



College: Mount St. Mary's University

Location: Emmitsburg, MD

Size: 2,305 students

CollegeWeekLive Results:

Expanded reach to 50 states and 115 countries

Lowered the number of stealth applicants

Enrolled 28% of students met at CollegeWeekLive

Mount St. Mary's University (the Mount) is America's second oldest Catholic university. This four-year liberal arts college was ranked a top-tier regional university by U.S. News & World Report, and is on the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. Mount St. Mary's University is committed to providing a personalized admissions process, with a focus on connecting prospective students and parents with current students who can share personal experiences.

The opportunity

The university's five recruiters travel across the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast corridor to visit high schools and participate in regional college fairs, but they needed a cost-effective way to reach prospective students outside the area.

The university's Admissions team also saw an opportunity to build strong connections with students and parents by communicating with them online throughout the enrollment process. "Campus visits are an important part of recruiting new students, **but not every student can visit us in person, and not every question can be answered during a campus tour,**" said Edward P. Wright, Associate Director of Admissions for Mount St. Mary's University. "Choosing a college involves multiple stages of decisions, and we need to be there for students and parents throughout this process."

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Edward P. Wright
Associate Director of Admissions

The solution

The university took a three-pronged approach to achieving these goals. First, they chose the online channel CollegeWeekLive to communicate with students. Second, they focused on delivering the right message to the appropriate students based on their previous interactions. Third, they developed a communication strategy to deliver information to students and parents at just the right time during their decision making process.

The university began hosting weekly online chat sessions at CollegeWeekLive to connect with students in an environment that students prefer. “We find that when we’re speaking with a student one-on-one in the office, they’re not always at ease about asking questions,” said Wright. **“But if we connect with students in a place where they are comfortable, such as an online chat, they open up more and we’re able to help them make an informed decision.”**

With one in three college-bound students using CollegeWeekLive¹, the Mount is able to meet hundreds of students each month who would otherwise be stealth applicants. It gives students a compelling reason to introduce themselves and be integrated into the Mount’s communication stream. CollegeWeekLive shares a wealth of demographic data about these potential applicants to help the university build personal connections with each student. **“CollegeWeekLive helps us get to know students sooner than we would have in the past – and make our communications incredibly personal.”**

The Admissions team has become adept at communicating with students and parents at critical decision points. “Using CollegeWeekLive makes it easy to keep the lines of communication open,” said Wright. “We invite students to reach out to us as they’re facing the early action deadline or are preparing their college essay. We also work closely with accepted students during our live chats in March and April to help them find ways to pay for college.

The Mount also invites prospective students to video chat at CollegeWeekLive with current students. **“Prospective students want to hear firsthand from current students** who are living the experience of being at the Mount,” said Wright. “Whether they’re visiting in person or chatting online, we want them to have a memorable experience and get a real sense of what our university is all about. Our prospective students, especially those from across country and overseas, really appreciate having this opportunity.”

The team also found creative ways to engage students through video email invitations sent out after chat sessions, as well as personalized emails once a student has visited the university online. The team even invited inquiry students to a live chat where they could get an early heads up on university news. “CollegeWeekLive is a great way to keep the conversation going,” Wright said. “We still send emails encouraging students to visit and apply, but by leveraging this online channel, we’re able to give students an easier way to connect.”

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[Edward P. Wright](#)
Associate Director of Admissions

The results

The university is achieving results on multiple fronts. Students around the world are visiting CollegeWeekLive every day, giving Mount St. Mary’s University a way to reach new students who might not otherwise have heard about the school. “We’re seeing more diverse, qualified students coming into the office,” said Wright. “Over the past three years, we’ve enrolled 28% of the students who visited us online at CollegeWeekLive .”

¹2012 E-Expectations Report, Noel-Levitz