



Case Study: University of Minnesota Extension

Extension division coordinates 50 program teams with online event management software

Background

University of Minnesota Extension (Extension) is a 100-year-old partnership between federal, state and county governments as they provide scientific knowledge and expertise to the public. Land-grant institutions like the University of Minnesota “extend” their resources, solving public needs with university resources through non-formal, non-credit programs. With approximately 50 program teams running hundreds of programs, these offerings help Minnesotans make better decisions, take positive action and address key issues in their lives and communities. Extension began using Active Network’s RegOnline product in December 2008 to help automate and manage their programs, saving time and becoming more efficient.

Why Active?



Prior to choosing Active Network, Extension was using another software vendor who proved to be unreliable and went out of business. Extension started shopping around for other providers. “Our priority was of course to find a company that was stable,” mentions Patrice Johnson of Extension’s Resource Development Unit. “For the system itself, we needed it to be accessible, easy to use and affordable. Active had the bells and whistles and was reasonably priced.” With over 10 years in the industry, Active also had the staying power and dependability Extension was looking for.

Feature-Rich Functionality

With so many programs to run, Extension uses RegOnline in a variety of ways. Here are a few of the features that Patrice and the staff find the most helpful:

- ▶ **Multi-Level, Simultaneous Access.** “We have a lot of program coordinators who all need access to the system, primarily to run reports. With RegOnline, we can give everyone a login and they can access their specific programs whenever they want.”
- ▶ **Easy, Quick Setup.** Setting up registration for each program is simple and at most takes an hour or two. “Usually we copy our events over, so it is just a click of the mouse,” notes Patrice. “It saves us a ton of time.”
- ▶ **Custom Forms.** RegOnline’s registration forms are flexible with the ability to tailor colors, add logos and generally match the look and feel of any website.

Customer at a Glance

Customer:

University of Minnesota Extension

Solution: RegOnline

URL: www.extension.umn.edu

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- ▶ **Real-time Reporting.** RegOnline comes equipped with a multitude of reports including cross-event reports, post-event financial summaries, and event snapshot overviews. "With all transactions and activities listed, it gives people peace of mind when they know where the money is coming from and going to." As part of the reporting functionality, a "smart link" URL can be created. Sending this URL to program coordinators allows them to view an updated, accurate report each time they click on the link.
- ▶ **Automatic Email Confirmations.** Once an attendee registers, the system automatically emails a registration confirmation with all pertinent details included. This saves staff time and eliminates paperwork.
- ▶ **Dedicated Customer Support.** "My experience with customer support has been great," says Patrice. "I call them every week!"

Conclusion

For Extension, RegOnline has definitely saved it time and the reporting has been invaluable. After the initial launch, it became apparent how easy the system was to use and how much better the information program coordinators received was. "Every penny is accounted for, all the functionality we need is there, and it's easy," notes Patrice.

