

TargetX and Piedmont College

Piedmont College Builds Stronger Relationships with Prospects and Enjoys 26% increase in Admits with the Support of the TargetX Recruitment Suite

Challenges: “Dinosaur-like” systems created boundaries to increased admits

Piedmont College is a small, private liberal arts college in Georgia that attracts students who are overwhelmingly state residents. Instead of competing with other liberal arts schools, Piedmont tends to spar for students with the larger state schools who historically have more staff and resources to focus on building relationships with prospects.

The college needed a CRM tool with an online application that would free its admissions staff to focus on deep, personalized relationships. Before finding that CRM, Joanna Tucker, Assistant Director of Undergraduate Admissions, says Piedmont’s “systems were dinosaur-like, to say the least.”

Like many small institutions, the admissions staff at Piedmont spent years doing communications and event management through painstaking manual processes. Emails were sent out individually and without automated scheduling. SMS messaging wasn’t possible. Campus visits were scheduled with antiquated tools that weren’t user-friendly for students. There was an online application, but it didn’t integrate with other systems, which meant staff had to manually upload student information. And, worst of all, that application created a significant barrier to completion.

“Our application didn’t allow students to create an account and return to their application in any way. Prospects would lose all their work, get irritated, and not finish the application,” explains Tucker. “It certainly wasn’t an encouraging process for them” Piedmont’s low-tech tools and processes meant fewer touches with prospects, slower responses to student queries, less nudges to complete applications, increased prospect frustration, and ultimately, more students going elsewhere.

TARGET 



PIEDMONT
COLLEGE

Piedmont College at a Glance

Founded in 1897

A small, liberal arts college

Located in Demorest and Athens, GA

Serves 2,500 total students

Home of the Lions

TargetX Solutions

Recruitment Suite

Online Application

Goals

To drive increased admits, Piedmont needed a flexible CRM with a recruitment solution that:

offers a mobile-first online application that saves student progress;

includes text messaging integration and a drag-and-drop email platform;

effortlessly manages student data and integrates seamlessly with other systems; and

has strong event management tools.

Solutions: The TargetX Recruitment Suite with Online Application empowers Piedmont to build stronger relationships with prospects

In 2017, a technology consultant was invited to Piedmont to audit the education management system. He quickly discovered the challenges faced by admissions and made a firm recommendation for a CRM.

His recommendation? The TargetX Recruitment Suite with Online Application — built on the Salesforce platform.

The TargetX Recruitment Suite empowers admissions teams to build stronger relationships with prospects by leveraging leading communication tools that automatically track student engagement throughout the recruitment cycle — all in one comprehensive CRM. With TargetX, Piedmont drove more conversions with less effort by nurturing prospects with robust email campaigns that are customized with easy drag-and-drop features and fully automated.

“Now, we have automatic communications and data syncs. If we receive an inquiry, the prospect gets a message. If they’ve stalled on their application, they get a prompt. When an application is complete, a student immediately gets a warm, customized congratulations email from us,” says Tucker. “Beyond that, every piece of a student’s data is at our fingertips when we need it—no heavy lift required.”

Perhaps best of all, the new online application with drag-and-drop customization has improved Piedmont’s admissions process by leaps and bounds. The application gives students the flexibility to begin their application, save any progress, and return to complete remaining requirements from any device, including smartphones. Now, prospects can complete at their own pace and on the device of their choosing, all while receiving improved support from admissions staff.

“TargetX allows our admissions advisors to have more time—intentional time—to make relationships with applicants because they don’t have to do all the back-end stuff that TargetX does automatically,” says Cindy Peterson, Dean of Admissions and Undergraduate Enrollment Management. “It has made our office much more efficient and intentional in pushing students to complete their applications.”

Peterson continues and adds, “SMS is another game changer. The ability to check in with students via text message is generating far more responses than past methods.” That’s not surprising since 70 percent of students report wanting text messages from their institution, according to the Social Admissions Report.

Another much-appreciated feature is the TargetX events module that allows staff to create, manage, and execute events that delight prospects. At Piedmont, visiting students receive personalized campus tours with faculty one-on-one meetings. Tucker says the events module allows the team to “list all available visit times for visitors to self-select easily. The options disappear once the slots are filled, which saves visit coordinators a lot of time and effort.”

Results: Admit numbers grow a whopping 26 percent at Piedmont College

With the adoption of the TargetX Recruitment Suite with Online Application, Piedmont College dramatically scaled back on non-student-facing work and built stronger relationships with prospects. As a result, Piedmont College has increased admit numbers by a whopping 26% since the launch.

“I definitely credit TargetX with a lot of our growth and success,” says Peterson.

The college looks forward to suite expansion for the next recruitment season with the launch of student portals that serve up content that’s based on a student’s unique interests.

