



# Database Review

Performed for Fine Arts Museum of Anytown

Client ID: D10000

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## Database Review

SofterWare's database review is a three-phase process specifically designed to provide your organization with a detailed review of your DonorPerfect database. The emphasis is on identifying the ways in which you can better utilize the software and services according to best practices and standard features found in DonorPerfect.

The three-phase process consists of the following:

- ✓ Gathering information from you regarding your business and the use of the software
- ✓ Reviewing your data for efficiency of use and overall database health
- ✓ SofterWare then provides a comprehensive gap analysis of its usage

Key aspects of the database are analyzed and a conference call will be scheduled to review the results and the action plan for bridging any identified gaps.

## Client Profile

### Support

Most recent calls to Support pertain to filters. Four calls have been made based on selection criteria for mailings.

### Training

Client has a Live and Recorded Webinar subscription with an expiration of January 15, 2010.

Completed trainings include 4 hours of telephone-based training.

## Client Questions and Concerns

Client has requested that the Main, Gift, Pledge and Address/Sal screens along with the appropriate coded fields be reviewed.

## Business Process Review

Membership-driven organization

Methods of Fundraising: events, mailings, membership

Mailings: Membership renewals, end of year appeal, annual newsletter, and major donor appeal.

Modules: none

# Software Utilization Review

## Screens and Fields

### Main Screen

The primary use of the Main Screen is to enter the contact information and preferred mailing address of a donor, as well as phone numbers and email addresses. The Main Screen is also used to gather other detailed information based on a donor's record type, affiliation with your organization and mailing history to enable segmentation and reporting of your constituencies.

#### *Use of the Main Screen*

There are records entered as individuals that should have originally been entered as organizations. This occurred during the time of entry. The records that are organizations but have a Main Screen consisting of Last Name/First Name (should be Org. Name/Org. Prefix), will need to have the Switch field checked on the Bio2 screen and the appropriate data fields must be changed. Almost 200 records were found in the database that have no address or city or state and are not marked Do Not Mail. Attempts should be made to fill in the missing data or the records should be marked Do Not Mail to prevent returns from the post office and to reduce mailing costs.

Currently only 10% of your database has recorded email addresses. Email addresses are entered along with the phone numbers on the Main Screen. The addresses can be used to send emails out to donors through their donor record, or to do group mailings via a third party vendor such as Constant Contact.

The field *Flags* (**FLAGS**), is used to represent the affiliation or connection of the donor to your organization. Flags should not be used to reflect membership, historical or transactional data. Flags have been used but not across a large portion of the database. Only about 31% of your donors have a flag assigned. Most of the codes in the Flags field have been correctly established with a consistent number of characters, i.e. two. There are others that exceed that length. It is recommended that code length for flags remain consistent to ensure proper results when querying the database. There are several codes that have been assigned but do not exist, as well as codes that are in the current listing but have not been used.

The *Record Type* field (**TYPE**) should be a broad categorization of a segment to which the donor belongs, e.g. individual, company, foundation, etc. Codes such as Major Donor or Prospect prevent the analysis of funding sources and can be discerned from filters on various fields in your system. This field can be used to break down which segments provide what portion of revenue to your organization. This data can then be represented, for instance, in a pie chart or bar graph illustrating components of funding: 55% from individuals, 25% from corporate, 10% from foundations, etc. Currently, about 3% of your database has a record type selected and not all types are used in the recommended manner. A listing of those records with no record type can be generated so they can be properly filled in.

The field *Recent Mail* (**MAILINGS**) has not been used. This field can be globally filled in when you create mailmerge files from DonorPerfect to record who the recipients of your mailings were. Further queries can be made to determine who did not respond with a gift, thereby necessitating a follow-up mailing.

## Gift Screen

The purpose of the Gift Screen is to enter donations. Some of the key fields on the screen include the *Solicitation* and *General Ledger*. These fields are used to track your fundraising efforts based on your methods of fundraising. The data entered on the Gift Screen is the basis for the Financial Reports that are generated on a regular basis. Types of gifts include straight gifts, in-kind gifts, linked and split gifts. The use of the *Thank You Letter* field can seamlessly integrate the data entry of gifts with the acknowledgement process.

### *Use of the Gift Screen*

The *Solicitation* field (**SOL**) is used to enter the event, mailing or reason for the gift, i.e. what prompted the donation. The solicitations that occur on an annual basis should be entered as a new solicitation each year. This enables you to view a history of the solicitation on one report so that you can see the increase/decrease in that method's effectiveness from year-to-year. Solicitation codes for Festival, Major Donor Appeal, End of Year Appeal and Newsletter have no year designation. The solicitation field has numerous outdated codes. Solicitation codes for past events and mailings should be inactivated using Code Maintenance in order to condense the pick list of codes during data entry while still being able to query the inactivated codes.

