



photo provided by Museum of Contemporary Art



www.mcachicago.org

at a glance

- The Museum of Contemporary Art needed to implement a complete ticketing, marketing, and CRM solution.
- Its previous system could only handle reserved seating and was cumbersome, not very intuitive, and had only limited marketing capabilities.
- The organization used Blackbaud's **The Patron Edge** to streamline operations, provide advanced marketing capabilities, solve training issues, and get easy-to-use, detailed seating plans.

Blackbaud software and services used by Museum of Contemporary Art:

- **The Patron Edge®**

The Museum of Contemporary Art Streamlines Operations with The Patron Edge®

The Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) in Chicago, Illinois offers exhibitions of the most thought-provoking art created since 1945. The MCA documents contemporary visual culture through painting, sculpture, video and film, photography, and performance.

the challenge

In June 2004, MCA saw a need to implement a complete ticketing, marketing, and CRM solution that could also manage both reserved seating in its theater and general admission to the museum itself. The ticketing system in place could only be used for reserved seating, and its users found that the existing system:

- Was very slow and cumbersome, taking up to thirteen mouse clicks to allow patrons entry to the theater
- Had limited marketing capabilities
- Was not very intuitive or user-friendly, making training difficult

the solution

MCA wanted to implement a system that would not only eliminate these issues, but one that would also manage general admissions across the organization. MCA particularly wanted to address the issue surrounding its marketing capabilities.

"Measuring the success of marketing campaigns was next to impossible. Our box office system would recognize concessionary coupons we had sent out, but it would not make any distinctions between them," remembered Amy Corle, director of visitor services and manager of internal marketing at MCA. "In the same way, it would allow free entry to relevant patrons but would not divide these free admissions into relevant marketing categories."

MCA also wanted to address the issue of staff training. A key requirement of the new solution was that it be user-friendly and intuitive to make in-house training of new staff easier.

MCA selected Blackbaud's comprehensive box office, marketing, and CRM solution — **The Patron Edge®** — to address these immediate issues.

the results

Upon implementation, users immediately reported a much speedier point of entry for both general admission and reserved seating shows. In addition, the solution proved itself extremely user-friendly, and any training issues were resolved quickly. "Two of our staff members were trained on



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“Now all marketing campaigns can be tracked in a way that wasn’t possible before.”

The Patron Edge® at Blackbaud’s Charleston, South Carolina headquarters, and they were then fully equipped to train others, even a member of senior management who subsequently went on to train others herself,” said Ms. Corle.

But it was the advanced marketing capabilities in **The Patron Edge** that had the most impact within the organization. “Now all marketing campaigns can be tracked in a way that wasn’t possible before,” said Ms. Corle. “To be able to look up visitors and view their visit histories is amazing, and we are now able to invite our patrons to performances and educational programs that we know will interest them, purely based on this visit history,” she added.

This has enabled MCA to achieve financial benefits also. “Because we can now anticipate attendance levels for these educational programs, we have been able to apply for grants and additional funding based on these figures,” said Ms. Corle.

The Patron Edge also enabled MCA to view, at a glance, detailed seating plans for the entire auditorium. “It’s great to be able to click on any seat and see who is seated there for any particular performance — or who should be seated there!” said Ms. Corle. “We are also able to identify exactly where our donors and major donors are seated, so we can give them the special treatment they deserve.”



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