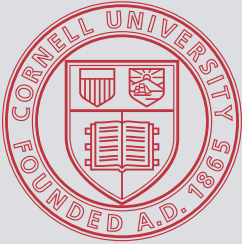# Client Success Story

Cornell University

cvent

Cornell University's Dairy Management Group in the Department of Animal Science runs an outreach program for the entire New York State dairy industry, a major industry which accounts for almost $3 billion of New York State's farm cash receipts. As part of its outreach efforts, the department is responsible for implementing initiatives that keep the dairy and livestock community aware of the latest research in animal breeding, nutrition, and reproduction and nutrition management.

The Problem

The Animal Science Department holds several events to engage New York State farmers, ranging from small, 15-person seminars to large hundred-person conferences. In addition to events, the department sells software licenses worldwide and fundraises for its undergraduate Dairy Fellows program. With all these initiatives underway, department members began to struggle with their data management and event registration processes.

Only 14% of the total registrants used the online registration option; the rest mailed in their registrations and payments.

Prior to purchasing Cvent's complete event management platform in 2011, conference coordinator Heather Darrow relied on multiple tools to execute the group's events. This made the entire event planning process extremely time consuming. The group's former registration system did not have any email marketing functionality, so launching events required Darrow to export contacts from a Microsoft Access database and mail paper invitations with instructions on how to register by check or online. Only 14% of the total registrants used the online registration option; the rest mailed in their registrations and payments. Since the online registration system was not connected to the Access database, this meant Darrow had to spend time manually recording both online and paper registrations back in the database.

"We were duplicating our work," said Darrow. "The Access database had over 17,000 contact records, and was too large and cumbersome to manage efficiently. Instead of spending time on bigger picture items related to marketing our events, we were doing database maintenance."

Despite the maddening amount of time Darrow devoted to data entry, the database remained mired by duplicates and inaccuracies. Furthermore, because so many invitees chose to mail checks rather than pay online, the events team had process deposits with the University twice a week with 15-20 checks each. The Dairy Management Group was ready to modernize its archaic process.

The Solution

In 2011, Cornell's Dairy Management Group chose Cvent. Right from the start, Darrow realized her days of juggling multiple systems were over.

With Cvent's event management platform, the group now uses a single system to manage events. Instead of only sending mailings with instructions on how to register, Darrow sends attendees an email invitation linking them directly to the event website where they can register and pay. All event registration information is automatically stored in Cvent's contact database and payments are automatically deposited into the University's account.

In addition to streamlining the event management process, Darrow found that Cvent could simplify all of the department's outreach efforts. With the platform, applicants can apply online for Cornell's Dairy Acceleration program, donors can make a donation with one click, and Darrow can distribute and track the department's software licenses. Even the renewal process has improved with the use of automated membership alerts for the Dairy Profit Monitor program.

"I didn't want to continue running parallel systems, so Cvent is the end all be all," said Darrow. "We can be more efficient and engage attendees more effectively by using one system for all of our outreach efforts."

The Results

online registrations increased by 68%, *saving 10 hours* of manual data entry work per event.

attendance rose

10%
per year
every year since 2011 with Cvent

25%
increased in sponsorship contributions

The results of making the move to Cvent are felt positively across Cornell's Dairy Management Group. Although the group still mails some paper invitations and marketing pieces—they're no longer the department's only point of contact with attendees. The email invitations with a direct link to the registration page have increased online registrations by 68%. This saved Darrow 10 hours of manual data entry work per event.

"After we started using Cvent, I didn't have to touch 82% of registrations. They're recorded in the system automatically," said Darrow. "It's allowed me and my team to focus on more important tasks."

With more time in their day, Darrow and her team ramped up their outreach initiatives by sending email newsletters to the surrounding dairy community. As a result of increased engagement efforts, Cornell saw its Annual Dairy Conference attendance numbers rise 10% every year since 2011.

Not only did attendance numbers rise, conference sponsorship contributions increased. Now that the group can solicit contributions through email and donors can pay online, contributions increased 25%!

Cvent's all-in-one event management platform is the solution Cornell's Dairy Management Group in the Department of Animal Science needed. With a centralized contact database, and the ability to manage registrations, donations and software licensing online, the Cornell team is prepared to take on any new initiative that comes its way.

"The positive effects of Cvent's technology have added time in our day, freed us up to be more creative and made it easier for our attendees to take advantage of what we offer," said Darrow.

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