

WGBH deploys the RedPoint Convergent Marketing Platform™ to engage its next generation of donors and transform public media marketing nationwide.

Overview

WGBH Boston isn't just a world-renowned public media organization: it's also PBS's #1 content producer, the source of programs ranging from Masterpiece: Downton Abbey to Frontline. But, like many public media stations, WGBH faces an existential threat. Its donors are aging and recruiting younger donors is difficult. Its system for communicating appropriately with these donors was not working.

In 2011, WGBH upgraded its 17-year-old donor management system to a robust, cloud-based solution, but it had a few limitations that made it difficult to fully leverage all of the necessary communications channels.

So WGBH turned to RedPoint's Convergent Marketing Platform™, a data-driven marketing solution designed to improve customer engagement. The RedPoint Convergent Marketing Platform extracts customer data from wherever it's located; delivers insights from customer behaviors, sentiments and preferences; and creates precisely the right interactions – whenever and through whatever channel is required – all from a single platform. Using RedPoint, WGBH created an authoritative “record of engagement” for every donor, establishing a strong foundation for its donor relationships. The RedPoint platform also allows WGBH to quickly create, automate, test, execute, modify, and reuse marketing campaigns of all kinds, across all channels. RedPoint's Big Data for Hadoop 2.0 application will help WGBH capture streaming information from social networks and fully integrate social media channels into its marketing mix.

WGBH now is making its immensely valuable donor engagement platform available to other public media outlets – helping local stations strengthen their donor bases and finances, so they can offer great programming locally for years to come.

About WGBH

Public media powerhouse WGBH Boston serves New England, the nation, and the world with educationally rich content that informs, inspires, and entertains. WGBH is the single largest producer of TV and Web content for PBS, and a major supplier of programming for public radio nationwide.

WGBH has been recognized with hundreds of honors: Emmys, Peabodys, duPont-Columbia Awards, and even two Academy Awards. It has earned honors for Nova, Masterpiece (including Downton Abbey), American Experience, Frontline, Arthur, Curious George, The World, and many other outstanding programs.

Today, WGBH delivers content wherever its audiences choose, through broadcast media, podcasts/vodcasts, streaming media, iPhone/iPad apps, educational multimedia, and beyond. As a local public broadcaster, WGBH serves southern New England with 11 public TV services, three public radio services, and local productions reflecting its region's concerns and cultural riches.



WGBH OBJECTIVES

- **Build a world-class donor engagement platform, and extend its benefits to public media outlets nationwide.**
- **Gain a reliable 360° view of each donor, and act on that information in real time.**
- **Overcome data problems that were alienating long-time donors.**
- **Engage a new generation of donors and convince them to contribute.**

WGBH RESULTS

- **Omni-channel marketing campaigns are created quickly and easily by WGBH marketers without involving technical experts.**
- **Greatly improved ability to select and segment customer data.**
- **Increased ability to test campaigns and track results across media.**
- **Improved productivity has enabled WGBH to reallocate resources to projects that engage younger donors.**

The Challenges

Like most public media organizations, WGBH has an aging donor base. Engaging younger donors is challenging even in the best circumstances. However, WGBH's engagement efforts were complicated by its 17-year-old system that required deep, specialized expertise and made it difficult to take advantage of new marketing channels. The older system limited WGBH to traditional campaigns and channels that were increasingly out-of-step with younger audiences, who live on social, mobile, and Web platforms.

In response, WGBH committed to building a world-class CRM system for public media. Its first step was to upgrade to a Salesforce.com cloud environment enhanced by roundCause from roundCorner.

This step immediately reduced total cost of ownership and made the data much more accessible to WGBH's marketers regardless of their technical acumen. However, over time they kept finding that they couldn't regularly extract specific data in order to meet their B2C marketing needs. Also, their active donor engagement programs rely extensively on heuristic matching rules and, without them in their new platform, they ended up inadvertently creating thousands of duplicate account and contact records. Not only was WGBH wasting money through duplicate records, it also was alienating donors by over-communicating or miscommunicating to them.

Custom solutions to these problems would have required costly development and ongoing maintenance at a time when WGBH wanted to refocus its limited resources on "boots-on-the-ground" fundraising.

"Identity resolution is a huge issue for us. Without heuristic matching rules in place, we were regularly creating duplicate accounts. This would lead to miscommunications with donors. RedPoint solved this problem right out of the box."

Cate Twohill, Director, Technical Product Development, WGBH Boston

The Solution

To overcome these problems, WGBH enhanced its technical ecosystem by implementing and integrating RedPoint's Convergent Marketing Platform. A leading customer engagement solution, the RedPoint platform proved uniquely capable of addressing WGBH's challenges by bringing together all the customer data WGBH needed to create precise, one-to-one interactions with donors across all of its marketing channels. And it allowed WGBH to continue driving value from the other technology investments it had already made.

RedPoint also is the only customer engagement platform vendor with a YARN-certified data management application for Hadoop 2.0, which will allow WGBH to drive even more value from its large streams of structured and unstructured audience and donor data.

The Results

WGBH now has a comprehensive, next-generation donor engagement ecosystem that supports constant marketing innovation and experimentation. With RedPoint, WGBH has the ability to individually engage donors, wherever and whenever they prefer. RedPoint's technology allows WGBH to leverage its existing investments and to better utilize everything the organization knows about its constituents to more accurately communicate with them.

Everything starts with accurate and consistent data: without that, no organization can build a reliable 360° view of its donors. This is especially challenging for WGBH, given its many donor touchpoints – from lockbox processed direct mail, to pledge drive 800 numbers and online donations to social and mobile media.

