Selecting Prospect Management Software

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Panelists

Robert L. Weiner

Developing your prospect tracking system

Monica M. Keith

Assessing your needs and reviewing electronic prospecting software

Stephen L. Swain

The functional aspects of an electronic prospect tracking process

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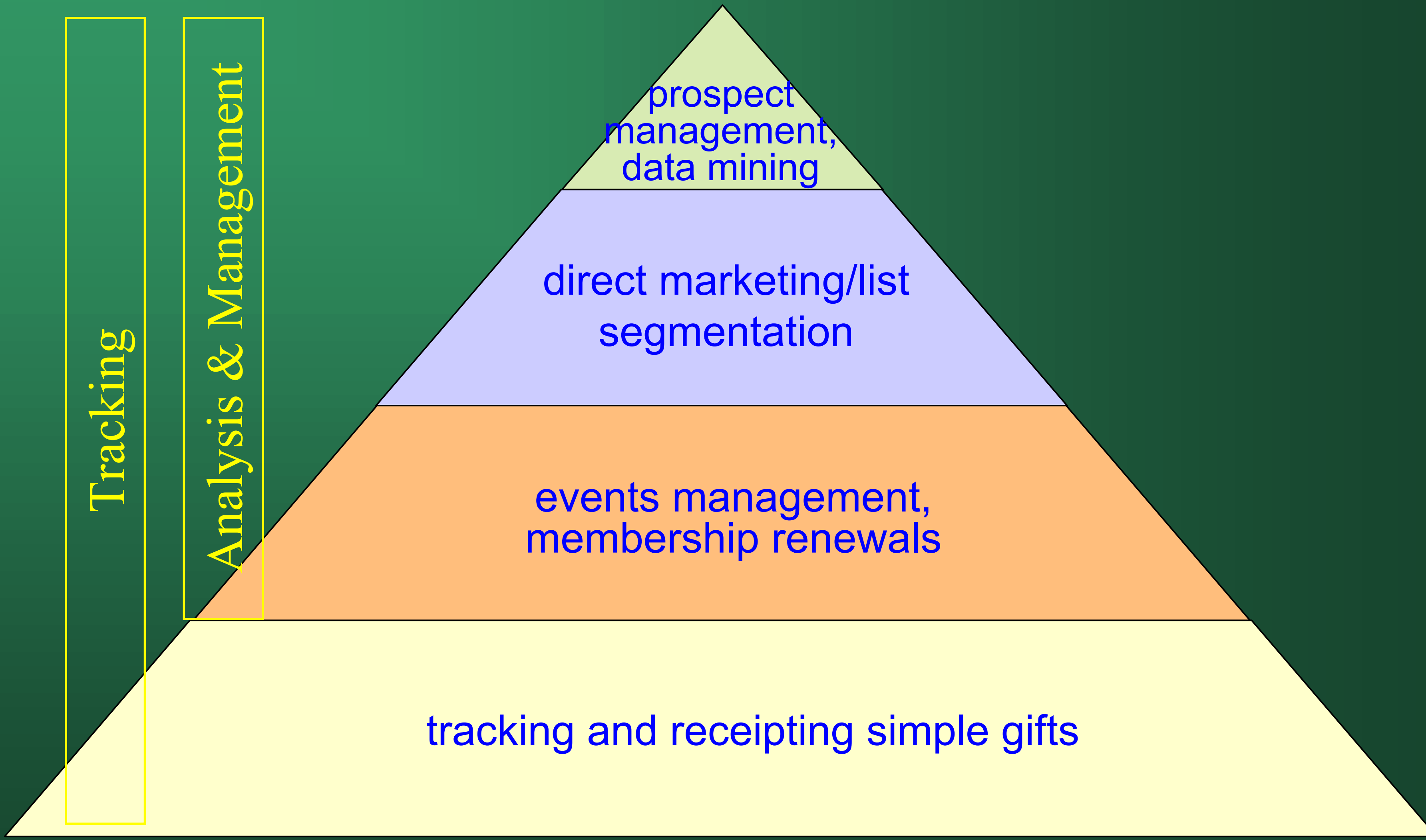
Principles

- There is no perfect database.
- First, decide what you're looking for.
- Buy-in is critical. Stakeholders must be involved in the decision.
- Structure software demos so you can compare "apples to apples."
- Make sure you understand all the costs.
- Trust but verify.

Levels of Using Donor Data



When to Change?

- More tech- (or data-) savvy fundraisers
- Increased goals
- Significant growth:
  - More donors, gifts, staff, locations, security or control needs
- Unifying/integrating separate databases
- Moving to a new type or level of fundraising:
  - Membership to Major Gifts, or a Capital Campaign
- Bottom Line: Is your software as sophisticated as your fundraising?

What Do You Need To Track?

