

Sphere Events Transforms Family Health Partnership's Care4 Breast Cancer 5K into the Largest Race in the County and Increases Event Revenue 84 Percent the First Year



FAMILY HEALTH
PARTNERSHIP
CLINIC

The mission of The Family Health Partnership Clinic is to improve the health status of the community and reduce the negative impact of poor access to care by providing a broad spectrum of services to the underserved with compassion and respect. The organization recognizes that as a community, it is responsible for each other.



Challenge

In 2001, The Family Health Partnership Clinic in Woodstock, Ill. held its first Care4 Breast Cancer 5K. The first race had 262 runners and in three years added 58 more for a total of 320. The race was a small, community event. Although generally satisfied with the race, there were some at Family Health Partnership that felt that the organization could do

more and do it more efficiently. The world had moved beyond paper pledges, so the clinic looked at ways to use the Internet and the connections of its runners to increase the event's success.

Solution

The Family Health Partnership selected **Blackbaud Sphere® Events™** with **Friends Asking Friends®** to bring the event's fundraising online. With Friends Asking Friends, runners are empowered to ask for support from their entire network regardless of geographic location. Paper pledges and the management of donations were transferred online where anyone could easily donate. This also significantly reduces the amount of manual donation entry from checks and cash delivered to the organization.

Results

In the first year since implementing Sphere, the number of participants increased by 200. Each subsequent year the number of participants increased. After five events using Sphere, the race had a 500 percent increase in participants compared to the last year without Friends Asking Friends and raised on average 49 percent more each year. The organization expects participation to reach more than 2,000 next year.

In the first year using Sphere, the Family Health Partnership increased its revenue from the Care4 Breast Cancer 5K by 84 percent. The organization's revenue from the Care4 Breast Cancer 5K now averages \$150,000, with last year's race raising almost \$185,000.

"The event has blossomed since we started using Sphere," said Cathy Brickey, finance manager for The Family Health Partnership Clinic. "We started out as a small, community event and the race is now one of the premier events in the county and is the county's largest running event."

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With participation growing each year, the organization soon outgrew the race location. Because of this, Family Health Partnership knew that it would need to stay in contact with runners more frequently and more quickly than it had in the past. The organization determined that email was the best way to do this and added email to its Sphere package of solutions. With email, the organization was able to deliver timely information to runners on location directions, run routes, parking instructions and the many other necessary logistical details.

Additionally, with Sphere, Family Health has been able to capture more information on its constituents and plans to test cultivation strategies using the email functionality. For the first time, the organization will send an email solicitation to runners and donors that participated in last year's event. This is something the organization could not do in the past. The Sphere database enables the organization to run these types of queries and reports to develop more targeted solicitations and communications.

Now one of the premier events in the county, the Care4 Breast Cancer 5K has sponsors knocking at its door. "Now, we have people that ask us if they can be sponsors. Everyone wants to be a part of the event. It is wonderful," Brickey added. It has also made the organization one of the most sought after nonprofits in the county. The local soccer league, for example, has partnered with The Family Health Partnership to utilize the clinic's Friends Asking Friends capability to manage its GoodtoGoal Soccerthon. The clinic will get a portion of the proceeds.

Additional results The Family Health Partnership Clinic has experienced with Sphere include:

- The 2010 race saw 58 percent of donations come in online for a total of more than \$105,000.
- With Friends Asking Friends, participants can gather support from family and friends across the county. In 2010, the number of donations from out of state was 326 for a total contribution of \$14,425 compared to nothing before Sphere.
- The query and reporting functionality in Sphere enables the organization to send more targeted appeals.
- Because online donations are processed automatically through Sphere, the organization has been able to significantly reduce the amount of data entry and manual donation processing. This frees up staff to provide a better experience for all participants.
- Online transactions accounted for 75 percent of all transactions and 68 percent of total revenue.



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"People want to be involved with our race. They want their name attached to it. What was once a small little race has become a big deal and has raised us more money each year. We wouldn't have grown the way we have without Sphere. Sphere really did make us grow, enabling us to continue providing much needed services to the uninsured in our county" Brickey concluded.

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