



Florida Church Brings **Digital Giving Solution** to its Congregation to **Stabilize and Increase Donations**

RidgePoint Church is one of Florida's leading non-denominational Christian worship institutions. Located in the community of Winter Haven, RidgePoint strives to bring a welcoming and casual environment to its base of 800+ parishioners, hosting two weekly services.

CHALLENGES

With a young and expanding congregation, RidgePoint Church knew it needed to be willing to adapt to meet the needs and expectations of its members to ensure it did not face the financial concerns plaguing many other places of worship.

However, like many religious and not-for-profit institutions, RidgePoint relies almost exclusively on gifts from its members to cover monthly overhead and support its charitable causes. In 2005, donation totals, given primarily through the traditional "pass the plate" method by cash or check, ranged anywhere from \$7,000-\$8,000 per month, a huge difference for an organization with an already tight budget.

Speaking with members, RidgePoint's leadership ascertained that the problem stemmed, not from a lack of interest in donating, but rather from a lack of in-pocket cash. As one parishioner pointed out, "I don't carry cash, and I don't even know where my checkbook is."

What was needed was a solution that provided would-be donors with a combination of ease of access and ease of use. With an average member age of 29, providing a technology-based giving alternative seemed the logical next best step in engaging members to donate on a regular basis.

But, although the Church in 2005 established an online donation portal, use of the portal was limited, with just 33 percent of members making use of the platform on a regular basis by the end of 2011.

SOLUTION

In 2012, then Lead Pastor Timm Collins began a conversation with his team around how they could encourage members to embrace online giving. The team recognized that one of the challenges to date continued to be a lack of education and promotion around the online portal and decided to institute measures to remedy that lack, further deciding to explore what other giving alternatives might be an option.

Already working with digital giving solutions provider Qgiv for their existing portal, Collins and his team decided to again engage Qgiv to bring the company's digital giving kiosk to RidgePoint's members while maintaining the online portal—keeping all solutions under one platform. Qgiv's comprehensive giving platform combines online donation properties

with mobile and in-person digital kiosks, enabling churches to reach their parishioners and external donor base at any time, in any context to help to increase the consistency, volume and amount of donations.

The Qgiv Kiosk combines online donation properties with the latest advancements in tablet technology, while its branded online portal enables donors to automate their gifting schedules, and receive detailed receipts for each donation via email.

In addition to the installation of a giving kiosk in the church's worship center, RidgePoint's leadership also began a promotion and educational campaign to increase visibility and awareness around the online portal.

The church's pastors note that traditional giving methods statistically have about a five minute window. But, in today's tech-savvy generation, that period has shrunk to seconds before the donor walks away. They say that being able to swipe a credit card or to quickly set up a secure online account with reoccurring donations has made all the difference for the church's members and the consistency of the donations the church receives.

RESULTS

Just a few short months after making the shift, the portal and kiosk were paying dividends for RidgePoint.

2011– 2012

The percentage of those giving to RidgePoint's general fund via digital means climbed from 33 percent in 2011 to 55 percent by year's end in 2012 (48 percent online; 7 percent kiosk).

2013

In January 2013, member gifts given digitally reached an all-time high, surpassing 80 percent on a single Sunday.

INCREASING GIFTS:

- In 2011, RidgePoint members passed the \$10,000 digital donation mark during only three months, with an average donation total of approximately \$1,420/week across the year.
- In 2012, all months exceeded \$10,000, and six months exceeded \$15,000, averaging \$2,280/week across the year. Shortly after introducing the digital education campaign for members, RidgePoint's average increased to \$2,728/week.

Global Funds

Qgiv's portal also enables fundraising from afar. As members work to raise funds for mission trips or other worthy causes, they increasingly are engaging with their family and friends via online social networks, driving them to the web portal, and bringing in funds from across the globe.



THE ROAD AHEAD

As the number of members using Qgiv's digital platform options for their gifts continues to increase, RidgePoint is looking to the future, working with Qgiv to pilot the company's latest Text Giving option to enable donations via mobile device, making it even easier for members to make their gifts to the church from anywhere, at any time.