- Demographics and Donations (of course)
- Interests
- Relationships
  - spouse, boards, influence
- Research Profiles
- Contact Reports
- Status, Capacity, Affinity, and Likelihood
- Funding Guidelines and Dates
- Correspondence
- Event Attendance
- Giving Clubs
- Planned Gifts
- Student Activities

1) Needs Assessment

- Develop detailed requirements:
  - Interview key stakeholders
  - Is software ***really*** the problem?
  - What are ***mandatory*** requirements? Everything else is "nice to have."
  - What are their top priorities for the wish list?
  - Integrated or standalone system?

2) Request for Proposals *(optional)*

- First, decide how you will use the responses.
  - Only ask for details that you will use to evaluate proposals: “Can your system handle donations in $, ¥, €, and £?” ***not*** “Can your system print a receipt?”.
  - Focus on major, mandatory requirements that will differentiate systems.
  - The complexity of your requirements should determine the complexity of your RFP.
- Anything you ask for you will have to read and score!

3) Proposal Review *(if you use an RFP)*

- Have entire selection team review and rate responses:
  - Divide by functional & technical areas
  - Has the vendor met your mandatory technical and functional needs?
  - Does their solution fit your budget and staffing?
  - Do they have appropriate experience?
  - Do they inspire confidence?

4) Demonstrations

- Goal: comparing “apples to apples”
- Make vendors show what you need to see
- Try to get your hands on the software
- Use on-site demos when possible
- Either use scenarios for demos or tell vendors which areas you need to see
  - Demos must cover the most critical functions identified by your needs assessment

Demonstrations (cont.)

- **Sample scenario:**
  - Add a $25 donor
  - Add a $25,000 donor
  - Marry the two records
  - Track a proposal to the couple through its lifecycle
  - Enter a 5-year $100,000 pledge. Show how the couple appears in the honor roll:
    - Year 1: are they a $20,000 donor or a $100,000 donor?
    - Year 2: are they a $100K donor, a $20K donor, or a nondonor?
  - One spouse dies. Is the surviving spouse still a major donor?

5) Due Diligence: Reference Checks

- Talk to previous similar clients.
  - Was work delivered on time and on budget?
  - How is ongoing support relationship?
  - Caveat: distinguish client implementation & support issues from vendor problems
  - Try to visit client sites
  - Attend User group meeting?

Due Diligence: Costs

- Make sure you understand all the costs:
  - Software (vendor modules and 3rd party tools)
  - Hardware (server(s) and desktop)
  - Network upgrades
  - Implementation assistance
  - Training – will you need more than the standard?
  - Customizations
  - Interfaces
  - Annual support: ~25% of retail price

Databases don't raise the money

- The right database can assist with:
  - Prioritizing and segmenting lists
  - Prospect management and tracking
  - Stewarding your current donors
  - Identifying future donors
  - Time-management
  - Measuring and forecasting
  - Asking the right person for the right gift at the right time
- This is only possible if data is captured and made available to appropriate staff

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Why track electronically?

- Integrity of your data
- Efficiency
  - If you have a shadow database, there exists a margin for oversight or duplication of critical data that would not otherwise exist.
  - E-screening, you will have a shadow database anyway, which could further complicate your efforts.

GIGO

Information is only as good as the system and the people feeding that system!

The Search for Software

- The ideal vs. the reality
  - Start with a wish list and then prioritize
- The Process
  - Define needs
  - Identify and Review Vendors
  - Review Budget
  - Review Staffing
  - Propose Solution
  - Implementation

Questions to Ask

Defining Needs

- What are your current system deficiencies?
  - Organize by staff responsibilities

- Develop a “wish list”
  - Incorporate to identified deficiencies

- What is really needed for the campaign and on-going?
  - Analyze short-term needs and long-term goals and develop strategy to meet both

Reviewing Software

Review Vendors [RFPs]

- Collect specs, pricing, client lists and review. Narrow down to the top 3-4 vendors
- Decide how you want to review software
  - Options include: Demo CD, WebEx, Site demonstrations, etc.
- Use your analysis as a base for the demonstration
  - Ask for all possible scenarios to be shown/conducted
- Feedback
  - Identify peers - what database do they have? Get feedback.
  - Call the peer clients of top vendors and get feedback on conversion, technical support, features and modules.

Questions to Ask

Reviewing the Budget

- What can we afford? [small budget but high hopes]
- What is the annual maintenance?
- Are their additional modules and what is the cost?

Staffing

- Review staff capacity (technical)
- Staff roles

The Comparison Grid (2001)

Process	Giftmaker	Raiser's Edge	JSI Millenium	JSI Paradigm
Prospect Tracking				
Ability to assign solicitor(s)	x/1	x	x	x
Ability to create an action list	x	x	x	x
Ability to have reminders set up for each Officer	n/a	x	x	x
Ability to group prospects by solicitor for each Officer	n/a	x	x	x
Ability to "define moves" regarding prospects	n/a	module	x	x
Ability to export into MS outlook (contacts, calendar items)	n/a	x	x	n/a
Ability to have multiple keywords for specific lists	x	x	x	x
Ability to attach documents (I.e. research and contact reports)	x	x	x	x
Ability to add secure information	x	x	x	x
Ability to access off-site	n/a	x	x	n/a
Reporting				
Ability to create reports in addition to canned reports	x	x	x	x
Report writer	n/a	Crystal	x	n/a
Ability to pull dynamic reports	n/a	x	x	x
Ability to have each Officer access own call reports, etc	n/a	x	x	n/a
Ability to export ALL fields needed	n/a	x	x	x
Ability to export/chart/graph data	x	x	x	x
Ability to print retrieval parameters	x	x	x	x
Ability to track grant/proposal information	n/a	module	x	x
Ability to link gifts to outstanding proposals	n/a	module	x	n/a
Additional Desirable Features				
Abilty to globally update	n/a	module	x	x
Ability to export any variables into MS Professional Suite	n/a	x	x	x
Ability to send mass/global e-mails	x	x	x	n/a

