

How Brenau University grew Giving Day donations by 300%

Overview

Brenau University, a historic private university in Gainesville, Georgia, puts a premium on staying close to its alumni. Since adopting Mongoose in 2022, its alumni engagement team has used personal, two-way texting to fill events, grow Giving Day, and build lasting relationships.

INSTITUTION	Private university
LOCATION	Gainesville, GA
DEPARTMENT	Alumni engagement
PARTNER SINCE	2022
CHANNEL	Text

The challenge

Email and social posts weren't reaching Brenau's alumni, and many missed events and giving opportunities. Emily Reid, Director of Alumni Engagement, needed a more personal way to connect that a small team could run.

- Email and social weren't driving engagement
- Alumni missed events and giving appeals
- A small team covering both events and donors

Why Mongoose

Emily had used Mongoose at Yale University and brought it to Brenau. Her team now sends personal, two-way messages, with photos, emoji, and Smart Messages, that invite alumni to reply.

- Two-way conversations, not one-way posts
- Photos and emoji for a human touch
- Smart Messages that save a small team time

300%+

more Giving Day donations in 2023 than in 2022

~12,000

alumni reached by one message about an alumni trip to Italy

1,600+

responses to that single message

“Having used Mongoose at Yale, I knew it would be a great fit at Brenau. The ability to personalize messages has helped us build stronger connections with our alumni community.”

EMILY REID · DIRECTOR OF ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

What changed for Brenau's alumni team

Personal messages turned outreach into conversation, for events, for giving, and for everyday touchpoints.

01

Giving Day up 300%+

Brenau promoted its 2023 Giving Day through Mongoose and saw donations rise more than 300%. Emily credits personal messages that connected the team directly with donors and created real urgency.

02

Events that get replies

The Italy trip message drew more than 1,600 responses. Even alumni who couldn't go shared feedback and kept talking with the team, which strengthened those relationships.

03

Personal touchpoints

Alumni reply with life updates and questions about upcoming events. "Even if they can't attend events, they know we're thinking of them," Emily said.

04

Benchmarks that help

Responsive support and quarterly reviews show how Brenau compares to peers. "Sometimes you don't know how you're doing until you see how you compare to other schools your size," Emily said.

WHAT MADE THE DIFFERENCE

- **Photos and emoji.** Seeing who'll be at an event makes alumni more likely to come.
- **Smart Messages.** Automate outreach while keeping it personal.
- **Segmentation.** Target alumni by graduation year or location.
- **Stewardship.** Donor thank-yous and real-time scholarship updates are next.



LOOKING AHEAD

Brenau plans to grow stewardship with event surveys, more interactive messaging, and donor thank-yous, and to collect more alumni phone numbers.

"Mongoose has saved us so much time and allowed us to connect with our alumni in a way that feels personal and meaningful."

Emily Reid

Want to see what personal texting could do for your advancement team?

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