

CUSTOMERS

Business Intelligence Technology for a Future Without Breast Cancer

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Deborah Kroeger, National Director of IT, Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation



Challenge

"Who are you running for?" Ask any of the 160,000 participants in the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation's (CBCF's) signature fundraising event, its CIBC Run for the Cure, and they'll probably tell you it's personal. With one in nine Canadian women affected by breast cancer, runners are out there for mom, grandma, another relative, a friend, or even themselves.



Founded in 1986, the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation is the leading volunteer-based breast cancer fundraising organization in Canada. CBCF works collaboratively to fund, support, and advocate for: relevant and innovative research, meaningful education and awareness programs, early diagnosis and effective treatment, and a positive quality of life for those living with breast cancer. Fundraising through the annual Canadian

Breast Cancer Foundation CIBC Run for the Cure, special events, corporate sponsorship, and other donations means the foundation can allocate millions of dollars to breast cancer research, projects, and services each year.

Approach

Throw out any stereotypes you might have about non-profits and outdated technology. CBCF is a pioneer in online fundraising: a mentor for other charities, the first organization of any kind in Canada to distribute tax receipts online, and a recent award winner for outstanding achievement in healthcare fundraising.

Deborah Kroeger, CBCF's national director of IT, explains the foundation's success, "At CBCF, we have to understand what's happening in our data, including where the opportunities and challenges are. We also have to show a strong return on our IT investments. A business intelligence (BI) solution from Business Objects has enabled us to do that."

So far, CBCF is doubling online donations year over year. Strong IT leadership, dedicated volunteers, and an integrated suite of Business Objects applications are behind this success. Before this solution, it was tough to manage Run logistics, online donations, and metrics. Reports were generated in HTML, meaning staff and volunteers could not export or drill down into the data. This raised a host of problems including leaving one chapter office with the task of printing and interpreting 5,000-page reports. Perhaps as frustrating was the lack of analytics and limited ability to see opportunities or challenges. "Providing timely and usable information for end users across the country required setting up interactive reporting

Industry

Non-profit

Business Pain
Not only was CBCF finding it difficult to manage Run logistics, online donations, and metrics, but a lack of analytic capabilities was limiting its ability to see opportunities and challenges. Because reports were generated in HTML, staff and volunteers could not export or drill down into the data. This raised a host of problems including a need to print and interpret 5,000-page reports.

Why Business Objects?
The interactive reporting and analysis tools from Business Objects provided the necessary flexibility to allow CBCF end users across the country to access timely and usable information via the web. The ability to eliminate those unusable 5,000-page reports alone has cut the time required to manage Run registration in half.

and analysis tools that could be accessed via the web. Business Objects technology had the flexibility and accessibility we needed," says Kroeger.

Results

Now with a web browser and just a few mouse clicks, Run directors can see the very latest metrics. Preformatted charts, graphs, and templates visually highlight key information and can be reformatted if required. Run donors and participants can view their fundraising history online and even forward on information to potential donors. And that oh-so-important export capability is there in Word, Excel, and PDF formats.

What helped CBCF roll out the solution? "The consulting guidance from Business Objects was exceptional," remarks Kroeger. "The consultant really listened to understand our business prior to high-level discussions about what we could accomplish. Then, via the Business Objects implementation methodology, a solution was developed and rolled out to meet our unique needs."

"Business Objects technology has had a huge impact," says Kroeger. "Besides eliminating those unusable 5,000-page reports, volunteers tell me the time required to manage Run registration has been cut in half. With the ability to drill down into a single report, everything has become a lot more manageable." The Foundation uses the system to identify running teams from previous years that have yet to register – allowing Run volunteers to get in touch.

Reports of Run numbers by region against previous years also help forecast where last-minute promotional activities may be required. These opportunity reports alone could help generate an additional 25% in online donations for breast cancer research. All online donations, including credit card and electronic money transfer (EMT) trends, are tracked and managed by the system, so financial records are up-to-date. On the front end, a well-designed interface keeps the online experience fast and user friendly.

"As someone working in the charitable sector, I was astonished by the ease, speed, and effectiveness of making a donation through www.cbcf.org. I was so impressed I had to try it again, and made a second pledge for my friend's son, who was also participating in the Run," says online donor Ken Freeman. With such personal commitment and useful technology, it's hardly surprising that donations have increased for virtually every Run site. Supporting the success of the Run is very important, but moving to a more in-depth analysis of all data is going to help CBCF be even more successful. So far, a closer look at online activity has revealed interesting trends: the average donation is larger online than offline; EMT technology is in demand; and runners who use the online system reach more donors.

That's just the start. The IT team intends to use Business Objects products for a deeper look at its entire database. They expect to find ways to more effectively target donors with direct mail campaigns, as well as comparing regional differences in fundraising modalities and the assignment of research grants. This last item is of particular importance. "We want to make sure we're funding a diverse range of breast cancer research across the country and avoid granting funds to similar research projects," says Kroeger. "The next six months will be very exciting."

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