

Iowa State University Foundation



“We made an excellent investment decision when we chose Convio. The solution has advanced our communication capabilities without requiring additional staff. Thanks to Convio's online training and support, we have improved our integrated marketing efforts and reached many of our strategic goals. Moreover, the research Convio publishes reinforces its position as an industry leader and helps us compare our results against the performance of similar organizations.”

— Rosa Unal, Assistant Vice President, Information Technology
Iowa State University Foundation

About Iowa State University Foundation

The Iowa State University (ISU) Foundation is a private nonprofit organization dedicated to securing and stewarding private gifts and grants that benefit Iowa State University. Each year, thousands of generous benefactors make gifts to show their support for Iowa State. The ISU Foundation works with Iowa State administrators, deans, and unit leaders to determine the university's fundraising priorities. The ISU Foundation staff and volunteer leadership works in partnership with university officials to generate private support for ISU.

Summary

The Iowa State University Foundation's results have improved across numerous categories after the implementation of Convio's integrated online suite. By making personalized asks and presenting supporters with relevant content based on their relationship with the university, the foundation has raised more money online, cultivated new relationships, and promoted loyalty and involvement within its existing donor base.

Challenges

Prior to partnering with Convio, the ISU Foundation had separate tools for email and online donations. Without any integration between the two systems, giving forms could not be pre-populated and donors were unable to update their records online. The foundation also faced challenges when managing its Web site. With limited technical skills, staff members struggled to keep content current. Additionally, precious resources were being used to process event registrations by telephone or mail because payments could not be accepted online. The foundation was eager to overcome these challenges by implementing an online Constituent Relationship Management (eCRM) solution.

The Convio Solution

In 2007, the ISU Foundation selected Convio's online solution to support an integrated approach to engaging alumni and donors. Without adding staff members, the Foundation has enhanced its online presence with:

- Convio Email Marketing to deliver personalized messages tailored to the recipient's relationship with the university, and links that automatically log in to forms pre-populated with an individual's information;
- Convio Fundraising to enable multiple designation options for 186 funds (including the foundation's capital campaign), and provide administrators with consolidated reporting of development results across more than 23 colleges, schools and units;
- Convio PageBuilder to create and manage Web pages for two main sites, each with a different look and feel; and
- Convio Events to process RSVPs online for offline events, and for foundation staff members to manage registrations, payments, and an event calendar via the Internet.

Expanded Giving Options for Donors

With the increased flexibility offered by Convio Fundraising, the ISU Foundation has greatly expanded its online giving program. Before Convio, donors interested in giving online were presented with a single donation page. This page has been replaced by more than 44 unique giving pages that provide donors the flexibility they need to give to a number of colleges or departments within the university, to specific classes, or to the University Museum. If desired, donors can split their donation to support more than one fund without having to complete multiple transactions.



The ISU Foundation's Web site presents visitors with recent news, videos, and a progress update on its capital campaign. One section of the site is dedicated to detailed stories about donors' relationships with the university.

Increased Engagement with Alumni and Donors

The ISU Foundation empowers supporters with a broad range of functionality that promotes engagement:

- Alumni can share stories and information proactively using StoryBuilder, a tool that allows end-users to contribute and post content in a structured way.
- List members can update their profiles easily and quickly in a self-serve fashion by clicking on a link in an email that automatically logs them into their current profile which they can update as needed.
- Online donation forms for the foundation's capital campaign attract donations from all levels of supporters, including major donors who appreciate the convenience of giving online.

Integrated Cross-Channel Marketing Campaigns

By combining the power of online fundraising with offline campaigns that leverage phone and direct mail, the ISU Foundation has encouraged people who make pledges over the phone to fulfill their pledges online. The foundation also includes URLs for customized donation forms in direct mail pieces to encourage recipients to engage with the organization online.

Results

- Raised \$285,000 online in FY 2008 (a \$100,000 increase from FY 2007)
- Had a ten-fold increase in profile updates during a one year period, thus improving list hygiene and ensuring alumni contact details are current
- Engaged alumni with a survey that yielded 1,000 online responses and many stories, photos, and favorite memories from ISU (all submitted using the StoryBuilder functionality within Convio PageBuilder)
- Registered more than 500 people online for regional events tied to the foundation's capital campaign

The Convio Difference

Convio is a leading provider of on-demand constituent relationship management software and services to nonprofit organizations to enable nonprofit organizations to more effectively raise funds, influence public policy and support their missions by leveraging the Internet to build strong relationships with constituents. Convio's online constituent relationship management, or eCRM, solution includes a suite of on-demand software modules for fundraising, advocacy, email marketing and Web content management complemented by a portfolio of best-in-class consulting services.



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