

Imaging of Donor Records

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Baylor University has implemented the scanning of paper donor records and indexing of those scanned images to data records in the University's alumni/development enterprise database. This process has been integrated into the daily work of the Gift Accounting and University Development offices and provides Web-based access to these images to appropriate staff located at the main campus as well as development officers traveling across the country. Queries within the imaging system provide for retrieval of images by constituent name or ID, gift/pledge designation account number, gift date, and document type. This new application has made critical information immediately available to multiple University staff without searching for or tracking physical folders, and, for the first time, has given access to this data to fund raisers working off campus.

The primary system software involved is Nolij Web from Nolij Corporation and the SCT Banner Alumni/Development System. Data is stored in an Oracle database on an IBM RS/6000 and images are stored on a Dell NT server.

Introduction of the Organization

Baylor University, located in Waco, Texas, is a private university affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas. It is the largest Baptist university in the world and the oldest university in continuous existence in Texas, having been founded in 1845. Baylor has approximately 14,000 students and 1,800 faculty/staff and, on the academic side, is composed of eight colleges and schools in addition to the School of Graduate Studies, the School of Law, and the George W. Truett Theological Seminary. Also, Baylor is the only private school member of the Big Twelve Athletic Conference. The institution's annual operating budget is currently \$282 million and total assets are \$1.2 billion.

The mission of Baylor University is “to educate men and women for worldwide leadership and service by integrating academic excellence and Christian commitment within a caring community.” In continuing dedication to this mission, [Baylor 2012](#), a 10-year Vision statement was announced in January of 2002. Achievement of this challenging commitment will provide an opportunity to demonstrate that an institution can achieve and maintain greatness and at the same time take seriously its Christian mission.

Statement of the Initiative

The establishment of this ambitious 10-year vision has emphasized the already important need to wisely solicit and manage donations to the University, to carefully and accurately track donor records, and to provide needed information to staff responsible for

these tasks. The prudent use of information technology funds and tools is a critical aspect of the support of these areas as well.

For years, documents related to donors and their gifts and pledges to the University had been paper only and filed in a central files repository. These files, when needed, had to be tracked down, physically retrieved, and then, physically returned after use. In 2000, staff in Baylor's Information Technology Services organization began looking into potential imaging solutions to meet institutional administrative needs. The decision to move forward was made and the donor records area was chosen to be the first campus implementation of imaging. After an evaluation of three vendor solutions, the Nolij Web product from [Nolij Corporation](#) was selected to become Baylor's imaging support system. This was a relatively new company, but the campus evaluation committee believed that the product was very sound and flexible and that the developer had an exciting vision for the future. And so, in the spring of 2001, the implementation began.

Design

Administrative offices involved in this project were University Development, charged with donor solicitation and management, and the Controller's Office, responsible for gift entry and accounting. No additional personnel were allocated for the implementation of the imaging system. Staff from Information Technology Services, University Development, and the Controller's Office, made up the project team. No special release time for this project was given to any of the project team from the

administrative offices. One senior analyst/programmer from Information Technology Services was dedicated to the implementation. Database administration help was allocated as needed.

The Nolij Web software was obtained for a reasonable negotiated price. As the initial campus imaging implementation, the cost of the image storage server and the scanning systems for this first setup were included in the project budget. Two of these systems, composed of a Dell PC and a high end Fujitsu scanner, were purchased, one each for University Development and the Controller's Office. Future scanning systems would be the responsibility of the individual departments. These initial hardware costs were approximately \$10,300 for the server, \$5,400 for each scanner with a Kofax adrenaline board, and \$1,400 for each Dell PC for a total hardware outlay of about \$23,900.

Implementation

The Nolij Web database was installed in Oracle on the same Unix server that houses the SCT Banner enterprise systems. The implementation really began with the initial vendor consultant visit in mid-March, 2001. At this meeting the software was introduced and general imaging concepts and methodologies were presented to the affected campus end-user community. Hands on training on scanning documents and indexing them to records in the Banner Alumni/Development System (ADS) was accomplished. Initial discussion of document types, access methods, naming options, and process flow began with this visit and continued throughout the next months. Also,

security issues were studied and appropriate access roles were defined for those who would be using the system.

The biggest problem faced during this project related to the consequences of implementing a new software product from a new company. While the quality and design of the system was excellent, documentation was sparse and the consultant was the company founder, developer, and salesman as well. He was the help line, but he was very busy. However, his energy, enthusiasm, and work ethic usually compensated for the demands on his time.

Another issue involved thinking through the ways the images would need to be accessed and designing indexes and queries to support all of those types of access. This required much analysis and creative thinking; particularly in definition of document types and the naming of scanned images. Ultimately, the system was designed to allow access by constituent name or ID, gift/pledge designation account number, gift/pledge date, and document type.

Each day, the Gift Accounting staff enter new gifts received into ADS and, in the afternoon, scan images of the day's checks and any accompanying documents into a Noli Web batch. The next morning, University Development staff index the batch of images to constituent database records. Also, University Development scans and indexes all current correspondence with major donors.

Production imaging of donor records began June 1, 2001, for all gifts and pledges after that date. Right away, the images were made available to campus staff in the University Development and Controller's Offices, and shortly, to staff in the Dallas and Houston development offices. In early 2002, after a good store of information had been

scanned and indexed, the application was released to development officers to use both in the office and when traveling. Retrospective imaging of donor records dated prior to June 1, 2001, has begun. Gift receipts back to January 1, 2000, have been scanned. The complete files of major donors are being scanned and indexed systematically as time allows.

Additionally, the system is used to store certain images on a temporary basis that are not related to specific constituents. There are folders established to hold scanned images of special event programs and of the President's itinerary as he travels. Online access to these items has been very helpful.

Benefits

The University has been very pleased with this implementation of imaging technology. It has increased the efficiency and convenience of access to critical donor information. Most questions that arise can be answered just by seeing the original documents. Now, those documents are available electronically via a secure Web-based interface saving, at the least, a trip to the central filing center, and possibly, a search of staff offices for the needed file. Access to these records by development officers working at home or on the road and by the remote Dallas and Houston Baylor Development Offices staff has been extremely beneficial. Dallas and Houston employees no longer require someone in Waco to find a needed document and fax it to them. Filing time and expense has been reduced. Lost documents are not a problem. The information is housed on a server in a secure computer room and is regularly backed up to tape with the

tapes rotated to off-site storage. Easy access is available to special items like presidential trip itineraries and University-sponsored event programs in their published format.

In conclusion, this imaging application is providing real time access to vital University information to those who need to know. It is increasing the effectiveness of donor cultivation and is a support to the achievement of Baylor's 2012 Vision.