

L'Hirondelle

Improving funding practices through technology

Context

Timely and adequate funding is essential for non-profit agencies to function. Often, however, the process of searching, applying and accounting for funding can be time-consuming and difficult. By moving from a manual to computerized database system, L'Hirondelle, a Montreal-based voluntary organization that serves refugees and immigrants, has saved time and money.

Program Description

Like many non-profit agencies, L'Hirondelle spends a great deal of time fundraising and reporting on activities related to funding received. Just a few years ago, the organization devoted numerous hours manually filling out statistical forms on each client, volunteer and dollar spent. All this data was then sent to the funding agencies, where the information had to be entered into a computer database.

Recognizing the inefficiencies of doing things manually, L'Hirondelle acquired computer database software in 2001. This software enables it to enter all the statistical information directly into the computer and to do calculations automatically. The data is sent by e-mail to the funding agency.

Successes/Challenges:

With its new software, L'Hirondelle is able to produce documents, such as its annual report, quickly and efficiently. At the same time, it has greatly improved its reporting capacity. In fact, one of its funding agencies increased its donation by \$5,000 to reflect the time it saves due to L'Hirondelle's more efficient reporting practices. L'Hirondelle plans to invest the funds from this donation in an upgraded computer system that will help them to secure additional funds.

www.hirondelle.qc.ca

These best practices are an excellent way of sharing your experiences with other organizations in the voluntary sector. If you also have positive experiences on the use of technology in the voluntary sector, the IM-IT Secretariat will be pleased to post your stories. Please contact the IM/IT Secretariat by e-mail at imit@ic.gc.ca .