



Monmouth College and NRCCUA

Strategic Partnership for the Win

Located in Monmouth, Illinois - a small community of roughly 10,000 in the west central part of the state - Monmouth College is a private liberal arts college offering 34 majors, 39 minors and 18 pre-professional tracks. In addition to the standard curriculum, Monmouth offers varied internship and study abroad opportunities and summer research experiences. With a ratio of students to faculty of 10:1, students can expect classes to be small and personal attention to be high. Also high is Monmouth's cultural diversity. Monmouth's founders believed strongly in equal educational opportunity for all and worked to create a campus that welcomed students of all genders, races and backgrounds.

Making an Impact on Enrollment

Monmouth's Vice President for Enrollment Management and Communications joined the institution nearly 3 years ago. His professional history included a long tenure in higher ed admissions, higher education consulting, as well as consulting in other industries, allowing him to bring a broad range of experiences and innovative thinking to the role.

Why would a Florida-born, North Carolina-educated professional go to west central Illinois and Monmouth College? Because Monmouth offers a transformative experience that other small liberal arts colleges just talk about. The Vice President said, "One of the things that got me here was when I came and realized that Monmouth wasn't offering just lip service. There was depth to the promise of

Challenge

- Lots of data, but no way to use it to make data-informed decisions
- Spending too much on Search and not getting the results they wanted
- Did not have enough resources to manage Search in-house

Solution

- NRCCUA® Omnichannel Enrollment Services
- Encoura™ Data Lab and its Enrollment Lens™ module
- NRCCUA Student Profile Data

Benefits

- 3x cost reduction on outsourced Search services
- Better use of data and the ability to use the data to make informed decisions
- Improved yield
- Reduced spend on student profile data that was not yielding

transformation. We approach the liberal arts - we call it the “illiberating arts” - in a unique way. We think it’s about giving students the opportunity to truly think and free the possibilities that exist.”

From the very first question the school asks of prospective students, you can see the unique approach. Monmouth’s Vice President said, “Most colleges ask high school students, ‘What do you

There were a couple of obvious quick wins right out of the gate.”

In addition, though they had quite a bit of data, they were having trouble making sense of it all. He said, “I wanted to figure out how we could look at our data in a way that didn’t take us hours upon hours upon hours to make data-informed decisions.”



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want to study?’ Those kids are 17 or 18, and most have no idea. We started asking, ‘What problem do you want to solve?’ College isn’t about end points. It’s just one small step in your life process as you try to make an impact in the world.”

By way of example, if a student decides s/he is interested in addressing the social issue of food insecurity, s/he could come to Monmouth and minor in Global Food Security. In that study track, students learn about the issue through a triad of vantage points in biology, anthropology and sociology - an interdisciplinary, liberal arts approach to addressing the problem.

Understanding the Challenges

When the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Communications first arrived on the Monmouth scene, his first priority was to figure out what they had and didn’t have in place from an enrollment perspective. It wasn’t long before he found a few areas he thought he could improve. He said, “When I came in, I wanted to identify ways to make things more efficient and to make our dollar go farther.

The Path to Data-Informed Decisions

Already familiar with NRCCUA, the Vice President shared Monmouth’s particular challenges with the company’s team. Immediately, it became clear that the solution lie with Encoura™ Data Lab and its Enrollment Lens feature. Enrollment Lens allows institutions to interact with its enrollment data to fully analyze and understand its recruitment funnel. Furthermore, the product offers enhanced “point-in-time” or “stage-of-funnel” visualization capabilities so users can dig in and track velocity across key areas of the admissions funnel.

The Vice President explained how Enrollment Lens provided insights previously unavailable to him and his team, saying, “Enrollment Lens allowed us to see the sources of data that weren’t panning out for us. We drilled in and could see it. There’s the old adage - ‘50% of my marketing is working and 50% isn’t. The problem is, I don’t know which 50%.’ With Enrollment Lens, we could see it more clearly. We could see what was and wasn’t working and stop spending money on sources that weren’t working.”

With restricted budgets and ever-increasing enrollment goals, knowing where it's possible to stop spending is invaluable. It also helps clean out the funnel and make it more streamlined.

He said, "We talk about the funnel all the time, but really, it ought to be more of a cylinder. If you work smarter instead of harder and spend less on names that go nowhere, you increase your yield."

Beyond just data sources, Enrollment Lens also lets the Monmouth enrollment team see the impact that geography has on their marketing efforts so they can target more precisely and save on costs. Monmouth's Vice President said, "It's not just about data sources, but about geography and where things are performing better. Once we know where we have hot spots, we can influence them."

Rather than travel to locations that are poor performing or mail to those locations, they may double-down in areas that are doing well for them and have significantly better return.

He added, "Enrollment Lens helps us know where to travel, mail, market and where to focus future name buys. We can see performance by county, then slice and dice the data in many ways to influence the work we decide to do or not do."

Search Done Right

In the past few years, the Monmouth enrollment team has also dramatically changed their outreach approach. In addition to working with NRCCUA's Encoura Data Lab, they were pleased to learn that the company could also help with Search and Digital Marketing outreach via their Omnichannel Enrollment Services.

The Vice President said, "We were going to bring Junior Search in house to save on costs we were spending using a 3rd party. We started planning out how to do that, and then, we had a staffing change. We realized that

without that person, bringing Search in house was just going to be too overwhelming, so we started looking for alternatives."

They were pleased to learn that NRCCUA could help with Search as well, and could do it at an achievable price - as in, about 3x less than they had been spending. "That's one of the reasons I love working with NRCCUA," said the Vice President, "I would tell any VP of Enrollment - if you want better service and people who aren't just there to make a buck, go with NRCCUA."

But more than gaining an effective Search solution at a lower cost, the Monmouth team feels supported like never before. He said, "We have weekly meetings with our NRCCUA team where we see how things are going - just like I would have a 1:1 with a team member. Now, instead of having one person with one skill set focused on Search, I have a team of experts acting as an extension of my operation."

Strategic Partners

Today, Monmouth's enrollment team and NRCCUA enjoy lots of regular interaction and engagement, underscoring the partnership that they share. Their VP of Enrollment Management & Communications agreed, "Vendors are all about selling stuff in volume. Strategic partners figure out what you're trying to accomplish and work with you to get there. A strategic partner is willing to say, 'Actually, you don't need that,' even if it means we'll spend less with them. For me, it was clear from the first conversation, our relationship with NRCCUA was going to be a strategic partnership."

He concluded, "The valuable insights we get from NRCCUA are worth their weight in gold. They are a phenomenal resource, and things are going really well. We're getting better results than I even expected, and I like where we're at."