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Arreva, Tech with Purpose, Driven by Cause, An Interview with David Blyer, Co-founder, CEO, and President

David Blyer
Co-founder and CEO

Arreva

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CEOCFO: *Mr. Blyer, what is Arreva?*

Mr. Blyer: Arreva is a trusted advisor and market leader of fundraising, donor relationship management, and auction software that has been serving the nonprofit industry for more than three decades. ExceedFurther, our All-in-One, Virtual Fundraising and Donor Relationship Management software is really the first, comprehensive, integrated, and automated platform for virtual fundraising, donor relationship management and virtual auctions and is helping nonprofits worldwide further their mission, transform fundraising, pivot to virtual auctions and fundraising galas, and cultivate relationships with donors and constituents.

CEOCFO: *You say "fully-integrated." What have you put together?*

Mr. Blyer: We have built a truly unified fundraising and donor relationship management platform, which really encompasses quite a lot of capabilities that are so essential to nonprofits every day; reaching and engaging with their donors, creating awareness, cultivating their existing donors, and raising money all year round through online fundraising and fundraising events, especially now in a virtual world. When I say we built a completely integrated and automated platform, I would emphasize that this is distinctive from much of what's in the marketplace, as it is a unified, single database, software platform that includes robust applications for online donations, peer-to-peer fundraising, events, volunteers, and guest-stay requests. The integrated donor relationship management includes applications for membership, campaigns, grants, hospitality, reporting, and more. When I talk about all of these applications, keep in mind that they are all unified in a single solution with a single donor relationship management database, which is one of our key differentiators in the market.

The software helps nonprofit helps streamline the myriad of best practices and activities that are essential to a nonprofit's success so they can be more efficient and save time and money, enabling them to focus on furthering their mission, which is especially important to small and medium-sized nonprofits, particularly when resources are even further strained due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Anywhere donors and constituents are engaging with the nonprofit from making donations, receiving communications, registering for events, registering as a volunteer, reaching out to their networks through peer to peer fundraising, the software is leveraging automation to handle processing and capturing of valuable data and insights that are incredibly important for true donor relationship management.

CEOCFO: *One thing I see on your site is "purposeful technology." What does that mean for you?*

Mr. Blyer: We've leveraged decades of experience in and understanding of the nonprofit sector to create technology to help nonprofits be efficient and highly effective at the things they need to do every single day. It extends beyond just being able to execute on a once-a-year event. The technology needs to allow for you to communicate and tell your story with impact to supporters and to allow them to easily give to and engage with your nonprofit through donations, volunteering, events, and so much more. It should also allow you to capture all of this in a single donor database and enable you to do things like sending out a thank you, acknowledgement receipt to the donor, and notifications to your staff members.

Purposeful technology means software that is born of a genuine understanding and passion for nonprofits and an intrinsic motivation to help them fulfill their fundamental purpose of achieving their missions. To us, purposeful technology, is so much more than just providing software, it is about a dedication to client success. At Arreva, we're truly with our clients, for good. Our commitment to helping our clients further their cause and achieve their missions is inseparable from our own purpose. Each step of their journeys, we're there, guiding, solving, and elevating. There's an understanding permeating our organization that our nonprofit partners are the heroes we serve, with heart, instinctively and authentically.

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CEOCFO: *Are nonprofit organizations looking for something better than what has been available? Are they aware that Arreva even exists, or the idea that there can be an all-encompassing solution?*

Mr. Blyer: While clearly nonprofit organization experience frustration with their current options, including makeshift and/or siloed solutions for everything from donations to event registration to volunteers to donor management and more, they are often not aware that there is a better way and may continue with their current less than ideal technology solutions.

We really are doing a lot of good things to build awareness about Arreva and the incredible value of our all-in-one virtual fundraising, donor relationship management, and auction software and services, as well as our relentless dedication to helping nonprofits. In addition to our robust training, support, and marketing efforts, we provide significant educational resources to the nonprofit community to help organizations further their causes and achieve their missions every day, especially in these difficult times.

We're experiencing rapid growth as we make inroads into the right channels and good news travels fast. Both new clients and longtime clients are amazed at how we help them as an essential part of what they do. For example, we asked the Ronald McDonald House Charities of South Florida, "What would you do if Arreva wasn't around?" Their answer, "Without Arreva, what we do would be impossible," says it all.

That what we provide is so essential for the nonprofits we serve is definitely understandable, given that we are typically dealing with organizations with limited staff that might include an executive director, development director, and some administrative staff with everyone else out there running the programs.

