CASE STUDY

Mobile one-stop shop transforms the student experience

Using technology and innovative thinking to serve students wherever they are

As higher education has undergone dramatic transformations over the last few decades, Maryville University of Saint Louis, a private institution, consistently re-imagines the educational experience in order to meet the demands of its more than 9,300 students.

In 2018, the university determined that today's students need a more agile, responsive, and flexible experience when it comes to requesting transcripts, paying tuition, or asking questions. It was no longer sufficient for students to wait in lines to ask questions or conduct business with the institution, so Maryville University embarked on a mission to leverage the latest technology to create an innovative, twenty-first century experience for its students.

Because Maryville's growing population of students have come of age during the digital era, the institution realizes today's students expect information to be readily available and easily accessible. And since students may find typical university processes difficult to navigate, Maryville wants to provide a one-stop, centralized location to access information and seek assistance. And long wait times in the phone queue or in person does not fit Maryville University's service-oriented culture.

MARYVILLE
UNIVERSITY

Primary Challenge
Integrate data and provide an improved student experience

Solution
Ellucian Colleague®

Results
Reduced response time to resolve issues

Increased student engagement and participation

Improved access to data through integration and mobile solutions

A two-pronged approach: A Solution Squad and Visitor Center

To meet these challenges, Maryville University introduced the Solution Squad in August 2018. The Solution Squad, part of the Division of Operational Excellence, is a team of 12 mobile student service representatives deployed across campus to assist students. At the same time, Maryville University also created a state-of-the-art Visitor Center, hosted by the Solution Squad, to serve both students and university guests. Here, visitors can learn about the university through multiple interactive digital displays, including a live social media feed and touchscreen table, or view 10k resolution footage of the campus on the panoramic wall display.

In order to provide the same high-quality service to all students on campus regardless of location, the Solution Squad relies on mobile-compatible software solutions in addition to iPads, iPhones, and Clover payment devices. Students no longer need to visit a physical office to get answers to their financial aid questions, request transcripts, pay their bill, or ask general questions. "With this innovative service model, students can ask about their financial aid paperwork while sipping their coffee at the campus Starbucks, register for classes at the campus bookstore, or make a payment right outside their classroom door," says Suzanne Marshall-Caby, Associate Vice President of Operational Strategy, Service, and Standards at Maryville University.

Students and faculty can also reach the Solution Squad in multiple locations on campus, through email, Live Chat, or telephone. The variety of contact methods makes the Solution Squad highly accessible to both onsite and online student populations, and prevents students from needing to travel to a specific location to ask a question or drop off a form. Many service requests are able to be quickly and proactively resolved, improving the student experience and increasing department efficiency.

Technology makes it work

Maryville University focused on identifying technology solutions that would allow the Solution Squad to be fully mobile throughout campus. Instead of restricting students' access to information to one location, the Solution Squad's goal is to be where the students are. Ellucian Colleague® allows the Solution Squad to access student data throughout campus via tablets, mobile phones, or laptops. A cell phone app permits the Solution Squad members to carry their "desk phone" with them wherever they go, resulting in improved phone services. The iPad check-in kiosk includes software to keep track of visitors to both the Visitor Center and the mobile units, which allows the team to track visitors in their CRM system. By rethinking how students access information about administrative processes, Maryville University dramatically changed its service culture.

In addition, the new technology has rendered desks in the Visitor Center obsolete by allowing Solution Squad members to seamlessly navigate through the space using iPads, iPhones, or laptops while assisting students and faculty.

"Colleague has been instrumental in the success of the Maryville's service transformation," says Marshall-Caby. "In order to build the trust in the mobile Solution Squad, students and faculty had to know they could receive the same high-quality service from the mobile units and Visitor Center that they had from the previous Student Service Center. The ability to access student information with mobile devices allows Solution Squad members to get a full picture of a student's record anywhere on campus." When combined with staff mobility, this access results in prompt and efficient student services independent of physical location.

The "university concierge"

Once the Solution Squad mobilized throughout the student community, they quickly assumed the role of "university concierge." The Solution Squad helps students and faculty navigate university processes and assists with any questions students may have by providing answers or connecting students to the appropriate resource. The team's mobility allows the Solution Squad to work more collaboratively with other departments and increases efficiency with processing administrative tasks. As a result, students and faculty have received prompt and efficient service. "Despite increasing enrollment numbers and higher demands for service, greater efficiency from the Solution Squad has significantly reduced the response time for resolving student issues, especially in the Division of Operational Excellence," says Marshall-Caby.

Due to high enrollment growth, the Solution Squad handled 64.82 percent more incoming calls from students in Fall 2018 than in Fall 2017. Total active call time increased from 375 hours in Fall 2017 to 723 hours in Fall 2018. Despite this higher call volume, the Solution Squad improved its response rate for student issues. The average time from student request to resolution in Summer 2018 was 43.57 hours versus 10.4 hours in Fall 2018.

Satisfaction surveys from the Solution Squad indicate that students are pleased with the service they receive. Although long lines used to plague the front desk of the former Student Service Center, 80 percent of students now working with the Solution Squad in the Visitor Center report waiting less than five minutes for assistance.

Moreover, in a recent survey, 95.23 percent of survey respondents report that their Solution Squad team member was helpful, while 94.1 percent state they are satisfied with how the Solution Squad handled their visit. One student survey respondent noted, "The Solution Squad was able to answer my questions and help me with no hesitation. It made registering a lot easier and less stressful knowing they were there to help." And yet another said, "The Solution Squad has completely revolutionized the Student Services experience. I wish they had been a part of Maryville sooner!"

Average Time from Student Request to Resolution

43.57 HOURS	10.40 HOURS
Summer 2018	Fall 2018

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SUZANNE MARSHALL-CABY
AVP of Operational Strategy, Service, and Standards at Maryville University

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