



CASE STUDY

MBA Networking Event

Objectives:

Greg Fairchild knows social networking. He teaches future business leaders at the Darden School of Business at the University of Virginia how to use people-networks to help organizations perform better. When Professor Fairchild decided to put his teachings into action at a kick-off mixer for the new school year, he needed a tool that would both promote networking and measure it so he could use the data in his classroom. Professor Fairchild turned to nTAG.

Solution:

nTAG worked with Professor Fairchild to design social activities using the nTAG interactive badge system that encouraged the MBA students to break out of their usual groups and meet new people while also collecting detailed data on the students' interactions. When the students arrived at the event, each received their personal nTAG badge and spent a few minutes inputting answers to two set of questions, one about their interests and one about the their personalities (in particular, sociability). Based on the answers to these questions, the nTAGs automatically assigned their wearers a series of tasks -- people they needed to meet. Points were awarded for each task completed.

Whenever two students stopped to talk, their nTAGs beamed each other, compared the students' profiles, and displayed topics of mutual interest, sparking conversation and helping the students to learn about each other. If one student fulfilled a task requirement for the other, the tags also showed the points awarded.

If not, the tags suggested introductions each student could make to others who would fulfill task requirements. All the while, the tags kept track of who met whom and how long they spoke.

The results were dramatic. At the end of the evening, the students reported that they had met significantly more people than they normally would have and that they learned more interesting information about the people they met. The year was off to a good start!



Meanwhile, the nTAG system automatically tabulated all the interactions and correlated the students' behaviors with the results of the personality questionnaires. The next day in class, Professor Fairchild presented the findings, showing which sorts of networking behavior were most effective and how certain personality traits influenced the networking styles of the students. Since each student received a personal report on their own networking style, complete with recommendations for how to improve, the learnings were exceptionally powerful.