



photo provided by Uppingham School



[www.olduppinghamian.co.uk](http://www.olduppinghamian.co.uk)

#### at a glance

- Uppingham School was concerned that it was not providing sufficient service to alumni through its annual newsletter.
- The school, which already used **The Raiser's Edge**®, implemented **Blackbaud® NetCommunity™** and built an interactive website.
- More than 1000 alumni signed up to the website in the first months after implementation.
- Raised additional income through online donations.

Blackbaud software and services used at Uppingham School:

- **Blackbaud® NetCommunity™**
- **The Raiser's Edge®**

## Uppingham School uses Blackbaud® NetCommunity™ to connect with alumni

In 1584 Uppingham School was founded by Archdeacon Robert Johnson. After over 400 years of existence, Uppingham continues to educate large numbers of pupils to the highest academic standards in a boarding environment which allows them to participate in the widest range of extra-curricular activities

### the challenge

In early 2007, the Development Office at Uppingham School was concerned that the service it provided to its alumni did not go quite far enough. Uppingham maintained a database of its alumni and distributed an annual newsletter detailing events, activities at the school and news about Old Uppinghamians, or OUs as they are known. However, they were keen to promote the concept of a 'School for Life', developing the existing strong bond between school and alumni into a longer lasting one by providing the tools for social and business networking, and thereby benefiting pupils long after they have left.

### the solution

As an existing user of **The Raiser's Edge**®, Uppingham School decided to implement **Blackbaud NetCommunity** to build a website that would create an online community of great benefit to its users, the Uppingham alumni, socially, professionally and intellectually. An additional benefit was the seamless migration between **The Raiser's Edge** and **Blackbaud NetCommunity**, which meant that any information updated in the new website would automatically be updated in **The Raiser's Edge**.

The Old Uppinghamian site ([www.olduppinghamian.co.uk](http://www.olduppinghamian.co.uk)) was launched in June 2007.

### the results

Soon after its launch, the Uppingham Foundation wrote to its 7000 database contacts informing them of the new website, and within three months, more than 1000 alumni had signed up as members – on the basis of one letter. Since then, another 650 individuals have signed up also as members: a sign-up rate of over 20%.

Patrick Mulvihill, Director of the Uppingham Foundation, estimates that the number of users could be far greater than this 20% would indicate. "Many users don't actually sign up to join the site, as it is only job advertisements and access to personal information that require a log-in," he explains.

The site quickly proved popular with users. "User feedback so far has been largely anecdotal. Users are telling us that the site functionality is good, but it is the immediacy of the site itself

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— Patrick Mulvihill  
Director of the  
Uppingham Foundation

Please direct media enquiries to:

Tricia Ryan

Blackbaud Europe Ltd.

tricia.ryan@blackbaud.co.uk

020 7921 9648

that is the biggest bonus,” Mr Mulvihill says. “News, events and appeals can be posted immediately for all to see, whereas previously our alumni would have to rely on the single newsletter issued each year.”

Although the primary aim of the website was to deepen the relationship between Uppingham and its alumni, there was an implicit understanding that this may generate additional income in the form of alumni donations. As such, the OU website does feature “Donate now” functionality, briefly detailing recent projects that have benefited from alumni generosity. “We had not, until recently, instigated any capital campaigns since launching the Old Uppinghamian website, but the enhanced relationships between the School and its alumni will undoubtedly bear fruit in the future,” says Mr Mulvihill. “We are just launching our first major campaign since launching the website and we feel that it will be a great tool to provide immediate project updates, thank donors and indeed generate donations. Due to the extensive nature of the capital project, the website will be ideal for showing plans and photographs as well as explaining the rationale behind the work, all of which is very cost-effective compared to producing and posting publications. We are also able to publicly acknowledge and thank our supporters on the website, again strengthening relationships between school and alumni.”

“We also recently gave away OU DVDs through the site which were aimed at encouraging legacies to the School, demand for which was very high,” Mr Mulvihill recalls. “Raising additional income was always a soft objective, and one absolutely secondary to promoting Uppingham as a ‘School for Life’ – however, this soft objective is very likely to be met, particularly in the long term,” he adds.

“We plan to expand our use of the functionality available in **Blackbaud® NetCommunity™** in the near future, with the introduction of a Marketplace, and perhaps even forums further down the line,” Mr Mulvihill explains.

Overall, the site has delivered on its original objectives, and more besides. “The site has been great for our international alumni both for keeping in touch with them and to help them to organise their own reunions.” Mr Mulvihill says. “Many of the site’s users are not from what you might refer to as the ‘Facebook Generation’, with our oldest user being 95 years old, but this site has generated interest in our alumni across all age ranges, and across the globe.”

## Blackbaud®

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## about Blackbaud

Blackbaud is the leading global provider of software and related services designed specifically for not-for-profit organisations, enabling them to improve operational efficiency, build strong relationships, and raise more money to support their missions. More than 19,000 organisations — including Cancer Research UK, CRISIS, University of Cambridge and English National Opera — use one or more of Blackbaud products and consulting services for in-house and online ticketing, marketing, website management, and fundraising. Blackbaud’s solutions include **The Raiser’s Edge®**, **The Patron Edge®**, **The Information Edge™**, **Blackbaud Gift Aid™** and **Blackbaud® NetCommunity™** as well as a wide range of consulting and educational services. Since 1981, Blackbaud’s sole focus and expertise has been partnering with not-for-profits and providing them the solutions they need to make a difference in their local communities and worldwide. Headquartered in the United States, Blackbaud also has operations in the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia. For more information, visit [www.blackbaud.co.uk](http://www.blackbaud.co.uk).