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Amplifying Alumni Engagement at Brenau University with Mongoose

Overview

Brenau University, a historic private institution in Gainesville, Georgia, prides itself on maintaining strong connections with its alumni base. To improve alumni engagement and enhance communication strategies, Brenau turned to Mongoose's platform. Since implementing the platform in 2022, Mongoose has enabled Brenau to streamline event outreach, drive significant improvements in Giving Day contributions, and foster meaningful connections with its alumni.

Challenge

Before adopting Mongoose, Brenau University struggled to effectively reach its alumni. Traditional methods like email and social media posts were not generating the desired engagement, with many alumni missing out on important events and giving opportunities. Emily Reid, Director of Alumni Engagement, recognized the need for a more dynamic and personalized way to communicate with Brenau's alumni base. With a small team and the need for a platform that could support both event promotion and donor engagement, Emily found that Mongoose was the perfect solution.

Solution

Drawing on her prior experience with Mongoose at Yale University, Emily advocated for Mongoose to be implemented at Brenau. The platform allowed the alumni relations team to send personalized, engaging messages that encouraged two-way communication with alumni. This personal touch, paired with features like photos, emojis, and smart messages, helped Brenau establish a deeper connection with its alumni, driving participation and increasing giving outcomes. Emily emphasized,

> "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."

Implementation & Impact

Since implementing Mongoose, Brenau has seen transformative results in how it engages its alumni base, particularly for events and fundraising initiatives.

Key Outcomes

Significant Increase in Giving Day Contributions

In 2023, Brenau used Mongoose to promote Giving Day, resulting in a more than 300% increase in donations compared to the previous year. Emily attributes much of this success to the personalized nature of Mongoose messages, which allowed the alumni team to connect directly with donors and create a sense of urgency around their giving appeals.

Successful Event Engagement

Mongoose has been instrumental in promoting alumni events, both virtual and in-person. For example, a message promoting an alumni trip to Italy reached nearly 12,000 alumni, and Brenau received responses from over 1,600 people. Even those who couldn't attend provided valuable feedback and engaged in conversations with the alumni team, strengthening relationships.

Personalized Touchpoints with Alumni

The Mongoose platform enabled Brenau to engage in meaningful conversations with alumni. Alumni felt they were receiving personal messages, which led to responses ranging from updates on their lives to inquiries about future events. "It's nice to have those touchpoints, even if they can't attend events, they know we're thinking of them," said Emily.

Improved Stewardship Opportunities

With Mongoose's capabilities, Brenau is exploring ways to use the platform for more personalized stewardship, including sending thank-you notes to donors and providing real-time updates on scholarships. This future focus will help the alumni team continue to grow their engagement efforts and ensure donors feel appreciated.

The Mongoose Difference

Authentic, Personalized Messaging

Mongoose's ability to send personalized messages, including photos and emojis, allowed Brenau's alumni team to create a more human touch in their communications. Whether inviting alumni to an event or sharing updates, the personal element made a significant impact on engagement rates. Emily noted,

> **"When alumni see a photo of our team and know who will be at the event, it makes them more likely to attend."**

Segmentation and Smart Messaging

The ability to segment alumni based on specific criteria, such as graduation year or geographic location, allowed Brenau to send highly targeted messages. Mongoose's smart messaging capabilities further streamlined the process, saving the small team time while increasing the effectiveness of their outreach.

Responsive Customer Support and Insights

Brenau has benefited from Mongoose's responsive customer service and quarterly reports, which help the team benchmark their performance against other institutions. "The quarterly reviews are so helpful—sometimes you don't know how you're doing until you see how you compare to other schools your size," said Emily.

Future Plans

Looking ahead, Brenau University plans to expand its use of Mongoose to further enhance stewardship efforts. The team aims to leverage the platform's new features, such as event surveys and more interactive messaging, to gather feedback and improve alumni relations. Additionally, the team is focused on increasing the number of alumni phone numbers they have on record, making Mongoose an even more integral part of their engagement strategy.

Conclusion

Mongoose has become a cornerstone of Brenau University's alumni engagement strategy, enabling the small team to maximize their outreach and build stronger connections with alumni. Through personalized messaging, thoughtful engagement strategies, and an intuitive platform, Mongoose has helped Brenau increase donations, improve event participation, and foster long-term relationships with alumni. Emily noted,

> **"Mongoose has saved us so much time and allowed us to connect with our alumni in a way that feels personal and meaningful. It's been an essential tool for us, and we're excited to see where it takes us next."**

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