

Company:**Metro Atlanta YMCA**

As part of a worldwide fellowship of 30 million people in 120+ countries, the Metro Atlanta YMCA is a non-profit organization helping build strong kids, strong families, and strong communities. Through participation in programs offered by the YMCA, individuals in any stage of life can experience personal growth in spirit, mind, and body.

www.ympass.com

Betsy Lenahan,
Chief Marketing Officer

Industry: charitable organizations

Birst Solution: Birst Group

“This solution changed the focus of our organization. Now, we’re more responsive to our members, and better able to engage them. We’re forward-looking and proactive—and we couldn’t have done it without Birst.”

—**Betsy Lenahan,**
Chief Marketing Officer
Metro Atlanta YMCA

Using Birst, Metro Atlanta YMCA Better Aligns its Mission, Member Engagement, and Marketing Communications Activities

Founded in 1858, the Metro Atlanta YMCA helps children learn and grow, teaches young people to lead, brings families closer, and encourages individual health and well-being. As part of this broader mission, the YMCA has become the largest, single childcare provider in Atlanta, enriching the lives of more than 10,500 children every day.

“We Needed Better BI Tools”

The Metro Atlanta YMCA is constantly striving to strengthen kids, families and communities. To create programs with the highest possible impact and increase member engagement, the YMCA’s marketing function needed a better way to identify and predict the needs of its members.

In an attempt to tailor and more effectively promote its programs, the YMCA tried comparing income statements and budgets with the member database to summarize trends, create marketing strategies, and predict outcomes. Employees and volunteers spent valuable time pulling pivot tables from Excel spreadsheets, buying mail lists, and experimenting with direct mail campaigns.

“Before Birst we spent more time trying to compile accurate data than interpreting the data,” said Betsy Lenahan, Chief Marketing Officer, Metro Atlanta YMCA. “We printed catalogues and flyers with a seasonal menu like a restaurant and showed all our offerings to as many people as we could. The burden was on the member to wade through all this information to find the desired YMCA program, schedule, or price. It was a complicated, time- and resource-consuming process. Our volunteers told us we needed better BI tools to understand our members’ specific program interests and match them with timely and relevant enrollment information. We agreed and started searching.”



Key Benefits:

- Improved ability to identify and create programs that meet members' needs
- Deeper engagement with member households
- Greater alignment between the organization's mission, program design, and marketing activities

“The power of Birst lies in its simplicity. It's easy to get started, easy to see results, and easier to decide how to act on them.”

—**Betsy Lenahan,**
Chief Marketing Officer
Metro Atlanta YMCA

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More Than Pretty Pie Charts

After comparing a variety of BI solutions, including those provided by Cognos and Oracle, Lenahan and her marketing team selected Birst. “Cognos is still sitting in the package in the back,” said Lenahan. “We concluded it's too expensive and the required data mapping would slow us down too much.”

“I found Birst while at home searching the Internet during a snowstorm. I was thrilled to be able to log on to a trial version and spend five or six hours test driving it. I wasn't looking for pretty pie charts showing what we already knew in spreadsheet form. I wanted to see key opportunities to engage with members and create immediate membership value for them—and I got just that.

“I also needed something that would require minimum deployment involvement from our IT Department because their agenda was always so full. I don't have a BI background, but with Birst's automated dashboards and adhoc reporting I was able to get up and running in just a few hours. Since our first conversation, Birst has been focused on providing what we needed quickly and at a very fair price.”

Key Selection Criteria:

- Easy to evaluate, purchase, and implement
- Affordable
- SaaS solution requiring minimal IT involvement
- Advanced analysis for identifying key trends
- Ability to export to other applications

What Gets Measured, Gets Goals Set

After seeing the possibilities of Birst with the trial version, Metro Atlanta YMCA purchased Birst Groups and was implemented within 30 days. In support of 16 branches, Birst is helping the YMCA better co-create the value inherent in belonging to the Y. The YMCA's new, multi-level member segmentation and engagement marketing program is based on the demographics, tenure, and frequency of involvement of each YMCA member.

“We're now able to focus proactively on solving needs within member households instead of setting annual enrollment targets and working backwards toward them,” continued Lenahan. “I can think more strategically about clustering and reaching out to members in a way that's meaningful for them. For example, we now know we have over 10,000 kids in elementary school and we're finding new ways to enrich and support their lives. We have thousands of households with kids under four, so we're looking at what we can do to help parents raise preschoolers. I believe that what can be measured can be set in short and long term goals. With Birst, we're deepening our engagement with our members which means they are benefiting from more rewarding membership experiences.”