

# Macromedia Case Study

## United Way of America



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*"With an organization as large and decentralized as United Way, it was nearly impossible – not to mention cost prohibitive – to convene all the necessary people in one place at one time. What United Way needed was a scalable, online conferencing tool to communicate its shift in focus to a variety of audiences."*

Jonathan Beekman Technology Project Manager Center for Community Leadership United Way of America

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### Developed by

United Way

### Products used

[Breeze](http://www.macromedia.com/software/breeze/) (<http://www.macromedia.com/software/breeze/>)

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UWA, the national leadership organization for the United Way movement, provides training, research and other support services for over 1,350 local United Ways. These widely dispersed organizations are independent,

separately incorporated and governed by local volunteers. In 2003-2004, United Ways across the nation leveraged over \$4 billion in resources and activated more than a million volunteers.

### **Challenge**

Competition is fierce in the US nonprofit sector, where nearly 800,000 charitable organizations vie for dollars. To distinguish itself in this crowded field, UWA shifted its focus from fundraising to shaping communities and improving people's lives. The strategy positions United Way as a leading community impact organization and not just a "pass through" for a wide range of nonprofits. UWA needed a scalable, online conferencing tool to communicate its new business model to its diverse audiences.

### **Solution**

An ongoing challenge for the United Way system is to keep its volunteers engaged and informed. Many of them are time-strapped executives from the for-profit world who sit on United Way boards across the country. By presenting two or three real-time webinars a week and archiving them for on-demand access, United Way keeps busy people in the loop.

The Breeze archiving capability allows United Way to extend its reach beyond real-time meetings. "United Way receives almost twice as many hits for the recorded versions as they do for the live meetings. It's a time and cost efficient way to triple the reach of a particular piece of content, share research and facilitate the exchange of ideas," says Beekman.

### **Benefits**

- Scalable tool works for small administrative meetings and large public conferences
- Saves travel time and costs across distributed United Way movement
- Integration with Flash, Outlook and PowerPoint reduces learning curve and training time
- Streamlines delivery of sales and technical support services
- Keeps time-strapped volunteers engaged and informed
- Comprehensive documentation
- Automates conference registration and demographic data collection
- 24/7 public access to vital health and education information

### **Project Details**

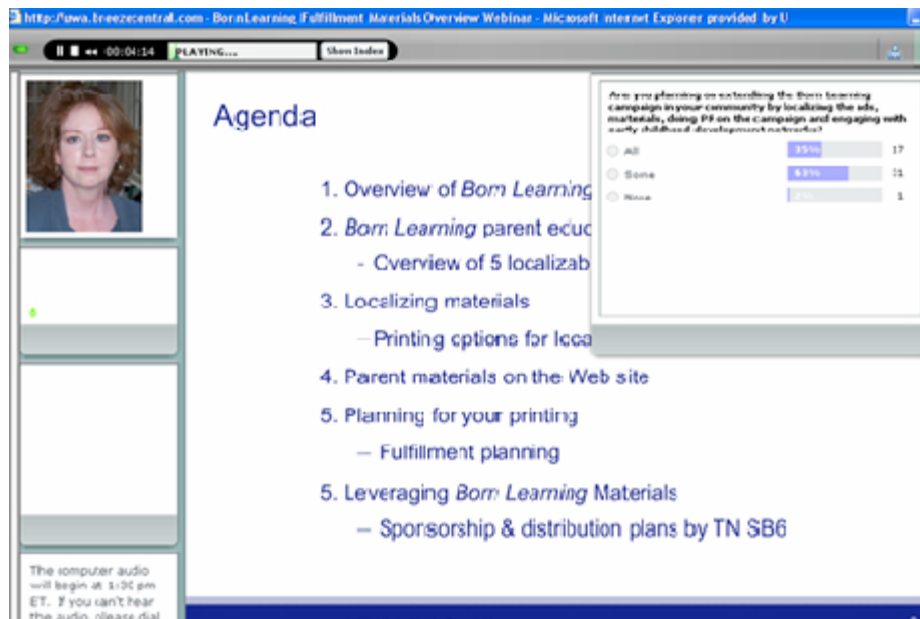
Based on a cost-benefit analysis and feature comparison of products from 10 software vendors, United Way chose Macromedia Breeze as an online communication tool. "Revising United Way's traditional business model after so many years required a lot of dialogue, thought leadership and best practice sharing," says Jonathan Beekman, technology project manager in the Center for Community Leadership at United Way of America.

Breeze facilitates ongoing communication with over 1,350 local United Ways and gives UWA a dedicated communication channel for cost-effective, media-rich online meetings that are more dynamic and interactive than a basic conference call. It also helps United Way attract high-end donors, manage partnerships, train and educate staff and steer the public to appropriate community resources.

For new United Way users, Breeze integration with Macromedia Flash®, Microsoft PowerPoint and Microsoft Outlook shortens the learning curve. The Presenter module saves further preparation and training time by allowing users to add audio narrations to PowerPoint slide presentations and deliver them over the Web as Flash files. Since most computers connected to the Internet already have the Flash Player installed, people do not have to download a proprietary plug-in to participate in an event.

The Events module can be used to send automated reminders, accept pre-registrations, and obtain demographic information from the audience prior to registration. What was previously a manual process for UWA staff is now fully automated.

In choosing Breeze, UWA opted for a modular tool with Voice over IP (VoIP) to save teleconferencing costs, an instant audience survey and polling feature to keep attendees engaged, and a customized interface feature for branding online presentations with United Way logos and colors. The Breeze environment also supports live video from participant locations, chat, screen sharing and automatic archiving of project resources.



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