

A photograph of four men standing on a golf course. They are wearing blue polo shirts with the Special Olympics Florida logo and various caps. The man in the center is wearing a white cap, while the others are wearing blue or white caps. They are all smiling and appear to be in a friendly conversation. The background shows a lush green golf course with trees and a clear sky. The text 'SPECIAL OLYMPICS FLORIDA' is overlaid on the top left of the image.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS FLORIDA

Turning a Golf App into a Fundraising Accelerator

slalom

The start of a partnership

Special Olympics Florida is on a mission to “build a community where everyone has the lifelong opportunity to develop physically, emotionally, and socially through sports, wellness, and leadership training.” For the past 50 years, the non-profit has empowered individuals with intellectual disabilities to hone their skills and talents through sports training and competitions.

Slalom’s relationship with the organization began in 2021, at the Special Olympics Florida Golf Invitational. This invitational is one of the largest golf fundraising events in the country, drawing hundreds of participants and raising over 10 million dollars since its inception 11 years ago. Not only was Slalom a white glove sponsor of the 2021 event, but some Slalom team members also golfed in the tournament, including Chris Reyes, Senior Director at Slalom.

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When time is money, every second counts



As a golf participant, Reyes noticed some limitations surrounding the event’s awards ceremony. Throughout the tournament, golfers had to manually track their scores on sheets of paper. When it came time for the ceremony, the Special Olympics team would collect the scores and calculate them by hand to name the winners. With over 450 golfers, the experience was time-consuming and tedious for the staff.

“Non-profits have limited time, budget, and bandwidth, so automating processes can really go a long way,” Reyes says. “I knew Slalom could absolutely create a better experience for the organization.”

Before leaving the tournament, Reyes approached Kate Mazelin, Special Olympics Florida Director, and offered

Slalom’s help. Mazelin responded enthusiastically, in total agreement. “We had this huge tournament and we wanted to ensure our guests felt like their financial contributions mattered,” she conveys. “However, our number one frustration was how long the awards ceremony took.”

Reyes immediately brought his ideas back to the Slalom team and the project was taken on pro-bono. “If we could digitize the scorekeeping, we’d solve a major pain point of the event,” Reyes concludes.



Technology fueled by purpose

To tackle the project, Reyes partnered with Kyle Battle, a Senior Consultant at Slalom with a specialty in Salesforce and personal ties to the Special Olympics. Battle not only managed the CRM for the Special Olympics World Games in 2015, but his older brother is a Special Olympics athlete, and his mom is a coach.

“It was a serendipitous moment,” Battle relays. “My history with the Special Olympics goes back to birth, so it couldn’t have been a more magical partnership.”

Battle and Reyes assembled a team of experts across Slalom, east coast to west coast, to head up the initiative. Together, the team built a mobile event application using the Salesforce Experience Cloud. This app allows golfers to log in and easily update their scores as they move throughout the tournament, ensuring calculations are collected automatically and timely for the evening’s awards ceremony. To encourage engagement, the app displays motivational GIFs and sponsored content at each hole.

“The end goal of this app was to eliminate paper scoring, but it became so much more than that,” Battle explains. “There’s a strong networking undercurrent to this application.”

Beyond scorekeeping, attendees are also able to connect with each other directly through the app, opening the door to networking opportunities between sponsors and attendees. By offering an enhanced experience for sponsors, the app can ultimately be used to drive fundraising, one of the most fundamental goals of the tournament.



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Furthering possibilities with Salesforce

“Fundraising is core to running non-profits like the Special Olympics Florida,” Reyes points out. “This app not only enhances the event experience, but now we’ve created a way to augment sponsorship interactions as well. Why solve one or two event needs, when we can create opportunities for the future?”

Since Salesforce is a cloud-based software already queued for managing events, the app offers an ecosystem of scalability. Special Olympics Florida can utilize Salesforce to directly sign-up registrants for the invitational, allowing the organization to build out its CRM. In turn, Special Olympics Florida will be able to amplify marketing outreach, enhance communications, and maximize fundraising for years to come.

“We are beyond thrilled and excited about where we’re going with this app,” Mazelin of Special Olympics Florida expresses. “Not only will we be able to up our game for the entire tournament this year, but the possibilities to keep building this app with Slalom are endless.”



A roadmap for all non-profits

In total, Slalom provided Special Olympics Florida with \$144K of in-kind work. Yet, Slalom's support continues to extend beyond the development of the app itself. Many Slalom team members will also fly out for the 2022 invitational to introduce the app, train staff, and ensure the event runs smoothly.

