



Loaves & Fishes expands their fight against hunger

With PantryEasy's Online Market

- **Offering the benefit of choice**—to clients who don't otherwise get to choose which foods and goods are available to them.
- **Closing the gap for their local vulnerable population**—particularly, those unable to access food pantry resources during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Scaling their support**—with a long-term solution that allows Loaves & Fishes to expand their service area.

Key Results



Within one week of launch, the pantry nearly maxed out all available orders.



Staff and key team can better manage fluctuating inventory levels.



Clients who haven't shopped in 2+ years are now back.



Decision-makers now have access to the data they've been wanting for years.



Clients enjoy shopping again.



About Loaves & Fishes

Loaves & Fishes is one of the largest food pantries in Illinois. The pantry provides emergency food and support services that empower their clients towards self-sufficiency. As of 2022, Loaves & Fishes serves an average of 1,000 families per week and is supported by over 1,500 volunteers. Over the past two years, Loaves & Fishes has stretched their service area to include four major Illinois counties, and plans to continue growing their impact with the help of their new online market capabilities.

[Explore the customized online market Loaves & Fishes created with PantryEasy](#)

With PantryEasy, Loaves & Fishes is serving more families, better.

Challenge #1: Without an online market, client accessibility was limited

Loaves & Fishes saw a significant increase in local need during the COVID-19 pandemic. They realized there was a gap, a whole vulnerable population, unable to shop in-person at the food pantry and access critical food and goods.

The food pantry knew they needed an online market solution that could help this vulnerable population access the food and goods they needed quickly, efficiently, and without adding an extra burden to the already stretched pantry support team. They tried new distribution channels to reach more people and looked for new avenues to serve these families. Loaves & Fishes even tried to retrofit their own website to accept online orders, but the short-term solution wasn't a sustainable one.

PantryEasy became an easily-managed extension of the services Loaves & Fishes wanted to make available. The online market allows the pantry to give their clients choice, provide them with healthy and fresh foods, and reduce waste.

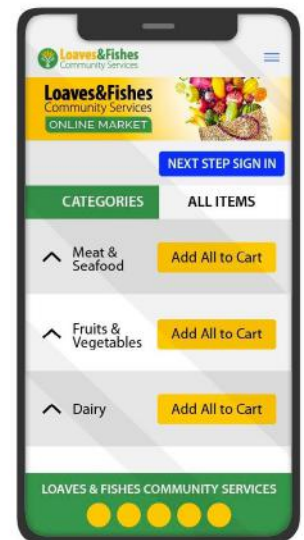
“We looked for different avenues to serve families in a way that wouldn’t compromise their ability to choose and their ability to get healthy foods. It became evident early on that online ordering would be a great solution for the families we serve.”

Jane, Director of Community Health, Loaves & Fishes

Challenge #2: For food pantries, inventory management is difficult

Loaves & Fishes doesn’t always know what foods will be coming in each week. That has made it difficult to offer clients choices. The administrative burden to offer choice is large because updating a front-facing inventory system can be complicated and time-consuming. But offering pre-packs with a variety of foods that families may not prefer leads to greater waste.

With PantryEasy’s quick inventory updating process, Loaves & Fishes can mark foods as available or unavailable instantly. When the food item has run out, PantryEasy automatically marks it as sold out, saving the administrative team even more time. Previously offered foods are stored in the system, streamlining the restocking process.



“It’s difficult for food pantries to manage their inventory day-to-day. That leads to uncertainty, because they never know what kind of food they’ll get. We designed PantryEasy to make inventory adjustments quick and simple, so your market is always up-to-date.”

Eric, PantryEasy Co-Founder

Challenge #3: Administrative teams are already stretched

To understand clients in a holistic way, food pantries need a simple system for gathering household info, monitoring the use of support services, and tracking clients in a sortable database. Many clients register on the spot when they come to a distribution day. Loaves & Fishes had been looking for a way to see which services were important to which families, quickly register new families on-site, and keep data organized and accessible.

With PantryEasy's on-site registration feature, support staff can register and serve new families right away. PantryEasy allows Loaves & Fishes to strengthen their administrative processes, grab better information, and make smarter decisions.

"As new clients come in, the registration process and ability to quickly connect them to food is an administrative plus."

Jane



What do Loaves & Fishes' clients have to say about the new online market?

"We had one client the other day who came up to tell us that this is a great system for her and that she hadn't been able to find a time to come up and stand in the distribution line, so she was doing without. She valued being able to pick out just exactly what she needed. For her, she appreciated the predictability, the ability to choose, and the ability to take advantage for the first time in two years."

Jane

Many of the clients who shop with Loaves & Fishes lack reliable access to a computer or internet. PantryEasy's mobile-friendly online market ensures this population is served. The simple user-interface and clear ordering instructions help their clients— of all ages and technology comfort levels— access the food and goods they need.

Loaves & Fishes now sees clients of all ages and backgrounds, from seniors to single moms, using the new online market. It's a system that accommodates a variety of common client needs, and connects them to resources quickly and effectively.

Key Takeaways

- **Loaves & Fishes can now expand their impact radius**, accessing new populations and helping more families in need.
- **Inventory management has improved**, reducing Loaves & Fishes' fresh food waste and saving their support team countless hours.
- **The administrative team is more efficient** with easier access to data that helps them plan and prepare.

About PantryEasy

We know food pantries across the country want to help put a dent in food insecurity. In order to do that, they need a simple-to-use, highly customizable online market that gets critical pantry goods to the people who need them the most, quickly and efficiently.

We understand it's frustrating to not have the software solution you need to help the people you serve. That's why we developed this industry-leading online market. We equip food pantries just like yours with a customizable, quick-launch online market that simplifies every step of the customer ordering, distribution, and administrative process.