Process, Process, Process

- **Establishment of Prospect Codes**
  - What is your hierarchy of prospects/pyramid
  - What does that mean for your timeline and goals
  - How will it structure your process and reports
- **Establishment of Staff Roles**
  - Who will ‘feed the system’
  - What and how often will we report on prospects
  - Who should get what information
- **Application to the Big Picture**
  - The pipeline you are creating is dynamic; which means the information is always in flux. Change is good!

Process, Process, Process, cont.

- **Role of Research** [is always changing]
  - Creating the pipeline, managing the pipeline
  - Proactive vs. Reactive
  - Campaign responsibilities
- **Defining your ‘Moves’**
  - What are your actions and who is involved
  - Next Steps vs. Action Tracks
  - Managing “up”
- **Putting it all together**

The Recommendation

- **Proposed Software: Raiser's Edge**
  - Versatility
  - Budget
  - Additional modules for the future, if needed
- **Report Writer**
  - Report writer included
  - Crystal Reports packaged
- **Prospect Tracking**
  - RE:SEARCH module
  - Creation of the moves management process
  - Ability to attach research, proposals, misc. media

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Functional Requirements

- Ability to identify or tag various types of prospects, i.e. Major Gift, Estate Gift, Annual Fund, etc.
- Ability to assign prospects to multiple staff/volunteers, i.e. Prospect Manager, Prime, Key Relationship, Volunteer Solicitor, etc.

Functional Requirements (cont'd)

- Ability to record various rating information about prospects:
  - Gift capacity
  - Inclination
  - Loyalty
  - PRIZM cluster
  - Expected gift amount

Functional Requirements (cont'd)

- Ability to record categorized notes about prospects:
  - Wealth and Assets
  - Philanthropic interests and activity
  - D&B or Hoover's company reports
  - Photos
  - Published articles, news stories
  - Research bios
  - Correspondence to and from the prospect

Functional Requirements (cont'd)

- Ability to record solicitation stages:
  - Identification
  - Rated/Unassigned
  - Qualification
  - Cultivation
  - Ready
  - Proposal
  - Stewardship
  - Re-cultivation
  - Rejected
  - Declined

Functional Requirements (cont'd)

- Ability to track all actual and planned interactions with the prospect:
  - Phone calls
  - Visits (both on and off site)
  - Letters sent and received
  - E-mails sent and received
  - Invitations sent and accepted
  - Attendance at events

Functional Requirements (cont'd)

- Ability to import and store contact reports
- Ability to record solicitation strategies
- Ability to record all proposals including full text of document, amount, status and link to pledge or gift

Reporting Requirements

- Detail, summary and metric reports:
  - Outstanding and future open actions/tasks
  - Next steps by prospect
  - Analysis of stage changes over time
  - Monthly prospect manager activity
  - Monthly prospect status by manager
  - Proposal summary by status
  - Prospect counts by manager, capacity, constituency
  - Daily prospect data change by manager

Resources

Batchelder, Duff: *Evaluating & Selecting Fundraising Software:*

www.techsoup.org/articlepage.cfm?articleid=359&topicid=10&btcfile=articlepage359

Battin, Tom: *Should Nonprofit Agencies Build or Buy a Database?*

www.techsoup.org/articlepage.cfm?ArticleId=377&cg=searchterms&sg=custom%20database

Grantsmanship Center: *A User's Guide to Selecting Fundraising Software:*

www.tgci.com/magazine/02summer/soft1.asp

Mills-Groninger, Tim: *Build, Buy, or Rent?*

www.nptimes.com/May01/sr.htm

TechSoup's Technology for Fundraising message board:

http://www.techsoup.org/forums/index.cfm?fuseaction=list&forum=2022&cid=117

Weiner, Robert: Tracking Your Prospects

http://www.rlweiner.com/articles/tracking_your_prospects.pdf

Weiner, Robert*: Buying and Implementing a Development System:*

www.rlweiner.com/case_handbook_chapter.pdf

More resources are posted at www.rlweiner.com/resources.html

Resources, cont.

APRA Website

www.aprahome.org

PROSPECT-L

www.charitychannel.com/collaborate/wa.exe?A0=prspct-l

FUNDSVCS

www.fundsvcs.org

Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE)

www.case.org

Supporting Advancement

www.supportingadvancement.com