



The Tools for a Development Office

- 1) Absolutely essential: a desk, a computer, a telephone, a door that closes. A window is nice.
- 2) Required: a donor management system and an electronic marketing program.

The donor management system allows you to track relationships with your constituents; track the affiliation they have with your school; track your communication with that constituent; track the gifts they give you, the timing and the impetus for the gift and the purpose for which it was given. These systems range in price from a few thousand to tens of thousands of dollars.

An electronic marketing program allows you to reach your constituents (as a group or as smaller groups determined by their affiliation with you) electronically through e-newsletters. These communications invite engagement and offer opportunities to give to your school. Two programs that we recommend are Constant Contact (about \$500 a year), MailChimp, and Vertical Response (free to non-profits although all features of the program do not come in the free package.)

- 3) Then: a good camera, photo editing program and a program to manipulate pdf files.

Ideally, you want a good SLR digital camera so that your photos are large enough files to be crisp and unpixillated even at full size; it is easy to make a large file smaller; impossible to make a small file larger. Your files should be rendered at 330 ppi to look good in print or on the web. A good SLR digital camera starts at about \$350.

Photoshop Elements allows you to edit photos, save them compressed for website use and catalog them for future use but it does not allow you to manipulate pdf files. Adobe Reader allows you to open pdf files but not to create them. You may have programs on other computers in your school that allow you to do edit photos, create pdf files and change pdf formats and that will do. In the Adobe line, you really want Photoshop (not Elements) and Acrobat; they are available in a school edition package that is very, very reasonable.

- 4) And then: a graphic design program, a scanner and a good color printer (scanner & printer may come in one package.)

A graphic design program allows you to produce high-quality projects in-house rather than depend on a designer. The package used by most designers is In Design, part of the Adobe family. Another good program is Quark, the scaled down version of which is called Quark Xpress. (Training for any of these programs is readily available locally, including online at Lynda.com, an absolutely fantastic resource, accessible for \$25 a month.)

Even without one of these design programs, you can produce excellent marketing pieces if you have the help of a volunteer graphic designer. You can brand all your communication pieces and generally upgrade your communications program with a good color printer. You can get a good printer for \$200 to \$300.

A scanner is very important to an alumni program, in particular, allowing you to get high resolution photo files from original photos. Scan all those graduation photos. Ask alumni to let you borrow their photos and scan them.