

Fundraising pledge  
Tracy Frank - 05/30/2009

### **Allegiance guarantees software to boost nonprofit funds**

What started as a software package to track Prairie Public Broadcasting memberships has grown into a fundraising system used by 40 percent of the public broadcasting market. Fargo-based Allegiance Software offers a fundraising program and traffic software that tracks programs and underwriting spots between broadcast shows. The company's main clients are public broadcasting and Christian broadcasting nonprofit organizations. "We have some algorithms built into the software that allow us to call this a well-oiled fundraising machine," said CEO Mark Jensen, who owns the company with his wife, Sonja Jensen, president and chief software architect. The software costs from \$10,000 to \$100,000 depending on the size of the organization and how many products and services are needed. Allegiance guarantees its software will increase funds by at least the cost of the system. Not one system has been returned, Mark Jensen said. "We've had testimonials from stations that within five or six months of having the system, they've already paid for it," he said. "We're pretty proud of that. We know of no other software company that's a competitor of ours that has that kind of a seal of approval." The program also helps stations work more efficiently, become more accountable and have fewer customer service issues, Jensen said. Allegiance Software's fundraising system was one of four products that received a Campbell Rinker Award in 2008 for exceptional ratings in a nationwide survey of more than 3,800 not-for-profit users of donor and member management solutions. The company provides technical, operational and fundraising support 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and has a 99 percent renewal rate on its customer support contracts. "There's a certain amount of pride, and I think our whole staff feels it," Sonja Jensen said. "We're the No. 1 vendor in public broadcasting, and we get a lot of really good feedback from our customers." Melanie Cannon, director of development for Nevada Public Radio, calls Allegiance the "gold standard within broadcasting" that offers the "Cadillac of service." Cannon said that on the rare occasions when something goes wrong, it has been immediately resolved. "There's nothing to compare it to," Cannon said. Sonja Jensen developed the software in 1977 when Prairie Public Broadcasting contracted with Dakota Computer Professionals to begin work on a database management system. Dakota Computer Professionals, owned by the Jensens, later developed a partnership with Prairie Public to sell the software. In the late 1980s, the Jensens bought out Prairie Public and changed the software's name to Allegiance. They enhanced the product and started adding five to 10 customers a year, Mark Jensen said. In 2000, the Jensens incorporated the business as Allegiance Software Inc. Allegiance recently built a new energy-efficient building in Urban Plains in southwest Fargo. It has enough room to more than double the company's size, Jensen said. It also has a training center with computer workstations the company plans to rent out to local businesses for computer training. Sonja Jensen said it feels satisfying to have come as far as they have. "Although we have plans to grow a lot bigger," she said. Those plans include expanding into nonprofit markets outside of broadcasting, she said. The Plains Art Museum in Fargo uses the software. Former Prairie Public employees implemented it when they started working at the museum. "It has been excellent," said Joni Janz, Plains Art Museum director of development and marketing, who once worked for Prairie Public

and Allegiance. “It works very well to maintain and enhance our membership fundraising efforts.”

**Business profile Allegiance Software**

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