



Improving Enrollment Performance, A Case Study

Client Profile

[Wittenberg University](#) is a private four-year liberal arts institution in Springfield, Ohio, serving 2,000 full-time students representing 37 states and approximately 30 foreign countries.



Situation

In 2006, Wittenberg adopted a strategic plan in which they strived to be recognized as a top 75 Liberal Arts University. To do so, they set the following enrollment management objectives:

- Attract outstanding students with a passion for learning who reflect the diversity of the world and embrace Wittenberg's values.
- Achieve optimal composition and diversity of the entering class
- Increase the following student populations: out of state, international, and those from diverse ethnic, economic and religious backgrounds, particularly Lutheran.
- Achieve target enrollment of 1950 FTE by 2013 in an environment where the desirable high school graduate population was expected to decline 7% by 2015.
- Enhance the academic profile of the incoming class.

Challenges

Wittenberg's processes and systems could not support these aspirations.

- The paper-based application process was too manual, time intensive, and suffered from high error rates and delays.
- Up-to-two-month lag time from initial application to decision was a significant competitive disadvantage.
- Counselors had little personal time to spend with the highest quality applicants.
- Budget and business processes could not support increased application volume and counselor activity.
- Existing business processes did not provide potential applicants with a user experience consistent with the Wittenberg brand.
- There was no ability to track and manage inquiries or conduct targeted marketing to desirable prospective students.
- Existing systems did not report or forecast in a timely or accurate manner, impacting strategic enrollment management decisions.

The Plan

As Wittenberg set out to increase enrollment, they targeted several concurrent areas of improvement:

- Increase applications.
- Improve inquiry "activity tracking" and outreach.
- Implement enhanced process controls for collection and standardization of data for analytics and management reports
- Improve application completion rate.
- Reduce decision turn-around time from months to weeks.
- Make application processing more efficient.
- Reduce and or eliminate the need for part time processing staff in order to redeploy funds to other efforts.
- Improve the applicant experience by making the process more transparent.
- Reduce security concerns by eliminating the need for counselors to

- remove files from the office when traveling or working at home.
- Shift the office environment from reactive to proactive
- Improve quality of life for admissions staff.

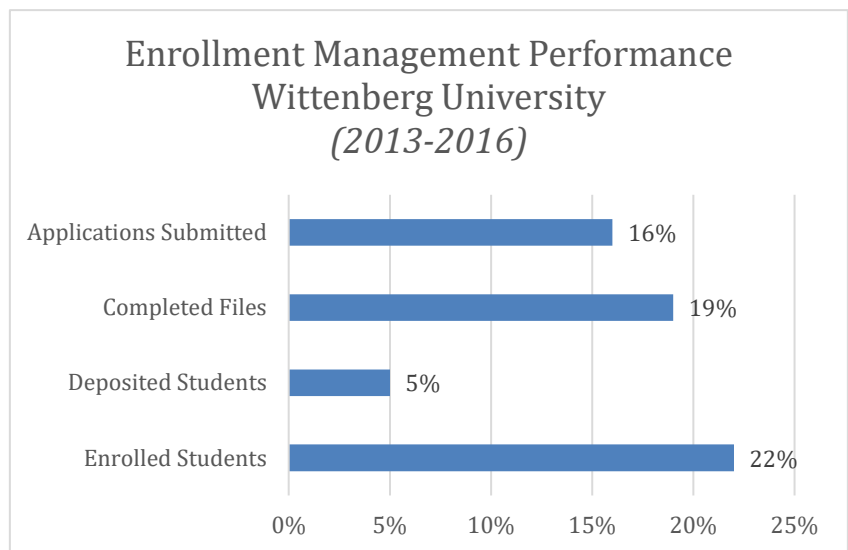
The Solution

Wittenberg selected FolderWave, which is an end-to-end software and services solution for higher education with proven success in the application-processing space. FolderWave “checked all the boxes” needed to overcome the challenges Wittenberg faced. The company stands out as a long-established thought leader that partners with clients to create and develop constantly evolving solutions to meet ever-changing business needs. This is done through a true, collaborative partnership that continues long past implementation. FolderWave’s solution improves staff satisfaction and motivation by simplifying daily administrative tasks and allowing staff more time for personal engagement with applicants and their families.

