

Breast Cancer Care

Breast Cancer Care relies on Blackbaud CRM to build more personalised relationships with its donors, volunteers and beneficiaries.



- Required one central database to run through the whole organisation to coordinate and manage its customer data.
- The Solution has improved reporting and the understanding of donors by generating better, and in some cases, brand new data, and in turn increase fundraising and levels of staff efficiency.



Blackbaud CRM automates manual processes and creates a central database with a single record per supporter, enabling better support for and understanding of the charity's clients and improved data management.

With a number of different databases across the organisation, Breast Cancer Care invested valuable staff time in manual data inputs, generating updates and compiling complete pictures of its fundraisers, volunteers and beneficiaries. By deploying Blackbaud CRM, the charity not only automated updates but was also able to minimise the risk of de-duplication, by collecting more accurate data and sharing information and knowledge throughout the organisation, to drive greater insight of its donor base.

The Challenge

To build a central database, offering a single customer view, boost the impact and influence of campaigns and increase levels of fundraising.

Founded in 1972, Breast Cancer Care is a national organisation that provides information and support, both practical and emotional, for anyone affected by breast cancer across the UK. It campaigns for the improvement in standards of support and care as well as promotes the importance of early detection.

The charity's development efforts were being restricted due to various databases being held by different parts of the organisation and it was therefore proving challenging to build a single customer view. For example, there were opportunities for cross-over between the charity's various clients – its fundraisers, volunteers and beneficiaries. One person could be all three of these but their details could be held on different databases, meaning they received separate, duplicate communications.

Breast Cancer Care wanted to build a picture of what each of these individuals could give to the organisation, in either a fundraising, volunteer or beneficiary capacity, or a combination of these. In addition, in an increasingly competitive environment and with the recent recession having a considerable impact on charities, Breast Cancer Care felt that it needed a competitive edge. It wanted to implement a solution that would allow it to build longer term relationships with its clients and change the way it interacted with its beneficiaries, volunteers and supporters, with the aim of becoming more efficient in its processes in order to save money, time and resources. This meant identifying opportunities to convert beneficiaries into volunteers, and volunteers into fundraisers.

“One of the difficulties we found with having a lot of different databases is that it can be inefficient in terms of resources,” says Samia al Qadhi, Chief Executive Officer at Breast Cancer Care. “This also applies to the people who support us, both our clients or our donors, as we might make mistakes, contacting them more than once.”

The Solution

To improve reporting and understanding of donors by generating better, and in some cases, brand new data, and in turn increase fundraising and levels of staff efficiency.

Breast Cancer Care had the added challenge of sourcing a product that would be able to meet its strict confidentiality and data protection requirements.

Breast Cancer Care has been a Blackbaud customer for several years, using its systems, including The Raiser's Edge, to build a fundraising database. It therefore decided to approach Blackbaud about the possibility of developing a new database that would run across the organisation, enabling it to improve the way it coordinated and managed its customer data. Breast Cancer Care was also impressed with Blackbaud's experience of working with other charities.

The Charity implemented Blackbaud CRM, a scalable and secure customer relationship management solution, which brings together information from different departments or offices and combines it in a single system of record. Organisations can align relationship management and other CRM functions more closely with their business rules and processes.

“We worked with Blackbaud to draw up the discovery assessment and the business case and it worked hard to understand our needs, particularly around fundraising, and has worked with us to agree the outcomes for the project,” says Karen Williams, Director of Finance and Resources. “We expect this enterprise project to revolutionise the way that we interact with our service users, volunteers and supporters.”

The Charity believes the technology will have a significant impact on the way it works with its clients because historically, it has relied on using several databases. This has meant that in the past, the charity ran the risk of its supporters being contacted by different departments. Breast Cancer Care wanted a system that would enable it to consolidate its contacts, helping it to identify and exploit opportunities for cross-over between its fundraisers, volunteers and beneficiaries. It also wanted a system that could be used centrally within the Charity and which could effectively monitor and manage its communications.

“We need to put our volunteers, our service users and our supporters at the heart of the organisation. Our vision for services and our fundraising marketing strategies need us to join up our approach to our services and our fundraising.”

Karen Williams,
Director of Finance and Resources



With Blackbaud CRM in place, Breast Cancer Care now has a single record per client held in a central database, enabling it to produce comprehensive, simpler, more accurate and automated reporting. The charity can store more data, such as demographics and easily retrieve this data. The single database also gives information on which fundraisers can be approached to be volunteers, giving the charity the ability to recruit volunteers as donors, increasing its targeting for fundraising appeals.

The Process

Implement a better and more advanced technical solution and improve levels of staff efficiencies.

Implementing Blackbaud CRM has enabled the Charity to build a single view of its customers across the organisation, enabling it to better manage and monitor its existing communications to beneficiaries, volunteers and fundraisers. Using data in this way has increased its reporting capabilities, making them more transparent and co-ordinated. Diana Jupp, Director of Services at the charity says, “The process of building the database has been very well-managed.”

The new system has helped to increase staff morale and attract experienced technical staff, giving them the opportunity to learn and use advanced skills, while technical training is more focused on end users’ needs. By using Blackbaud CRM, Breast Cancer Care is now able to show the investment it is making from its services and fundraising.

“We have project boards and many of the staff have been involved in developing each part of the database to reflect their services and their needs,” says Ms Jupp. “The Blackbaud CRM database will help us ensure we maintain our contacts and show whether we are overusing or underusing our volunteers. It gives us the ability to have a longer-term relationship with our clients. The business benefits to Breast Cancer Care will be that we will become far more efficient in our processes, so we will be saving money, time and resources.”

Breast Cancer Care believes that the database will help it to co-ordinate its resources more effectively and enable the charity to better support its donor and client needs. The Charity feels that Blackbaud has worked hard to understand their needs, particularly around fundraising.

“We needed to invest in the infrastructure of the organisation and this is a major part of that investment,” says Ms al Qadhi. “The benefit is that the resources available to us in terms of our supporters, our clients, the people who want to be involved with Breast Cancer Care, will be coordinated more effectively. We can both support them more how they want to be supported and enable them to support us in the way they want to.”

At-a-Glance Results

- The creation of a central database means that Breast Cancer Care offers better support for and understanding of its volunteers and can share information and knowledge throughout the department.
- The Charity has the potential to recruit clients as donors, as a result of broad and more accurate donor data.
- Breast Cancer Care has improved levels of staff efficiency by eliminating cumbersome data entry and removing the need for database consistency group emails.
- The Charity has reduced complaints from contacts, in particular those related to receiving multiple communications.
- Better targeting for fundraising appeals has led to a reduction in costs, as the Charity is not mailing those people who are less likely to respond to appeals.

