



DIRECTLINE TECHNOLOGIES, INC.

CASE STUDY

DirectLine Boosts Response by 10%, Cuts Costs by 80%

Background

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Alumni Association's management team wanted a more cost-effective way to increase membership. At first, everyone was nervous about using a telefundraising company. In addition, management was concerned that a telephone campaign might cannibalize the Annual Fund effort, which was done in-house by student callers. DirectLine alleviated their concerns by providing regular feedback, creating a pleasing script and providing technology that allowed the Alumni Association to listen to actual calls.

The Challenge

"We had tried all kinds of direct mail pieces, including whiz-bang mailers and advanced personalization, but we were still getting just one-half to one percent returns," says Jason Lusk, Marketing Manager for the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. "Nothing worked, so we finally agreed to try telemarketing." The goal was more members and lower acquisition costs.

DirectLine's Solution

DirectLine conducted three campaigns in 2004: two campaigns to lapsed members and one campaign to upgrade annual members to life members.

Results

For the first campaign, DirectLine contacted 7,727 reachable records and obtained 887 pledges, an 11 percent response rate. Of those pledges, 672 paid, an 8.7 percent paid response rate. For the second campaign, DirectLine contacted 10,752 reachable records and obtained 1,127 pledges, a 10 percent response rate. Of those pledges, 777 paid, a 7.2 percent actual paid response rate. The membership upgrade campaign was also a success. DirectLine's work helped to add approximately 600 life members to the membership roster.

"DirectLine's results were ten times that of the Alumni Association's previous results with direct mail at one-fifth the acquisition cost," says Mr. Lusk. "I was impressed with the way we acquired members so quickly during the campaign. We acquired 700 of our new members for the year just in September."

Value Added Benefits & Advantages

Return on Investment: DirectLine boosted response by 10 percent and cut acquisition costs by 80 percent, which increased return on investment significantly.

Volume & Speed: DirectLine completed each campaign in a few short weeks, which brought quick results.

Confidence: DirectLine provided the university with access to real-time statistics on campaign progress via the Internet and the ability to listen in on calls, which gave the association's management confidence in the outcome of their investment.

Rapport: Association management found DirectLine's staff responsive and easy to work with. Plus, the association was pleased to work with DirectLine's President, Martha Connor, who has an extensive background in higher education. Her expertise made DirectLine a better fit than other telemarketing firms and improved the effectiveness of the campaigns.