Outcomes

"Partnering with FolderWave has enabled us to adjust our operational calendar and become a more proactive shop rather than a reactive shop."

-Karen Hunt,
Executive Director
of Admissions,
Wittenberg
University



Karen identified significant improvements in the following areas:

Accuracy:

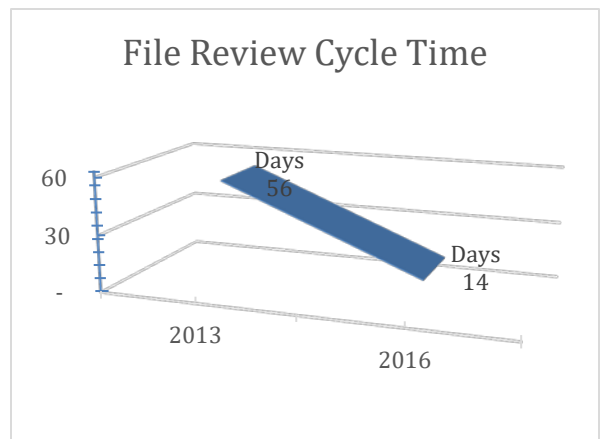
- A significant reduction in errors and redundancies.

Control:

- Greater control over processes.
- Better ability to advise applicants at fairs and events as we have access to their records online.
- Greater certainty when communicating to those applicants missing items to complete their application.

Process Improvement:

- Decreased application processing time.
- Reviewing files and “decisions out the door” have gone from 2 months to 2 weeks.
- Eliminated the need for part-time staff.
- Counselors have a greater capacity for personal outreach with applicants since the efficiency of the system allowed for realignment of some tasks from counselors to the processing staff.
- Elevate Staff Assistant position to Operations Manager role to better support strategic planning so processes could move from reactive to proactive.



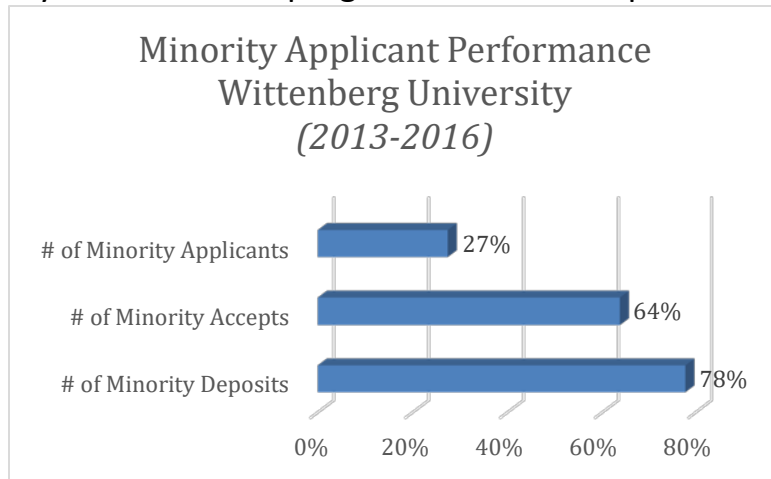
Cost Savings:

- Significant savings in time and space. Very cost effective.

Actionable Reporting & Forecasting:

- Enrollment reports are now accurate and at our fingertips every day. It is just “unbelievable” how far we have come in just 4 years.
- We are able to identify applicants with special interests and

communicate to those applicants based on those interests. This has allowed for many different departments such as the music department and faculty from different program areas on campus to be more involved with outreach. The athletic department also has more information on the status of the athletes' application process.



- We have been able to create an affinity score that allows us to predict matriculation based on Inquiry activity and touch points. Understanding the class behavior has been so valuable and response to targeted communication has been so valuable as shown by the chart above.

Security:

- Security is no longer a major concern. Since going paperless, physical files no longer leave the building.

Work Life Balance:

- Improved employee quality of life. Staff no longer must work long hours in the office as they can read from online from the comfort of their homes.

About FolderWave

Since 2000 FolderWave has been a trusted partner to institutions of higher education by helping them leverage technology, thought leadership, and best practices to operationalize the achievement of their strategic enrollment goals and objectives.