"Identity resolution is a huge issue for us," says Cate Twohill, WGBH's Director, Technical Product Development. "Without solid heuristic matching rules in place, we were regularly creating duplicate accounts. This would lead to miscommunications with donors. For example, sometimes we'd communicate with long-time donors as if they had just made their first contribution.

“RedPoint solved this problem right out of the box. It has amazing identity resolution tools. It allows us to match at both the individual and household levels. We’re on the path to cleaning up all the duplicate records, and since we’ve been live on RedPoint, the duplicate record problem is under control.

“At last, we can keep identities clean and perfect for all our ongoing donor communications. Not having to manage duplicate accounts has, by itself, nearly paid for the cost of the solution.”

WGBH relies heavily on their direct mail channel for benefit delivery and donor communications. RedPoint’s data management capabilities provide NCOA, CASS, and other certifications to optimize direct mail programs. For the new, younger donors who are WGBH’s future, the solution offers social media integration and geo-data – information that will be indispensable in new mobile and in-person canvassing programs.

And, since RedPoint is API-based and applications-agnostic, says Twohill, “We have access to any data source or any analytics tools we want.”

Building on this strong and flexible data management foundation, RedPoint’s Convergent Marketing Platform gives WGBH’s marketers easy and powerful tools for executing on their omni-channel marketing vision.

“Our marketers are thrilled,” says Twohill. “RedPoint’s campaign management tools put all the power in their hands – not just the hands of a few people with deep technical skills. The tools offer a graphical, drag-and-drop user interface. We love them.”

Thanks to RedPoint’s simplicity, more than 30 marketing professionals were able to quickly get up to speed to build, modify, run, and reuse even the most complex campaigns. From one visual tool, marketers can define segments, create splits, control data delivery to external vendors, and much more. They can develop automated campaigns encompassing everything from email and direct mail to SMS communications.

“RedPoint’s tools have made us smarter segmenters,” Twohill notes. “Previously, we couldn’t select data from more than a few of our connected data tables at a time. This made it very difficult for us to perform complex segmentations for omni-channel marketing.

“Let’s say we’re sending membership renewal notices. We want to know everyone who gave at least \$100 in the past year, and is interested in either radio classical music or TV drama, and has contacted our audience member services team. To us, that’s a segment. We couldn’t create and reach out to that segment before. But with RedPoint, we can.”

Whatever task they are engaged in, marketers get the information and control they need – and when they need more, says Twohill, it’s easy to drill down and get that, too.

Even before implementing RedPoint, WGBH’s marketers focused heavily on testing. “With RedPoint,” says Twohill, “we feel even stronger about our ability to test and track, and know that we’re getting reliable results across platforms.”

In the end, RedPoint not only helps improve productivity, it supports WGBH’s strategic goal of reallocating resources to projects that engage younger donors.

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Transitioning Campaigns to Engagement

Building donor engagement isn’t always about traditional “campaigns” anymore. Now, it’s also about promoting conversations with individuals. That’s especially true at WGBH, which produces much of PBS’s highest-profile programming, from provocative Frontline documentaries to the cultural phenomenon Downton Abbey on Masterpiece.

“Lots of people talk about WGBH in social media,” says Twohill. “We want to know what’s being said, both positive and negative, so we can address it immediately. RedPoint will make it possible for us to listen to what people are saying about us, connect with anyone

who chooses to talk about us, and leverage all the information that's out there."

Unstructured social data streams have been notoriously difficult to integrate into marketing programs. At WGBH, RedPoint Data Management for Hadoop will change all that. With its pioneering support for Hadoop 2.0/YARN, RedPoint will make Big Data accessible to WGBH analysts without requiring highly specialized programming skills.

"I'm not a Hadoop expert," says Twohill, "but I can already see how this Big Data tool will help us run analytics against data from lots of different sources – work we couldn't even have considered before."

By linking social listening with a growing understanding of donor behavior and preferences, WGBH can more consistently take the right next action with each donor in real time.

"We want to track how people are engaging with us from any device, at any time," Twohill says. "If we know how people are consuming our content, and what they're engaging with, we can integrate that with our CRM data. We can personalize their experience in the specific channels where they want to engage. Through platforms like Facebook and Twitter, we can encourage them to let their friends know what they like. We can build a virtuous marketing cycle that grows and grows."

Strengthening Public Broadcasting Everywhere

Taken together, these innovations transform the way public media organizations engage their donors. They could help hundreds of financially challenged public broadcasters – and WGBH is making sure they do. The Boston-based organization is offering other public broadcast organizations the opportunity to benefit from what it's learned and implemented.

"Because we produce so much content," says Twohill, "it's in our interest to keep all public broadcasters viable so they may offer great content to their local markets. Everything we are doing – including the development of our new MyWGBH online member portal – is being done in a way that will enable any public media outlet to adopt the same solution without needing to build it themselves. With these sophisticated tools, any station will be able to improve their own engagement and strengthen their donor bases."

Finally, many of these innovations wouldn't be practical for WGBH if they required extensive internal IT investments for custom development and integration. But, with RedPoint's technology and support, this is no longer an issue.

Says Twohill, "I tell people I feel like we've added ten people to our staff: RedPoint Global professionals who help us set up, answer our questions, provide new versions, and support us day and night. We hope to offer the same kind of support to other public media outlets so they can leverage RedPoint and find success, too."

About RedPoint Global Inc.

RedPoint Global offers a comprehensive set of world-class ETL, data quality and data integration applications that operate in and across both traditional and Hadoop 2.0 / YARN environments. The company also offers data-driven customer engagement solutions that help companies derive insights from customer behaviors and create consistent, relevant and precise messaging across any and all channels required. All RedPoint applications offer a unique visual user interface that eliminates the need for programming skills, allowing enterprises to utilize all data to achieve their strategic business goals. For more information please visit www.redpoint.net or email contact.us@redpoint.net.

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