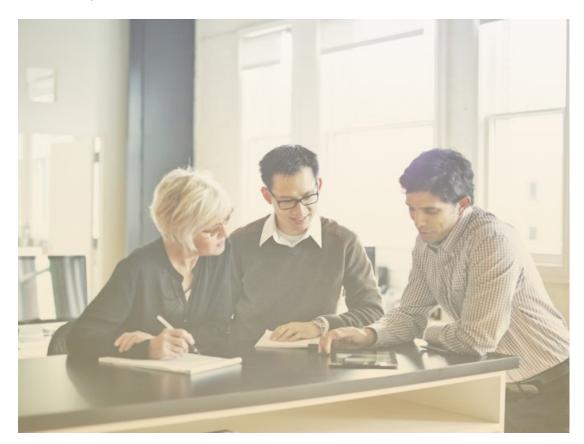# Streamlining College Admissions Using Higher Education UCaaS Solutions

By **ROSE DE FREMERY** - **Contributor**

Spring is an exciting time for college-bound students as they receive their acceptance letters and start planning for an important next chapter in their lives. Behind the scenes, college departments and offices have been closely collaborating to make and communicate their decisions on who will join the incoming class of students.

College admissions season is a busy and stressful time for everyone, but higher education UCaaS solutions help streamline the process for admissions committees and prospective students alike.

Here's how higher education UCaaS solutions can help admissions officers and their colleagues effectively coordinate with each other and communicate with applicants during this critical and busy time in the academic year.

Higher Education UCaaS Solutions for Screening Applicants

So what is unified communications-as-a-service (UCaaS), and how can it help? When a mission-critical process like college admissions is in full swing, timely and efficient communication is of the essence. UCaaS can be of particular benefit at this time of year, enabling colleagues from various departments and offices to quickly compare notes about which prospective students will be admitted and how to prepare for their arrival on campus.

For example, early on in the process, an admissions officer may want check in with their supervisor about a particular applicant who shows great promise and may fit the college's recruitment goals. The officer can shoot a quick call over to their boss by dialing their office extension so they can review the application together over the phone. Or, if the officer just has a simple question and doesn't want to interrupt their colleague who's on a call, they can quickly pose the question via chat and receive a response at the recipient's convenience.

Alternately, the officer can simply leave a voicemail message. Using the visual voicemail feature, which provides a text-based transcription of an audio message, their colleague can easily scan the message and determine how best to prioritize a response.

As the admissions office completes its initial screening of applicants, it may need to convene a team-level conference call in order to review the pool of students who made the cut and begin preparing for the next step in the process — presenting their list of vetted applicants to the admissions committee for review. Using a UCaaS solution, they can easily compare notes and collaborate on follow-up action items by joining in an audio or video conference call. Using web-based screen sharing, they can view applicant records and create a meeting agenda. From there, it's time to advance to the next stage in the admissions process.

Benefits of UCaaS for Admissions Committees and Applicants

After the initial application review process is complete, the admissions committee typically meets to make acceptance decisions for the incoming class. UCaaS can be helpful here too, enabling committee members to collaborate via video conference, complete with web screen sharing, so they can examine each applicant's qualifications and potential.

Committee members who are traveling, working at other campuses, or telecommuting can participate too, joining the conference using software on their computers or via a mobile app on their smartphones or tablets. These features are especially handy in the event of severe weather or a challenge to the daily commute since they enable everyone to hop on the call remotely, rain or shine.

As admissions decisions are underway, prospective students and their families will naturally wonder about their application status. Higher education UCaaS solutions help keep them fully apprised during the application process with convenient SMS updates, notifying them that their application has been received, screened, and reviewed.

Should prospects call the college with questions about the status of their application, the UCaaS system's call routing and call handling features can quickly and efficiently direct their call to the right department and staff member. What's more, CRM integration with UCaaS allows that staff member to instantly view the prospective student's record in the CRM, quickly assessing the status of their application and providing an informed answer.

High-Quality Communications with a Low TCO

Two important factors when considering whether to use UCaaS for your college's admissions process are quality of service (QoS) and total cost of ownership (TCO). Busy admissions professionals need a communications solution that provides high-quality voice, video, and messaging, offering enhanced QoS when required. A top-notch UCaaS solution delivers the high standard of reliability that today's higher education institutions expect, with experts providing 24/7 customer and technical support on demand.

When colleges migrate to a UCaaS solution, there's no need for costly internal infrastructure like servers and storage systems. This makes the TCO associated with UCaaS much more attractive and affordable. Offices can share resources, achieving a level of redundancy that is far less expensive than traditional, premise-based PBX systems. Start-up costs are typically minimal thanks to bring-your-own broadband services. By taking advantage of flexible pricing options, colleges can easily scale their UCaaS solution up if needed without facing prohibitive costs. And with powerful software integrations that boost productivity, they can achieve a better ROI from their overall technology investment.

The admissions process can be stressful for both college employees and prospective students alike, as colleges strive to ensure they admit the prospects that are the best fit while students constantly check for updates on their applications. UCaaS solutions can streamline the experience for everyone involved, helping admissions professionals seamlessly collaborate with one another while automatically keeping prospects in the loop about the progress of their applications. As a result, colleges can make their all-important admissions decisions more efficiently, ensuring that students find out as quickly as possible where they'll be headed in the fall.

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