DESTINY One

Western Continuing Studies

Increasing efficiency and improving customer engagement with learners

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A software platform to increase operational efficiency and improve the student experience

About Western Continuing Studies

Western Continuing Studies (WCS) serves over 3,000 non-traditional and adult students every year in London, Ontario, Canada. Students take everything from two-day seminars to online certificates to multi-week courses in a variety of subjects. The school also partners with local businesses and organizations to offer customized corporate training programs.

Western Continuing Studies offers a wide variety of courses and programs to a diverse student body, yet the school did not have the right processes and systems in place to manage them as efficiently as possible. Staff often spent huge amounts of time and effort working on redundant and repetitive tasks that took them away from meaningful interactions with students. In particular, the school's registration processes took a lot of manual effort from staff and did not meet the high expectations of the non-traditional students they serve.

Western Continuing Studies' director, Carolyn Young, realized that the school needed to modernize their internal processes and automate those repetitive and redundant tasks so staff could maximize the time they spent on the high-value activities that impact and transform students' experiences,

such as program counselling and course development. Further, with potential budget cuts on the horizon, Young wanted to ensure that WCS was set up for continued success.

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To address these challenges, WCS turned to Destiny One, a student-centric software application from Destiny Solutions made specifically for managing non-traditional higher education. Since it was implemented in 2013, Destiny One has helped WCS increase online enrollments, reduce repetitive administrative work for staff, and enhance the customer experience for students.

How has Destiny One helped Western Continuing Studies?

① Increased online registrations

Before implementing Destiny One, WCS was not fully equipped to take registrations online. In fact, only 40 percent of registrations were handled online. The rest required manual effort from both staff and students. "We had flaws in long-term practices," Young said. "In our French immersion programs, for example, when students were interested in registering for the course, the old process was that they would download a PDF, fill it out by hand hand and mail in their registration with a cheque."

Destiny One allows staff to quickly set up courses, publish them online and begin accepting registrations right away. Students can now browse for courses, register and pay right from their computer. Today's students are demanding shoppers. In fact, according to Young, "Our customers expect what we call the 'Amazon experience.' You go in, you find what you want, you buy it and you're in and out in five minutes."

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Destiny One has allowed WCS to meet these expectations and, as a result, 90 percent of students are now enrolling right on the website. In addition to improving the online experience for learners, online registrations also save staff time and effort. "With that change, our team has more time to create new courses and programs," Young said.

② Increased sales conversions

In addition to streamlining the enrollment process, Destiny One also helped Western Continuing Studies to increase conversions from prospective learners into enrolled learners—without additional staff effort. One way Destiny One helped increase conversions is by automatically alerting students when courses are open for enrollment.

Throughout the year, Destiny One collects information on learners who are interested in courses or programs but not ready to enroll. Then, when the courses open up for registration, the system sends notification emails to prospective

learners. After Destiny One sent the automated emails for the first time, 25 percent of the recipients signed up for courses right away. "That went right to the bottom line and what was so exciting about that process was that no one on our team had to do any work around that," Young said. "It was actually just a function in the system that sent out those emails automatically."

③ Increased transparency and visibility

Increasing sales conversions and improving staff efficiency are positive steps for any higher education institution to take, but in order to be truly beneficial, these factors must be measured. Before implementing Destiny One, it was difficult for WCS to see trends and track their business performance. Destiny One helped to change this reality. The software application includes 150 ready-made reports that allow staff to track, measure and evaluate all facets of WCS's operations.

"When I'm reporting to senior leaders about our enrollment trends, I have really good data and reports to show. We didn't have those tools before," said Young "When people ask me, 'How many of your students are in online courses?' and, 'How many of your students are taking courses at this campus or this campus?' I have access to reporting tools that give me those answers."

The bottom line

It comes down to business processes

Improving operational efficiency and offering an outstanding customer experience are top concerns for higher education administrators across North America. By implementing the Destiny One software platform, Western Continuing Studies has been able to streamline and automate its business processes. This investment has simplified life for staff and, as a result, it has significantly improved their capacity to serve their students. After all, with modernized business processes staff are more efficient and students are more engaged. Given the high expectations of today's learners, this is not something that can be ignored.

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According to Young, the value of improved business processes for any higher education organization is as clear as day. "If you're using processes that are dated, you're going to lose your customers."

About Destiny One

Destiny One is a student-centric SaaS application that helps universities and colleges engage their students with world-class customer service. Destiny One is used by top institutions across the U.S. and Canada to enable the level of business excellence needed to support growth and enhance customer engagement with learners.

Destiny One manages the entire learner lifecycle, allowing institutions to:

- Plan and manage courses, certificates and programs
- Target marketing campaigns and define a consistent look and feel
- Increase registrations by automating the enrollment process
- Govern accounting transactions and manage financial information
- Configure workflows, staff roles and permissions, and rules and fees
- Gather useful data and report on facets of your business

Want to learn more?

Contact us at
info@destinysolutions.com

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