Global Corporate Foundation

How one Global Corporate Foundation saved 70% on user fees with SmartSimple.

At a Glance

The Foundation, the philanthropic arm of a global food and beverage company, had been spending a large amount of money on user fees with their supplier, CyberGrants, even though many of their users were only in the system a few days a year. In addition, the service had been declining significantly in recent years. A serious system crash went unresolved for an extended period of time and their customer support lacked a sense of urgency when responding to requests. Looking for a change, the Foundation selected SmartSimple Cloud because of their usage-based pricing model, strong Customer Support, as well as the flexibility and scalability of the SmartSimple Cloud platform to support their increasingly complex needs.

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A Foundation Representative

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Global Corporate Foundation is a SmartSimple Cloud user

Request a demo and learn more about SmartSimple Cloud for Corporate Social Responsibility at www.smartsimple.com

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SmartSimple client since: 2016

Type of giving: Grants

Dollars granted: Approx. $80 million annually

Old system: CyberGrants

SmartSimple product/services:

• SmartSimple Cloud for Corporate Social Responsibility

Key pain points:

• Lack of system stability
• Unresponsive customer support
• High user-based fees

New system must-haves

• Usage-based pricing model
• Flexibility
• A high level of security
• Personalized support offering

About our Client

One of the world's largest food and beverage companies, the Atlanta, Georgia-based company's charitable foundation is a world-wide philanthropic organization, committed to giving back at least 1% of their prior year's operating income annually. As of 2020, they have awarded more than $139 million, providing grants for water and the environment, the economic empowerment of women and community well-being. More than 432 organizations have benefited from their donations in over 154 countries and territories.

CyberGrants system failure prompts the quest for a new solution

The Foundation had been using CyberGrants as their granting solution since 2009. However, they experienced a rash of issues around system functionality and customer support. "We suffered a major system crash and the vendor wasn't able to respond and fix the problem in a timely manner," says one Foundation representative. "We already felt we were spending considerably more than necessary on user fees, so we took this as an opportunity to check out the market and consider implementing a new system."

The grants management team knew that an out-of-the-box solution would not meet the Foundation's complex needs. "The Foundation has a very unique situation. We receive about 6,000 unsolicited applications a year. As an international company, we rely on the recommendations from our global business units as to where our funding should go. There are only 10 of us on staff, and there are business units in countries all around the world. Without the ability to collaborate with them, we'd be unable to keep up-to-date on philanthropic organizations across the globe, so we need their valuable input."

"The local offices have their own philanthropic programs, so it's entirely possible for an organization to receive funding from an office in Japan, then apply for funding from the global Foundation. At that stage, the Japanese office has to approve the application before they qualify for global funding. Add to that our employee giving program and you have a lot of information that needs to be entered, stored, tracked and reported on."

But it was the high user fees that were the major underlying issue. The Foundation had spent a great deal of money each month on user fees because CyberGrants charged the same access fee for everyone, no matter how often they were or were not in the system.

People make the platform

After narrowing down their search to two potential vendors, the grants team decided on SmartSimple Cloud. "What really impressed me was the attitude of the SmartSimple team. While yes, platform functionality and cost was very important to us, it wasn't as important as a company's culture and their attitude towards cooperation. With SmartSimple Cloud, we knew we could build something that would meet everyone's expectations. This was not going to be just a one-time relationship, but a partnership that would build synergy for both organizations."

The Foundation staff were impressed with their seamless implementation and how smoothly their system worked from the get-go. "I love that the platform is fully configurable. Whatever we want to do, SmartSimple Cloud can accommodate and make it happen. The SmartSimple Cloud workflow is completely different from any other we've seen or used. We can decide on how it functions rather than needing to change our process to match the limitations of the system."

"We also appreciate the great Technical Community Support team at SmartSimple. The Technical Community Support team is much more dedicated than at other companies. They have helped us not just with the administration of our system, but with the actual configuration as well. They always complete tasks on time and have extended hours that accommodate the needs of all our offices from around the world."

Significant reduction in the cost of system access

The Foundation is saving 70% annually thanks to SmartSimple's fee structure. "With SmartSimple Cloud, we have the advantage of flexible user fees, so we're only paying for the amount of time people are actually in the system. We're also taking advantage of the community group license that covers occasional users. This is making a huge difference to our bottom line."

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A Foundation Representative

The Foundation staff also really like the benefits of having unique user portals for everyone accessing the system. "Everyone has their own portal, their own password and they only see what they need to see. This makes the overall interface much more efficient for local approvers."

"I would recommend SmartSimple Cloud to anyone because it's a fully configurable solution. We haven't had to compromise our process to use the platform and they have a culture of helping their clients improve their granting processes. We've benefited greatly from our system, and every enhancement just makes it a better solution." ●