

## Chicago Public Radio

### Reaching new members and driving gifts through online communications

"Convio helps us reach our listeners regularly, develop stronger relationships with them through online communications and convert them into donors/members in support of our station."

— Wendy Turner, director of on-air and online fundraising, Chicago Public Radio station WBEZ

### ABOUT CHICAGO PUBLIC RADIO

Each week, Chicago Public Radio offers more than 560,000 listeners a wide variety of programs — from news and public affairs to music and arts. Supported by contributing listeners, the station produces such programming as *Eight Forty-Eight*, *Schadenfreude*, *Performance Space*, *Stories on Stage* and *Worldview*, and broadcasts a wide array of jazz, blues and world music.

Chicago Public Radio is the home of three nationally syndicated programs including the Peabody award winning *This American Life* with Ira Glass, *Odyssey* and *Wait, Wait... Don't Tell Me!*, which is co-produced with NPR.

### THE CHALLENGE

Like many public radio stations, Chicago Public Radio relied on pledge drives to raise a significant portion of its funds. Through these on-air drives, every listener is a potential donor.

However, while the station communicated every day with listeners through its broadcasts, it did not have specific information about them, such as their names, email addresses or interests. Each listener was anonymous. Having used the Internet previously for convenient online donation processing during pledge drives, Chicago Public Radio thought that the Internet also could give it a cost-effective way to communicate regularly with its listeners in a more personal manner.

"We had a hunch that if we could develop more personal relationships with our listeners by providing new services and regular communications, we would likely build strong, ongoing support throughout the year, rather than just during pledge drives," Wendy Turner, director of on-air and online fundraising, Chicago Public Radio, said.

The station decided to test its hunch. It sought an online solution for gathering more information about its listeners and also communicating with them regularly to convert them to loyal donors.

### THE CONVIO® SOLUTION

Chicago Public Radio evaluated several online solutions for connecting more personally with its constituents, offering online services and conducting online fundraising campaigns. The station chose Convio for email marketing, online fundraising, event management and online surveys.

"Though we had a vision of developing personal, ongoing relationships with our listeners, we didn't understand

### HIGHLIGHTS

In less than two years of using Convio, Chicago Public Radio achieved strong results, including:

#### Improved Outreach and Services

- Grew list of email addresses from 18,000 to 35,000
- Delivers monthly email newsletter to listeners
- Sends online surveys to find out more about its listeners

#### Increased Donations

- Grew online donations more than 150 percent in 2003 compared with 2002 (exclusive of pledge drives)
- Raised \$32,000 (primarily from new donors) in two-week campaign to defray costs of radio show
- Raised more than \$16,000 in 12 hours through targeted, end-of-year email campaign

#### Improved Efficiency

- In eight months, saw about 10 times in online donations what it paid for Convio in a year
- Communicates regularly with listeners and easily creates online fundraising campaigns
- Volunteers now enter and process pledges in two days (previously hired four temporary employees to process pledges over a month)

everything that was possible online," Turner said. "We chose Convio as our online partner because its staff members had the right philosophy. They quickly taught us how to think bigger about our goals, yet helped us roll out online programs in a way that was manageable and not overwhelming."

Chicago Public Radio began by collecting email addresses. For example, the station requires Web site visitors to provide an email address for every online action, such as making a donation, and asks them if they would like to receive future communications. This helps Chicago Public Radio continuously grow its email address file, the foundation for online marketing and fundraising activities.

Using Convio, Chicago Public Radio extends its reach beyond existing donors (also considered members) with online fundraising campaigns that invite other listeners — nondonors — to support the station. In addition, Chicago Public Radio conducts online fundraising campaigns timed around current events and in support of pledge drives.

"Before using Convio, we would ask the same members for more and more dollars during our pledge drives," Turner said. "Now we are finding more listeners and interacting with them online to develop stronger relationships and support throughout the year."

Chicago Public Radio now sends *E-Update*, the station's email newsletter, to listeners who have elected to receive it. The station also sends online surveys to collect additional information about listeners, and then uses that information to personalize email communications and target email fundraising appeals based on listener interests. Plus, the station publicizes fundraising events online and provides an option for online registration.

## RESULTS

Using Convio, Chicago Public Radio has increased the quality and frequency of communications with its listeners, built a stronger online presence and boosted donations.

**Improved Outreach and Services** — By encouraging listeners to sign up for email newsletters and other online services, Chicago Public Radio nearly doubled its file of email addresses from 18,000 to 35,000 in less than two years. Using this file as the basis for its outreach programs, the station sends regular email communications to its listeners, and finds out more about them through online surveys.

**Increased Donations** — Through targeted online fundraising campaigns, Chicago Public Radio grew online donations independent of pledge drives by more than 150 percent in 2003, compared with 2002. One email sent on December 31, 2003 to members drove more than \$16,000 in donations



Dear Wendy,

There are just twelve hours left in 2003. You've probably received a note from us recently requesting a year-end contribution. I just want to remind you that it's not too late to **lend your support** to Chicago Public Radio, one of this community's most wide-reaching cultural assets, serving more than half a million people each week. Your **gift today** will provide the funds needed to keep unique thought-provoking programs on the air in 2004. Make a secure pledge online **right now**. In many cases, your contribution today will be deductible for the 2003 tax year. Thank you! And Happy New Year from all of us at Chicago Public Radio!

Sincerely,

Greg Salustro  
Vice President, Development



Public Radio Voices of 2003...

Bob Edwards - Lisa Labuz - Dan Bindert - Terry Gross - Baxter Black - Scott Simon - Peter Sagal - Gretchen Helfrich - Anne Garrels - Steve Edwards - Carl Kassell - Marian McPartland - Steve Shadley - Chris Heim - Susan Stenberg - Dick Buckley - Ira Glass - Garrison Keillor - Liane Hansen - Tony Sarabia - Melba Lara - Michele Norris - Jerome McDonnell - Richard Steele - Nancy Wilson - Tavis Smiley... and many many more.

Chicago Public Radio conducts online fundraising campaigns timed around current events and to support pledge drives.

within 12 hours. Another email raised \$21,000 within one hour. Still another two-week email campaign targeting listeners of a specific radio program raised \$32,000 to defray the costs of streaming the program on the Internet. Ninety-eight percent of respondents to that campaign were first-time Chicago Public Radio donors, demonstrating the station's success at reaching new listeners for support.

## SOLUTION AT-A-GLANCE

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

- **Fundraising Center** — for driving donations online
- **Email Marketing** — for expanding the support base via email marketing
- **Constituent360™** — for storing constituent information to facilitate marketing and communication

**Improved Efficiency** — In an eight-month period, Chicago Public Radio generated about 10 times in online donations what it paid for Convio in a year. In addition, the station significantly reduced manual work following each pledge drive. Before using Convio to solicit and process online donations, the station had to hire temporary employees to process donations for a month; now two volunteers can process donations in two days, saving the station time and money. And, because its online donations have increased, this year the station has cut its pledge days to only 17 — the fewest it has ever conducted in one year.

## ABOUT CONVIO

Convio is the leading provider of software and services that help nonprofit organizations 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, email communications and alumni relations. Convio's clients include the ASPCA, The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

## FIND OUT MORE

To learn more about how Convio can help your organization manage constituent relationships more easily and productively, 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