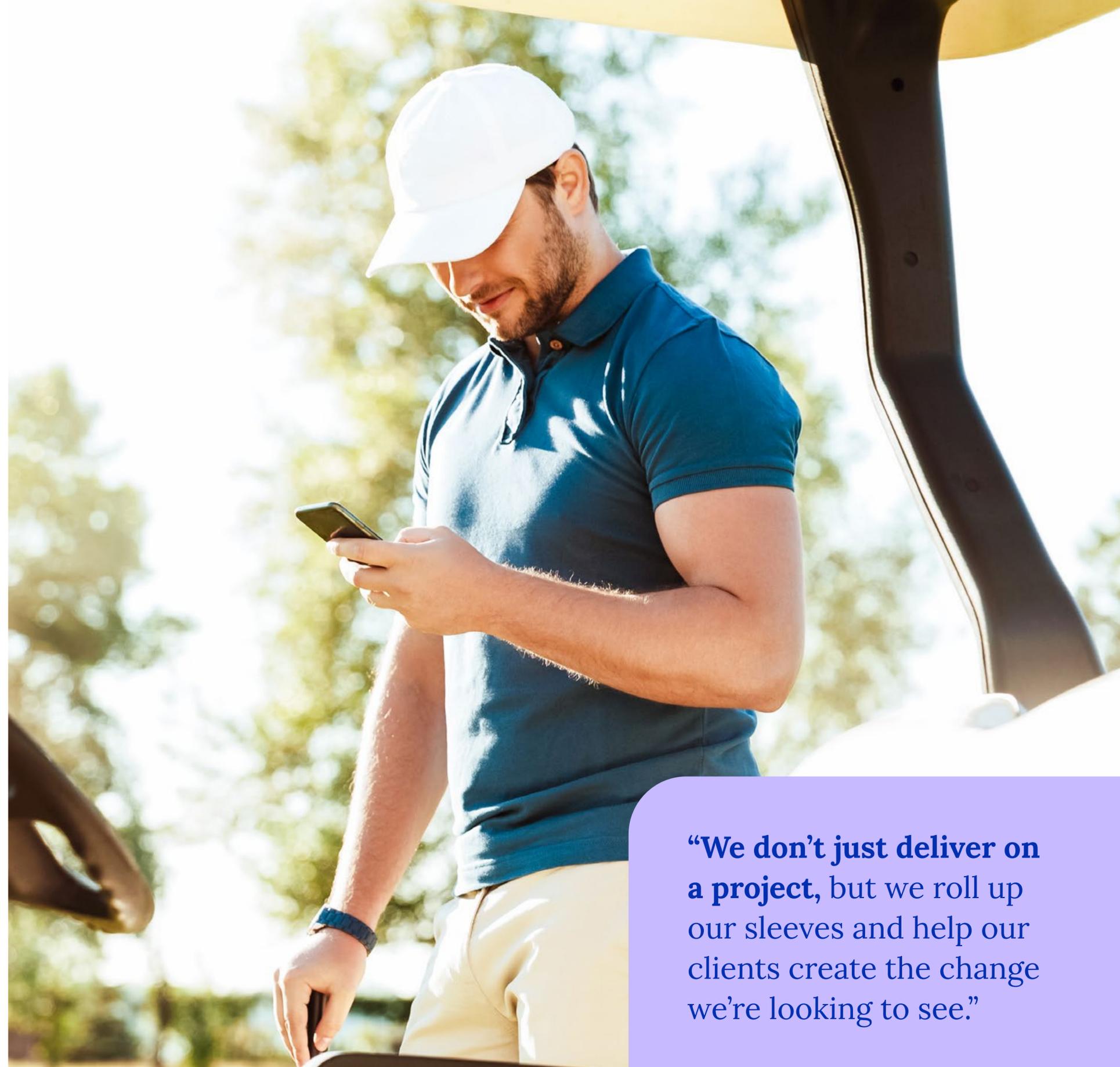
"This is one of Special Olympics' biggest nights for fundraising and we're going to be there, supporting the organization from idea to execution and beyond." Reyes reveals. "That's what makes this project inherently Slalom. We don't just deliver on a promise, but we roll up our sleeves and help our clients create the change we're looking to see. It's truly the essence of Slalom's customer love."

"We want to lead with our minds and our hearts," Reyes continues. "This is a specific use-case that addresses the livelihood of all non-profits. We're building a roadmap that can help other organizations boost fundraising and further their mission. There's a lot of potential here, and we're just starting to scratch the surface."

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