



Nonprofit Use Click & Pledge to Reduce Transaction Costs by 75%

Chef Ryan Hiding was in the process of starting his own restaurant in Atlanta when crisis struck: he was diagnosed with late-stage gall bladder cancer. The Atlanta restaurant industry rallied around him, hosting a community-wide event to raise support for his family and care. Through their hard work and generosity, this tight-knit community's efforts went beyond expectations, raising over \$200,000 for the Hidingers. This large outpouring of support inspired the birth of a new nonprofit: The Giving Kitchen (TGK).

After the experience with the Hidingers, The Giving Kitchen founders realized there was clearly a need for emergency assistance for metro-Atlanta restaurant workers facing these types of unexpected hardships. Because restaurant workers typically have low wages, variable hours, and weak benefit packages, this type of crisis (e.g. an injury, a natural disaster, the death of a family member) can be unmanageable—and can create a hole that's difficult to get out of.

“Our goal is to stop the spiral that can start when an unanticipated crisis comes up,” explains Stephanie Galer, Executive Director of The Giving Kitchen. “Our grant money goes a lot farther in keeping them steady and preventing that decline than it would be trying to come back from further setbacks.”

To support their efforts, The Giving Kitchen hosts several food-related events per year—a perfect match for the restaurant industry—and relies on the support of their for-profit partner, Staplehouse restaurant, to continue to help those in need. Though they're still a rather young nonprofit, The Giving Kitchen has quite a few financial transactions to manage: ticket donations, individual gifts, and the ongoing net profits from Staplehouse that are funneled back to TGK. With so many revenue streams to manage, TGK found themselves in need of a good database and payment processing solution.

Click & Pledge: The Obvious Choice

When they first got started, The Giving Kitchen used PayPal and tracked donor data using a Microsoft Excel workbook—a system that took a lot of additional time for data entry. They also experimented with a few other solutions in an effort to create customized checkout pages, build their own forms, and integrate with their website. Unfortunately, each platform had significant drawbacks, and most didn't work well together. Then, Galer found Click & Pledge.

Galer was introduced to Click & Pledge through Georgia Gives Day—a one-day giving event sponsored by The Georgia Center for Nonprofits. Because the center uses Click & Pledge's GiveBig platform to organize the statewide event, The Giving Kitchen was required to sign up with Click & Pledge in order to participate.

“The account was really easy to set up,” recalls Galer. “And I realized it was something we could use year-round.”

At the same time, TKG was just beginning to build out their Salesforce platform. “There were lots of decisions to be made about which processors to use with Salesforce,” explains Galer. “And what Click & Pledge offered made it the obvious choice.”

The Support to Get Started

In addition, Galer wanted to find systems that didn’t require a lot of extra work to set up because TKG was still in its beginning stages and was run by a small staff; they simply didn’t have the time to devote to a large technical effort.

“To be able to do Click & Pledge setup alongside all of the other things we were doing is definitely a testament to its accessibility,” says Galer.

Galer also was extremely satisfied with Click & Pledge’s adaptability and responsiveness. As she got started using Click & Pledge, she found more and more advantages with the customizability of the platform. But what really saved the day for TKG is Click & Pledge’s event management.

Click & Pledge Event Management Reduces Costs by 75%

In the past, TKG had used a combination of a ticketing company and another payment platform to process ticket sales. The main problem? TKG was giving up 12% in fees for every transaction. Events bring in approximately \$400,000 per year for them, so that was a significant chunk of change. With Click & Pledge, TKG was able to reduce its transaction costs by 75% to 3% per ticket—a \$36,000 savings.

In addition, Galer simply found Click & Pledge’s event management software more robust and easier to use than her previous system. “We could set different ticket levels, track inventory, monitor attendance,” explains Galer. “And that was for a 1,000-person event, so that’s no small task.” All of that information transferred easily from Click & Pledge into Salesforce, allowing Galer and her staff to track important information they gathered from their events.

And these tasks are completed easily by their small staff—everyone takes on a small role. “That is extremely important because we have such limited time,” explains Galer. “If we didn’t have Click & Pledge, we would need to hire a full-time development person.”

The cost savings add up.

Stellar Product and Stellar Service

Overall, Galer has been pleased with her Click & Pledge experience, and she is excited about continuing to explore features of the Click & Pledge platform that she hasn’t yet tried. And she knows that with each new product, Click & Pledge’s support team will be right there to help her.

“I think Click & Pledge has largely been successful for us because of the forums and customer service.” explains Galer. “To have almost daily access to someone who can answer questions and literally fix the problem is great.”

She’s particularly pleased with Click & Pledge’s responsiveness to the changing needs of its customers.

“They really listen to what we need,” says Galer. “We use Click & Pledge all day every day, so we know what the product needs to be. They pay attention to our needs and adapt with us.”

“I’ve never seen anything like it.”