

CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT

Breakthrough Mental Health Research Foundation



“We wanted a system that does not require a large number of plugins to manage online activity. You can create everything yourself and manage it internally. So for me, that was a winner.”



—Sharn Elder, Project Officer, Breakthrough

Breakthrough Mental Health Research Foundation is Australia’s first – and only – foundation purely focused on raising funds to invest in life-changing mental health research. Project Officer Sharn Elder explains why the organisation recently migrated to Blackbaud Raiser’s Edge NXT® as they seek to find answers to Australia’s growing mental health crisis.

Breakthrough Mental Health Research Foundation (Breakthrough) was established to fund evidence-based research into the causes of mental illness and how to reduce its impact.

As support for Breakthrough has grown rapidly over the last few years, the decision was made for the organisation to focus on a system that supports rapid growth.

Project Officer Sharn Elder was appointed by the board to manage Breakthrough’s transition to an independent charity, and one of her first priorities was finding a CRM solution to support the organisation’s growth and long-term objectives.

Breakthrough Mental Health Research Foundation is powered by:

Blackbaud
Raiser’s Edge NXT® and
Blackbaud Online Express™

“Searching for the right software solution”

Sharn started with ten possible CRM solutions, before narrowing down her options after hours of research, trials, and discussions with other nonprofit organisations. She ultimately decided that Blackbaud Raiser’s Edge NXT was the best choice for Breakthrough.

“I needed to source something that we can manage internally that’s built and designed for nonprofits”, she says. “It needed to handle everything you’d expect a nonprofit to need, while also being simple and intuitive to use for the front-end staff.”

“Ultimately, we found Blackbaud Raiser’s Edge NXT to be the best solution to meet our goals. It had all the tools we needed including donor management, regular giving management, events management and so much more... it’s the perfect solution for us as we look towards rapid growth in the future,” Sharn explains.

Making online fundraising easy and integrated

As a forward-thinking organisation, Breakthrough know that online fundraising will continue to grow over the coming years, which is why having a CRM system that integrates smoothly with their online activities was also a high priority for Sharn.

“We are rapidly growing online. So a key part of our strategy for the next 12 to 24 months is going to be building out digital platforms.”

“I needed to source something that we can manage internally that’s built and designed for nonprofits.”

It needed to handle everything you’d expect a nonprofit to need, while also being simple and intuitive to use for the front-end staff.”

—Sharn Elder, Project Officer,
Breakthrough

“Direct mail still has a place, but we have to think about the 40 and 50-year-olds who are doing everything online, and build solutions that cater for their preferences.”

Sharn also chose Blackbaud Online Express™ to help ensure a seamless integration between Breakthrough’s online donor-facing experience and the Blackbaud Raiser’s Edge NXT database.

“There is nothing worse than having to manually enter data from your online platform into your database. That’s why we needed a database that integrates with our website and automates basically everything.”

Blackbaud Online Express allows Breakthrough to easily create unlimited, flexible donation forms and send and track effective email communications.

Using Blackbaud Online Express also gives Breakthrough the ability to design modern online donation, event, and membership forms that help drive online participation and integrate with Blackbaud Raiser’s Edge NXT.

“We wanted a system that does not require a large number of plugins to manage online activity. You can create everything yourself and manage it internally. So for me, that was a winner”, says Sharn.



Changing platforms with full support

Sharn says moving to Blackbaud Raiser's Edge NXT was a much more straightforward process than she expected, especially given the high level of support provided by the Blackbaud services team.

"We had really tight deadlines to meet, because we had to make sure that we had transitioned our database to Blackbaud Raiser's Edge NXT by the 30th of June, when we became a complete independent charity."

Despite the time pressure, Sharn says working closely with the Blackbaud services team helped her feel confident that their goals would be met.

"In the end, it was a very smooth, easy transition", says Sharn.

"The support Blackbaud provided, especially from Senior Technical Consultant, Boaz Khor was outstanding. He knew exactly what needed to be done. And he explained everything to me as we went along."

"He managed all the data side of things, matching all the fields, customising everything to the backend. It was brilliant."

Funding more breakthrough mental health research

Sharn is thrilled with how well Blackbaud Raiser's Edge NXT and Blackbaud Online Express have helped improve Breakthrough's database management, and believes the improvements will ultimately lead to stronger fundraising in the future.

"Knowing as much as we can about our donor base is vital for effective fundraising", says Sharn. "In the past, it was quite difficult for us to be able to segment our data. Now, I can run a query and it takes me two minutes to be able to identify the data I need, whereas before it would take me hours".

"In the long run, that's really going to help us with our future strategies because we're going to be able to identify where our donors are, what's working best, what's not working so well, what they are responding to, and how we can help them make the biggest impact possible."

Sharn says she strongly recommends all organisations consider Blackbaud Raiser's Edge NXT and Blackbaud Online Express to help them achieve similar results to Breakthrough.

"If you want a system that is easy to manage, easy to migrate, and comes with so much support, then you need to go with Blackbaud. Absolutely."



"Ultimately, we found Blackbaud Raiser's Edge NXT to be the best solution to meet our goals."

It had all the tools we needed including donor management, regular giving management, events management and so much more...(!)"

—Sharn Elder, Project Officer, Breakthrough



“If you want a system that is easy to manage, easy to migrate, and comes with so much support, then you need to go with Blackbaud. Absolutely.”

”

—Sharn Elder, Project Officer, Breakthrough

To find out how Blackbaud Raiser’s Edge NXT and Blackbaud Online Express can help streamline your organisation’s processes and grow with you into the future, contact us on +61 2 8918 1200 or info@blackbaud.com.au.

[Learn more](#)

About Blackbaud

Leading uniquely at the intersection point of technology and social good, Blackbaud connects and empowers organisations to increase their impact through software, services, expertise, and data intelligence. We serve the entire social good community, which includes nonprofits, foundations, corporations, education institutions, healthcare institutions, and the individual change agents who support them.

