2018 High School Class: Focus on Yield

Throughout the summer months, the Office of Admissions has remained steadfast in implementing yield initiatives geared toward the 2018 fall semester. Students/parents received three mailings from our office this summer:

- Downtown Akron Partnership letter and insert was mailed to students in mid-June
- Mark your calendar postcard was mailed to students in late June (see below)
- Letter from Dr. Green with four complimentary Zips athletic tickets vouchers was mailed to parents in July

Admissions also hosted three events for confirmed students this summer:

- Nearly 50 students joined us for a meet-n-greet, buffet dinner and the Akron RubberDucks baseball game in late June.
- 70 students attended the Cleveland Indians baseball game with us in July. The UA prize wheel and Zippy were popular with the students and their guests.
- The UA Scavenger Hunt for new freshmen continues until August 24. This event is in collaboration with Downtown Akron Partnership.

We continued to send e-mails and text messages to encourage admitted students to confirm their enrollment. We also continued to conduct individual appointments with students and their family members.

The Office of Student Financial Aid is also focusing their efforts on yield. Staff are busy processing loan requests from students and parents and assisting students who have been selected for review by the
government. Persistent outreach continues to all students, new and returning, encouraging them to provide required documents and accept financial aid offers for the coming year.

As of July 18, 88% of all new freshmen who have submitted a FAFSA have been packaged for their financial aid—this is the same percentage of students who were packaged by mid-July last year.

2019 High School Class: Focus on Inquiry and Application Generation

Throughout the summer, we continued to assess our goals, strategies and tactics pertaining to the recruitment of the 2019 high school class. Fathom, an agency that focuses on paid search, paid social, search engine optimization, conversion rate optimization, and analytics consulting is working with admissions, in conjunction with University Communications & Marketing, to expand our digital marketing efforts with both Ohio and non-Ohio high school students.

On the left is an example of a UA Facebook display ad developed by Fathom that is targeted toward prospective students.

Two digital campaigns launched this summer which are focused on inquiry and application generation. A third campaign is scheduled to launch later in the cycle which will support the university’s yield efforts.

Prospective students also received three mailings from the admissions office this summer:

- Teaser brochure mailed in May to promote UA advantages and visiting campus
- Senior Mailer brochure sent in July to promote applying to UA and visiting campus
- Fall Visit Days and Engineering Visit Day postcard invitation mailed in August

E-mails promoting visiting campus, academic programs, the Williams Honors College, financial aid and scholarships, etc. were sent to students and parents throughout the summer.

Transfer and Adult Students: Focus on Outreach

Transfer Credit
One of the most important factors in a transfer student’s decision to attend The University of Akron is the amount of college credit we award based on the student’s previous college work. The University of
Akron has developed a robust web-based Transfer Equivalency Database for prospective students to use as they are making their transfer college decision.

The database has over 46,000 course equivalencies from 1,369 colleges/universities. The example above illustrates how Stark State’s elementary Spanish sequence (SPN 100/200) transfers to UA. In addition to these two courses, we have 500 other course equivalencies established with Stark State.

The database was collaboratively developed by the Transfer and Adult Enrollment Center and our academic departments and it is updated daily as new equivalencies are determined.

Stop-Out Student Initiative
The University of Akron is partnering with College Now to implement a returning student initiative to recruit, retain, and graduate students who have stopped-out over the past two years without completing a degree. College Now will contact these students and invite them to make use of the reentry services College Now and UA provides. UA’s Adult Focus will support these students during their transition back to the university by providing dedicated advising, academic support, and the opportunity to participate in an organization of peers that will direct future efforts to support adult students.

The initial outreach to 1,600 students will occur the week of July 23 and will continue through the fall semester.
Technology:  Focus on Service

TargetX CRM Implementation Update
Over the past two months the following implementation benchmarks have been achieved:

- All current 2019 freshmen prospects are now in the CRM. Data load processes have been built to support the loading of prospects from EAB, ACT, SAT, Hobsons, college fairs, high school visits, and campus visits.
- Inquiry generation campaigns have been launched to increase the number of self-inquiries to UA.
- The CRM now includes off-campus events (e.g. high school visits; college fairs) to support admissions officers’ recruitment travel.
- Staff training regarding the off-campus events, reporting features, and managing one-to-one interactions are scheduled to be conducted in late July.

The next implementation priority is loading the applicant information from EAB and the Common App into the CRM.

Based on the significant progress that has been made the over the past several months, the CRM will be our new system of engagement as we recruit the fall 2019 freshmen class.

Financial Aid Support Center
The Financial Aid Support Center, consisting of online articles, the ability to chat in real time with financial aid advisors, and the availability of advisors 24/7 has greatly enhanced customer service and given students greater access to the information they need to secure financial assistance.

Recent performance highlights (as of July 18) include:

- 7,039 interactions (chat, telephone, email) completed since the launch date of May 23
- 90% customer satisfaction rate based on requests for feedback on assistance
- Average wait time of 1 minute, 19 seconds to speak with an advisor
- 86% resolution rate of questions, requests with the remaining 4% being escalated to senior advisors on campus
- Average time that advisors spend assisting students on the telephone is 7 minutes 30 seconds

These statistics demonstrate an enhanced level of access to our services and that students are being assisted quickly and efficiently. All calls are recorded and senior leadership in the Office of Student Financial continuously reviews advisor performance to ensure that the highest standards of customer service are being met.

Scholarship Spotlight:  Focus on Student Success

The Evans Foundation generously provides scholarships to financially needy students who are enrolled full-time at The University of Akron in the College of Business Administration. Recipients are students who have demonstrated high scholastic ability, good citizenship, promise, and leadership abilities.