BCG Systems, Inc.

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BCG Systems Answers the Call:

Creating a Custom Online Pledge Management Solution

The United Way of Summit County (Ohio) coordinates fundraising for 50+ partner agencies. Its mission focuses on community impact projects and bringing people and resources together to create stronger and healthier communities. As one of the largest corporate campaign sponsors in the county, the United Way of Summit County is constantly working to promote the good work of their partner agencies and the charitable contributions that make that good work possible.

CHALLENGE

Replace a time-consuming manual pledge tracking system with a cost-effective, highly secure web-based pledge solution allowing corporations and individuals to pledge online.

SOLUTION

iPledge™, a comprehensive, flexible, and highly secure web-based pledge management solution based on Microsoft technology and developed internally by BCG Systems Inc.

RESULTS

Eliminated manual data entry of pledges, saving countless hours over the lifetime of the product. Secure, convenient online service encourages charitable giving.

Finding a Better Way

Pledge tracking was an excruciatingly time consuming manual process. Pledge cards by the thousands came in from corporations like Target, Key Bank and Bridgestone Firestone. United Way of Summit County staff would manually enter the information from each pledge card into the organization's fundraising software. If a card were lost or illegible, the well-intentioned gift might never reach its recipient. There had to be a better way.

When Brett Kimmell was hired as CFO in 2004, he was charged with bringing the pledge system to the Internet, in the form of an electronic pledge management solution that was powerful, flexible and backed by a trusted partner.

Kimmell investigated several web-based pledge management systems. Most providers charged a per-transaction fee for each pledge. The costs of the available systems were simply too high and either offered features the United Way of Summit Country didn't need or were lacking in necessary functionality.

Having just completed his masters in information systems, Kimmell was no stranger to custom software development projects, and he decided to build a pledge management software from the ground up. He turned to long-time business partner of United Way of Summit County, BCG Systems, headquartered in Akron, Ohio for a custom solution to the organization's problem.

"We wanted a solution that was easy for our clients to use, easy for us to administer and maintain, yet powerful, secure and cost effective," Kimmell says. "BCG Systems is professional and responsive. They had the resources to deliver, and deliver it right."

iPledge™ Is the Answer

Kimmell worked closely with BCG Systems during the entire project, from design through implementation. "We had an idea of what we wanted the donor experience to be. BCG Systems took our ideas, made suggestions of their own and designed an online pledge software that truly exceeded our expectations."

iPledge™ is a comprehensive, state-of-the-art electronic pledge management solution developed by BCG Systems for United Way of Summit County.

"I've shown this solution to other United Way agencies, and they all think it's the best they've seen."

Brett Kimmell, CFO
United Way of Summit County

About BCG Systems

BCG Systems is a single-source provider of business management software, hardware, and infrastructure planning. Nationally recognized for providing exceptional information management solutions and service, BCG Systems designs, implements and supports cost effective ERP, CRM, and networking systems — in addition to custom applications and Web development. BCG Systems' certified professionals combine experience, commitment and ingenuity to maximize the return on each client's technology investment.

In a typical United Way campaign, employers hand out pledge cards to each employee, collect the completed cards and return them to the manually enter the data into its fundraising software. With iPledge, the participating corporations invite their employees to visit the iPledge web page where they can pledge electronically, any time of the day or night. Participating corporations have great control over the campaigns they sponsor; iPledge supports numerous pledge payment options such as payroll deductions, electronic funds transfers credit card, checks or cash. A corporate representative, serving as the campaign's administrator can log in to add other administrative users, run various reports and check the overall status of the campaign against its goal. Administrative setup is simple; the corporation establishes a goal and selects the various payment type options they wish to offer.

Encourages Generosity

The web-based interface is very well received by employees at client corporations who appreciate the flexibility and convenience of pledging online. Human resource personnel at the client corporations also appreciate the convenience of a paperless system and the ease of tracking the corporation's progress toward its overall goal.

From United Way of Summit County's own website, the public can access iPledge to make individual donations. The interface is clean, uncluttered and easy for visitors to navigate. Visitors to the site can pledge with a credit card or bank transfer. They can also elect to be billed for the pledge amount. If they prefer, donors can designate a particular organization to receive their pledge.

Keeps on Giving

The agency is now reaping the benefits of its web-based pledge solution. No more volunteers are required to manually enter every pledge, this frees their time for other tasks within the agency and putting more pledge dollars to work faster. "iPledge saves us paper costs and the time and labor involved in entering literally thousands of pledge cards," Kimmell says.

Security a Priority

iPledge is hosted on the United Way of Summit County's own server. BCG Systems serves as the organization's network administrator, ensuring the entire system runs smoothly. iPledge is based on a SQL database and was written using VB.NET. The United Way owns the source code to their program, and Kimmell is capable of making small changes if needed. Security is a concern not only to United Way of Summit County, but also to the corporations who participate in the campaigns, since personal financial information of its employees and principals is recorded. Kimmell reports that the IT staff from each of the organization's corporate clients is pleased and satisfied with the high level of security BCG Systems has implemented.

iPledge includes a built-in interface to the Andar Fundraising Software package used by many United Way agencies. A simple one step process exports the necessary data from iPledge to Andar.

The Best They've Seen

The business partnership existing between United Way of Summit County and BCG Systems is a success. BCG Systems has also implemented a new accounting system for United Way of Summit County. The agency has a single trusted partner it can call with any questions about its software and network infrastructure. "We've never asked BCG Systems for anything that they did not have a professional on staff capable of handling," Kimmell adds.

Kimmell is so impressed with iPledge and the service he receives from BCG Systems that he praises them to other organizations, "I've shown this solution to other United Way agencies, and they all think it's the best they've seen."

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