The *General Ledger* codes (**GL**) should represent the General Ledger accounts in your accounting system for easy reconciliation. The general ledgers are the funds or programs to which gifts are credited. If the current general ledger codes in your list are the correct representations, then the codes need no modifying. If additional accounts are needed, they can be added through Code Maintenance. There are several codes assigned to gifts (matching the solicitation code) that have since been deleted, hence reports will not be meaningful for this data. Codes that will no longer be used should be made inactive so that they can still be reported on in the future. Codes can be made inactive through Code Maintenance.

The *Type of Gift* field (**GIFTTYPE**) is used to record the type of donation (check, credit card, in-kind, etc.) that has been made. Less than 35% of your gifts have a gift type listed. It is recommended that gift types are notated for each donation made. Setting a default on this field to a value such as check would provide better information on this field in the future.

The *Thank You Letter* field (**TYLETTER**) is used to designate the type of acknowledgment the donor will receive. Every gift that is to be acknowledged must have a thank you letter selected. Over time this field should be populated with the different thank you letters you send out. The accompanying templates should be created and stored for a seamless merge.

## Pledge Screen

The purpose of the Pledge Screen is to enter the pledges made by the donors. The information entered enables your organization to keep track of projected income based on the commitment made by the donors. In addition to the projected payment schedules, it facilitates billing of donors' payments.

### *Use of the Pledge Screen*

Currently there are 49 open pledges in the database. Only 8 of the open pledges are set to receive reminders and pledge processing has not been done since August of 2007. There is an outstanding total balance due of \$75,200. That total includes open pledges dated back to 2001. Should some of the older pledges be written off? Are pledge payments being applied correctly to reduce the pledge balances? Please refer to the Needs Assessment for recommendations.

### **Other Info Screen – Included in the Preferred Review**

The Other Information entry screen allows you to maintain non-financial transactional information about donors. There are many possible uses for this tab such as tracking volunteer hours, Board/Committee terms or names of children.

### *Use of the Other Info Screen*

No use has been made of this screen.

### **Link Screen– Included in the Preferred Review**

The Link screen stores an unlimited number of relational "links" between separate records. For instance, you can link a donor to his/her employer as well as to family members. Creating links between records allows you to see how your donors are connected. Since the links have reciprocal relationships, you can easily navigate from one record to the other.

### *Use of the Link Screen*

Minimal use has been made of this screen and most of the links are to the original record. Link codes have been edited and are no longer set up as reciprocal.

### **Contact Screen– Included in the Preferred Review**

Contact Management allows you to keep track of ongoing projects related to managing your relationships with your constituents and the associated follow-up activities. All activities pertaining to constituents can be entered into the Contact Screen, such as meetings, mailings and phone contact. Contact Manager can also be used as a "tickler file" or reminder for those activities labeled with a due date.

### *Use of the Contact Screen*

Minimal use has been made of this screen. Some correspondence has been noted but not assigned to a contact person. Since the Contact Manager can be used as a reminder for pending activities based on the association of login ID's to open activities, it is recommended that the login ID's of staff members be established as the codes in the *Contact Person* field (**BYWHOM**). In addition, this screen does show

there have been mailings through DonorPerfect, although some mailcodes have not been entered onto the Main Screen in the *Recent Mail* field (**MAILINGS**) (see note in Main screen section). Using the *Update Last Contact* feature of Mailmerge will ensure that all fields are populated on constituent records that reflect a mailing has been sent. Permanent history of all mailings sent can then be maintained on the Contact screen.

## **Bio 2 Screen**

The Bio 2 screen shows additional fields from the Main (DP.DBF) table in which you can enter other information about your donors. Examples of items on this entry screen are capital campaign information, major donor research, volunteer planning, planned giving or membership status. You have the option to add up to 9 sub-screens to this screen. The pull-down displayed in the upper right corner allows you to navigate amongst the sub-screens.

### *Use of the Bio 2 Screen*

Limits have not been assigned for all membership categories. The *Membership Category* field (**MCAT**) is designed to store the dollar ranges for the appropriate membership levels so that DonorPerfect can automatically assign the membership levels for you. This is recommended as a high priority since your organization relies on membership.

## **Addr/Sal Screen**

The Address/Salutation entry screen allows you to enter additional addresses and/or salutations for donors along with their mailing preferences. From this screen, you can designate the type of mailings a specific alternate address is to receive. This allows you to send mail to a specific member of a household and still maintain the primary record as the couple, company, or family (for instance, for board, staff, or volunteer mailings).

### *Use of the Addr/Sal Screen*

There are 242 organization records and roughly 50% of those records have a cross-reference. When a name is entered on the *Optional Line* or a *Contact* person is listed at a company or organization, making a cross-reference facilitates the constituent search process.

