Ivey Grows to Be Most Prestigious Business School in Canada with Help from Abila Millennium

The Ivey Business School at Western University has been developing top business leaders for nearly a century now through its HBA, MBA, MSc, and PhD programs. In fact, more than 40 percent of its alumni hold the title of Chair, President, C-Suite, Vice President, Managing Director, or Partner.

Its success didn't materialize overnight. Nor did it happen without an aggressive advancement strategy. Since 1998 when Abila Millennium was adapted at Ivey, the Advancement department has grown the business school’s annual fund from just $250,000 to $4.9 million.
Millennium as Easy as A, B, C

Ivey’s former Advancement Systems Manager, Rita Nicholson, has been with Ivey for 20 years, and says one Millennium attribute she appreciates most is its ease of use. “I’ve trained numerous people on the system over the years, and all it takes is an hour-long session and they get it. It’s a very powerful tool, but the software is simple,” explains this self-proclaimed tech geek. “And it comes right out of the box. You don’t have to utilize all the bells and whistles if you don’t want to. But they’re available if you do.

“And, whatever I need to find in the database is a click away, whereas with other systems I’ve used it could take up to 10 clicks. Navigating around Millennium is as easy as A, B, C.”

Data that’s Meaningful and Actionable

Nicholson says at Ivey, they have a deep respect for data, so they manage it carefully and use it to drive many of their decisions. Requests for data housed in Millennium come in regularly—whether it’s historical giving numbers, specific campaign results, or a particular supporter’s cumulative giving. And these requests come in from multiple places, like the Alumni Relations department, Dean’s office, and individual faculty members.

“With Millennium I can say yes, far more often than no,” she says of these requests. “I always tell people, if the information is in there, I can get it out for you, and report it in a meaningful, actionable way.”

Tracking Engagement Deepens Relationships

Millennium enabled Nicholson’s team to create sophisticated segmentation used in Ivey’s annual fund solicitations, helping them grow giving to nearly $5 million.

“Millennium has allowed Ivey to track multiple levels of engagement in a very user-friendly and logical manner,” says Nicholson. “Being able to track these engagements has deepened our relationships with our donors.”

Millennium’s prospect management module was also instrumental in the success of Ivey’s most recent fundraising campaign. “The system was designed to track prospects throughout the fundraising cycle, and we utilized every aspect of it. For example, using project ratings, we were able to determine if we had the right number of prospects at the right capacity level lined up for a specific project. Proposal ratings provided a means to track potential annual cash, since we had a count of the number of proposals to be presented in the fiscal year with amounts and the status of the ask.

“Additionally,” concludes Nicholson, “the system enables us to code each unique point of alumni activity, allowing us to use the data in a predictive model to develop alumni engagement indexes.”

About Abila

Abila is the leading provider of software and services to associations, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies that help them improve decision making, execute with greater precision, increase engagement, and generate more revenue. With Abila solutions association, nonprofit, and government professionals can use data and personal insight to make better financial and strategic decisions, enhance member and donor engagement and value, operate more efficiently and effectively, and increase revenue to better activate their mission. Abila combines decades of industry insight with technology know-how to serve more than 8,000 customers across North America. For more information, please visit www.abila.com.