

Happy New Years from the RESolutionsTECH Team!

5 – 4 – 3 – 2 – 1 – HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

It's a new year, a clean slate, and a time for change. You have resolved to stop bad habits, join the gym and actually go, and spend more time with your family – so your personal life is set, but what about resolutions at the office? You've been putting off updating and cleaning up your database and don't know when you'll find time to do it. Your work resolution is to clear away all the clutter, garbage data, and inefficient processes that prevented your organization from maximizing its successes in 2009. RESolutionsTech wants to help you kick start that resolution by doing a major clean-up of your data through a process called Database Audit. We want to work with you to ensure opportunities missed in 2009 are capitalized on in 2010.

As we move into this exciting New Year, a Database Audit will provide you with a thorough, yet affordable reporting of all problem areas in your database. Once the problems have been identified, we can work with you to prioritize all issues in order for you to clearly meet your New Year's resolutions.

A few examples of the many problems we have identified with other organizations include:

- Missing or incorrect addresses
- Structure prevents you from getting accurate reporting
- Missing or incorrect home phone numbers
- A security setup that is not protecting your data
- A setup that prevents you from tracking all fundraising tasks

Solution to these problems:

RESolutionsTech and a Database Audit! We can use National Change of Address to add thousands of new and correct addresses to your database. We will examine your campaign, fund, and appeal structures to ensure they are being used correctly. The Database Audit will verify which home phone numbers are correct and which ones are not. We will set up security to protect your valuable data. And we will ensure that you can track all of your fundraising tasks effectively.

Furthermore, the Database Audit will help your organization achieve several different goals:

1. Reduce operational costs, such as save at least 3 per cent of your annual direct mail cost;
2. Get accurate one-touch reporting – what gets measured, gets done;
3. Save time – stop the madness of the manual data review;
4. Improve system processes, especially those with advanced functions;
5. Identify areas where best practices can be implemented.

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The Ottawa Regional Cancer Foundation has completed a database audit and their Vice President of Operations and Gift Planning, Lucie Châtelain, comments on how RESolutionsTECH included the Cancer Foundation staff in the audit process.

“All of our staff were involved in the audit process – from the CEO and Vice Presidents to our Special Events staff. A survey was distributed to learn exactly how each staff member was involved with the Raiser's Edge database and get a better understanding of their thoughts on the current system. Interviews were also conducted of our key users to learn about our specific situation.”

Lucie has been involved with other audits but says the RESolutionsTECH audit differs in one major way, follow-through.

“We have done audits in the past – very detailed analysis of what we were doing well and what areas needed improvement. However, with each audit, there was never a plan of how we would move forward and implement those necessary changes. RESolutionsTECH ensured us they would provide a plan on how to complete the process and implement the recommendations.”

What should you expect from your Database Audit? Some areas covered include:

Staff Training and Support

Ask yourself: Are staff and volunteers using your database effectively?

- What level of expertise do employees and volunteers have with your database?
- Is data being maintained and entered consistently?
- Do users have support channels available to get help with the database whenever they need it?
- Are user manuals available, up to date, and easily accessible?
- What challenges are staff and volunteers currently having with the database?

The goal of this part of the analysis is having database users increase their frequency and accuracy of database use from proposed incentive and disincentive systems and having experienced users delivering support and training as often as needed. Also, all database users will significantly improve their productivity and achieve improved end results.

Data Clean-up

Ask yourself: What is the overall health status of your data?

- Are addresses accurate in your database?
- Is there data that you do not understand?
- Are there duplicate records?
- Is there data that should not be there?
- Is all data being maintained in a single location?

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The typical end result of completing this part of the analysis is to increase the number of constituents you are communicating with while reducing your costs. You will understand all data elements in the database and where they should be with less chance of the many forms of duplication of data that can occur. It will be clear what you have not been adding to the database and why you should be. After this analysis you can begin to focus on key constituents where you will have a better return on investment.

Accurate Reporting

Ask yourself: Is your reporting contributing to your success?

- Are you getting the reporting you want from your database?
- Can this reporting be generated with the click of a button?
- Is the reporting accurate?
- Is the data present to support your reporting needs?
- Is your reporting assisting you in reaching your goals?

Once the reporting analysis is complete, you should know what data you need to maintain to get the reporting you require. You will be able to create the structure in the database that will permit you to get the accurate, complete, consistent, and meaningful data you must have to achieve your ultimate success.

Online Presence

Ask yourself: What online technologies can assist you?

- Are you raising enough money online?
- Is your website integrated with your database?
- Is your website dynamic or static?
- Are you leveraging social networking websites?
- Is your website setting you apart from other charities?

After the analysis of your online presence, you should have a better sense of what will give you a better return on your investment. The analysis will look at options such as cloud computing, email, Google Analytics, Ad Words, Web Master Tools, your website and social networking use.

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Communicating Effectively

Ask yourself: Are you communicating with your constituents to achieve maximum results?

- Are you leveraging email effectively?
- Are you recording all touch points with constituents?
- Are you able to focus on constituents where you will have your best return on investment?
- Are you tracking response rates, open rates, clickthroughs?
- Are you leveraging past results into future communications?

Upon completion, you will have indentified improved methods of communication and have accurate reporting driving how you adjust and tweak your communications to always be improving. This will include looking at all areas such as snail mail, email, phone, and social networks all while ensuring everything is tied back and reported on in your database.

A complete Database Audit is a thorough and affordable way to identify all of the areas within the database where improvements could and should be made. This assessment will ensure that the database is properly set up to meet the needs of your organization.

The ultimate goal of the Database Audit is for you to clearly understand:

- Where you are now
- Where you need to go
- How will the proposed changes make a difference

Just as we have for Renascent Foundation, Cambrian College, Kid's Help Phone, and many other organizations – our team is ready to assist you in starting on the right track for 2010.

We wish you a Happy New Year with good health and great success!

Contact us to Discover how we can Help you!

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