

University Hospital Uses Fund-Raising Software for Maximum Efficiency

The RWJ University Hospital Foundation, Inc. has improved the efficiency of its fund-raising operations by switching to new software that allows more effective management of its donor database. This foundation is the fund-raising organization for Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick, New Jersey, one of the nation's leading academic health centers. The software they now use allows the foundation to carefully select donors by their areas of interest, giving history, geographic area, and many other parameters. "resultsplus! helps us organize nearly every aspect of the fund-raising process to the point where our results have been substantially improved," said Jill Kolakowski, Accounts Manager for RWJ University Hospital Foundation.

The foundation now uses resultsplus!™ software from Metafile™ Information Systems, Inc. to track the response of every fund-raising activity and generate targeted lists used for direct mailing and telespecting. They have found that these appeals are far more effective than the untargeted kind because they reach the right people. Also, by tracking pledges against actual contributions received, the software helps the university hospital send reminders that ensure each pledge gets paid, without bothering those people who have already paid.

Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital is the principal hospital for The University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, the nation's largest public university of the health sciences. The hospital's foundation is the not-for-profit organization that raises funds to support the hospital's programs and facility needs through specific

CUSTOMER

The **RWJ** University Hospital Foundation

PROFILE

Headquarters
New Brunswick, NJ

Type of Business
Healthcare

Web site
<http://www.rwjuh.edu/foundation/mission.html>

The RWJ University Hospital Foundation has created special funds for donors to target gifts benefitting specific areas of the hospital.



giving programs, such as The Annual Giving Program or The Tribute Giving Program, which allows donors to remember a special occasion or to pay tribute to the memory of a loved one. From time to time, capital campaigns undertaken by the foundation help the hospital with specific capital construction and equipment projects.

Database is lifeblood of foundation

According to Kolakowski, donations to the foundation come from a wide range of sources - from large pharmaceutical companies and foundations to individuals who are simply grateful for the treatment they received at the hospital. Foundation staff members quickly recognized the importance of moving this donor information from the filing cards and spreadsheets that are typically used by most foundations in the startup phase to a database specifically designed for fund-raising tasks. "The donor database is the lifeblood of any fund-raising operation," Kolakowski said. "The problem with keeping this information in paper files is that as the files grow, a foundation's staff has to spend a considerable amount of time sorting through them to find files and record information. It's very easy to overlook or misplace a file, which means you will probably forget to contact that donor. Also, if a donor calls with a question, you have to tell them you'll get back with them after you have located their file. The paper file approach also makes it very difficult to generate mailing lists."

Foundation managers evaluated a number of different fund-raising software packages. They selected resultsplus! primarily because they felt it was easier to use than the other packages they looked at. "I came from a nonprofit

using a different software package," said Debra Miller, Special Events Manager for the foundation. "When a new person joined that organization, it usually took them a considerable period of time before they became productive. With **resultsplus!**, on the other hand, all of the most common things you need to do on a daily basis are connected to icons that are always right in front of you on the screen. This makes the program very easy to use."

In addition to being so user-accessible and easy to use, **resultsplus!** offers a full range of advanced features. For example, doing an advanced mail merge makes it possible to target mailings to specific individuals within corporations and specific members of families, or send a single mailing to a corporation or household. The product allows you to track both individual giving histories and combined giving histories. **resultsplus!** can process any type of contribution, including: tributes, split gifts, matching gifts, online gifts, and soft credits, as well as in-kind and effective value donations, and, of course, payments on pledges. "Every gift that comes into the foundation is entered into **resultsplus!**," Kolakowski said, "making it possible to go to one source to track every contribution and donation that has ever touched our organization."

Tracking donations to individual funds

The foundation configured the software to track donations to nearly 100 separate funds, such as the emergency department, community outreach programs, hematology/oncology, cardiology, medical equipment, pediatric programs, etc. "One of the most important benefits is that we can now focus our fund-raising efforts on people who have proven interest in the area that we are targeting. Most of our contributors identify with one or several particular diseases or medical specialties and are primarily or exclusively interested in contributing to them. For this reason, nearly all of our appeals are targeted to a specific field of medicine. **resultsplus!** lets us very quickly generate lists that target a particular specialty in a matter of minutes. I simply query the database for a list of people who meet certain criteria, such as having given to a particular fund

or a certain number of contributions or a certain dollar amount. I can then merge a letter to those people on the list or export a file for an outside telemarketing firm to call. We now spend our resources only on communicating with people most likely to be interested. At the same time, we protect our contributors from feeling they are being bombarded and ensure that they pay attention to the few targeted appeals they do receive from us."

"We also receive lists of prospective donors from affiliated institutions such as the Heart Center of New Jersey," Kolakowski said. "The first thing we do is to enter them in **resultsplus!** and filter them against our existing contributors to make sure we don't contact a donor as if we are talking to them for the first time. We also have the telemarketers send us their pledge lists on a daily basis so we can update our database and make sure we don't send a reminder to someone who has just made a contribution. The bottom line is that we avoid annoying our donors by contacting them as few times as possible while also saving money in the process. Having a detailed record of every contribution also makes it easy to give recognition to our contributors. We generate a report at the end of each year that lists that

year's contributors for our Annual Report. All we have to do is export that list to Microsoft® Word format and send it to the people who lay out our Annual Report for us."

The software is very helpful in planning the foundation's special events. "We sponsor golf outings and participate in the Auxiliary's Charity Ball," Miller said. "Using **resultsplus!** queries makes it easy to create tailored invitation lists according to the interests and history of the invitee, based on a variety of factors such as whether or not the person has previously attended the event, their level of giving, and their interest in the specific area. We can be certain the names and addresses in the database are correct, because they are checked every time we contact each donor. Generating these lists manually would be a nightmare, but with **resultsplus!** it is a breeze."



"All the most common things you need to do on a daily basis are connected to icons that are always right in front of you on the screen. This makes the program very easy to use"

*- Debra Miller,
Special Events Manager*