



CLIENT STORY

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF ST. PAUL

PROFILE

Type: Community Foundation

System: FIMS

Catholic Community Foundation
THE ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS

A Religious Foundation eases the burden of managing 607 funds by effective management of investments and earnings allocations.

Background

The Catholic Community Foundation was founded in 1992 within the Archdiocese of Minneapolis and St. Paul in Minnesota. Its mission is to financially support the spiritual, educational and social needs of its Catholic community. As of December 2003, the foundation had \$134 million in assets, distributed between 607 funds. During their most recent fiscal year, they made 1,020 grants and distributed \$3.9 million.

In 1997, the foundation implemented the Foundation Information Management System (FIMS) from Microedge. Nancy Borzo, the foundation's Vice President of Finance and Administration and Acting Director of Grants, was the staff person responsible for selecting the software that best fit their requirements and overseeing its implementation. Today she uses FIMS all the time. She believes that using FIMS has "made us more professional, internally as well as externally. Donors can now see the level of quality in what we can generate." And the Catholic Community Foundation has become a real presence in the Minneapolis/St. Paul community foundation arena.

Getting off on the right track

After the Catholic Community Foundation had been raising money and distributing it for five years, they decided it was time to implement an integrated software system to help them manage their funds, grant-making and donor development. Until 1997, Nancy kept the foundation's financial statements in Lotus Notes, and their bank custodian managed investments and submitted reports to her. She says their grant-making volume was also much smaller and more manageable at that point and that their donor database consisted of "a couple of hundred names, max".

When you look at it, it's phenomenal what we get out of FIMS with just a staff of 7 doing all the work.

Now, Nancy loves using the FIMS Fund and Account Tracking System (FACTS) to monitor investments and allocate earnings so she can manage the foundation's 607 funds. Without FIMS, she says, "we wouldn't be able to manage that many funds." Those funds include about 125 charitable gift annuities, which she easily maintains through FIMS. Nancy says that charitable gift annuities are a popular and rapidly growing segment of the Catholic

Community Foundation's giving options.

Today, Nancy believes that FIMS reliability is critical to her foundation's operation — she can trust that the information she generates is accurate. And the foundation's increased grant-making volume is easily tracked in FIMS.



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We get great support from the MicroEdge staff.
We demand 24-hour turnaround
and we get it.

FIMS allows them to build good donor relations

One part of FIMS that Nancy says the Catholic Community Foundation is just now beginning to use to its fullest potential is the Donor Relations Module. When the foundation was young, most of its donors were people that the foundation staff knew. The foundation's Marketing Director and the Development staff are now working to broaden their donor base significantly and are using the Donor Relations Module to help maintain all of their donor relations information.

FIMS benefits:

- Foundation staff can use FACTS to allocate investment earnings from multiple pools to participating funds.
- FIMS summary reports give the entire foundation staff the same information, keeping them all on the same page.
- FIMS has saved the foundation money, especially in terms of keeping staff size small.
- Donors appreciate the quality and sophistication of the data they receive.
- Foundation staff can grow into more complete usage of the various FIMS modules as the need arises.
- The foundation operates more professionally, both internally and externally.

Training and support helped get them up to speed quickly

While they were implementing FIMS, MicroEdge staff members came to the foundation's office twice to assist them. The first visit was to install the software, and then a MicroEdge trainer came back to train the foundation staff. Nancy says they made a few mistakes during the initial setup but that they weren't unexpected. She says the MicroEdge staff member she worked with "was always there" for her. "We get great support from the MicroEdge. We demanded 24-hour turnaround and got it," she says.

These days Nancy thinks they only use support a couple of times a year. "We are very disciplined and cautious – not often trying new stuff out." She acknowledges that recent FIMS software updates might contain features and functionality her foundation isn't using, but for her it's a question of managing priorities. FIMS allows her and the other foundation staff to accomplish required tasks efficiently, and she knows the system so well that when she needs to perform a new task, she always thinks about the implications it will have in FIMS.

With FIMS, we don't sweat the small stuff – it's all just there.

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