



Linda Anick (with Jack Anick)
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to the corporate world after
working with nonprofits."
PHOTO BY SCOTT PAULUS

Accounting for donations

Firm develops system to help nonprofits capture money online

BY STACY VOGEL DAVIS

Jack and Linda Anick are trained in accounting, but they always had a passion for nonprofit work.

So in 1981, they combined the career and their passion into Anick & Associates, the only accounting firm they know of that works exclusively with nonprofits.

The Wauwatosa company has grown consistently by honing its specialty and adding new services that allow nonprofits to concentrate on their core missions.

The company's latest service manages

donations for clients through online systems and check-capture technology, even writing thank-you notes and sending tax forms to donors. The donations then go to the client's account, ready for use when they're needed.

"It's more cost effective and more efficient, because the donation is only touched once," said Amy Schultz, the firm's business integration and special projects manager.

When Jack and Linda Anick started the company 30 years ago, few nonprofits had considered outsourcing their accounting

functions. Today, many hire outside accounting firms to help streamline their operations.

The Better Business Bureau of Wisconsin, based in Milwaukee, decided to hire Anick 12 years ago, shortly after Randall Hoth became president and CEO, Hoth said.

"My position was that the Better Business Bureau should focus on our mission, not on financial services and administration, the things that experts could do better than we could," he said.

Anick & Associates' expertise in non-

profits has earned it a good reputation in Wisconsin and across the country, Jack Anick and customers said.

"Nonprofit accounting is totally different than any other kind of accounting, especially for those agencies like ourselves that have a large amount of government grants," said Joe Volk, executive director Of Community Advocates, Milwaukee.

When Volk was hired, the organization was in some financial distress and doing its accounting in-house, Volk said. Anick & Associates helped the organization put its finances back in order, he said.

The firm provides security for Volk because he knows there's an entire company watching out for Community Advocates' finances instead of one in-house finance manager.

"Time and time again, I've seen that (in-house) person leave, and agencies have to scramble to replace that person," he said. "When you outsource it to an institutional vendor like Anick & Associates, one person of the Anick team might leave, but that doesn't mean the whole thing falls apart."

The firm offers much more than accounting to its 63 clients, Jack Anick

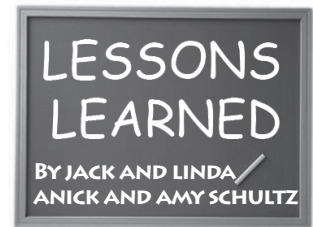
said. It helps budding nonprofits plan and achieve 501(c)(3) status and offers guidance to growing organizations through seminars, webinars and one-on-one advising. It also helps groups identify potential mergers and alliances, something Jack has stressed in recent years, he said.

It has tested its new donation management and acknowledgement service with several nonprofit agencies and will officially launch the service Nov. 19.

The company has grown steadily throughout its history, averaging 15 percent annual revenue growth in the last 12 years, Linda Anick said. She declined to reveal exact revenue figures.

Jack Anick originally tried to limit the company's number of clients, but he has increased the limit several times. The firm often gains new clients when an executive director leaves one nonprofit for another and wants his or her new company to work with Anick, too, he said.

The company has 23 employees; Jack Anick serves as president and Linda Anick as vice president. Jack Anick is the big-idea person, while Linda Anick is the pragmatic one, they said.



WHAT'S BEEN YOUR BEST BUSINESS DECISION?

"To always keep up with technology and try to be cutting edge for all of the services and expertise we provide to the nonprofits."

WHAT IS YOUR GUIDING PRINCIPLE? "To provide the highest level of ethics and business integrity in the financial foundation that we provide the nonprofit and its board of directors."

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON YOU'VE LEARNED? "That nonprofits and the people who work at the nonprofits are mission-driven and deserve respect, support and the opportunity for continued success in their vision."

WHAT ARE THE MOST DAUNTING ISSUES FACING YOUR FIRM? "Because of the economy, many nonprofits are struggling. We continue to seek out ways for them to gain financial viability."

Linda Anick said they knew they'd never strike it rich working with nonprofits, but they wouldn't have it any other way.

"I would never go back to the corporate world after working with nonprofits," she said.