CASE STUDY

Epilepsy Foundation

Smarty helps epilepsy foundation route drivers & deduplicate records

Challenge

The Donated Goods division needed accurate address data to send its drivers to the correct pickup locations. They also wanted clean data for marketing, reporting, and analytics.

Solution

Using Smarty US Address Verification, EFMN can send drivers straight to verified addresses. In addition, standardized addresses help identify duplicate records and generate more accurate reports.

Results

Address verification contributed to reduced expenses associated with direct mail campaigns and donated goods pickup.

PRODUCTS USED

US Address Verification

smarty

The client: Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota

The Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota (EFMN) is a not-for-profit organization that provides support to people impacted by epilepsy, meaning those who have an epilepsy diagnosis, as well as their caregivers and communities. The organization was founded in 1954 by a group of doctors who saw a need for social support and other assistance outside the scope of medical treatment.

Epilepsy can be a very isolating diagnosis; the EFMN helps people with epilepsy connect and access resources they may not be aware of, such as one-on-one confidential support. EFMN also organizes and hosts multiple social events, including a summer camp for youth with epilepsy. This camp provides an alternative option for youth who are uncomfortable attending a typical summer camp, which may not have adequate support for safe activity participation, medication needs, and staff trained in responding to seizures. The organization also provides free seizure recognition and response training for students, teachers, nurses, coaches, workplaces, and more.

The challenge: Keep the donated goods division running efficiently

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Raising funds continuously ranks at the top of the challenges a not-for-profit organization must tackle to succeed in its mission.

25 years ago, EFMN started a social enterprise, their

Donated Goods division, which operates like its own business within the organization. This division collects used clothing and household item donations and resells them in bulk to secondhand stores, generating significant revenue for its programs and services supporting people with epilepsy.

Currently, the Donated Goods division provides 25% of the funding for EFMN. It's a critical source of revenue.

The Donated Goods division operates in Minnesota south and east of St. Cloud, including Twin Cities and Rochester, covering about 80% of Minnesota's population. Previously, the division blanketed entire ZIP Code areas with postcards and drove every street, looking for donations left on the curb for EFMN to pick up. EFMN has anywhere from 9-12 trucks on the road daily, driving to and stopping at an average of 60-90 houses to pick up donations. It's critical that drivers take the most efficient routes and that they're driving to verified addresses that actually have a donation waiting for them.

The solution: Verified and standardized addresses improve inefficiencies in operations, marketing, and reporting

Now, donors can schedule a curbside pickup on the EFMN website. EFMN implemented Smarty US Address Verification to validate and standardize the addresses as they're submitted online.

"The address verification product is especially important to us because, Number 1, it leads us to an address that exists, and Number 2, it puts that address into a standardized format," said Brooks Anderson, Associate Executive Director, Finance and Operations, EFMN.F

Address standardization is the process of bringing disparate address formats in line with a predefined

standard. For organizations like EFMN, this process is crucial for data quality and operational efficiency.

Key Benefits:

Alias Identification: Standardizing addresses allows for easy identification of alias addresses. For example, "St." and "Street" can be recognized as the same.

Duplicate Detection: Once addresses are standardized, it's much simpler to identify duplicates in a database. This enables EFMN to maintain a single, accurate record for each donor.

Cost Savings: By eliminating duplicate records, EFMN saves on postcard paper costs, printing, and postage.

The results: Reduction of direct mail campaign and donation pickup expenses

In any given city, EFMN was previously blanket-mailing postcards every six weeks. Now that they can identify who's a new donor and who's recurring, they can be more strategic and choose when to send postcards only to people who have donated in the past or to send postcards to an entire neighborhood.

Additionally, EFMN increases marketing efficiency by identifying and merging duplicate records. These savings can be substantial. For example, if costs are $0.55 per mailing and EFMN sends out 100,000 mailings, eliminating just 1% of duplicates could result in a direct saving of $550.

"Our postcard expense would be much greater without standardized addresses," said Anderson. "In order to analyze our database and identify new and recurring donors, we need to start with standardized addresses. If we didn't have that standardized address, we wouldn't be able to deduplicate records and run reports. We just wouldn't have adequate information without that."

In addition to improved marketing, address verification enhances EFMN's operational efficiency. It reduces the number of stops at an incorrect house having no donation. This enables EFMN to be more efficient with pickups, lowering the cost of fuel, drivers, and trucks on the road.

Questions?

Learn more at Smarty.com

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