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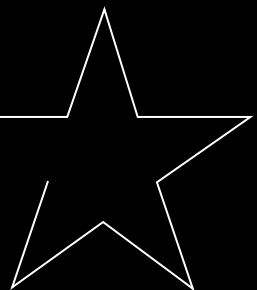
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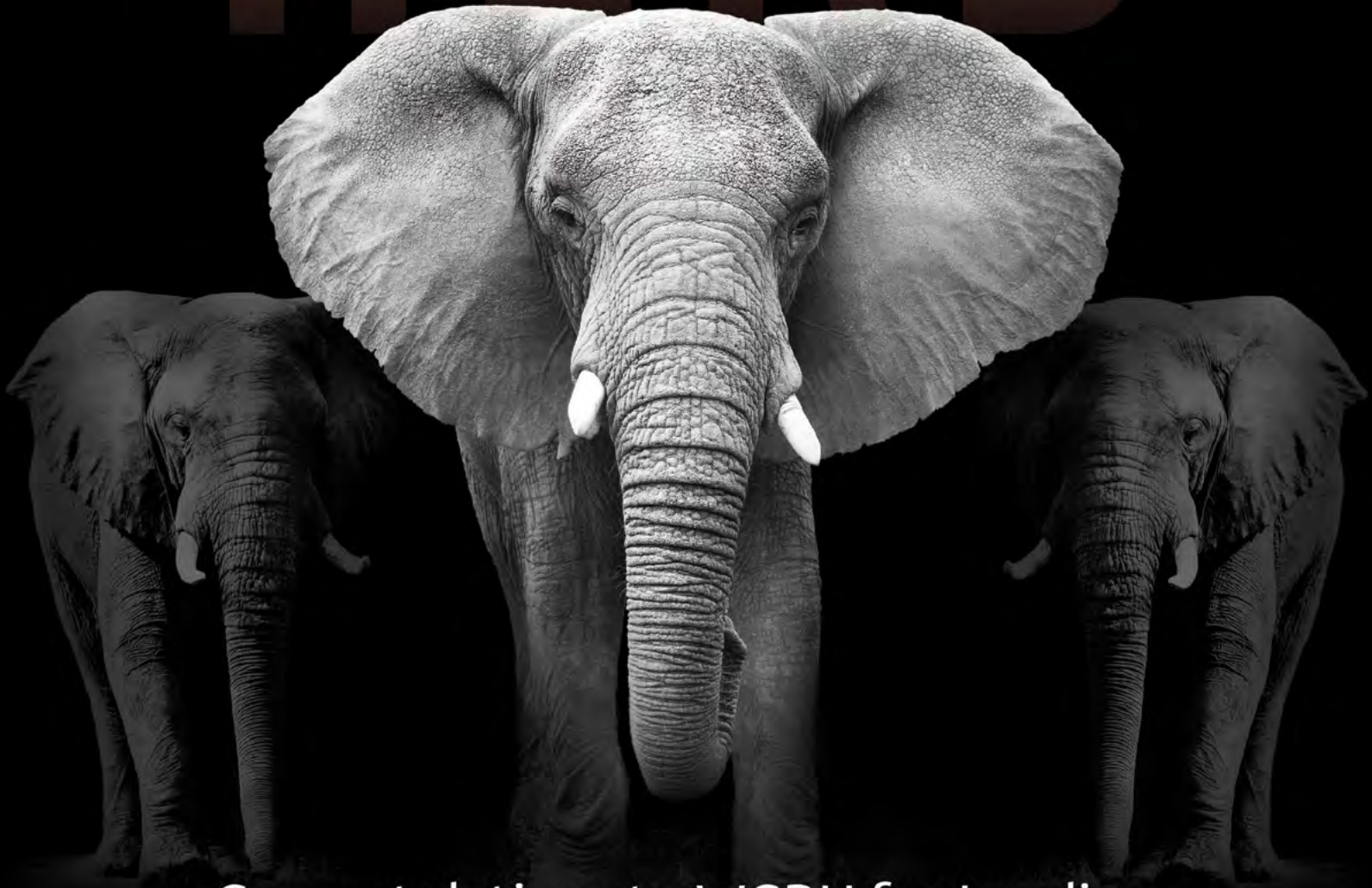
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WGBH Enhances Donor Records to Drive Engagement and Donations

By cleaning up and unifying its profile information, the Boston-based broadcasting company can now deliver more relevant and personalized messaging as donor relationships deepens. —by *Judith Aquino*

Donor relationships are the life blood of nonprofit public broadcasting organizations like WGBH. Headquartered in Boston, Mass., WGBH serves southern New England with 11 public TV services, three public radio services, and local productions. It's the Public Broadcasting Service's (PBS) largest content provider and produces shows like Nova, Masterpiece, and Antiques Roadshow in its Boston studios.

But like many PBS stations, WGBH faced eroding donor counts, an aging member base, and poor engagement with audiences. The organization also lacked accurate donor records and a powerful platform for reaching donors across multiple channels. Without a clear picture of constituents through all of their interactions, long-time donors were sometimes treated like first time visitors. "Unless we had a better way to know who are our donors were we couldn't deepen our relationships with them," notes Cate Twohill, director of technical product development at WGBH.

WGBH had upgraded its 17-year-old donor management system but the new system was limited to traditional channels like direct mail, which was out of step with younger audiences. Two years ago, WGBH turned to RedPoint Global, a campaign and data management provider, for help. WGBH's goals were to develop a clearer picture of its donors; deliver more relevant and personalized offers to its constituents, increase engagement, and boost donations.

WGBH implemented RedPoint Global's Convergent Marketing Platform in 2013. The platform provided data cleansing, linking, and identity resolution capabilities, among other features. This was critical because WGBH discovered that it had 80,000 duplicate accounts and contact records, which prevented the company from distinguishing between new and existing donors.

The platform also enabled marketers to create, automate, test, and execute campaigns across channels like email, direct mail, and social media. Additionally, the solution includes a preference management system that enables WGBH to track and update constituent channel and other messaging preferences.

By implementing the platform, WGBH was able to link 2 million records across multiple internal systems including its CRM system, financial systems, and existing marketing program files. This included connecting contact history, previous conversations, mailing lists, and social media data to create a holistic and accurate view of each person. WGBH was also able to solve its data duplication problem both initially and on an ongoing basis.

And because the unified data is made available to the call center, during pledge drives, fundraisers are able to immediately see a caller's donation history and react accordingly. The Audience Member Services (AMS) team can immediately acknowledge Donors for past donations and then tailor their messaging in real time based on the data available to them about the programming the individuals prefer or an event they were planning to attend in the future.

WGBH's customers benefitted greatly from the solution. They were no longer receiving irrelevant or untimely offers, and WGBH was able to accurately acknowledge and thank donors for their contributions. The AMS team can now focus on providing program and membership information to keep constituents happy and engaged. Additionally, WGBH saw a 10 percent increase in its renewal response rate and annual savings of \$100,000 in postal costs and revenue by eliminating duplicate donor records.

And as a result of its success, WGBH is now helping other public media stations implement their own CRM ecosystem in order to leverage similar strategic marketing initiatives. More than a dozen stations are either live or in the process of getting there.

Twohill attributes the organization's success to its upgraded technology as well as employee camaraderie. "We needed to work together to be able to listen to our listeners and know who they are," Twohill says. "Everyone had a sense of responsibility to better serve our listeners and donors which allowed us to be successful."

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