



CASE STUDY

How students and staff unlocked the power of images for fundraising and community building during an annual campaign.



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PROBLEM

Winston Salem State University is a school that serves primarily the African-American community with a great sense of teamwork. They were looking for a way to motivate students, alumni, and staff to donate to the institution. While everyone had a common intention, each of the parties had specific interests, which made it difficult to bring together under the same campaign.

Students sought to motivate the student body to get funds for students with financial difficulties. The staff in charge of the alumni looked for new ways to attract that community. Fundraising staff were about to finish the annual campaign and were looking for ideas to incorporate the students' ideas.

After talking with the students and the staff, we learned that for many students it was not possible to donate the high amounts that the university usually requested. They were focused on small donations around \$20 and doing it in a more fun way. They had the idea of creating a wall of UnSelfies, but they did not know how to do it. For its part, the staff had a donor management system with extensive forms to fill out, totally impersonal and boring, with a great emphasis on a donate button. In addition, they thought that any campaign running with the annual campaign could jeopardize the amount of donations they'd receive.

SOLUTION

More than 60% of online campaigns fail because fundraisers don't establish better connections with online audiences. PixGift is a transformative fundraising platform that builds community around a collective, visual experience. Through easy-to-use giving boards, PixGift turns images, selfies, and logos into powerful fundraising campaigns that donors actually enjoy participating in!

- The first thing we explained to staff is that online fundraising is not about raising large sums of money (which rarely happens) but rather it's an effective way to build a community around a project or a cause. We explained that it's an excellent funnel to attract past donors, captivate new prospects, and drive visitors to their website. Through simple math, we showed that if the goal was to get 200 participants willing to share the campaign in their social network, and each on average was composed of 100 people, then those 200 shares could potentially reach 20,000 people. So the goal was to get 200 participants.
- The second thing we explained is the specificity of a project. In an online campaign, donors want to know more about the purpose of the fundraiser and where their money goes. These facts allow them to create a strategy to forge emotional connections that can drive them to give. What triggers more emotion than to find out that some students could drop out of school due to lack of resources? Therefore, the second approach would be to incorporate the students' cause into a mini-campaign (within the annual campaign).
- We also brought to their attention that for online campaigns to have traction they should be entertaining, easy to do, fun, and visual as much as possible. Plus adding a rewards strategy encourages

people to contribute. Therefore, besides providing a giving board, we proposed the creation of a photo mosaic created with the school mascot to use it as a piece of recognition and marketing.

- Once the strategy was developed and a Giving Board was set up to capture 200 interactions, the theme of the photo-sharing was left to students' choice. Responding to concerns about how to process payments, PixGift solved the problem by allowing a link to an external page of the donor management system provided by third parties. In addition, PixGift provided the code of the Giving Board to be pasted on a web page of the university to follow their branding.
- Once the Giving Board was launched, it provided an excellent opportunity to teach leadership skills to students. Therefore, it was agreed that they would be responsible for motivating the student body, parents, staff, and alumni supported by teachers and staff.

Thus, PixGift provided a solution to the students to materialize their idea, allowed the alumni to be part of a visual symbol kept in their memory, and opened the possibility of complementing the annual campaign. In addition, PixGift was not only a perfect technical solution, but was complemented by a strategy designed to inspire emotions in all participants at different levels.

RESULTS

- It took only two weeks to reach the target of 200 participants.
- Several prospects were activated as donors.
- The staff and students became great ambassadors of the campaign and institution.

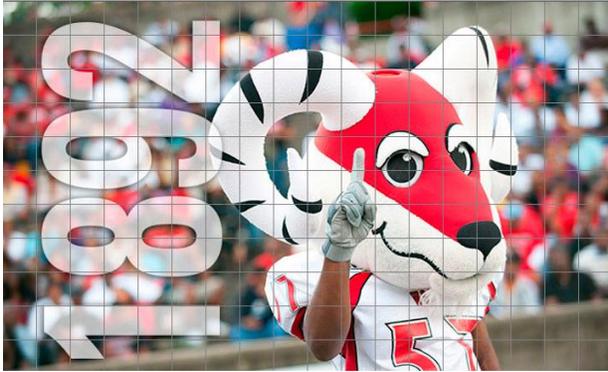
WHY IT WORKED

PixGift Giving Board was an effective tool for crafting strategies that could connect with the emotions of donors at different levels. The campaign was a new experience, easy to do, visual, and most importantly, fun!

