

TargetX and the Illinois Institute of Technology

Illinois Institute of Technology Achieves Record Breaking Application Year After Implementing the TargetX Mobile-first Application

Challenges: Illinois Tech lacked have an application that reflected the school's ethos: tech-savvy and innovative

It cannot be underestimated how important mobile devices are to student applicants. Research shows that 64 percent of students complete at least some part of their college applications on a mobile device^[1]. However, the most widely used tools in higher education are not yet compatible with the hyper-mobile world of today. Illinois Tech's primary challenge was trying to yield maximum results from an application that had not been designed with mobile in mind.

"We are a technology-focused university," says April Welch, Associate Vice-President of Strategic Initiatives at Illinois Tech. "Our applicants are tech-savvy and they expect speed and reliability from our application, even when they access it from a phone. Our application's student experience is a reflection of our institution. Therefore, we needed to ensure it was seamless and easy to use."

In addition to needing an application designed for mobile, Illinois Tech required a flexible application that could easily grow to accommodate the school's varied graduate programs, internal offices, and research experiences.

Solutions: The TargetX Online Application offered a true mobile experience that not only handled the volume and complexity of multiple programs, but most importantly, provided students with a clean and easy user experience

TargetX's mobile-first Online Application is the first of its kind in the higher education marketplace. Most online applications are designed around outdated paper models that are difficult to read and offer a disjointed user experience. The TargetX Online Application is clean, clear, and easy to use on any mobile device, appealing to the growing number of students who use their phones to apply to college.



Illinois Institute of Technology at a Glance

Located in Chicago, IL

Private, technology-focused research university

7,792 students

One of 21 institutions that comprise the Association of Independent Technological Universities

Home of the Scarlet Hawks

TargetX Solutions

Recruitment Suite

Online Application

Goals

The Illinois Institute of Technology (Illinois Tech) needed an application solution that:

is designed with mobile in mind;

is flexible, customizable, and easy to use;

creates a seamless user experience;

can bring all Illinois Tech graduate programs under one application;

and allows students — throughout the application process — to stay organized, save and track completed pieces, and move easily between sections.

“Students are no longer linear,” points out Welch. “Other apps assume that a student is going to start the application, sit there, and complete it. The TargetX Online Application gives students the opportunity to jump around to various sections. If students need to stop and come back, they don’t have to start over. It also gives them a great visual display that estimates the time remaining to finish. Really, it’s more geared towards the way students actually complete applications.”

Another major reason why Illinois Tech chose the TargetX Online Application, says Welch, is because “it’s built on Salesforce, and that’s a huge advantage in terms of expandability and flexibility. We knew that we would be supported with this particular platform.”

She continues, “It also allows us to easily handle a lot of different applications. For instance, we had 25,000 applications for an 8-week Brazilian research experience. We were able to handle that volume because the TargetX Online Application is built on the Salesforce platform and allows us to use automated processes and communication flows to respond quickly to every stakeholder. It’s been really exciting.”

Since the success of the Brazilian research project in the summer of 2015-16, Illinois Tech has dramatically expanded its implementation of the Online Application to graduate programs like its Institute of Design and the Law School, as well as internal offices like Student Life and Housing. Now, every program and office shares one unified application process with a consistent look and feel, branding, and user experience, while maintaining the flexibility to embrace what makes each unique.

Welch explains, “The application review process is different across our graduate programs. The questions they have for applicants and the data they collect vary. But, the TargetX Online Application allows each unique entity to create exactly what

they need, while maintaining a uniformity within the architecture and design. This is a huge benefit.” Welch also loves that each graduate program can be self-sufficient, manage their own communications flow, calculate yields, and run their own data reports with basic training on the platform.

Results: Record application numbers and increased staff efficiency thanks to the TargetX Online Application

Since the launch of the TargetX Online Application, Illinois Tech has enjoyed a record-breaking surge in applicants.

Welch says, “We have a high international student population who don’t have access to a computer. For some of them, their only point of entry is a phone. Since our launch of the TargetX Online Application with mobile compatibility, we’ve had a record number of applications..”

Welch reflects on the additional value of mobile. “When you think about mobile-first, your thought process is better. We, as a team, are now really concise on what we need to ask and how we ask it. This fits well with the students of today who want to get to the point quickly.”

In addition to getting tighter, the team has successfully brought the majority of Illinois Tech graduate programs and internal offices up to the same high communications standards. “One of the biggest outcomes of the launch of TargetX is that we communicate to prospective and existing students at a consistently high level — from the admissions office to student life to our diverse graduate programs,” says Welch. “Even our recruiting teams in India, China, and Korea are now using the platform successfully.”

