NORTH CAROLINA CHINESE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

About North Carolina Chinese Business Association

As a premier nonprofit business organization, the mission chartered by North Carolina Chinese Business Association (NCCBA) is to represent, serve, and promote the common interests of its membership and the North Carolina Chinese business community, particularly in promoting development in the fields of science and technology at both an entrepreneurial and corporate level. NCCBA serves as the forum for networking and meeting peers, for sharing experiences and lessons learned while creating and sustaining successful businesses as well as facilitating coaching and mentoring service opportunities for its members. NCCBA serves as a major catalyst in bridging the China - North Carolina business relationship.

The NCCBA CHALLENGE: Searching for one tool, the ultimate one

With hundreds of participating members, pre-event planning and communication and post-event tracking and follow-up posed significant resource constraints for NCCBA. They were experiencing pain points in several areas of collaboration ranging from manual data input and event payment reconciliation to an ISP whose sending limit of 200 emails per day kept them from notifying the whole organization in a single step. Things changed when they began to use the intuitive, self-service driven Web cooperation toolkit provided by Marketingship.

"The biggest challenge we had at NCCBA before using Marketingship is that we could not complete all our planning and organizing tasks within a single application, which saves us time, effort, and money," says Frank Wang, President of NCCBA. "We used a proprietary database from our ISP to maintain our membership list, Google calendar to plan events, an ISP email account to send our correspondence and event flyers, and mailed-in checks to collect payment…many other works were performed manually. I had been looking for one tool, a simple tool which could simplify my organization's tasks for a reasonable price. I was excited when I first found Marketingship. I am enjoying my Marketingship experience and I am very satisfied. "

Prior using Marketingship, NCCBA had its contact list locked in one proprietary database containing core information of almost a thousand members. "We thought keeping membership information in a database was effective information management, however, sometimes you can only see problem when they present themselves and they didn't present themselves one at a time." Frank continues. NCCBA had faced several challenges in membership management:

- Duplicate membership records in the database
- When member segmentation was performed based on event-related metrics such as event participation frequency instead of demographic information (which were stored in spreadsheets), manual collation of past event signup sheets was required
- Membership renewal and payment collection were carried out primarily on site at events; membership status was manually updated later in the master member-status spreadsheet

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"I want one tool and one tool only. Marketingship is the one."

----Frank Wang, President of NCCBA

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Hosting events is the core of NCCBA. "We are an event-driven organization and each event serves as the medium for us to represent, serve, and assist our members. Planning an event and spreading the details to our members already requires a lot of time and effort, but it worth little without the participant feedback. That tells us how we did at an event and what elements we can improve. We've been diligent soliciting such feedback from our members but response cards and other feedback methods have had disappointing results." Frank explains. "…before using Marketingship, I knew there were many areas we could improve in event planning and tracking but I just could not find a better solution."

There are many areas requiring improvement:

- Newsletters were prepared from scratch each time before an event and do not have the desired professional look
- Sending emails to nearly a thousand contacts at one time was unmanageable due to the email limitations placed on the organization by their internet service provider
- The inability to track email delivery status, open rate, click through rate, and soft/hard bounce rates
- The inability to seamlessly link event notification with event registration just by sending newsletters
- The organization membership directory was either available to all or none, with no ability to set different access privileges for qualified membership levels
- Post-event feedbacks could only be conducted through, and results obtained from, third party online survey services whose result formatting was not compatible for importing into the membership database

The NCCBA SOLUTION: Marketingship's easy, powerful, and affordable cloud solution

NCCBA started its Marketingship journey with MailCraft, an email newsletter service which provides free accounts to organizations with fewer than 2,000 contacts. "…MailCraft was just a beginning; we soon realized that we could find exactly the functionality we required in the EventCraft and CommunityCraft services…there are many integrated features available in the same web portal, very helpful and powerful features." Frank says.

Marketingship provided a platform for NCCBA to complete its entire tasks within one application. Now NCCBA can:

- Create stylish and effective emails using professionally designed templates
- Track emails to ensure delivery, confirm readership and gauge recipient reaction for each newsletter
- Efficiently sort and search emails and members to have the right information at the right time
- Create professional looking event registration forms in minutes with a large selection of templates; embed registration link and form into newsletters
- Set tiered registration fees based on registration date and membership level; collect payments automatically
- Send scheduled reminders and updates to event registrants and attendees
- Conduct member segmentation by using Activity Histories to track member interests
- Find members in moments by sorting information fields; search members by events and relevant details

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- Automatically gather new registrations and update registration status
- Track invitations, registrations, payments, and actual event attendance
- Create and customize the organization's own member portal
- Invite people to log in to its member portal from anywhere on the web
- Upload the organization's entire knowledge base to the member portal; build and share the information with members based on different membership levels

The NCCBA RESULT: All in One, easier and happier

NCCBA now manages its entire member related activities and events through Marketingship's MailCraft, EventCraft, and CommunityCraft toolkit. Frank says he is more confident he and the staff can serve the members and the community because he found "a platform to build an application the way I prefer, use the features the way I like, and see the contents the way I want. I was amazed by the wealth of feedback the application provides from many of its trackable metrics. "

Not only are the organizers happier but the members are as well. "I noticed the difference in our event lifecycle right after our debut with Marketingship. People talk. They talk with smiles." Frank says. "…they told me how much they like our professionally designed newsletter. They find the content more informative because we attached a video of the guest speaker's bio into the event homepage…the users enjoy the flexibility of managing their information on the member portal, the ease of renewing and upgrading membership by themselves, and the sense of engagement by having access to the membership directory."

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