

Lawrence Tech's new online completion program looks to aid Michigan's struggling economy

Pathways through Partnerships program provides smooth transition for community college students

People in the state of Michigan are facing some steep challenges today. Foreign competition in the automotive industry has resulted in massive job reductions. A recent CNN.com article cites unemployment in Michigan at 7.4%, resulting in more than 76,000 jobs lost in the last year. The same piece indicates that this job loss is creating major problems for Michigan residents in the housing industry — with the highest percentage of mortgages going into foreclosure in the nation.¹

The only way to lift the state out of this plight is to invest in retraining its workforce — both the existing and upcoming populations — for jobs that are relevant to the new economy. Academic institutions across the state have a tremendous challenge and opportunity to assist.



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Lawrence Technological University, a private, non-profit institution serves 4,500 full-time enrollees. The largest architectural school in Michigan, Lawrence Tech is also recognized for its engineering, management and arts and sciences programs.

This spring, Lawrence Tech is launching a new initiative, Pathways through Partnerships, aimed at fostering connections with students at all 28 community colleges across Michigan. The program will enable students to



The Lawrence Technological University in Southfield, Mich., is the largest architectural school in Michigan.

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Web-based relationship management helps overcome recruiting challenges

Community colleges face rising enrollment, declining funding

As the New Year begins, public higher education institutions across the country are faced with the reality of deep budget cuts on the state and local levels. Perhaps nowhere is this felt more profoundly than at our nation's 1,200 community colleges.

Despite a slowing economy, however, enrollment at community colleges continues to spike. According to the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), community college students constitute nearly half of all undergraduate enrollment in the United States. In Maryland alone, community colleges are expected to grow twice as fast as their four-year counterparts over the next 10 years. Community colleges are undeniably playing a critical role in the development and growth of today's workforce and the overall health of the economy.

How then can these institutions

continue to increase their enrollment efforts in the face of budget cuts?

Doing more with less

Due to high-demand, but low resources, community colleges must be more efficient than ever in managing their enrollment and marketing efforts. However, few have the resources in place to effectively track and manage their interactions with prospective students.

Please consider your answers to the following questions. If the answer is yes to any of them, it's likely time to re-examine technology requirements for recruitment and retention:

Is the admissions staff being asked to do more with less money?

Is your team far busier today than it was even three years ago?

Are staff members still using

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legacy Student Information Systems, Access or Excel for contact management?

Over the last few years, technology solutions for contact management and marketing that were typically reserved for large-enterprise institutions have become much more accessible and configurable to the needs of community colleges. Systems that offer a centralized view of contact management, marketing, enrollment and program management are allowing community colleges to extend their reach to constituents with very low investment in capital or IT resources.

Unifying communications and outreach

Higher education is filled with

technology solutions that are designed to meet the robust needs of large, public or private, four-year institutions — accompanied by significant costs for these sizable software packages and equally large expenditures of money, time and resources for implementation. For this reason, many administrators at two-year schools have relied on the simple contact management software bundled with new computer purchases (eg. Microsoft Access included with MS Office bundle) for managing contact information and outreach.

But how is that contact tracked? Moving between Access or Filemaker databases and Excel spreadsheets is time-consuming and does not present an option for automating this process. Building a new list of prospective targets and managing outreach to that list can be a complicated process. Newer

Web-based contact management and marketing software bundles can seamlessly integrate these functions, resulting in increased admissions and improved enrollment management.

By combining these functions with robust marketing automation and analytics, institutions can see a significant lift in enrollment and revenue. Already, community colleges across the country, including Anne Arundel Community College and Ivy Tech, are empowering their recruitment and admissions personnel with Web-based relationship management and marketing tools.

In today's environment, where students are faced with a number of continuing education choices, community colleges must find ways to enhance their relationship management and marketing efforts to capture the attention of prospective and current students. ▲