Learn more about Habit for Humanity Greater Birmingham

Habitat for Humanity is one such nonprofit organization. With a focus on providing quality, affordable housing, stability, and self-reliance for families and communities in 70 countries globally, Habitat for Humanity is focused on fulfilling the vision of a world where everyone has a decent place to live. At the Habitat for Humanity of Greater Birmingham chapter in Alabama, Melanie Jacobi, and her staff are focused on fulfilling this mission for local families in the greatest need. And as Manager of volunteers and community engagement, Jacobi has one of the biggest tasks at her Habitat for Humanity chapter. While Giveffect was put in place before Jacobi came on board in her current role this past January, she has come to realize that there have been some major improvements to what the Greater Birmingham chapter is able to do on a day-to-day basis.

Overview

At Giveffect, we pride our organization on creating an all-in-one software system that is convenient, user-friendly, and makes the job of nonprofit professionals easier. Our software helps nonprofit organizations with a wide array of needs ranging from volunteer management, online giving, website hosting, events and auctions and wealth screening, among other tools. Giveffect combines 10 systems into one, then auto-tracks and reports on key data metrics of nonprofits just like yours. Our goal is to eliminate manual data entry so nonprofit organizations can get back to fulfilling their true mission. Because we know that a nonprofit fulfilling its mission is its top priority.

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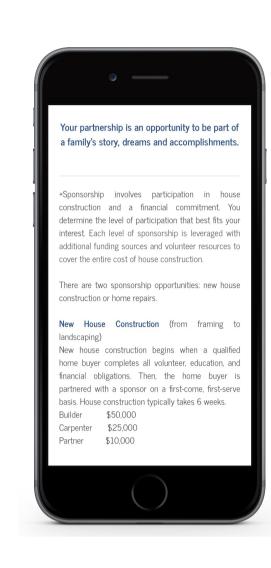
- Melanie Jacobi
Manager of Volunteer and Community Engagement
Habitat for Humanity of Greater Birmingham

Organizational Pain Points

According to Jacobi, the main pain point for Habitat for Humanity of Greater Birmingham is the fundraising aspect, as with many similar nonprofits. "Because we are a nonprofit, we are always looking to fundraise. The support for the homes that we build comes from the community. So we're always looking for local business partners and individuals who are interested in sponsoring a home so that we can assist a family in need. Of course, the families that we work with do purchase the homes. So they are working on paying their houses back over the course of 20 years. The sponsors donate the money, and then the families are purchasing the home to buy them back. The families are making mortgage payments just as you or I would."

As we can see, Habitat for Humanity of Greater Birmingham has a major focus on fundraising. But the fundraising that they are doing has a larger impact on their community: housing. Therefore, the chapter cannot afford for the fundraising campaigns it creates and the events it sponsor to fall short. If it does, this means a family may not obtain the housing it needs to grow and thrive.

Because it needed to find a way to fundraise as efficiently but also as large as possible, the Habitat for Humanity of Greater Birmingham knew that the organization would need a system that pushed convenience and efficiency to the forefront. They would need a system that would allow them to create any kind of fundraising campaign as quickly and painlessly as possible. With that in mind, and turning away from traditional methods of using nonprofit software, Habitat for Humanity of Greater Birmingham looked into the all-in-one, integrated and automated system found in Giveffect.

From managing volunteers and Sweat Equity to ReStore inventory and fundraising, Giveffect simplifies nonprofit operations for Habitat for Humanity of Greater Birmingham

Community Impact

Even with Habitat for Humanity of Greater Birmingham needing to remedy the main fundraising pain point quickly, the affiliate also needed to find a software system that would allow it the greatest positive impact on their community. With the implementation of Giveffect, it found that software system that was not only integrated but had the tools necessary to help it do the work that would make that positive impact through campaigns and initiatives, such as the annual Women Build initiative.

A partnership with Habitat for Humanity International, the annual Women Build is where over 300 communities across the globe participate in building homes for families that need them. In Birmingham, Jacobi says that the affiliate brings together a group of women to help build these homes over the course of three days. Previously, there had been no fundraising component with this affiliates' Women Build. But with the addition of Giveffect, they were able to implement a successful peer-to-peer fundraising campaign that raised more money than the previous year. "It was very successful for our first go-round because in the past there was not a fundraising element associated with Women Build," says Jacobi. "Some women participated as individuals and some participated in teams. We raised over $15,000 in a short amount of time leading up to our Women Build. So we were very pleased with that aspect and how easy it was to undertake the fundraising process [using Giveffect] because that is always something that we're in need of".

