

How iWave Helps You Expand Your Reach as You Pivot Your Fundraising Strategy



Background

A Noise Within is a theatre company in Pasadena, CA, that produces world-class performances of classical theatre and coordinates a robust education program. Their education program is one of the largest in the country, serving about 19,000 students per year. The nonprofit theatre is in its 29th year and has a goal of enriching its community with timeless storytelling of the human experience. The company moved into a new facility in 2010 after a successful capital campaign and has since seen substantial growth in their team, organization, and audience.

The Challenge

Patti Anne Miller, Development Director at A Noise Within, has worked with the theatre for just over a year and she, and her team, are dedicated to procuring the support of loyal patrons and corporate sponsorships to enhance the theatre's artistic and education programs. Patti's team consists of an Institutional Giving Manager and a Development Assistant. They look into lower-level donors to find out if they are giving to similar organizations, and into higher-level donors for long-term opportunities to increase donations.

In March of 2020, along with the rest of their community and the world, A Noise Within faced the challenge of pivoting their fundraising plans and strategies due to the impact of COVID-19. As the small development team adapts to the new normal, having a reliable fundraising intelligence platform in their toolbelt has been vital to their success.

The Solution

A Noise Within had their annual gala planned for mid-March, but when COVID-19 restrictions came into place, the theatre closed its doors. "We were supposed to have the room packed with the right people who don't typically donate to us," said Patti, "we were planning on having a paddle raise to get the donations from the people filling the seats. But when COVID happened, we had to readjust." Patti and her team had to pivot their plans and moved the event online. They lowered their ticket price and allowed anyone to attend the online event. "We used iWave to expand our reach and seek out supporters beyond the people who would have attended the live event," said Patti, "we got a ton of donations from all over the world - from people's families, people who had moved away from Pasadena, people who haven't been able to participate in our company in a long time but wanted to support our community and our mission."

Before iWave, the team at A Noise Within was using multiple tools to gain insight into their donors, but they struggled to find the specificity of information they needed and were often coming up with nothing. But then they made the switch to iWave. "We were so impressed with the interface," said Patti, "The platform is so user-friendly and onboarding was easy and smooth."

With focuses on both individual and institutional giving, Patti's team members use iWave in different ways. Her Development Assistant's main focus is individual giving and she uses iWave to set up profiles and find analysis of individuals, board members, and major gift prospects. Her Institutional Giving Manager uses iWave to dig into similar organizations and education programs to create a "dream list of institutional funders" for their organization.

With iWave, the development team at A Noise Within has been able to find new donors, as well as better understand the donation habits of their current donor base to find their Hidden Gems. "iWave helps us cut to the chase" says Patti, "we use it to narrow down who to focus on, how much to ask for, and the best time to ask".



ORGANIZATION

A Noise Within

LOCATION

Pasadena, CA

INDUSTRY

Arts and Culture

KEY CHALLENGE

Expanding reach to find supporters and donations for the theatre's art and education programs outside of their traditional constituents after shifting to virtual events.

KEY BENEFIT

Finding individual supporters and institutional funders beyond their usual donor base and understanding donation habits of current donor base all on one platform.



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PATTI ANNE MILLER
Development Director