

CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT

Corpus Christi College Oxford



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—Ben Armstrong,
Deputy Director of Development

Founded in 1517, Corpus Christi College is a close-knit and vibrant Oxford college, committed to academic excellence. The college is smaller than most, with a total of 240 undergraduates, 115 graduate students and 40 academic Fellows. Corpus Christi is proud of its reputation for sustaining academic excellence in a pleasant and tolerant atmosphere, and aims to attract the most talented and committed students, irrespective of origin or background.

The College’s Development Office has been running since 2001, and is responsible for fundraising to secure existing academic posts, provide student bursaries and fund new buildings vital to the future of the College. Corpus Christi had been using Raiser’s Edge for a number of years to manage alumni communications and campaigns and, in 2016, migrated to Raiser’s Edge NXT™, Blackbaud’s cloud fundraising solution. Included in the Raiser’s Edge NXT package is Online Express™, which the College has begun using for email communications and event management.

Why did you start using Online Express?

“Our fundraising and alumni relations activities this year have taken a slightly different approach. It’s our 500th anniversary year, so we have set a challenge to get 1517 donations to the college, to coincide with the year that we were founded.

“We’re obviously trying to engage with as many alumni as we can, and we also want to re-engage with alumni who have lost touch with us over the years.

“We have a great relationship with Blackbaud, so we looked to them for ideas on how to take our alumni interactions to the next level, and they suggested Online Express.”

Corpus Christi College Oxford is powered by:

- ▶ Raiser’s Edge NXT™
- ▶ Blackbaud Online Express™

[Learn more ▶](#)

What do you like about Online Express, and how are you using it?

“It was the flexibility of Online Express that first attracted us to it as an alumni engagement solution. It seamlessly integrates with both our own website and Raiser’s Edge, so all communications and transactions are automatically updated.

“We use it for email communications with our alumni, and it’s been absolutely fantastic. We’re running more events this year than we ever have done in the past, and Online Express is crucial to their success. Feedback from alumni has been great, and their message to us has been that they are encouraged to read the emails as the layout flows much better than before. They really like our weekly e-newsletter and opt-outs are few and far between.

“We’ve also been using Online Express to sell branded merchandise for our anniversary year. This is communicated in the e-newsletters, and we see a definite increase in merchandise sales off the back of the newsletter—So much so that we have struggled to keep up with demand! I love the fact that I can come in to the office each morning to find things have been sold overnight without me physically having to do anything.”

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What impact is Online Express having on donations?

“Every time we send an email using Online Express we’re seeing a spike in donations, event registrations and merchandise sales, which is all helping to move us towards our target! We’re reaching more people than I had expected with our emails; I thought the open rates would probably be in the region of 10-20%, but it’s actually as high as 48%, which is just amazing! We’re managing to really engage with our alumni and that’s all helping to grow the number of donations we receive before the end of the year.”

Will you continue to use Online Express after your anniversary year?

“Yes, definitely. It’s played an important role in communicating with our alumni and for increasing donations. Going forward it will be an excellent tool for introducing our alumni to new development projects. We wouldn’t consider moving ahead without it now!”

