TIP SHEET

Upgrade Your Homegrown Award Management System – 5 Reasons to Partner with a Tech Company

As higher ed financial aid leaders know, the right award management system can make all the difference between getting awards to the appropriate students and having unused scholarship funds leftover. It not only helps their organization deliver impact on campus, but it also helps leaders and teams with the most crucial tasks and provides visibility into each scholarship fund and its lifecycle.

Unfortunately, sometimes making the case for an award management system can be challenging, leaving institutions reliant upon in-house award systems and processes that can be cumbersome. So, what can financial aid leaders do? Keep reading for five reasons why partnering with an established tech company and adopting an innovative award system can help you deliver greater impact.

1 Access to Resources
Gain access to an unmatched community of users all working within the same framework to achieve similar goals. What better way to master technology and stay up to date on the latest best practices than by joining Blackbaud's community groups, user-conferences, and other champion programs. These types of opportunities aren't afforded when operating in a vacuum of a system that other institutions wouldn't be able to understand.

2 Dedicated Team of Developers
By partnering with a tech company, you also get dedicated developers and projects managers working to ensure the success of the solution. This means that there is a team focused on solving issues when they arise and discovering ways to improve the product. With homegrown systems, institutions must rely on the one or two IT staff available to help troubleshoot – and this is in addition to everything else they are working on.

3 Voice of the Customer

What better way to improve a product than by incorporating feedback direct from customers? Tech companies know this and are constantly working with customers to identify ways they can address challenges and shortcomings within their products. Whereas the IT department on campus does not have the time or resources to focus on discovery work and find ways to improve their antiquated system or processes.

4 Connect Solutions Across Campus

At Blackbaud, we have created a solution that easily integrates with other solutions on campus including your CRM, student information system, and accounting software. It goes without saying how much of an advantage it can be to have your solutions connected and the ability to seamlessly share data across platforms. A homegrown solution will most likely require manual imports of data to keep up with changing student and fund information, requiring a lot of time and energy for your team that could be spent awarding funds.

5 Tech Support

Upon implementation of your new award management system, you also gain additional support from product experts and customer success managers. This means being able to talk to someone at all hours of the day to fix problems in real time. Sometimes with a homegrown system, teams have to create workarounds that are not ideal and can add more work and steps to a process due to the lack of IT staff or support resources.

Making the change from a homegrown award system to a new award management system with an established tech partner will be a major project for your team. However, Blackbaud is here to help every step of the way. From your decision to partner with us through implementation and going live on the system, our team is dedicated to making the process as seamless as possible.

Learn more