With the peer-to-peer fundraising function, Habitat for Humanity of Greater Birmingham was able to not only create its own campaign, but it allowed potential supporters to create their own campaign pages connected to the Women Build campaign. This gave the campaign and event a reach that it did not have in the past, and subsequently led to a greater number of participants and more funds raised.

Peer-to-Peer Positivity

The peer-to-peer [fundraising campaign] we did for our Women Build was our first foray into the peer-to-peer fundraising model. That has been very successful for us," says Jacobi on the 2018 Women Build. "That went very well as far as fundraising goes. It really streamlined that process and made it very user-friendly for the volunteers who would be working on the house to be able to ask their friends and family for donations for their project."

But the Greater Birmingham version of the Women Build, which took place from May 10-12, 2018, finally got that all-important fundraising component once it implemented Giveffect. Now, the affiliate was given the opportunity to create any type of fundraising campaign that it wanted to coincide with the Women Build event. Jacobi and the affiliate chose to go the peer-to-peer route, and the result made for an unexpected bump in donations in a short amount of time. This was because the Habitat for Humanity of Greater Birmingham now had an element to their nonprofit operations that they did not previously have that would open up a lot more doors and opportunities.

Habitat for Humanity of Greater Birmingham took full advantage of the Giveffect's fundraising & events management system by using one of their most well-known campaigns in the Women Build to tap into the desire of their surrounding community to help. Jacobi and her staff knew that Giveffect is designed both for the purposes of making fundraising ideas for marathons, galas and other events to life and for making the creation of implementation of those ideas as easy as possible.

Smart Automation in Action

And the ability to create an engaging peer-to-peer fundraising campaign webpage comes from Smart Automation, the signature tool that empowers the all-in-one, integrated nature of ee Giveffect software. For Habitat for Humanity of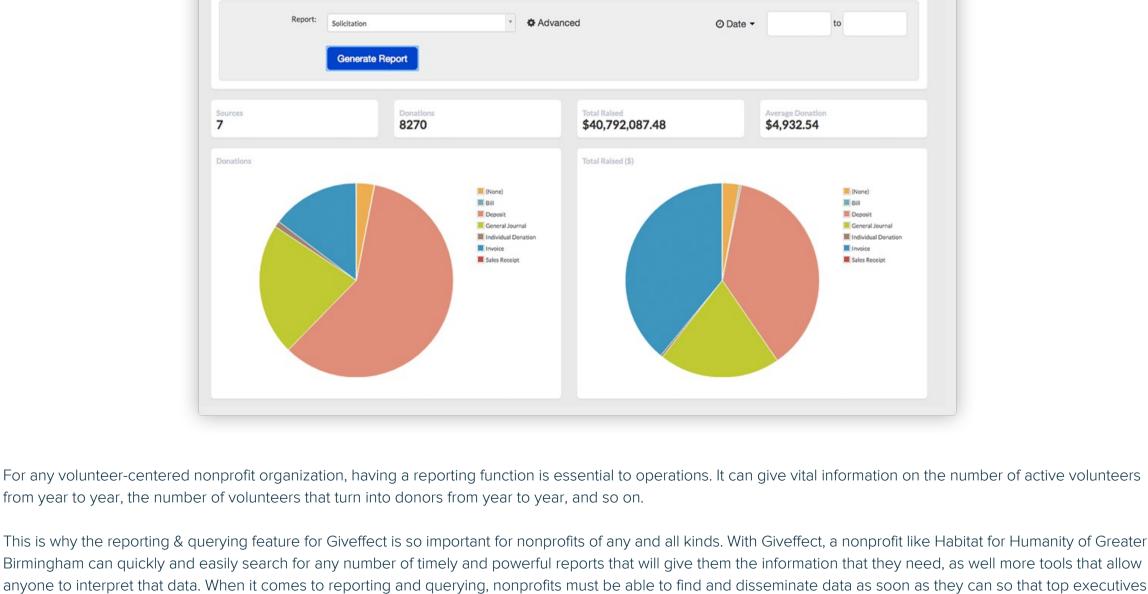 Greater Birmingham, the Smart Automation feature has created a way for the organization as a whole to work towards greater connectedness and efficiency by eliminating the need for manual data entry on all fronts. Previously, Habitat for Humanity of Greater Birmingham used systems that were not connected and made it difficult to obtain, interpret and distribute information to the proper stakeholders within the organization. This, in turn, led to the staff of the Greater Birmingham affiliate having to focus more attention on making sure that various administrative tasks were handled, which disrupted the flow of their daily operations.

