



PnP Develops a Rapid Solution to Help Not-For-Profit Manage their Community Programs



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CHALLENGE

- inefficient collection of child information
- lacked meaningful data and ways of measuring impact

SOLUTION

The MEL framework met BWAA's need for:

- offline/online access
- synchronisation between partners and BWAA
- collection of consistent and enhanced data
- privacy and security

RESULTS

- greater efficiency
- deeper insight and marketing improvements
- better relationships with partners

Introduction

Baptist World Aid Australia (BWAA) is a not-for-profit organisation that works with partners across the globe to help eliminate poverty, empower individuals and create self-sustaining communities. BWAA is comprised of two main business areas; collecting funds from their donor base and distributing this money to Partners to implement Programs at the community level. BWAA is made up of over 30 employees who are predominately based in Sydney, with satellite offices also located in Queensland, Victoria and South Australia.

This case study describes the problems associated with managing community Programs and of gathering data from the developing world. It also illustrates the way in which customised IT solutions can be utilised to successfully address specific business issues.

Challenge

Inefficient collection of child information

BWAA require information to be collected about the children and the community including photographs, so that this information can be passed on to donors. However, it has always been difficult to source information from the developing world. This is because these areas are geographically remote, have limited access to telecommunications and inconsistent electricity supplies. As Tineke Osten, Administration Co-ordinator – CRM Systems at BWAA says "it usually can take up to 3 months for us to receive all of the children's information and even when we receive it, we must then manually check it". Lois Parsons, Program Officer at BWAA points out that this is a very time-consuming process, "between us it would be equivalent to the work of two full time staff" she says.

BWAA were looking for a way to improve the efficiency of their data collection and data entering processes.

Lacked meaningful data and ways of measuring impact

Furthermore, the data that was collected did not provide sufficient information about outcomes or impact. The data's content and format was also inconsistent which made it difficult to compare performance across programs.

Initially BWAA only collected information for marketing purposes. Felicity Wever-Norris, Program Manager at BWAA says "we now want to use information as a

random sample of that community to measure change across the four outcome areas of our Programs; Survival, Development, Protection and Participation". It would be impossible to do this with the current system as it does not have the capability to collect large amounts of information. BWAA were looking for a new system that could gather detailed data to enable them to monitor their Program outcomes.

In addition to this, each of their partners would come up with their own Program indicators to report impacts and outcomes of the Program. This made it difficult for BWAA to produce consistent and comparable evaluations. If they wanted to compare program success against their four outcome areas, it was essential that they developed a standard survey so that they could perform meta-analyses.

Solution

A framework was developed called Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) that specifically addressed the following issues:

- Inefficient collection of child information

Solution:

- » Provision of a smart client application which is able to run in both online and offline modes to overcome internet and power problems
- » Created synchronisation by giving partners access to a system that directly feeds into BWAA's database

- Lacked meaningful data and ways of measuring impact

Solution:

- » Developed standard survey forms to provide collection of consistent and enhanced data
- » Capability to add further information to the forms when required

- Privacy and security

Solution:

- » Intermediary web site to isolate the developing world from BWAA system and to create isolation between partners

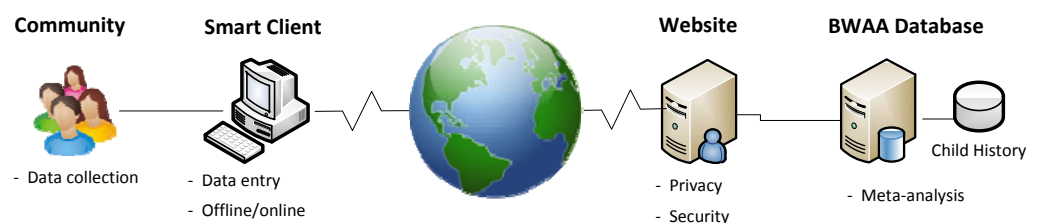


Figure 1: Flow of information from partners to the MEL database to BWAA's internal system

"Overall PnP were highly strategic in addressing the challenges. They knew how to think outside the box and translate complex ideas into simple processes"

Peter Leau, Director of Business at BWAA

Rapid development of project

PnP were given a short time frame to complete the project. This is because BWAA had a commitment to new Partners and it was crucial that the system was up and running for them to set up the new Programs. "There was a huge rush to get this completed and PnP was excellent with getting on board with that and meeting our deadline" says Tineke. "I expected the project to take 3-4 months. From scoping to implementation PnP were able to complete it in 6 weeks" says Peter Leau, Director of Business at BWAA.

Outcome

Greater efficiency

MEL has reduced the time it has taken to collect information. Before it would take months to receive the information, "with MEL it can be as quick as a week" says Tineke. No longer do program officers have to deal with spreadsheets or technical issues with photos. The system automatically compresses photos to a size that is of viewable quality and can be sent over slow internet speeds. BWAA simply views the information and are given the option to press 'accept' or 'reject'. If accepted the information is then automatically pulled into their database. This has significantly reduced administration time and has also increased accuracy.

Deeper insight and marketing improvements

BWAA can now collect more detailed information which has allowed them to measure the effectiveness of their Programs. This has given them a deeper insight into overall performance and assists them in making informed decisions. Furthermore, acquiring more information has also improved marketing. The information about the child that is sent to the donors now also includes information about the local community making it more interesting to read.

Better relationships with partners

Partners are becoming empowered through having access to a system that directly feeds into BWAA's database. Lois predicts that this increased responsibility will enhance partner motivation and ultimately partner retention rates.

