

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

ONLINE UNIVERSITY FOCUSES ON LEADS MOST LIKELY TO BECOME ENGAGED, LONG-TERM STUDENTS

Founded in 1971, Liberty University currently enrolls more than 51,900 students — 11,900 on campus in Lynchburg, Virginia and more than 40,000 online. Liberty launched its distance learning program in 1985, which expanded to online learning in 2002. With more than 40 degree programs, Liberty University Online is now the largest non-profit online educator in the world, and has earned a top-three ranking from the Online Education Database.

Between 2008 and 2009, Liberty doubled its enrollment, attracting more than 250,000 leads per year through the Internet and other marketing channels. With these huge numbers, it was becoming cost-prohibitive for Liberty to follow up on every lead with a live response, e-mail or direct mail piece.

Prioritizing and Personalizing Leads

“We knew we were treating all leads the same,” said John Donges, executive director for Liberty University Online. “Our enrollment counselors were giving the same amount of attention to serious learners as they were to window shoppers.”

Liberty wanted to focus on and personalize its treatment of high-value leads — those most likely to become engaged, long-term students — in order to get the most out of its growing lead volume.

The Challenge

Online university needed to manage large volumes of leads and focus on high-value prospects

The Solution

On-Demand Lead Scoring from TARGUSinfo

The Result

Converting 4-5 percent more leads and saving \$150,000 per year on direct mail

“Our lead-scoring program measures up on any scale. We are converting 4 to 5 percent more high-quality leads into enrollments. We’ve also stopped sending high-end direct mail to lower-tier prospects, and have not seen any dip in conversion rates.”

*- John Donges,
Executive Director for
Liberty University Online*

Turning Prospects into Stay-and-Pay Students

Liberty turned to TARGUSinfo’s On-Demand Lead Scoring to classify tens of thousands of leads per month in real time.

Liberty chose TARGUSinfo because of the coverage, currency and accuracy of its consumer data that fuels the predictive scoring solution. By analyzing the Liberty customer database, TARGUSinfo was able to create tailored profiles of prospects most likely to enroll; the university now scores each lead according to those profiles and prioritizes its efforts to convert the most promising ones into students.

The lead-scoring program now directs the most promising leads to enrollment counselors, while less intense follow-up strategies are applied to the remaining leads, saving money and valuable staff time. Furthermore, the promising leads are matched with enrollment counselors based on the students’ interests and the counselors’ skills and experience.

“As a university, the heart of our mission is, of course, quality education,” said Donges. “Qualifying our leads with On-Demand Lead Scoring lets us focus on our mission by directing us toward eager learners instead of wastefully slogging through unproductive leads.”

Using Time and Money Wisely

With the success of TARGUSinfo’s On-Demand Lead Scoring, Liberty is now converting 4 to 5 percent more high-quality leads into enrollments.

Liberty is also saving \$150,000 a year on direct mail by reducing the number of packages it sends out, only mailing information to the prospects most likely to convert. The university plans to apply its lead scores in real time within its call center to help facilitate the processing of inbound inquiry calls.