Bremer Bank was founded on the principle that commerce and philanthropy were closely intertwined with banking. The founder, Otto Bremer, wanted the profits of the bank to be reinvested in the communities that the bank serves. Its 90 branches serving communities in Minnesota, North Dakota, and Wisconsin have spent the past 75+ years fulfilling that promise.

As a financial institution, Bremer focuses its philanthropic efforts on three pillars: affordable housing, financial literacy, and economic empowerment. The bank has been a leader in philanthropy for affordable housing, creating the largest banking partnership with Habitat for Humanity in the country, purchasing up to 500 below-market mortgages and doubling the number of local families that can attain affordable homeownership through Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity. The bank also works with Junior Achievement and other nonprofits, educating the community about how to interact with banks and acquire the best financial literacy possible. In economic empowerment, Bremer has partnered with United Way, packing backpacks with school supplies for kids throughout their markets or home kits for families transitioning out of homelessness.

For many years, the bank has run annual workplace giving campaigns with United Way. Until recently, those campaigns were run manually and required a lot of administrative work for the teams responsible in each of the 90 branches. This was in stark contrast to the rest of its operations, including HR and internal communications, which were digital. Its workplace giving program was in need of an overhaul.

Solution: Through its partnership with United Way, Bremer had the opportunity to be one of the first companies in Minnesota to sign on with Philanthropy Cloud, using the platform primarily for workplace giving.

Before Philanthropy Cloud, there were 90 campaigns at different locations, all with different fundraising tactics, incentives, and messaging. One of the benefits of having each branch run its own campaign was that employees could keep their donations local.
With Philanthropy Cloud, Bremer was able to run one campaign for all 1,700 employees, which had many benefits. Now all the branches receive the same messaging and are working toward the same company values and goals. The employees still have the option to direct their own giving to their local communities. And they can do so year-round at a time of their choosing. It was vital for employees that their dollars stay in their community, and Philanthropy Cloud, with its flexible and distributed management, allows for that.

Bremer assigned each branch a champion to hold a campaign kickoff and give a presentation provided to them by Headquarters, ensuring all employees receive the same information around the same companywide initiatives. The Champion role in Philanthropy Cloud provides trusted users rights to add and edit content in the platform. It allows for customized content for certain segments of the employee population, such as employee resource groups, branches, or geographies.

Having everyone on one platform also transformed tracking and metrics. Administrative work was cut from 90 branches, each manually recording contributions and sending reports to Headquarters, to instead, Headquarters simply viewing or downloading the reports, which are updated in real time, from Philanthropy Cloud. The time savings was immeasurable.

**Impact:** The company usually runs one big annual campaign each fall. In 2020, however, it added a second campaign for COVID-19 relief and recovery. Over four weeks, the company raised $100,000 for pandemic relief through Philanthropy Cloud. This sum was a combination of employee contributions, matching, and an additional gift. Because of the urgency with the pandemic, the team pulled the entire campaign together in just a couple of days.

The company exceeded its fall campaign goal of $200,000, and with matching, gave $470,000 to United Way. Bremer Bank was also able to provide and pack 1,500 kits for families transitioning into stable housing, and over 5,000 backpacks for students in 2020, with the help of Philanthropy Cloud, Bremer Bank...

- Inspired 1,700 employees to raise $570,000
- Provided and packed 6,500 kits and backpacks for families and children
- Streamlined the entire giving process for employees
- Aligned all 90 branches across multiple states on corporate-led campaigns and initiatives
- Drastically reduced administrative work and increased productivity companywide
in need of school supplies. Program administrators were able to coordinate the volunteering effort in Philanthropy Cloud, where employees would sign up. They also offered virtual volunteering in the platform, allowing employees to make fleece blankets to include in the kits. In addition, employee giving has increased nearly 20% since they implemented Philanthropy Cloud two years prior.

“Our purpose at Bremer Bank has always been to cultivate thriving communities. Salesforce.org Philanthropy Cloud has really enhanced and accelerated our culture of community giving.”

Erin Dady, Chief Marketing and Public Relations Officer
Bremer Bank

Bremer Bank employees packing boxes on-site at United Way

Get in Touch: Contact us at philanthropycloud@salesforce.com or 1.800.667.6389 to learn more.

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