

BC Children's Hospital Foundation

BC Children's Hospital Foundation Modernizes Fundraising Campaign with Interactive Donor Wall



Leveraging Technology for Hospital Fund-raising Strategies

In an Internet age, when time is of the essence and most potential donors are plugged in, fund-raisers need to up the ante for quick and attention-grabbing campaign elements.

BC Children's Hospital Foundation (BCCHF), located in Vancouver and serving the province's entire child population, supports the people, places and things required to ensure children in British Columbia have access to outstanding pediatric care.

In April 2008, BCCHF launched the Campaign for BC Children, a \$200-million initiative. The campaign has a superhero comic-book theme designed to resonate with children and entertain adults. Among its goals, the Foundation aims to raise money for a new children's hospital, and to establish and equip specialized pediatric care facilities in regional hospitals and clinics.

While traditional means of outreach have helped to make the community aware of the campaign, BCCHF's Donor Relations team sought a more provocative way of communicating with hospital employees and visitors. "We wanted to do something outside the box and use technology, so we developed the idea of an interactive donor wall," said Debra Kerr, Donor Relations Coordinator at BCCHF.

The interactive donor wall had to attract the attention of passing visitors and encourage donations, profile key donors, educate the public about the capital campaign, and keep everyone up to date on the progress of the new hospital construction and campaign proceeds.

Enter the interactive professionals

To help develop the wall, the Foundation brought in Shaun Mavronicolas and his team from 2C Visual Communications in Vancouver, along with Scala, 2C's digital signage software partner.

To get the interactive donor wall up and running, a number of things had to be accomplished. "From a digital standpoint, interactivity was of primary importance," explained Mavronicolas, 2C's Creative and Technical Director. "It had to be simple and easy for kids and adults to interact with the content, and it had to be engaging at the same time."

Mavronicolas recommended 2C's diVA™, an interactive software and hardware system that creates a responsive environment — an area that interacts with people who use it or pass by it. By integrating a mural with simple floor decals, sensors, LCD screens, video, DMX lighting and other special effects, the system could educate and entertain hospital visitors and staff in keeping with the campaign's "Be A Superhero" theme.

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With diVA, user interaction changes content on different screens and synchronizes it with lighting and sound effects. Depending on which decal a visitor stands on, different parts of the wall come to life.

Mavronicolas planned to integrate Scala's content management and design software for digital signage so the Donor Relations team could remotely update any content appearing on the LCD screens. With its open architecture, this software would give the BCCHF Donor Relations team the opportunity to control multiple LCD screens and provide varying content feeds to each screen.



The Donor Relations team, the Foundation's Information Services department, 2C and other vendors spent the next six months creating the interactive mural. The final product was a 10 feet tall by 15 feet wide display featuring four LCD screens, four audio speakers, two motion sensors, four distance sensors, lighting and a cast of everyday men and women who are the heroes of BCCHF.

Totally interactive

So, how does the mural work? Floor decals drive the interactive component of the mural, but it's the hidden sensors that "wake up" the mural when someone enters the space. The hidden sensors also monitor the floor decals, which are nothing more than stickers on a concrete floor. Two motion sensors sit high above the mural to detect anyone who enters the designated mural space. Short loops of content begin to play on the main screen and tell viewers how they can interact with the mural. At the same

time, a soundscape consisting of muted city sounds such as skateboarders cruising by, buses driving along and people chatting will begin to play.

Another set of sensors is mounted at about hip level along the mural walls to monitor the presence of anyone standing on a floor decal. The floor decals give viewers directions such as "Stand here to play." There is a decal for each screen, four in total. When a person is detected on a floor decal, the video content associated with that decal/sensor begins to play with the connected screen.

Easy mural management

While the technology behind the mural is complex, editing and uploading content is quite easy. Although the main hub for managing the interactive donor wall lies within BCCHF's Information Systems department, the Donor Relations team can manage content for all four LCD screens from anywhere in the hospital that is connected to the network. The same goes for the Scala design software, which can be accessed by the Information Systems office.

According to Chris Sweeting, the Web and Technical Support Specialist at BC Children's Hospital Foundation, the Donor Relations team updates the donor wall regularly. Once the team determines what new content will include, the final content updates only take 10 to 15 minutes to upload into the network with the content management and player software.

"The software is straightforward and simple for what we need to do," said Sweeting. "I check the software daily to make sure it's running, but other than that it manages the wall on its own. It's fairly simple."

All in all, Kerr said the donor wall's reception by patients, hospital staff, donors and the community has been positive.

"The mural adds an element of fun to the lobby, and kids really seem to enjoy it," said Kerr. "We've had great success conducting media interviews in front of it, so that has helped further the message about the Campaign for BC Children."