

## **Saving The Library: Fundraising Technology Helps The New York Public Library Overcome Budget Cuts**

By Androniki Bossonis

When faced with New York City's proposed 29% library budget cuts, the New York Public Library knew they had to act quickly to raise funds (as well as petition against the budget cuts). Such a cut would severely limit the community's access to library services, such as free books, media and job training. Library hours would be cut almost in half, resulting in most branches opening only three days a week at best.

The third largest public library in North America (and one of the largest in the world), the New York Public Library consists of 87 libraries: four non-lending research libraries, four main lending libraries, a library for the blind and physically challenged, and 77 neighborhood branch libraries in the three boroughs served. Efficiency is crucial in managing a donation and advocacy program for such a comprehensive library system.

Ed Baryluk, VP of Sales at Fanggle, a leading Web 3.0 platform/application provider, heard of NYPL's situation, and offered an innovative fundraising solution. By using Fanggle's Web 3.0 fundraising platform, NYPL was given an easy-to-use cloud computing solution to effectively reach multiple channels and yield highly effective results. This is the second year of the Fanggle/NYPL relationship.

"Fanggle's contributions were key in our fight to restore funding to the Library," says Michelle Misner, The New York Public Library. "They provided unprecedented levels of efficiency for us, as well as convenience for our patrons."

The platform consisted of a back-end admin panel, which managed content on an internet microsite (a small site which functions within the NYPL home page). There, visitors could donate, submit advocacy letters, and view the progress of the campaign against targeted goals. Although the microsite was simple in terms of visitor navigation and back-end administration, the technology driving the site was quite complex.

On the donation side, the user interface made it simple and secure for visitors to donate and view progress, while data of how much was collected is sent to the back end. On the advocacy side, however, an intricate array of tasks had to be seamlessly programmed for accuracy, clarity and ease of use.

By integrating with Google Maps, NYPL library locations appeared mapped on the microsite. A 'bubble' appeared at each location, whose size and color reflected the number of advocacy letters collected. As letters were collected, they were forwarded to their appropriate council member by geomapping the address to a database of council member regions. Copies were forwarded to Mayor Bloomberg's office as well.

A visual gauge showed how many dollars and letters were collected, along with the campaign's targets, and target goal amounts could easily be changed on the back end. The admin panel also

had features for uploading campaign videos featuring the library chancellor, adding information about the potential cuts and their effect on the library, adding quotes and testimonials of public outcry, etc.

In addition to the website, there was a Mobile Site, a Mobile App, and Social Media functions as well, all of which tied into the same back end. The Mobile Site & Mobile App were smaller versions of the website, with the same functionality. Facebook & Twitter users shared and posted links to info, advocacy letter pages or to the fundraising site, which helped the campaign gain traction (especially amongst a younger generation).

What's in store for next year's campaign? Fanggle and NYPL will be integrating QR Code based giving technology, as well as Social Media Fundraising apps, Text to Pledge and Text to Give. These channels also tie into the same, user-friendly admin panel, which makes managing a complex, multi-pronged campaign virtually effortless.

“Now, organizations can reach donors at multiple endpoints simultaneously, collect payments safely and instantly, and track and analyze their data automatically. That's the beauty of Web 3.0...it makes things easier, more secure, and much more efficient”, says Fanggle's Ed Baryluk.

NYPL's adaptation of cutting-edge technology allowed them to overcome a \$40 million shortfall in 2010, and \$37 million in 2011, thus protecting critical resources and vital institutions. Next year could be an even larger battle, but with the help of supporters and robust technology, NYPL feels confident that they can keep libraries in top budgetary priority.