QUINLAN SOCIAL IMPACT INITIATIVE
2023 CASE STUDY

CLIENT BACKGROUND

The Quinlan Social Impact Initiative ("QSII") is an interdisciplinary committee of faculty, staff, and students at Loyola University Chicago aiming to build a program to support community-owned businesses in Chicago. The project was formed in late 2021 and in the Summer of 2023 was granted $625,000 by the government to aid their mission in helping local businesses gain access to existing resources and facilitate stronger collaboration. Progress in this project is gained through research of the current economic environment of Chicago, fostering stronger connections with community leaders, and defining the program's scope. Project leaders foresee the initiative as becoming an integral element of the Quinlan School of Business curriculum, through undergraduate and graduate student involvement.

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SITUATION

Due to many committee members being leaders of their own departments, QSII leader Dr. Peter Norlander came to RCG for assistance in various project activities. RCG was targeted as a resource since it is composed of undergraduate students seeking hands-on experience in a consultative setting and to further integrate the QSII as a collaborative university effort.

RCG was hired initially to help with creating a more defined 3-year project timeline with detailed benchmarks, identifying key stakeholders, and describing intended outcomes. This also involved attending weekly brainstorming sessions on Thursdays with the larger stakeholder community to take notes of progress and current topics. As the semester continued, QSII and RCG's engagement changed with the evolving nature of the project's focus. Instead of having a specific engagement scope, RCG became a resource for general assistance with any assignments that arose for QSII stakeholders.

STRATEGY

The scope of the engagement with QSII became somewhat vague because there were many dynamic factors at play, as well as many changes in the QSII project itself. To mitigate confusion from this and maintain involvement in the engagement, RCG positioned the team as general consultants to anyone in the project who needed assistance on QSII activities. This led to multiple engagements involving project forecasting and data entry.

RESULTS

At the beginning of the engagement, RCG produced strategies for QSII to establish a community presence. As QSII hopes to publicize its goals via digital distribution eventually, RCG suggested the use of fliers to market the project as well as gather data. The fliers would have a QR code that can track how many times it was scanned, as well as the time it was scanned. Furthermore, RCG suggested building in-person connections by having a presence at neighborhood events such as the farmers market or welcoming community leaders on campus to present the mission statement.

Later in the semester, RCG was asked to help refresh proprietary data the QSII has regarding the business service organizations (BSO's) in its network. This involved updating contact and financial information for each BSO. The financial information RCG found included:

- Total revenue
- Revenue from clients
- Revenue from donations
- Revenue from government sources
- Total expenses
- Wages/salaries paid
- Number of clients served
- Number of paid employees
- Volunteer metrics

RESULTS

RCG searched through numerous websites and carefully examined each page to gather the necessary information. By exploring a wide range of websites, RCG was able to completely refresh the QSII database. The success of this project allowed the QSII to create an internal dashboard that will serve as a tool to track the BSO environment in Chicago.