



Universities embrace RightNow customer service solutions to answer students' questions via web, email and phone

Centralised, responsive information centres optimise student recruitment and retention while reducing administrative costs

Australian universities using RightNow's solutions include the University of New South Wales, the University of Southern Queensland, Monash University and the Australian National University. Other leading universities adopting the solution include Azusa Pacific University, the Dallas County Community College District, Fordham University of Montana, New York University, North Carolina State University, Rice University, Stevens Institute of Technology, the University of California at Los Angeles, the University of Houston, the University of Michigan, the University of South Florida, and numerous others. "With RightNow, we are able to get quality information to people where and when they need it," Betty Roberts, associate vice-chancellor and associate vice president of technology support services at University of Houston, said. "And we are doing it at less cost to the university than ever before." A variety of factors have historically prevented universities from delivering responsive service. Foremost has been their decentralised structures. With the information they need dispersed among multiple, independent departments - including admissions, financial aid, registrar, bursar, athletics, housing and various academic departments - students typically have to look in several places before finding answers to their questions. In the absence of formal call centres and a shared knowledge base, the information students receive can often vary, depending on the individual university staff member giving the answer. Limited budgets have also hampered universities' efforts to improve their responsiveness to students' queries. RightNow specifically addresses these issues by consolidating all information from all university offices and making it readily available to students and university staff alike via the web, email, and phone. This ensures questions can be answered quickly and accurately across all communication channels. By optimising the usefulness of the web as a self-service information resource, RightNow also drives down service costs. RightNow's growing popularity in the university market can be attributed to several factors, including: Sophisticated knowledge management functions that let universities identify frequently asked questions and author appropriate answers; Powerful search functions that make it easy for students to pinpoint the specific answer they need on the university web site, even as the total number of available answers grows; and A proven hosted application delivery model that enables universities to enjoy the benefits of RightNow's solutions without having to shoulder the infrastructure costs and workloads associated with internal deployments of enterprise applications. "RightNow enables higher learning organisations to achieve excellence in customer service without investing additional human or capital resources," Sean Forbes, vice president of Marketing and Business Development at RightNow, said. "That makes it an ideal solution for today's universities as they seek to improve their competitive position within their existing budget constraints." ENDS

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