CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT
Royal Belfast Academical Institution

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—Peter Anderson,
Director of Development and Alumni Relations

Founded over 200 years ago, The Royal Belfast Academical Institution (RBAI) is one of Northern Ireland's leading grammar schools. Educating boys aged between 11 and 18 from a wide range of social and cultural backgrounds, the school is renowned for encouraging excellence and participation, ensuring that every boy is well supported so they can perform to the best of their abilities.

The Development and Alumni Relations office was launched in 2013 to engage past pupils, promote the ethos of the school and build a sustainable fundraising programme to support the development of the school. The Development and Alumni Relations Office is the hub for communications with past pupils and friends of the school. Peter Anderson, Director of Development and Alumni Relations at RBAI, shared with us the positive impact eTapestry is having on the School's development activities.

Royal Belfast Academical Institution is powered by:

➤ eTapestry®

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Why did you decide to implement eTapestry?

"Having used Raiser's Edge, Blackbaud's flagship fundraising solution, for more than ten years in the charitable and university sectors, I was well aware of the benefits that such a solution can bring.

"However, I knew Raiser's Edge was not the appropriate solution for a start-up context like ours and was immediately drawn to eTapestry during the tender process. The first thing that struck me was the agility of the system, and the ease with which we could run queries and generate communications.

"The leased agreement really appealed to the Board of Governors, as it enabled us to avoid heavy capital expenditure at a time when the School was investing heavily in a new department."

What features of eTapestry have you been most impressed with?

"I travel extensively, so appreciate the fact that eTapestry is cloud based, and I can literally access the system from anywhere on my laptop or mobile phone. The journal features allow us to track all our donor contacts, and I value being able to review journal contacts right before walking into a donor meeting.

"The system is so intuitive that we were able to start using it immediately after installation, without extensive training. The analysis tools are superb, as are the query features."

How is eTapestry supporting your work in terms of development?

"There are only two of us in the Development Office so to have a system that's as fast and agile as eTapestry is important. It has provided us with a dynamic and reliable system where we can build relationships and keep in regular contact with our donors and alumni around the world.

"We've grown our database from 1,000 records which we inherited from our alumni association, to over 6,500 records in the space of three and a half years. The Development Office is now actively supporting bursaries, scholarships and capital projects. Having a good quality database has been intrinsic to our success.

Would you recommend eTapestry to other schools?

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