CEOCFO: *Do you think someone looking to give to an organization is more comfortable if they are on website that flows smoothly, that does not send you to a third-party?*

Mr. Blyer: Yes, it absolutely helps, there is no doubt about it. I would like to share a story a little with you. There was an organization that I admired, and it had a very small staff. It was called The Social Cog, which was about helping autistic adults. When you turn eighteen, from a government perspective you "age out of the system." The government does not

subsidize money for these organizations anymore. The Social Cog was formed to help autistic adults socialize and put programs together. I met them shortly after they launched. I had just completed a presentation at the University Miami Nonprofit Center. I had talked about what our all-in-one solution is along with all of the benefits that I've shared. This wonderful lady approached me and said she was with a grassroots organization. She said she had no donors yet and no money, but she explained what her cause was all about. She said she was going to buy a \$49 website from Go Daddy and she was going to use Excel for the database with a non-branded simple donation form through PayPal. She said she believed passionately in what she was doing and felt that she could take it on a national basis. She said she was so glad to hear what we offered, which was exactly what she needed and meant she would not need to cobble everything together. She also asked us to build them a website after learning that we build great websites for nonprofits only if they are using our products because the donor-centric websites we build are also completely integrate with our software. We built their website in just ten days. They had no content, so we helped them with content and banners to create a beautiful site.

We build websites for nonprofits and we only build websites if they are using our product because it is completely integrated. We built their website in ten days. They had no content, so we gave them some content and we gave them banners; it was a great looking site. On her first meeting with a prospective donor, the gentleman who was going to write the check, asked her if she had a website. She directed him to the website, and he told her that it was a really nice website, especially for a grassroots startup. He wrote her a check for \$20,000. On her way back from that meeting, she called us up to thank us for how fast we built this website and now professional it made her organization look to have a website that was completely integrated and kept the donor on the site throughout the giving process. Even if they're not giving \$20,000 initially, they are kept on your website and are able to learn more about how they can get involved and support your mission.

CEOCFO: *Are there groups of nonprofits where you could work with the organization to get out to the member organizations or does that not exist much in the nonprofit arena?*

Mr. Blyer: Yes. There are national nonprofits organizations, such as The Boys & Girls Clubs of America with more than 4,000 affiliated Clubs in the U.S.

CEOCFO: *Can you get an inroad into the parent organization?*

Mr. Blyer: Yes, absolutely and we have. In addition to our 6,000 clients worldwide, we have partnerships and have been vetted by some of the national organizations like the Boys and Girls Club, Ronald McDonald House Charities, St. Vincent de Paul, and more. With many of the national nonprofit organizations, they vet just a limited number of vendors for their chapters, and in these cases, they vetted Arreva. They then work with us to educate the chapters on Arreva and our technology. The chapters typically make their own technology decisions but knowing that their national organizations has put forward Arreva as a vetted solution and partner is an important factor in their decision making.

With the Ronald McDonald House Charities, we have most of the chapters nationwide using our product. We have been vetted by the Boys and Girls Clubs and are working with many Boys and Girls Clubs across the country using not only ExceedFurther, our all-in-one virtual fundraising donor relationship management software, but also using our virtual auction software for live and virtual auctions, silent auctions, and virtual bidding.

CEOCFO: *What has surprised you as Arreva has grown and evolved?*

Mr. Blyer: Nothing surprises me anymore. The reason I started this company was truly a personal one. When I was 26 years old, I survived cancer. I remember how I felt back then, and I made a commitment to myself to figure out how to give back in some way, honestly not knowing for certain what that meant. I wanted to have a good career, and I really didn't have the option of doing something as a volunteer from a financial standpoint. I was very fortunate in my career and ultimately had an opportunity of a lifetime to take a step back and say ask myself what the next chapter in my career would be. I decided that this is the time that I can give back. I considered setting up a foundation, but instead decided that I would leverage my love of software to help the nonprofit industry.

I sat down to write a business plan, not even realizing how big the nonprofit industry is. It is a trillion-dollar industry. When people think about nonprofits, they think about giving a donation and maybe about putting their name on a building, without realizing it is one of the largest sectors in the U.S. When I started writing a business plan I researched all of the competition and realized I could truly build a better solution to do all of the things I've shared, as well as lower

the price where it is affordable for the small and mid-size organizations that were often lost amidst the big players. I know that this was not only an attractive business venture, but also my way of giving back by helping nonprofits with a completely integrated solution that would help them easily, and efficiently build awareness, cultivate and engage donors, and transform their fundraising, while they focus on achieving their missions.

If I built an application like this in the business world, I might be ten times bigger already; the nonprofit industry is a tough industry. I didn't think it would take me or the company this long to get where we are, but I am inspired by the work we do and all we've achieved so far. I'm so grateful for the people we have here at Arreva. Many of them have been here for twenty plus years, and they absolutely love what they do and what we're doing to help nonprofits do their important work.

CEOCFO: *Why pay attention to Arreva?*

Mr. Blyer: We are really making a difference for nonprofits, and this is something that we pride ourselves on, especially during these times. We are not here to simply sell software; we are dedicated to helping our clients succeed. That relentless dedication to client success has driven an amazing retention rate over 90%. We have customers that have been with us for more than twenty-five years. It truly is inspiring to hear so much appreciation from our clients who rave about what our teams do for them. We live up to the words "We're with our clients, for good," every day providing tremendously valuable educational webinars, best practice educational resources, and more. Our proactive client success team serves as an advocate to our clients, listening to their feedback and helping them to optimize the results they achieve through Arreva. We are really just a good company that helps nonprofits do the great work they do. Nonprofits do the most important work out there, and, as such, we set the bar for ourselves incredibly high in achieving our goal of helping them to achieve their missions.