But the implementation of Giveffect replaced all of the software systems that the affiliate had been previously using. And powered by that signature Smart Automation software, Greater Birmingham now had a suite of software systems that would speak to each other regularly, reduced the time dedicated to manual data entry, and offered up several tools throughout the system that would be instrumental to streamlining the day-to-day volunteer management, fundraising, wealth screening and membership management functions, among other areas. Additionally, the affiliate now had access to a system where everything that happens on the administrative side is automatically updated on the users' side. That is what makes Giveffect so effective for Habitat for Humanity of Greater Birmingham and nonprofits just like it.

Reporting

For any volunteer-centered nonprofit organization, having a reporting function is essential to operations. It can give vital information on the number of active volunteers from year to year, the number of volunteers that turn into donors from year to year, and so on.

This is why the reporting & querying feature for Giveffect is so important for nonprofits of any and all kinds. With Giveffect, a nonprofit like Habitat for Humanity of Greater Birmingham can quickly and easily search for any number of timely and powerful reports that will give them the information that they need, as well more tools that allow anyone to interpret that data. When it comes to reporting and querying, nonprofits must be able to find and disseminate data as soon as they can so that top executives and boards can make key decisions on how to move. Giveffect, once again, makes that process easier and more efficient by making it to so that an organization can grab or create a report, then distribute it within seconds instead of longer.

In the case of Habitat for Humanity of Greater Birmingham, it is possible that the organization may want to locate information on what a fundraising campaign such as Women Build raised the most funds during the last fiscal year, or which major donors are most active within the surrounding Greater Birmingham community. By implementing Giveffect, the chapter is in a much better position to get information that it needs most from the reports at its disposal.

Pulling Everything Together

Even with all of this progress that Habitat for Humanity of Greater Birmingham make, the real power comes when everything is automated, integrated and connected. There was a time when the chapter had to go to one place to access their volunteer calendar, then to another place to access a way to create volunteer-driven campaigns, and still, another place allows potential volunteers to sign up for new jobs, shifts, and assignments. Currently, the Greater Birmingham chapter has its volunteer calendar, its volunteer sign up the flow, and its online donation flow powered by Giveffect.

In having an integrated software system powered by Smart Automation at their disposal, Habitat for Humanity of Greater Birmingham is, in turn, able to assist more people throughout their community and can become more efficient. The organization now has the ability to streamline its volunteer management operation. They can more easily create volunteer-centered campaigns using the back-end of Giveffect. They have the ability to use the volunteer customer relationship management database to create records of constituents and easily track volunteer hours. They can create online fundraising campaign pages in a matter of only minutes and have supporters and constituents donating in a similar time frame. They can even pull the most pertinent information to their organization as a whole through the reports and queries feature. With a system that ensures that everything is integrated, automated and connected, Giveffect gives organizations like Habitat for Humanity of Greater Birmingham the opportunity to take full control of any and all operations within their sphere.

Conclusion

By exposing Habitat for Humanity of Greater Birmingham to tools such as the options found in the fundraising and events system as well as the volunteer calendar and the volunteer CRM database, the Giveffect software system has given this affiliate the potential to go far beyond what they had been previously doing with software systems that were not connected, integrated and automated. And with these, along with others found within the wealth screening system, the email marketing system and the online giving & merchant system, Habitat for Humanity of Greater Birmingham has a chance to extend the great work that it is already doing out to even more residents of its surrounding community.

Jacobi does express that the affiliate is yet to tap into the full potential of the Giveffect volunteer management system and that it would like to begin using tools such as Event Buddy to its fullest extent. But more success will come with more time spent with the software. With what the Greater Birmingham affiliate has already accomplished, it is only a matter of time before they have this and other systems fully mastered.

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About Giveffect

Giveffect is the leading fundraising, events, online donations, offline gift tracking, volunteer management, donor management, and constituent relationship management software for nonprofits - and more. Connected and automated.

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