

Chaminade College Preparatory School

“Esto Vir,” which literally means, “Be a man,” is the motto of Chaminade College Preparatory School, a Catholic Day and Resident school in St. Louis, Missouri. An education at Chaminade is much more than an academic undertaking; it is an endeavor that encompasses all aspects of a young man’s being.

Students at Chaminade experience a wide range of athletic, cultural, social and religious activities as an integral part of a “total education program.” This program includes an international resident program, which brings geographic and cultural diversity and enriches the school community. At Chaminade, a wide network of faculty, support staff, and parents work together to offer a variety of experiential opportunities, which guide each young man to discover the unique contribution he can make to the human endeavor.

Highlights

- Having implemented Greater Giving in 2007, Chaminade has surpassed the one million-dollar fundraising mark for online donations.
- When the school switched to Greater Giving Online Payments for online event registrations, over 90% of the auction attendees agreed to pre-register a credit card at check-in, making check-out smooth and fast.
- By adopting mobile bidding and becoming more selective with their auction items, Chaminade saw a marked increase in per-item sale prices.
- Adopting mobile bidding eliminated recording mistakes and was a huge convenience and time saver at the live event.

Challenge

Chaminade has been holding benefit auctions since 1974, so hosting an event was not a challenge. They had been using event software for some time, improving on their previous paper-based process; but in 2006, they had outgrown just using the PC software. They needed to sell event tickets in advance, accept online donations, and take and process credit cards at the live event.

Michelle Renner, Chaminade’s Director of Advancement Services, explained that she had to run her own merchant account to process payments. “It was crazy the way I was doing it,” says Renner. There had to be a better solution.

Even worse, they were holding the event in the school gym. Renner says, “We were serving dinner out of a locker room!” Chaminade is a school always on the cutting edge of technology; it was time to up the ante and try something new.

Solution

When Greater Giving was selected as Chaminade’s new fundraising solution provider in 2007, money raised with Online Payments alone paid for the entire investment. Renner leveraged the technology to sell event tickets online, in addition to taking regular donations for on-going, year-round support. Chaminade even used Online Payments to sell the logo wear for a basketball state championship, and the shirts sold out in two days!

In 2011, they were still holding the auction in the school’s gymnasium—an inelegant venue, says Renner. “It was like dressing up a pig’s ear.” The committee added up the cost and logistics of holding the event at the school, and determined it was not a significant cost to take the event off-campus in 2012. This move provided a great opportunity to try something technologically new, as well. Where they had been using

paper and the PC version of the software to run their event, they decided to adopt mobile bidding for their off-site, rebooted auction.

In 2012, Chaminade used IML to run the mobile bidding side and Greater Giving to process payments. Electronic bidding was a huge time saver, and eliminated human errors like misreading a sale price or a bidder using the wrong bid number. But in 2013, Chaminade moved to using the Greater Giving Mobile Bidding solution. The cost of using mobile bidding dropped from \$9,000 to \$2,700 per year, and the back-end process with their existing Greater Giving products was seamless.

Tips from Chaminade

- Consider what other fundraising campaigns you have, and tie Online Payments into those campaigns to make it easy for your supporters to donate while also registering for a live event.
- Don't depend on just one activity to fund your organization—communicate with supporters multiple times during the year.
- When using mobile bidding, rent or purchase additional bidding devices, such as tablets, for bidders who don't bring one of their own.
- Raise more money per item by decreasing the number of items in your auction, and making it easier for bidders to bid with a mobile or electronic bidding solution.

Results

The software is a huge time saver for Chaminade staff and volunteers. With Greater Giving, they can produce an event catalog and print bid sheets with no fuss—tasks that were an enormous challenge in prior years. Greater Giving has also streamlined the process for taking and settling credit card payments, cutting reconciliation and settlement time down from over a week to only a day. Their auction attendees like the new system as well; over 90% of the attendees pre-registered their cards upon arrival at Chaminade's first event using Auctionpay.

And the adoption of Online Payments has been huge for fundraising. "We used to pick and choose what we ran through the Online Payments platform," says Renner. Now, they operate virtually every banquet, golf event, and fundraising activity with Greater Giving—and they have surpassed their one million-dollar online fundraising mark.

Since adopting mobile bidding in 2012, Chaminade has seen the price of the average auction item increase from \$85.19 to \$97. They attribute this to the ease of bidding and a decrease in the number of silent auction items. "We love the convenience," says Renner. The computers do the work compiling the results of the auction, leaving staff free to run the event. Then, with Greater Giving's mobile bidding solution, the annual cost of using mobile bidding dropped more than \$6,000. The school still purchased an additional twenty mobile bidding devices to assist bidders who didn't have one of their own.

Ultimately, raising more funds for their organization and cutting costs means more opportunities for Chaminade to prepare their students for success in college, and in life.