Since some mailings were listed as Flags, the Addr/Sal screen might be a better use of mailing instructions, thereby eliminating special handling. For instance, if the female member of the household is the phonathon volunteer, a packet or list of donors for that volunteer can be sent to the volunteer and not to both members of the household using selected mailcodes, thereby eliminating the need for special handling. So, if a volunteer named Paula Martin is married to John Martin, an alternate mailing address that contains Paula Martin instead of John and Paula Martin can be used for the Phonathon Volunteer mailing.

## Utilities – Included in the Advanced Review

### Duplicate Maintenance

A preview of the Name/Address duplicates revealed approximately 83 pages or roughly 200 pairs of possible duplicates. If there are true duplicates, printing costs and postage can be reduced by consolidating the records. In doing so, all gifts, pledges, etc. are merged into one record and the other record is deleted. Numerous duplicates have been recognized as organizations with more than one contact. We suggest listing the contacts as alternate addresses on one organization record, possibly reducing mailing costs. There are 21 pages of potential duplicates with same last name and no street address. If the addresses are not known but you'd like to keep the donor in your database, be sure to mark them as "Do Not Send Mail". After duplicates are merged, any remaining entries with no address or city should be marked "Do Not Send Mail".

### Code Maintenance

To make data entry in DonorPerfect more efficient and help ensure the consistency of your data, some of the fields you see on DonorPerfect screens are coded. The codes are maintained within Code Maintenance. Each entry consists of a code and a description, although some coded fields track more information such as the *Solicitation Code*, *Membership Category* and *General Ledger*. Code Maintenance is used to add new codes as the need arise, edit existing codes and inactivate old codes you no longer use for everyday data entry. A review of the counter report revealed numerous codes in fields such as *General Ledger*, *Solicitation* and *Subsolicitation* that were created and not used, have no description or are outdated.

### Security

DonorPerfect's security system is used to assign passwords to your staff that allows access to specific screens or operations. This lets you match each user's access to the duties each individual needs to perform. Your database does have login ID's created but there is no distinction between them. All users are set up identically with all access to the database. In addition, there might be users that are no longer employed by your organization but yet still remain as an active user in the database.

### User Defined Filters

DonorPerfect provides the ability to create and save filters so that they can be used again. Over time you have accumulated a large number of saved filters. For easy organization of the filters, the use of filter groups is suggested as well as deleting any outdated filters.

## **Custom Programs**

### **Orphan Records**

The Orphan Address Record program helps you manage records where the main record has become disconnected from the address record ("orphan"). Using the program allows you to identify the records that are orphans and then delete or fix the addresses that are not associated with the record. There are three types of orphan records: Main record with no address record, address records with no main record, and main records with more than one address record marked as the primary address

Running the Orphan Address Record revealed six pairs of orphan records that have more than one primary record. The identified orphans should either have duplicate primary records deleted or fixed as Priority 2 records.

## Needs Assessment

The analysis on the proper usage of your database has shown the areas of your database that are in need of review. What has been found to be the weakest area of the database is the incompleteness of addresses on the Main screen. Those records should be identified, cleaned up and/or deleted.

There are a number of fields for which the codes will need to be reviewed. The goal is to achieve code consistency which will increase the quality of information for accurate reporting. Ultimately, when these codes are aligned more appropriately, you will be able to perform more meaningful analysis of the database and improve your fundraising strategies. Key fields to be reviewed include Record Type, Flags, Solicitation and General Ledger. The blank Record Types should be identified so they can be properly filled in. This can be done by our Data Services department after a discussion with you if you choose not to fill them in manually. A review and cleanup of the Flags field is recommended to eliminate those codes that are contained within other codes. The Solicitations should be reviewed as numerous codes will need to be made inactive through Code Maintenance. Roughly 30% of all donations made have no General Ledger assignment. We recommend that you begin to identify and fill in the General Ledger code for all gifts in the current fiscal year for improving year-to-year analysis.

Since there are outstanding balances on your pledges, a review of pledge entry as well as processing is suggested. Older pledges can be written off, if appropriate. The use of the Apply Payment option in Version 10 might be a viable tool to assist you with the alignment of previously entered gifts to the appropriate pledges.

A demonstration of the use of the Other Info Screen would be beneficial since you've been tracking volunteers' hours outside of DonorPerfect. Centralized gathering of your volunteer information in the database using both the Other Info Screen as well as the Bio2 will enhance reporting and management of your volunteers.

Although several of the links between your records are not complete, it does look like there has been some effort to show a relationship between donors. A review of link usage is recommended if your goal is to record how the donors in your database are related and have a more comprehensive picture of your constituents' connections in the community.

A walk-through of the uses of the Contact Screen is suggested since there is minimal use of its functions. The primary functionality of the screen is to track constituent communication with built-in reminders for future activities, track grant requests and the associated deadlines, as well as retain permanent history of mailings sent to your donors.

