

## Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh

### Driving member loyalty and revenue through email and Web site communications

"Convio is a breakthrough for our membership renewals — opening new and extremely effective communications and revenue channels by helping us increase the frequency and quality of communications with our members through the Internet."

— Karen Poirier, director, membership marketing, Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh

## ABOUT CARNEGIE MUSEUMS OF PITTSBURGH

Founded in 1895 by industrialist Andrew Carnegie, Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh ([www.carnegiemuseums.org](http://www.carnegiemuseums.org)) is a collection of four distinctive museums: Carnegie Museum of Art, Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Carnegie Science Center and The Andy Warhol Museum.

Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh (Carnegie Museums) reaches more than 1.5 million people a year through its four museums. More than 400,000 people are served through on-site and off-site educational outreach programs, and hundreds of thousands more — both nationally and internationally — are served through traveling exhibitions and scientific research activities.

## THE CHALLENGE

With 90 percent of its membership marketing budget spent on replacing lost members, Carnegie Museums needed a strategic plan for membership retention. The organization understood that the Internet offered a cost-effective opportunity to reach its members more frequently and encourage them to renew, but it faced several obstacles:

- The organization had no consistent online relationship with its constituents and needed a strategic plan to develop ongoing relationships through both email and Web site communications to improve membership retention.
- The emails that had been sent previously were not personalized and were text-only messages sent using a personal email tool that offered no tracking or reporting capabilities. In addition, the organization's Web site lacked members-only content to make members feel special. The organization sought an online solution that would help it easily create more effective emails and Web site content, as well as offer built-in tracking and reporting capabilities to help the group analyze its online results and improve future campaigns.
- The organization's Web site had no transaction capability, so even when it did drive members to its Web site, there was no way for them to renew online — they had to print a membership form, fill it out and fax it to Carnegie Museums with a check or other payment information. The organization needed to streamline this process and offer members an easy, convenient way to renew online.

## THE CONVIO® SOLUTION

After researching options, Carnegie Museums chose Convio for a hosted solution that includes software for Web content management, online membership and email communications — all in a single online system.

## HIGHLIGHTS

In less than two years of using Convio, Carnegie Museums achieved strong results, including:

### Better Outreach and Member Services

- Grew list of member email addresses from 5,000 to 12,000 — almost half of its entire membership file — within first year.
- Welcomes each member by name on Web site, and includes content in Web site and emails based on member interests.
- Offers comprehensive online calendar for all four museums.

### Increased Membership Renewals and Revenue

- In 2003, 88 percent of the members who received email newsletters renewed, and 72 percent who received other email updates renewed, while overall renewal rates were 62 percent.
- On average, 58 percent of first-year members renewed in 2003, compared with 40 percent in 2002; multi-year members renewed at 78 percent in 2003, versus 73 percent in 2002.
- Raised \$121,000 online in 2003 after taking membership sales online for the first time in late 2002.

### Improved Efficiency

- Communicates with members an additional 15-20 times per year.
- Non-technical staff members manage 150-page Member Center site.

"We chose Convio as part of our overall membership plan because of the depth of its software and services, and because of the company's knowledge of and commitment to the nonprofit sector," said Karen Poirier, director, membership marketing, Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh.

To begin online relationships with its members, in 2002 Carnegie Museums created an online Member Center and implemented email marketing from Convio. Later that year, the organization deployed Convio's online membership solution, allowing new constituents to join online at one of many membership levels, and allowing existing members to renew, sign up for email updates and log in to the site for special information based on their individual interests.

Previously, Carnegie Museums communicated with its members primarily through a bimonthly printed magazine. Now, using Convio, the organization also sends email newsletters to constituents who have opted in to receive them, and email alerts to keep members updated on the latest museum news and events. In addition, Carnegie Museums uses online surveys to gather more information about members and other site visitors, and then uses that collected knowledge to develop more targeted online communications. The organization also incorporates email communications into its membership renewal/upgrade campaigns to alert donors of upcoming mailings and to follow up on previous mailings.

"With four distinct destinations in our family of museums, Carnegie Museums' members have varied interests," Poirier said. "Using Convio, we develop a closer relationship with members by communicating more often than just the six times a year that we send the magazine, and by learning about our members' interests and delivering just the information that matters to each one."

## RESULTS

With Convio, Carnegie Museums has increased the quality and frequency of member communications, and boosted membership renewals — all with a single, integrated software solution.

"Our investment in Convio is paying off. Though we faced budget cuts the past two years, our membership revenue has increased — helped by our online efforts," Poirier said. "This has been revolutionary, especially for our museums that had not previously used the Internet as an integrated part of their marketing plans."

**Better Outreach and Member Services** — Carnegie Museums gathered member email addresses — more than doubling its list from 5,000 to 12,000 — and now sends more frequent and relevant online member communications. In addition, Carnegie Museums collects information about its members through online surveys and forms, and uses that information to deliver personalized content based on each member's interests and membership level. As a result, a survey completed in the first

Carnegie Museums' Web site offers multiple membership options, as well as opportunities to log in for special member information or sign up to receive email updates.

year of using Convio indicated that 78 percent of online members felt more connected with the museums, and 89 percent intended to renew or upgrade their memberships.

**Increased Membership Renewals and Revenue** — By developing online relationships with members, Carnegie Museums has greatly increased its membership renewals and revenue. In 2003, for example, members who received email newsletters renewed at a rate of 88 percent, and those who

## SOLUTION AT-A-GLANCE

Organizations can purchase Convio's online solutions individually, and then add solutions for a comprehensive online infrastructure. Carnegie Museums implemented a solution that includes the following:

- **Web Site Center** — for easily creating and managing personalized Web content
- **Fundraising/Member Center** — for driving membership online
- **Email Marketing** — for expanding the support base via email marketing
- **Constituent360™** — for storing constituent information to facilitate marketing and communication

received other types of email updates renewed at 72 percent, compared with overall renewal rates of 62 percent — demonstrating the positive impact of online relationships on renewal rates. In addition, first-year members in 2003 renewed at a rate of 58 percent, compared with 40 percent in 2002; multi-year members renewed at a rate of 78 percent in 2003, versus 73 percent in 2002. Carnegie Museums also found that the average online transaction through its Member Center in 2003 was \$131, versus \$111 offline. Overall, the organization raised \$121,000 online in 2003 after taking membership sales online for the first time in late 2002.

**Improved Efficiency** — With Convio's easy-to-use email and Web site software, Carnegie Museums has increased its efficiency. The membership marketing staff administers the Member Center Web site and manages email communications for each of Carnegie Museums' four museums. This group also is communicating with members an additional 15-20 times per year. In addition, the fast and cost-effective nature of email and Web promotions allows the organization to produce and promote more members-only events. The organization also has more than 150 pages on its Member Center Web site and offers online membership enhancements, such as welcoming each member by name and delivering interest-based Web site and email content — all easily managed by non-technical staff members.

## ABOUT CONVIO

Convio is the leading provider of software and services that help nonprofit organizations and higher education institutions use the Internet to build strong constituent relationships that drive support and participation. Convio has online solutions for fundraising and membership, advocacy, special events, volunteer fundraising, Web site management and email communications.

## FIND OUT MORE

To learn more about Convio products and services, contact us today:



11921 N. Mopac Expressway, Suite 200  
Austin, TX 78759  
1-888-528-9501 | 512-652-2600  
info@convio.com | www.convio.com