



About Winthrop University

Located in Rock Hill, South Carolina, Winthrop is a public university that blends liberal arts, professional programs, global awareness and civic engagement. It has received accolades and high rankings from numerous organizations for its quality and affordability.

Enrollment: 6,000

Objectives Achieved

- 8 percent increase in applicant pool
- Simplicity of an integrated system

Solutions

- Banner® by Ellucian
- Ellucian CRM Recruit™

“The bi-directional feed between Ellucian CRM Recruit and Banner works well with verifications and distributions. No other CRMs did this—they all did it with batching, and we initially looked at 25 of them.”

Josh Bistromowitz

Executive Director of Recruitment, Winthrop University



Recruitment gets down to earth, from the cloud

Winthrop University solves recruiting challenges big and small

Entering the same data in more than one place increases the potential for error, creates unnecessary steps, and simply frustrates users. They expect a “smart” computer application to populate data fields after the first entry and anticipate their next step in a task-based activity.

At Winthrop University, staff and prospective students learned to live with this quirk, the workaround for report generation, and other limitations of the constituent relationship management (CRM) system. Only when they had the opportunity to upgrade did staff realize how cumbersome their old system was.

Not wanting incremental improvements that would fail to solve all the challenges, the administration at Winthrop moved

forward with a new CRM and selected Ellucian CRM Recruit™ because of its contemporary functionality and because of its tight integration with Banner® by Ellucian, the existing enterprise resource planning (ERP) system.

IT reflects the Winthrop University brand

As a community with many parts, institutions cannot build great reputations only on well regarded academic programs. Faculty, staff, and the public must also have positive experiences with support and other systems for colleges and universities to thrive.

Mindful of this principle, Winthrop worked hard to establish its reputation as a premier university with a long list of accomplishments dating back nearly 130 years. As it started the search for a new CRM, Winthrop required a system



that would project excellence to prospective students, parents, and influencers whenever they interacted with the university. The institution sought to not only eliminate the duplicate data entry that was required by prospects under the old system, but also needed to find a way for staff to make simple changes, such as adding a field for a new question in an online application.

“It was always a hassle to make any changes in our applications,” says Joshua Bistromowitz, executive director of recruitment at Winthrop University. “Our apps go live in August, so to make any changes we’d have to start in early Spring because the vendor was not always available to support us.”

Flexibility and control can work well together

From establishing itself as a school to train women as teachers, becoming fully integrated by race and gender, and achieving university status and national recognition for quality and value, Winthrop University has a proud history of firsts to live up to. True to this reputation, Winthrop looked ahead at its future IT needs and decided that tying up physical space and resources on servers and other equipment did not fit the educational model of the future. It mandated that its new CRM reside in the cloud.

Notes Bistromowitz about the old system, “We had no good way to archive data and were looking at buying new on-site servers if we were to continue with it.”

As a cloud solution, Ellucian CRM Recruit requires no servers on campus but remains accessible from anywhere and on any mobile device. With uptime guaranteed by service-level agreements, this solution allows IT departments to move beyond routine tasks such as backups and maintenance. And when significant versions become available, the cloud model is particularly helpful because upgrades are free and pose no operational disruption.

Another challenge that Winthrop overcame with the help of Ellucian CRM Recruit was delivering timely communication to prospective students, because the previous system had limited functionality outside the office. For example, when staff would attend a recruiting event, they had to return to the office with handwritten notes and enter data

into the system before outreach to prospective students could begin. Ellucian CRM Recruit changed that because it gives staff more control to remotely pull data from many sources, connect students to specific events, update their information in the system, and communicate with them on a very personal level.

Adds Bistromowitz, “From the students’ perspective, if they took the SAT on a certain date, they can expect we’ll automatically follow up with reminders and keep them engaged, or have someone call the student directly about it. From an administrator’s view, we know what our costs for a recruiting event were, the ROI, and whether we want to do it again.”

Good changes precipitate better changes

As part of its planning for the rollout of Ellucian CRM Recruit, Winthrop scrutinized its practices and processes to know exactly what needed improvement, what should stay the same, and what had to discontinue.

Having greater capacity to conduct outreach, for example, is an upgrade that led to revisions in the way the institution contacts prospects and influencers, the frequency, how they reach them, and what they communicate. As important as it is to be high tech, the administration needs to remain high touch as well.

“Having the email templates is great because it makes the daily process easier for reaching any number of students, but we can still personalize the communication,” says Bistromowitz.

The results are promising: Winthrop has seen an eight percent increase in the applicant pool since deploying Ellucian CRM Recruit. And, because the institution needs fewer data entry positions, it has been able to evolve those roles and give personnel greater responsibility, such as record cleanup so that data is correct before it gets into Banner.

“The bi-directional feed between Ellucian CRM Recruit and Banner works well with verifications and distributions. No other CRMs did this—they all did it with batching, and we initially looked at 25 of them,” comments Bistromowitz. “We wanted one system to do everything, and it runs as expected.”

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