Since your organization is membership-driven, a review of the membership feature is recommended to provide consistency with membership levels and simplify the process of sending renewals.

In reviewing the mailing process, it would be helpful to go over the Addr/Sal Screen where special mailing instructions are recorded along with alternate addresses.

When setting up user ID's, it is advisable to correlate the processes and features in DonorPerfect along with staff functions. Do you have different users working in different areas of the system? Do you have one person who enters and edits donors and gifts? Will there be someone else who will be working with the Utilities such as backing up, changing screens, or keeping the codes consistent? By aligning DonorPerfect's security with your staff's responsibilities, you will put into place the mechanism to have better control over the data integrity of DonorPerfect.

## **Action Plan**

### **Training**

Your organization currently holds a webinar subscription. A review of the basics of donor and gift entry via live or recorded webinar is recommended. In addition, you'd also benefit from the Membership and Mailmerge webinars. Once you start moving forward, additional training can be scheduled, if desired, for other areas of the system such as the Events Module and Customizing Your System. We offer different methods of training, including having a trainer come to your office or customized virtual trainings.

### **Modules & Tools**

Since roughly \$10,000 in donations was made online in 2008, it is recommended that a demonstration of the use of WebLink be provided to you. When using WebLink, collected data can be easily reviewed through WebLink's administrative tools, and then quickly imported into DonorPerfect.

Data is currently being stored in other formats outside of DonorPerfect. Your organization could benefit from acquiring the Import Module to quickly and accurately import donor and gift data into DonorPerfect. The goal is to have one database that has complete and comprehensive data about your constituents. When gifts are imported into DonorPerfect, the reconciliation between DonorPerfect and your accounting system will be streamlined.

### **Adjustments to Data and Screens**

The adjustments identified in this section are recommended for further improving your database. If you are comfortable using the tools in DonorPerfect to complete any or all of the following items, you do have the ability to do so. If you would like to have a member of our Data Services department perform these adjustments for you, for a reasonable fee, please contact your Client Account Manager for a price quote.

About 100 organization records have no cross-reference.

There is no year designation for several of your solicitation codes from year 2000 – 2005. The gift data can be converted for you to facilitate the year-to-year analysis of gifts from the Festival, Major Donor Appeal, End of Year Appeal and Newsletter.

## Client Questionnaire

Please answer the following list of questions to the best of your knowledge. Use the bulleted list to assist you in answering the questions.

### Describe how the following aspects are employed in your development efforts:

- Events
- Mailings
- Memberships
- Direct Mail
- Board Involvement
- Online Donations

We are a museum that displays over 1,200 pieces of multi-media created by local artists with 350 members. We also receive cash donations from non-member visitors. Our major event is our Festival held in December each year. We also send a few mailings to our donors throughout the year.

### Are you using the functions below in DonorPerfect to achieve the goals of your organization?

- Gift Entry and Acknowledgments (merging from DonorPerfect to Word)
- Pledge Entry and Pledge Processing
- Moves Management module and major donor relationship stewardship
- Mailmerge file generation
- Membership Tracking/Renewals (if applicable)
- Event tracking
- Volunteer tracking

Gifts are entered by our bookkeeper. She then gives photocopies of the checks with the original envelopes to Sara in our department to be entered in DonorPerfect. Everyday, Sara also gets a report from our bookkeeper of gifts that were entered directly on our website. We occasionally compare our accounting system reports to the donations in DonorPerfect. We use DonorPerfect to create membership renewal notices but this is a very labor-intensive process. We also use DonorPerfect to create our mailings throughout the year. We do not have any current effort focused on major donor cultivation.

### Do you think you are using DonorPerfect to its fullest extent?

- Are there areas of the system that you have not used yet?
- Are you aware of all the features of your database?
- Are there functions of the program that you feel you are using more successfully?

As mentioned above, the membership renewal process is very complicated because we run an Excel export of our current members and have to change the letters based on their membership levels. We would like to simplify this process. We also are not recording information from our major donors as we solicit them. We have this information stored in Outlook. We would like to keep all the notes about donors' giving intentions in DonorPerfect.

### Are there other programs you are using outside of DonorPerfect to assist in your operations?

- Accounting Software
- Excel
- Additional Database
- Other

We use an in-house accounting system. Our volunteer data is tracked in Excel.

### Describe your mailing process

- Do you use a mailing house or is it done internally?
- How many mailings per year are sent?
- Do you receive large quantities of returned mail?

We send the mailings out ourselves.

Are there certain aspects of DonorPerfect that you would like to know more about?

We have donations that are received online. We have to manually enter them in DonorPerfect. Is there a way to allow our donors to submit donations on our website and then download those donations into DonorPerfect?

Do you have any other comments that you'd like to make?

We are anxious to see how we can improve our operations based on this review.