Customer success story:

Leukemia & Lymphoma Society drives fundraising by embracing connectivity strategy

Overview

100%	**24K**	**10M**
fundraising platform uptime	transactions per hour enabled	donations in first 4 months

Challenge

Needing connectivity for an online fundraising platform

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS) is the world's largest volunteer health organization dedicated to funding blood cancer research, education, and patient services. Since its founding in 1949, LLS has invested more than $600 million for research specifically targeting blood cancers. LLS is devoted to curing leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease and myeloma, and improving the quality of life of patients and their families.

Through its flagship program, Team in Training (TNT), LLS has also grown to become the world's largest endurance sports training program, raising more than $850 million since its founding in 1988. The TNT program allows amateur endurance athletes to help raise funds for LLS. In exchange, the program provides personalized fitness training and sponsored trips to endurance events around the globe, including marathons, triathlons, and century bike rides.

Since individual fundraising is core to the development strategy at LLS, the organization recognized the trend towards online fundraising in the market. In order to reduce costs and improve the user experience on the TNT online platform, LLS needed to embrace a connectivity solution between its outsourced application and internal systems.

Objectives

Reducing costs by embracing integration in healthcare

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society needed to reduce fundraising costs and improve the user experience for the Team in Training program. This required:

- Creating an online fundraising platform for the Team in Training campaign with a positive user experience

- Using an ESB-like implementation platform and AnypointMQ to create a highly reliable core integration backbone, integrating legacy back-end applications with modern front-end experience

Solution

Embracing digital transformation for the TNT fundraising platform

With their new connectivity strategy, LLS regained control of the infrastructure, developing a set of rich user applications and integrating them with the existing back-end systems. Because donors would be performing important financial transactions, the system would need to be highly reliable - with no messages lost, robust exception strategies, and an active/passive failover architecture to achieve full redundancy.

Using Adobe Flex to create a rich user interface, LLS built a series of front-end applications, allowing individual participants to register themselves and manage their own fundraising, and providing TNT chapters with tools for administration. The team brought together Mule and AnypointMQ at the core, creating a backbone to integrate the front-end applications with a core set of reusable services called Mission360, as well as a legacy VB-based campaign management system called Society Central. Mule's out-of-the-box connectors allow the applications to access the file system and SMTP services for sending email.

The IT team was challenged by the LLS Board of Directors to meet an aggressive 3-month timeline to complete the project. To make sure that their Mule implementation was "first time right," the LLS team used MuleSoft's center for enablement to help with their architecture and implementation of Anypoint Platform.

By partnering with MuleSoft's center for enablement, the LLS team was able reduce project risk and complete their project within the 3-month timeline.

Results

Helping drive $10 million in donations within 4 months of rollout

The LLS team's new architecture and organization resulted in a set of robust systems and processes, designed to scale with increasing donations for years to come. The system is designed and tested to handle peak loads of over 24,000 messages per hour. In the first 4 months of production, the system processed over 500,000 messages with zero message loss.

> "Since we went live with the solution, we have seen 100% uptime, and almost unnoticeable CPU utilization from Mule. This reliability has really freed the IT team to spend more time on innovation rather than fielding support calls as we did in the past."

Osman Mazhar
Senior Architect, LLS

The business-level benefits resulting from these changes are even more remarkable. User feedback on the interface and system performance has been overwhelmingly positive. The improved functionality and performance have helped to drive over $10 million in donations in the first 4 months alone.

"The savings we have realized by building this infrastructure has really affirmed the success of this venture," added Mazhar. "Every dollar we save on fundraising costs means more money going for research and patient services."

Over time, LLS will leverage TNT's scalable platform to bring its other programs on board, further improving cost efficiencies by eliminating redundancies. With more IT resources now available for innovation, the team plans to develop and integrate value-added community features such as blogs, discussion boards and forums, to continue enhancing the user experience and driving stickiness.

"These are mission-critical systems handling significant amounts of money," concluded Mazhar, "So we want to have somebody to lean on in case anything goes wrong. For LLS and our beneficiaries, it can literally be a matter of life and death."