- The giving board made the campaign more observable capturing the tendency to imitate.
- It was personal but also created a great sense of community.
- The photo could be done in the company of other peers.
- It embraced any demographic. People could relate that small gifts were able to make a difference.
- Participants could see that they were part of something bigger. In the literal sense, each person was a part of a visual storytelling of generosity.
- The campaign was not about the organization, but about the donors and the people they served.
- When we care, we share. By making it easy for donors to share the Giving Board on social media, it provided an opportunity to stay with social currency.
- It was linked to a specific time frame that provided a sense of urgency.
- The visual art created by the Giving Board recognized each contributor and left residual behavior towards the future.

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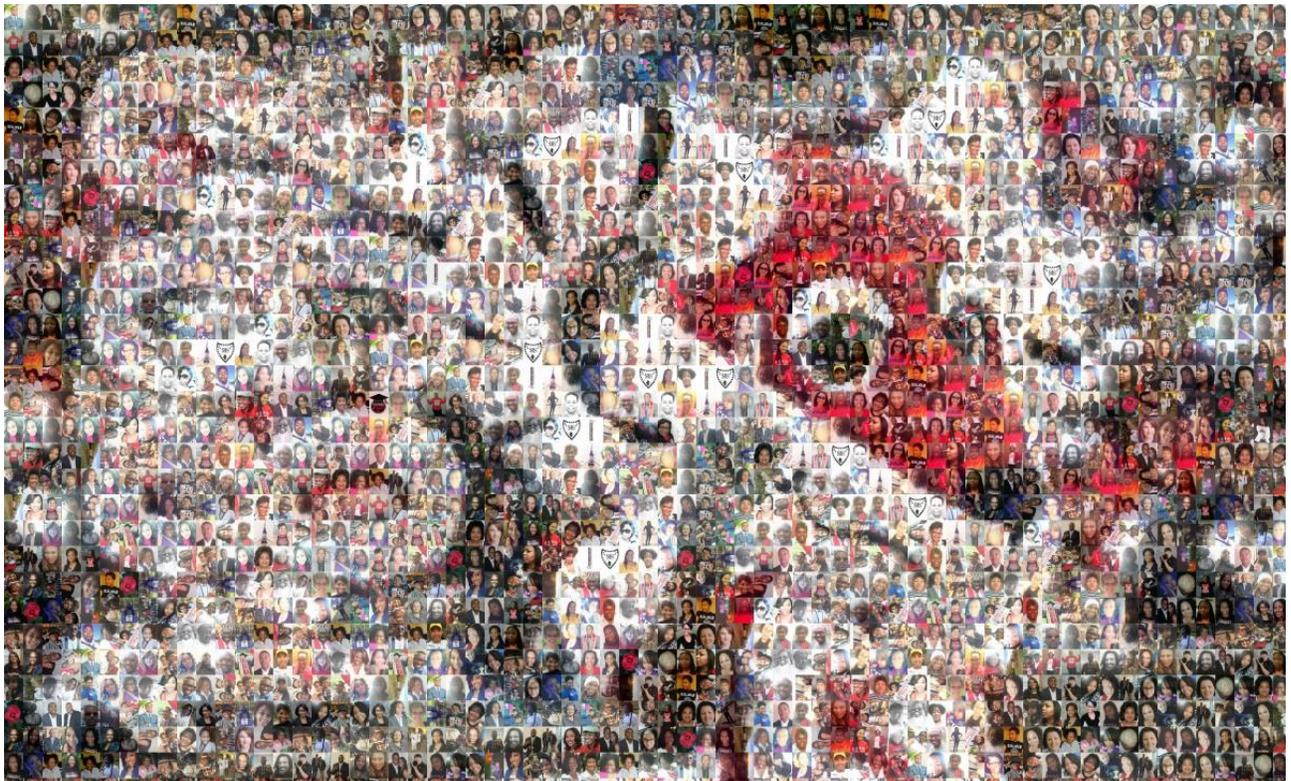
THE VISUAL STORYTELLING



THE FOUNDATION OF THE GIVING BOARD



A COLLECTION OF IMAGES FILLED
THE GIVING BOARD



PIXGIFT TURNED THE GIVING BOARD IN A STUNNING MARKETING PIECE