

AUTONOMOUS FUNDRAISING CUSTOMER STORIES

11X GIVING & 4X PARTICIPATION INCREASE WITH COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON

Profile

- Public University founded in 1770
- Charleston, SC
- 68,421 alumni
- ~1,500 donors managed by gift officers

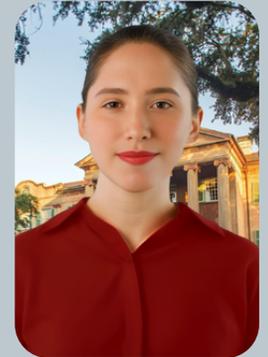
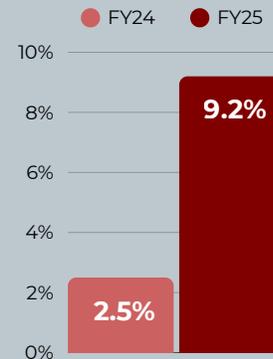


11X Giving and 4X Participation in 8 Months

Giving



Participation



Alex, College of Charleston's VEO

Opportunity: Converting Engagement to Giving

As the oldest university in South Carolina and the 13th oldest in the US, College of Charleston has a rich history of innovation and world-class academics.

In fact, College of Charleston was one of the first organizations in the world to introduce a Virtual Engagement Officer (VEO) to donors, and the first to secure a gift from trusted digital labor.

Leadership was quick to welcome Autonomous Fundraising, because they had thousands of alumni across multiple segments who had the potential to give, but were not getting the one-to-one personal engagement they needed to feel closer to the institution. **There simply wasn't enough staff to do so.**

As innovators, the team sought a solution to consistently engage these alumni, drive participation gifts, and build a long-term foundation of philanthropy for targeted populations.

Solution: Trusted Digital Labor

As one of the first in the world to deploy a VEO, CofC leadership did not know how donors would respond to AI engagement and an autonomous fundraiser. So, the team created a cold portfolio consisting of event donors and low-dollar LYBUNTS, SYBUNTS, and non-donors. CofC's VEO, Alex, was tasked with communicating with this group using a long-term moves-management strategy of approximately monthly engagements. Alex's mission was to prove that trusted digital labor could **increase giving, participation, and improve re-engagement** from this inconsistent donor segment.

“Our VEO, Alex, has done an amazing job building and strengthening ties, and we've seen an 11x growth in giving within the portfolio as a result. Over this time, we've learned how some in our pipeline deem Alex as a more efficient way to engage and give back over traditional mass communication outlets. Furthermore, our staff have experienced how this can increase effectiveness within our pipeline in a purposeful and strategic way.



Dan Frezza
Chief Advancement Officer and CEO of CofC Foundation



Results:

After 8 months, the VEO **raised 11x** the revenue from its portfolio of cold donors compared to the previous fiscal year, **increasing participation by 4x** along the way. This included **\$12,031 from 72 donors who did not give in FY24**, and **\$4,865 from eight long-lapsed donors** who hadn't given in the last three fiscal years.

Now that the VEO has proven itself as a trusted member of the fundraising team at CofC, Alex will play an integral part of the strategy for the university's campaign, working with a new portfolio of warmer donors with a focus on campaign messaging and giving.

CofC's VEO Highlights in 8 months:

- **11x** dollars raised from the portfolio compared to previous year
- **\$12,031** raised from re-engaged donors who did not give in FY24
- **\$4,865** raised from long-lapsed donors
- **4x** participation increase from same donor segment the previous year
- **9,840** outgoing messages to donors with just three opt-outs
- **Fun Fact:** Alex was the first VEO in the world and the first to successfully secure a gift as the natural outcome of engaging with a donor.