

Admit Streamlines Admission Evaluation and Cuts Costs at Cornell

The Online Application Review System Saved 250,000 Sheets of Paper Its First Year

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Cornell University, Graduate School

Ithaca, New York

Products:

Admit Application Evaluation System

Why Admit?

“Admit offered the most flexibility of all the evaluation systems we considered. Each of our graduate programs can now conduct evaluations according to their individual needs, which is invaluable to a school as decentralized as ours.” – Jason Kahabka, Assistant Dean for Student Services and Admissions

The Savings

Time, money and paper. Now that application materials no longer need to be printed and manually circulated, the school has nearly eliminated the use of paper for admissions review and evaluation, and greatly reduced administrative time. Plus, with all information in a centralized, easy-to-access database, student inquiries can be handled more efficiently and accurately.



Cornell University
Graduate School

The Challenge

Cornell University Graduate School comprises nearly 100 decentralized fields of study and relies on some 1,400 faculty evaluators and users during its admissions application review process. Prior to implementing the Admit Application Evaluation

System, the school supported several different and independent application review systems. Many fields conducted part or all of their reviews by printing, photocopying and hand circulating documents; others created PDF files and circulated them in either electronic or printed form. A few fields developed their own electronic review systems. Coordination among the fields was a challenge, and the university incurred significant administrative overhead related to creating user accounts, updating and communicating passwords and deactivating old accounts. Then there were the hundreds of administrative hours spent searching through decentralized data in response to student requests for information.

The Solution

The Graduate School went live with Admit in November 2011, providing access to all of the school’s nearly 100 fields of study and allowing each to use the system according to its individual needs. With Admit, the school’s central office was able to designate an administrator within each field, who then each set up their own staff evaluators. With the Admit system in place, the Graduate School efficiently processed 20,000 applications – a new school record.

According to Jason Kahabka, the ability to create a hierarchy of user permissions and delegate access represents a major improvement for their decentralized admissions structure. Each field now also has various options for how they can use the system. Some fields, for example, are set up in Admit for multiple states of review; some fields use other features such as broad access. “The primary reason

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we chose Admit is that it's highly configurable," Kahabka said. "It gives our programs the flexibility to conduct their evaluations according to their individual needs." And student inquiries are now handled far more quickly and efficiently – the system allows administrators to instantly see an applicant's current status and decision, as well as up-to-the minute application changes.

The positive impact of Admit has been universal. Faculty overwhelmingly described the system as flexible and convenient and a dramatic improvement over their previous processes. According to one faculty evaluator, "The online system has been beneficial in all the expected ways: less paper, easier for multiple users, etc." And now that faculty have become more familiar with Admit, many are exploring ways to further customize their processes, including restructuring applicant pools.

The Benefits

- Saves paper: "This helps move us towards 100% paperless" – Jason Kahabka
- Saves processing time: No need for printing, copying or circulating of documents
- Saves administrative follow up: Responses to inquiries are faster and more accurate
- Improves information access: Admit provides realtime application status and student information
- Provides flexibility: Individual fields or programs can configure the Admit system to best meet their needs
- Enhances convenience for evaluators: No waiting for or handling paper files, and no misplaced documents – all application materials can be easily accessed online, anytime

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Business Profile

Graduate study has been a part of the Cornell curriculum since the founding of the University in 1865. Cornell was one of the first institutions of higher education in the United States to offer advanced degrees. In 1896 the trustees reorganized the University into separate faculties, one of which - the Graduate Department - became the Graduate School in 1909. Today, the Graduate School offers advanced degrees in nearly 100 fields of study. For the 2010-2011 academic year, the school enrolled 2947 doctoral degree students, 258 research master's degree students and 1,655 professional master's degree students.

Future Developments

To further its goal of transparency and access to realtime information for applicants, Cornell University is also implementing CollegeNET's Applicant Portals, providing students direct online access to their admission checklist and decision. And by exploring ways to use *Triggers*® automated communication tools for automatically uploading and matching scores, the school expects to further reduce administrative processing time.

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