

CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT

PA Research Foundation



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—Michelle McNicholl, Fundraising Administrator, PA Research Foundation

For almost four decades, the Princess Alexandra Research Foundation has supported global health solutions, including the Gardasil cervical cancer vaccine. Chief Executive Officer Damian Topp and Fundraising Administrator Michelle McNicholl explain how migrating to Blackbaud’s fundraising and donor management software, Blackbaud Raiser’s Edge NXT, has enabled the organisation to function at a whole new level.

Focusing on the future

As the philanthropic arm of the Princess Alexandra Hospital Campus (Queensland’s leading research hospital and largest cancer clinical trials centre), the PA Research Foundation has a long history of funding world class research into deadly and debilitating disease.

While its primary purpose was originally to raise funds for medical research, patient support and staff education at the PA hospital, the organisation has been rapidly expanding and growing over the last seven or so years.

But while the organisation was growing rapidly, their previous fundraising CRM system, first implemented in the early 90’s, couldn’t keep up.

PA Research Foundation
is powered by:

Blackbaud Raiser’s Edge NXT®

Blackbaud Merchant
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“It was an extremely old program,” explains McNicholl. “As time went on, it became more and more troublesome for us to import data, use payment gateways, update donor details... all those sorts of things”.

“As we were growing as an organisation, we needed something that was going to meet our business needs, now and into the future.”

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The team spent a good six months researching and reviewing different solutions that are available, including talking to other organisations and attending software showcases.

“We did a lot of research,” explains McNicholl. “We looked at what we wanted to achieve and what we were hoping to gain by switching to a new database solution.” A forward focus was necessary to make the final decision, factoring in the PA Research Foundation’s growth potential, and where they would be able to save time and money as the organisation expanded.



“Blackbaud Raiser’s Edge NXT is just so configurable to our individual business needs... it can do everything that we need it to do. We can actually see that it will be able to move with us as we change,”

—Damian Topp, Chief Executive Officer, PA Research Foundation

Access from anywhere, anytime is key

Usability and accessibility were also important factors the team considered, so the software could service PA Research Foundation staff working semi-remotely.

When they took the plunge and decided on Raiser’s Edge NXT, the improved accessibility afforded by the new software really blew Topp away.

“Staff can easily log in remotely from any device: they can access Raiser’s Edge NXT from their laptop, they can look at it on their mobiles, whereas the old system had to be set up where you actually had to remote-in to a computer, have a login, etc.”

“It can do everything that we need it to do”

The configurability of Raiser’s Edge NXT is a standout feature that gives Topp and McNicholl confidence in the software’s ability to handle more complex tasks as the organisation’s needs develop over time.

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“With Raiser’s Edge NXT, we can do more. We can produce more sophisticated pieces of work. Manual data processing has been replaced by direct, seamless processes where we can input data into our system with just a couple of clicks of a button. We’ve added a lot of tools to Raiser’s Edge NXT that have really sped up our work, which is great.”

Ongoing support dedicated to success

While moving to a new fundraising and donor management solution can be a huge undertaking, McNicholl says the service Blackbaud offers – from assisting in the software transition through to ongoing technical and professional support – makes Blackbaud “quite a leader in the field”.

“The Blackbaud Customer Success team have been exceptional. Whether it’s affirming the processes the PA Research Foundation teams have come up with to achieve business objectives, or suggesting tweaks to make those processes more efficient,” McNicholl says they’ve been “a really great support – very approachable.”

“And if they don’t know the answer, they swiftly go off and find it for us... they’ve just been very, very easy to work with.”

Blackbaud’s partner ecosystem lends a helping hand

One of the great benefits of working with Blackbaud is having access to their partner ecosystem. This meant that when the team identified the need to automate and streamline their fast-growing Regular Giving program from their call centre into Raiser’s Edge NXT, the development team at Red Arc, Blackbaud’s technology partner, came in and helped build a solution.

“We really wanted to automate the upload of our call centre data into the database”, explains Topp. “We put our hand up and said that we’re happy to be guinea pigs. So Stu and Lucas from Red Arc developed a custom solution. And it’s turned out to be something that Blackbaud can now take to other customers.”

McNicholl adds, “Stu and Lucas at Red Arc were amazing to work with. They helped us build this little piece of technology so that now we have an amazing, seamless process. Data comes into Raiser’s Edge NXT from our call centre where it is automatically being processed via Blackbaud Merchant Services, the end-to-end payment processing solution. Credit cards are being processed all on their own, and we get to move on with other things. It’s fabulous!”

To find out how Blackbaud Raiser’s Edge NXT and Blackbaud Merchant Services 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

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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.

