

With Act! on board flying charity takes off

When Act! works so effectively in a commercial environment, why not use in the not-for-profit sector? That was Kevin Robinson's thinking when he set up **Wings4Kidz** to transport seriously ill children and their families from rural areas to major hospitals.



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Kevin Robinson
Founder

Going for regular life-saving treatment is a gruelling reality for many families with sick children. It often involves long car journeys and overnight stays that take their toll on everyone involved.

But in parts of Australia, where hospital visits can mean a 2,000 km round trip, moving closer to the treatment centre is basically the only option. With no chance to go home even on weekends, given the distance, this massive disruption can rip families apart.

However, many are being spared having their life turned upside down in this way thanks to Wings4Kidz, a charity that flies sick children from remote rural areas for treatment for free. Its ability to do this is in large part down to Act!, as founder of the charity, Kevin Robinson, explains.

“As a business consultant I began using Act! myself in 2000, so I'm always telling my clients about the importance of having a great CRM to manage sales and customer information.”

Based on that experience, when Kevin set up Wings4Kidz, Act! was the obvious solution for creating a robust information system that everyone in the charity could work from and rely on — you can't afford to miss appointments for life-saving treatment through error, miscommunication or people not being where they should be.

Act! is now very much at the heart of Wings4Kidz's logistical operations, providing a central information database to coordinate every detail of each flight, so pilots are ready, and drivers and cars are in place to take patients between airport and hospital.

It also ensures that the right planes are available. While a small plane like the Cessna 340 is perfectly adequate for most trips, sometimes only the charity's high performance aircraft will do. The charity's Mustang 510 twin-engined jet for instance, which can maintain sea level cabin pressure up to 16,000 feet, is a must for children who have had brain surgery, when any drop in cabin pressure could have serious consequences.

Act! creates a personalised experience

Currently, there are some 1,200 contacts on the charity's database. Along with each hospital's details, there is also crucial information about the condition of each young patient, which everyone involved with flight and transportation must have at their fingertips.

Details about parents, siblings, pets, and family life in general, are also entered into the database, so the Wings4Kidz team can create a really personalised experience. "We want to be as friendly as possible," says Kevin, "and we go to great lengths to do that because we know we could be flying a child and their family for treatments and check-ups over the next few years."

Also stored in Act!'s database are the sponsors and donors who need to be kept up-to-date about charity's work. "Each wants to know different things," says Kevin, "so we have to communicate with them in the way they want to make sure we come across as professionally as possible," says Kevin.

When there is so much competition for every charity dollar, that's essential. This is one reason why Kevin and his team keep on tweaking Act! to make it even better for them.

"A lot of people make the mistake of sticking with how they set things up in the first place," says Kevin, "when you need to be constantly improving."



In Act!, Kevin also keeps all Wings4Kidz social media contacts and details of members of the public who just want to stay in touch with the charity. Again, by using Act! to group and categorise them, Kevin can be certain that they are only being sent the information they need, as often as they want it.

More efficient ways of working

Sudden changes in a child's condition means that flight schedules have to be flexible, often operating at short notice. That requires commitment and dedication, so anything that can be done to remove time-wasting inefficiencies, like having to make unnecessary phone calls or recheck information, is greatly appreciated by the volunteer pilots, drivers, ground crew and admin staff who willingly give up their own time to help out. Even more so, when plans to increase the number of flights each year to 3000 become reality.

Coping with that increase in capacity will be no problem for Act!, which means Wings4Kidz can keep on taking to the air, saving thousands of sick children from the misery of turbulent road trips on the ground.



Results

- Act! is enabling Wings4Kidz to meet its goal of 3,000 flights and 12,000 passenger journeys every year.
- By using Act! as a central source of detailed information, the Wings4Kidz team can provide a personalised experience for every sick child, and their family, who flies with them.
- With so much competition among charities for donations and sponsors, Act! helps Wings4Kidz present the most professional image possible.

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