

The logo for The George Washington University, consisting of the letters 'GW' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, centered between two horizontal gold lines.

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Connecting people and information

CASE STUDY

GreenOrbit 



"This is how people know what's going on in the organization. If you want people to know about it — post it on the intranet."

INDUSTRY
Education

USERS
200

- FOCUS**
- **Communications**
 - **Online Forms**
 - **Culture**

The George Washington University (GW) is a private university and research institution in Washington, D.C. Founded in 1821, GW has since grown to span three campuses and enrolls more than 26,000 students. The institution is renowned for developing global leaders and boasts alumni such as former Secretary of State Colin Powell and First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis.

Key to supporting GW's prosperity is the Division of Development and Alumni Relations. This team of nearly 200 fundraisers, alumni relations officers, advancement services staff, and communications and marketing professionals is responsible for engaging alumni and securing donations to the university. This includes fundraising to students, alumni, philanthropists, corporations and foundations, all of whom allow GW to continue to provide world-class education and research.

Recently, GW concluded the Making History Campaign, which raised an astonishing \$1 billion in funds from more than 65,000 donors. Key to achieving this ambitious target has been a 'can do' culture and a strong communications framework — utilizing GreenOrbit (formerly Intranet DASHBOARD) platform.



CHALLENGE

Email Overload

Prior to GreenOrbit, the Division of Development and Alumni and Relations (DAR) had a heavy reliance on department-wide emails. Learning and Development Specialist Kadie Groh explains that "Everyone was emailing everyone, so you were getting several emails a day that were coming from a central list. Then you were always scouring your inbox, looking for information, perhaps from several weeks ago."

This was exacerbated by the fact that staff work across several campuses and locations. As such, they required a central location to access the communications and information needed to support their fundraising efforts.

"It's where we store all of our case statements and information for fundraisers to provide to donors, assisting them in acquiring donations."

SOLUTION

Central Communications

GreenOrbit was selected to connect the DAR staff to information, and to each other. As a result, naming the new intranet 'DAR Connect' was a natural decision.

Moving away from the "email mess" that previously plagued the team, DAR Connect provides a central location to access everything that's happening within the division. GreenOrbit News is a key feature that takes pride of place on the intranet home page, sharing all kinds of updates, reminders, stories, and alerts. Associate Director of Development Communications Craig Burdick says, "This is how people know what's going on in the organization. If you want people to know about it- post it on the intranet."

Kadie also confirms that "News has been so helpful to get us away from emails. Everything you need is now right there on the homepage."

SOLUTION CONT.

Culture

Over its rich history, GW has developed a culture of "Communication, diversity, excellence, respect, service, sustainability and teamwork." For the Development and Alumni Relations division, GreenOrbit has provided a vehicle to celebrate and further develop these key values.

A 'Culture' subsite within the intranet has been created to share division goals and visions. A key feature of this is 'DAR Stars', where staff can give 'shout outs' to their colleagues and celebrate their fundraising achievements. Contributors simply complete an GreenOrbit Online Form to submit their suggestion."

"Our interactions with the GreenOrbit team have been amazing. Everyone has been so friendly, helpful, communicative and open to doing whatever they can to help us."



The Making History Campaign

To help support their fundraising goals, the Development and Alumni Relations division created a Campaign Update subsite. Throughout the billion-dollar campaign, this was the place to access updates and information and to celebrate milestones.

"We had a monthly tally on how much money we had raised, and how much more there was to go. It's where we stored all of our case statements and information for fundraisers to provide to donors, assisting them in acquiring donations."

Using Online Forms, staff could also request university leadership to attend fundraising events and meetings when needed — a welcomed alternative to email.

Customer Experience & Future Plans

GreenOrbit have worked closely with Development and Alumni Relations, who conclude that "Our interactions with the GreenOrbit team have been amazing. Everyone has been so friendly, helpful, communicative and open to doing whatever they can to help us. It's a really good relationship."

Moving forward, GW plans to leverage GreenOrbit's Enterprise Social Network tools to further develop internal communications and collaboration. Craig views the tagging feature of Channels as a way experts can share their experiences to help others — "You can do pretty much everything with it!"

The team at GreenOrbit looks forward to working with GW in the future, and helping to evolve their intranet as their organization continues to grow and develop.



Get Going

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About GreenOrbit

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