

Custom Screening Solutions Help Indianapolis Archdiocese Safeguard Its Youth A Barada Associates Case Study

All too frequently in today's society, the media blasts headlines about children being tricked into trusting a dangerous individual—often with tragic results. Even small schools managed by a full contingent of permanent staff struggle with this issue on a daily basis. So, imagine the challenge for a four-person human resources staff (two of which are part time) to ensure the safety of 35,000 children in an environment with 6,000 employees and 30,000 volunteers—spread over 39 counties.

That's exactly what the Archdiocese of Indianapolis has been able to accomplish since 2005 with the help of Barada Associates. The Archdiocese, which performs some 4,000 background checks each year, "had a process that had worked well for 10 years," notes Archdiocese of Indianapolis Human Resources Director Ed Isakson. Nevertheless, Isakson was confident they could find "a way to do that, even better."

Effectiveness in Action.

According to Isakson, there was no "crisis or problem" that motivated him to seek Barada's help. Rather, Isakson decided during routine effectiveness reviews that its partner lacked the



technology and scope to fully meet the Archdiocese' needs. "We were looking for a business partner that could do [our] checks as thoroughly as possible," says Isakson. "We wanted [an organization] that

had innovative and effective ways to improve the screening process."

Isakson received a call from one of Barada's former account executives, who introduced the firm to him. "The more I heard, the more I was impressed," Isakson notes. "I heard the things I was looking for in terms of setting up a relationship." The Archdiocese began working with Barada on criminal background checks—state and national sex offender registries at first, then more comprehensive national checks and rechecks on its people.

Client: Indianapolis Archdiocese

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis serves a population of approximately 2.5 million (with a Catholic population of 232,000, as of the 2000 census). It operates and oversees 10 high schools, 60 elementary schools and more than 12,000 religious education students (pre-kindergarten through 12th grade).

The Services:

Barada handles all the Archdiocese background screens in a customized program that enables authorized staff to select a screening profile based on the person, position or volunteer service.

Custom Care.

As an entity dealing with 150 parishes or missions and 70 schools, the Archdiocese experienced substantial challenges in breaking down its billing. "We would get one bill from our previous partner and then have to break it down into parishes and schools," says Isakson. "Our accounting department spent a great amount of time separating this."

Barada, on the other hand, used automated and advanced technologies that enabled it to set up multiple accounts and generate individual bills. "Instead of one bill, they could send out 200," says Isakson, "but still give me one consolidated statement."

Barada also set up custom screening solutions for the Archdiocese' 30,000 volunteers, focusing on those components appropriate to their roles and responsibilities. "We do different types of checks for different people," says

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Isakson. "For example, for those with access to over \$1,000 in funds, we do credit checks. We do international checks for people who have worked or ministered abroad."

For the Archdiocese, Barada created a menu of services that Isakson describes as "very comprehensive but very user friendly." The solution is Internet-based, enabling an authorized individual to go online and select the precise check they require. "This is cost effective because we aren't paying for something we don't need and it is targeted to that person, position or volunteer service," Isakson says.

Mission Control.

Even with billing, screening requests and other services distributed to individual parishes, Isakson retains control over the screen results. No matter who requests a check, Isakson gets a copy. "I can review the results and work with the hiring managers if they are concerned," Isakson says. "Using their

expertise, Barada was able to provide a custom solution with centralized oversight but decentralized billing. Before we spent a lot of time on oversight but now we can be more strategic in our role."

Other benefits Isakson notes include enhanced online offerings, faster turnaround time and an excellent reputation. Isakson also says Barada provides attractive pricing, which is crucial to a not-for-profit with limited resources. "I did reference checks on the reference checking firm," says Isakson. "I called three or four organizations they partner with, [who reported] outstanding service, reliability, innovativeness and a proactive attitude toward meeting the needs of customers."

"The staff at Barada have been very responsive," he concludes. "They understand how their services can assist us and will suggest creative solutions that meet the needs of the Archdiocese. We have been impressed with everyone from the human element on down."

