The Computerworld Honors Program

Honoring those who use Information Technology to benefit society

Final Copy of Case Study

YEAR:
2012

STATUS:
Laureate

Organization name:
edRover, a project of DDx Media, Inc.

Organization URL:
http://edrover.com

Project Name:
edRover

What social/humanitarian issue was the project designed to address? What specific metrics did you use to measure the project's success?

edRover was designed to address the problem of declining funding for education across the U.S. In addition, our solution helps participating businesses gain new customers, boosting the local economies. Through our mobile apps, we've created a virtuous circle of consumers looking for businesses that want to give back to schools, and in turn those consumers benefit from special offers and learning about new businesses. Together, both groups working together to raise resources available for education. Since the program launched in late March 2011, 11,000+ consumers from over 1,000 schools have joined our communities to help raise funds for their favorite schools. We have also listed over 40,000 check-in locations across the U.S.

Please describe the technologies used and how those technologies were deployed in an innovative way. Also, please include any technical or other challenges that were overcome for the successful implementation of the project.

We focused on using smart phones to address the challenge of school fundraising. Since each smart phone has a built-in GPS, location-intelligent apps were created to locate nearby businesses or landmarks that are sponsored check-in points. When the consumer is close enough (within .1 mile radius), a donation can be "fetched" by clicking a button to check into the location. The funds are then transferred from the businesses' account to an account that the user can apply to their favorite school. One of the major challenges has been the disparate mobile operating systems. Programming for each platform is costly, and it is difficult to find programmers

who can cross over between the platforms. Thankfully, there are emerging cross-platform development frameworks that we will begin to use so that we can expand more affordably.

Please list the specific humanitarian benefits the project has yielded so far.

We are in the early beta stage of the program, and it takes time to fully spread the word to 100,000+ eligible schools, education foundations, and other education-oriented 501(c)(3) organizations that can benefit. Our users have just started raising funds through this program in the 2011-2012 school year. We know from enthusiastic comments on our company blog that parents are looking forward to raising funds to purchase classroom, art, music and sports supplies, field trips, technology, and enrichment opportunities that have been cut due to budget pressure. We also know from business feedback that they see this as a streamlined way of giving back and raising their profile in the community as a company that cares. We believe that this type of philanthropic marketing will be very popular and beneficial in the coming years.

Please provide the best example of how the project has benefited a specific individual, enterprise or organization. Feel free to include personal quotes from individuals who have directly benefited from the work.

Parents have enthusiastically thanked us for creating such an easy system for school fundraising that they can use for free. Their comments on our website have been really gratifying. There are way too many quotes there to pick from! Many are worried that kids don't have food at home, that kids are being cut from sports teams because they can't afford the equipment, that field trips have been cancelled and that old standards like journalism, drama, debate, art, gym and music are being cut. Many are hoping to send basic supplies like paper and pencils into their children's classrooms. A restaurant manager has thanked us for streamlining her charitable giving approach. Instead of blindly giving out gift cards for hundreds of requests from schools and other non-profits annually, they can make one gift through edRover and encourage these organizations to use edRover to gather their share of the donation by confirming visits to the restaurant regularly. We will be posting many testimonials on our YouTube Channel in the coming weeks: http://youtube.com/edRover1.