



Driving new growth in advancement

At the University of Alabama, Birmingham, there's more to advancement services than processing gifts and navigating new tax laws. Advancement is about understanding prospects' triggers, pinpointing opportunities, and crafting campaigns—all to generate conscientious donations that help the institution deliver the best possible student experience.

Donor data and business intelligence tools within Ellucian Advancement Performance make it all possible by revealing the priorities, time lines, and other variables behind donor decisions.

"The data may be telling a story that we're not even seeing (otherwise)," said Michelle R. Hussey, the university's assistant vice president for advancement services. "It's very possible that the story is so compelling, yet we don't even realize that story's there to tell. So having the data details that a BI tool provides can literally change the future of all decision-making as we all strive to become more strategic and increase overall operational effectiveness."

Understanding donor motivations

UAB implemented Ellucian Advancement Performance in 2014 in part to better understand what motivates university supporters to become university donors.

Advancement Performance (AP) is an integrated package of advancement scorecards, dashboards, reports, analytics, and a data warehouse to help institutions find better ways to manage donors, engage alumni, and increase fundraising.

Business intelligence (BI) tools within Ellucian Advancement Performance provide users with self-service access to current, trusted, and consistent information that enables staff to measure campaign progress, understand performance indicators, and communicate key advancement information. In short, business intelligence illuminates donor details and trends that can then fuel more compelling, targeted outreach efforts.

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About the University of Alabama at Birmingham

The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) is a state-funded institution with 2,322 full-time faculty, 51 undergraduate programs, and 91 graduate programs.

Enrollment: 18,568

Business challenges:

- Pressure to increase private funding due to declining state and federal support
- Continued need to prospect and increase donations from all constituencies
- Meeting leadership's request to measure and improve fundraising effectiveness

Solutions:

- Ellucian Advancement Performance

Business outcomes:

- Ability to identify and prioritize best strategies for different segments and campaigns
- Ability to measure and track prospect engagement
- Ability to analyze and improve campaign performance
- Ability to demonstrate advancement results to university leadership

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Assistant Vice President
for Advancement Services

“If you can take a look at affinity, listen to their story, what they’ve done, what their passions are, then it will make a big difference in the amount of money that you’re able to raise because it’s impactful for everyone,” Hussey said. “It will impact the student, and it will impact the donor.”

Working smarter

In addition to understanding the context of donor decisions, Ellucian Advancement Performance also helps Hussey keep university leadership and department staff well informed on advancement efforts and opportunities.

Intuitive dashboards enable quick, easy reports with digestible graphics that communicate answers at a glance.

“BI, especially AP, allows you to put that (information) in the front-line fundraiser and leadership’s hands very easily,” Hussey said.

Eventually, university leaders hope to use data and business intelligence to understand donors and predict their giving.

“How long should it take for a donor to move through the development cycle? How long are they in the pipeline?” Hussey said. “We would like to be able to establish a predictive model for UAB and determine how long it is before they make that significant gift, whatever that level is to them.”

That kind of detail brings new potential to make stronger, more enduring donor connections.



Enhancing the solution

Ellucian Advancement Performance customers don’t just install the solution. Ellucian collaborates with customers—small, mid-sized, and large institutions—to refine the solution in ways that best meet user needs. Customers also participate in monthly calls to share best practices and discuss potential new product features.

“I think one of the most exciting things about Ellucian is that they have reached out to their clients and that they...have asked for client feedback,” Hussey said. “They’re willing to work with you because they want the product to be the best it can possibly be.”

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ABOUT ELLUCIAN

Ellucian helps education institutions thrive in an open and dynamic world. We deliver a broad portfolio of technology solutions, developed in collaboration with a global education community, and provide strategic guidance to help education institutions of all kinds navigate change, achieve greater transparency, and drive efficiencies. More than 2,400 institutions in 40 countries around the world look to Ellucian for the ideas and insights that will move education forward, helping people everywhere discover their futures through learning.

To learn more, please visit www.ellucian.com