

Client Stories

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart High School



Rooted in Catholic Felician Franciscan tradition, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart High School educates and transforms each student for a life of exceptional Christian leadership, stewardship, and service to all.

Though Our Lady of the Sacred Heart High School has been running an auction for years as part of their overall fundraising strategy, they were using a homemade database to organize and package the items. But tracking by hand what guests had won was burdensome, and the school decided they'd outgrown their database. To automate their event, they added Greater Giving in 2011.

Highlights

- Switching to Greater Giving Online greatly simplified auction set-up and take-down.
- Utilizing a single, all-inclusive software system simplified tracking attendees easier than ever, and eliminated the need for back-end, manual labor.
- Making ticket sales and event registration online-only was easy to do and tied in with the school's Green Initiative.
- The online registration tool allowed guests to save their credit card information and use it again at the event, streamlining event night registration.
- Online Bidding was a hit with event guests, and eliminated the need to print receipts at the end of the event—a paper-saver and a time-saver!

Challenge

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart has used Greater Giving since 2011, starting with the use of the- PC version at the helm on auction night. Their event requires three full-time staff members to pull off. This year, Director of Advancement Jenna Zyroll was on the lookout to automate as much about their process as possible—and also to bring the auction up to snuff with the school's Green Initiative.

Every year, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School used paper in their auction, from registration, to bid sheets, to printing receipts at the end of the night. As an environmentally conscious Green School, it was the auction committee's priority to cut down on the amount of paper used in the auction.

Zyroll wanted a centralized solution that would put all the auction data in one place, so everyone on the committee could access it at any time. She also knew there had to be something easier out there than networking computers, using terminals, and hiring an IT professional. Whatever solution they chose would need to make check-in and check-out easier to set up and take down.

On top of their practical concerns, Zyroll felt that their event also needed some shine and polish. Something new and exciting for guests, and a way to bring in more cash from the existing, standard auction.

Solution

This year, Zyroll decided to upgrade and utilize all the features of the Greater Giving package: the online event registration feature, the online event management software, and the mobile bidding functionality.

This meant that now all the event registration and ticket sales—over 250 attendees—were handled online, and automatically added to the event database. This drastically cut down on the staff time required to manage registration and manually enter data into the software. And families had no trouble using the software to buy their tickets, and were even able to save their credit card information for use at the event, making on-site check-in more efficient than ever.

To pump up the event's "wow" factor, and to further automate the check-out process, Zyroll also decided to utilize Greater Giving Online Bidding. But she knew shifting from paper to mobile bidding at the event was going to be a change, and so the committee set about preparing families for using the exciting new technology.

Tips from Our Lady of the Sacred Heart High School

- Send out simple reminders to your guests about Online Bidding such as, "Don't forget to charge your phone! But if you do, don't worry — we'll have chargers at the event." Be sure to have a few device chargers on hand at your event.
- Use Bid Assistants. For a 250-person event, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart trained 6 student and 3 adult Bid Assistants.
- Put information on your website about mobile bidding, so guests know that you're using a new, innovative technology.
- Have a reading glass station in your silent auction room for those who need assistance with viewing screens.

In advance of the event, the auction committee included instructions, an FAQ, and a video on their website about how to mobile bid. And in the months leading up to the event, email teasers went out announcing that something new was on the way. Zyroll raised donations from supporters to fund the new system, and talked up the cutting-edge online platform.

In addition to eliminating paper bid sheets completely with the help of Online Bidding—tying into the school's Green School initiative—the school was able to coordinate 100 silent auction items with staggered closings, 12 live auction packages, a special appeal and a number of smaller raffles.

Greater Giving's Storefront retail sale feature also played a big part in this year's auction success. With Storefront brought up on a tablet, Bid Assistants—made up of students and adults—could roam the auction room selling raffle tickets to guests on the spot. The school found that among Bid Assistants, student volunteers sold more tickets than their adult counterparts. Guests enjoyed talking to the students, and were happy to support them by buying a ticket.

Results

In addition to the online software streamlining the pre-registration process, Online Bidding also took a big chunk out of the committee's manual data entry process. All of the winning bids were automatically routed into the software, leaving only the 12 live auction items to be manually entered by a staff member.

Storefront took another big bite out of manual labor on event night, because raffle sales could be done on the fly and went directly into the database. This was a boon for convenience—as the sale could be made anywhere in the event—and a boon for the Green School initiative, because it required no paperwork.