

Stevenson University

Rapid Growth and Strategic Restructuring Improve Fundraising Efficiency

Stevenson University, Maryland's third largest independent university is renowned for its unique blend of liberal arts and career preparation. Located in Stevenson, Maryland, the University has substantially increased enrollment of its student body and alumni in the past decade. Founded in 1947 as Villa Julie College, the University's Board of Trustees voted to change the name to Stevenson University after three years of intensive research in June of 2008. In addition, the University completed a restructuring plan with the goal of creating six new schools. With a current enrollment of 3,900 undergraduate and graduate students, Stevenson prides itself with its historically high job/graduate-school placement rates.

In 2005, Stevenson University initiated a 20 million dollar capital campaign and in 2006 began working with WealthEngine to research and screen current and past donors. Since then, the University has been actively fundraising for their campaign. In December of 2009, the 20 million dollar campaign was completed with Stevenson surpassing their campaign goal.

With an active database of 14,000 alumni, in addition to increased student enrollment, the advancement office has developed processes for enhancing the database and improved procedures for fundraising, data management, and prospect research.

Under the direction of Rob Turner, Director of Advancement Services, the number of researchers has increased since the University initially signed on with WealthEngine in 2006. There are 15 individuals who make up the Office of University Advancement. Twelve individuals focus on development, of which three are researchers, and three focus on alumni relations.

Screening Donors for Effective Cultivation

Since implementing a prospect management plan to streamline their fundraising efforts, Stevenson University has seen an increase in individual giving amounts. Screening and researching their alumni and parents of current students has provided greater insight and allowed Turner and his team to target their focus on the right individuals.

Wealth screenings have also helped Turner and his team to identify assets for a large group of prospects relatively quickly. As they implemented a more comprehensive data collection strategy and screening process, holes in their previous process were identified. Turner explains, "In recent years we realized we were missing

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"We use the WealthEngine scores and ratings, primarily Propensity to Give (P2G) and Estimated Giving Capacity, to provide a high level overview of an individual we're researching. The P2G score is a great identifier that directs us as to which individuals to look at first."

- Rob Turner, Director of Advancement Services, Stevenson University

a key opportunity with our screening process; no one had thought to screen parents of incoming freshmen. Our stewardship process and screening results showed there was a need to focus on these parents.”

As Turner explains further, “We went back and decided to do a segmented mailing of these individuals. Lists of parents were segmented in ascending order by Propensity to Give (P2G) score and inclination score. The direct mailings also used campaign codes that allowed us to track potential donors so we could measure the return on investment (ROI) from targeted mailings. Finally, the advancement team coordinated their phone solicitations following the mailing, which resulted in a far more cohesive plan.”

With these changes, Turner revised their fundraising plan to include a strategy for ongoing, regular screenings of different segments and improved workflow for effective prospect management.

Integrating Wealth Data for Better Fundraising Results

Following fundraising best practices, Stevenson University uses Datatel Colleague Advancement as their donor management system (DMS), and integrates the data gathered through screening directly into their DMS. Stevenson migrated over to Colleague Advancement to integrate their results into Datatel from a posted .csv file to their secured file transfer protocol (ftp) site. The advancement office uses two different types of integration with WealthEngine to link their screening data back into their DMS. Each method is used to support different fundraising activities and different points in the fundraising cycle.



Mass import integration with data from screenings they’ve conducted, and



Individual record links to data using WealthEngine’s Prospect Link API, known as WealthConnect.

Stevenson’s researchers use WealthEngine on a daily basis to look up individuals. Using WealthConnect, they link the individual’s complete wealth profile within WealthEngine’s FindWealth Online research tool, and results are easily integrated back into Colleague Advancement.

Goals:

- ⚙ Use wealth screenings to identify assets for a large group of prospects
- ⚙ Build a comprehensive data collection strategy and improved workflows
- ⚙ Uncover opportunities in their research process
- ⚙ Develop a strategy for ongoing, regular screenings of different segments

Screening and Targeting Process:

- ⚙ Use P2G and inclination scores to segment parents of incoming freshmen
- ⚙ Create segmented mailings to freshmen parents
- ⚙ Use campaign codes to track potential donors
- ⚙ Establish metrics to measure the return on investment (ROI) from targeted mailings
- ⚙ Coordinate post-mailing phone solicitations

Prior to integrating screening results into their DMS, Turner worked with Datatel to develop an implementation plan to guide their process. They tested the integration with Datatel and determined how the WealthEngine screening results would be included. WealthEngine data is held within the Datatel Major Donor Module, which has text boxes that can be filled in with data. As well, clients can customize a page for additional fields and notes. "It's in this area we are able to customize most of the data with specific notes for others to understand," adds Turner.

Simply put by Turner, "The fact is, you have to screen and bring the data back into your DMS so everyone can see the data, make comments and remarks about an individual. Having it all centrally located increases efficiency within your organization. There's no need to spend time updating records because the data is cleaner, transparent and readily accessible for everyone in our advancement office to view. This integration between WealthEngine and Datatel makes all of our lives easier."

"Having the integration between Datatel and WealthEngine has made working with these two platforms easier and user-friendly. With just the click of a button within Datatel, we're able to view the WealthEngine Advanced Search results and bring a summary of the results back into Datatel."

- Rob Turner, Director of Advancement Services, Stevenson University