Banner XtenderSolutions Help Belmont University Address Issues of Accessibility, Space, and Cost While Improving Student Service

Like many institutions, Belmont University uses Banner as its comprehensive administrative system, serving all departments throughout the University. In addition, the University is leveraging the power of Banner by integrating it to Banner XtenderSolutions, an imaging and document management solution suite that launches documents and content directly from Banner. With this integrated solution, University staff can securely access business documents such as admissions materials from within their familiar Banner environment, eliminating the costs of paper management and the maintenance of an external imaging system. The University has implemented the solution in its admissions, registrar's, financial aid, student accounts, and student affairs offices.

Belmont University
Nashville, Tennessee
Enrollment: 4,750
www.belmont.edu

Initially, Belmont University implemented Banner XtenderSolutions with the objectives of eliminating redundant clerical work and freeing up physical space that was being used to store paper documents. But after using the solution for five years, the University has realized deeper benefits including:

• streamlining the execution of admissions processes,
• locating student services closer to students, and
• placing staff in positions where they can add value rather than merely execute clerical tasks.

Results with Banner XtenderSolutions:

• **Administrative processes are more streamlined**

• **Staff can focus more on helping students**

• **Complete student information is available immediately from desktops; files and documents are no longer misplaced**

• **Office space is freed up**

"Imaging has allowed us to take the attention off of the process and put it on the individual applicant instead," said Dr. Kathy Baugher, dean of enrollment services at the University.

One example of how the solution has moved the process to the background is the review of admissions files. Prior to implementing imaging, the admissions committee - comprised of eight to 10 people - would gather together to review prospects' files. Now, only about two to three people need to interact face-to-face or by phone. Others give their input and approvals using the electronic file management applications within BannerXtender Solutions.

"BannerXtender Solutions … has made our processes more efficient, resulting in better service to our students and cost savings."

— Dr. Kathy Baugher, dean of enrollment services, Belmont University

---

"The time we save by not coordinating schedules and physically gathering together is huge. And we can make decisions much faster now and be much more personalized in our communications," said Dr. Baugher.

Admissions staff also can readily access the information they need to answer questions when students or parents call. The immediate access enables the staff to provide better service by responding promptly and completely to callers' queries.

Recently, the University extended the imaging solution to its student affairs office, which is responsible for making sure the institution is compliant with disability requirements. Information about disabilities is captured during the admissions process, then scanned and forwarded to student affairs for their consideration and action. Similarly, housing applications that are gathered by enrollment services are scanned and then forwarded to the housing department.

Imaging also is allowing Belmont to put its physical student service locations where they are convenient for learners. An important consideration for the initial Belmont Central student service center was that the location be near necessary student paper documents. With imaging, the needs for storage space and access to paper documents were eliminated. "Now we have the ability to put student service locations at places that are convenient for students, rather than in places that are convenient for accessing documents. We could not have considered this without the imaging solution," said Dr. Baugher.

Likewise, the location of staff in student financial services is no longer restricted by proximity. "We can locate additional staff wherever office space is available. Before, we had to spend time thinking about how to create space in an area nearby the necessary files," recalled Paula Gill, director of student financial services at the University.

With BannerXtender Solutions, financial services staff have immediate access to complete information, regardless of their location. "It is important to us to give accurate, consistent, and complete information to our students and parents," emphasized Ms. Gill. "With BannerXtender Solutions, we no longer have misplaced files or missing documents from a file. The ability for all staff to access complete information promptly has improved our service tremendously."

Likewise, the consolidation of information and ease of access have been a boon to the registrar's office. "Imaging gives us access to a student's complete record. I can access all the information from my desktop when talking to an advisor so that we can have an in-depth and comprehensive discussion focused on the learner," said Steve Reed, registrar, Belmont University.

Mr. Reed's office was able to convert a large room from file storage to office space for five people. Also gone are the six work-study students who filed paperwork day in and day out.

"Space is at a real premium at the University. We have people working in converted closets, so freeing up space is a tremendous benefit to us," said Dr. Baugher.

The imaging solution also has enabled the lean administrative staffs to manage a burgeoning enrollment. The University has grown from about 3,000 students in 2000 to about 4,750 today.

"We've had to add some staff but not proportionate to the increased enrollment. One of our core values is to be efficient and effective, and add technology where it makes sense. BannerXtender Solutions supports this value: it makes it possible for us to hire people who can add value, rather than spend our budget on people to perform clerical tasks. It has made our processes more efficient, resulting in better service to our students and cost savings," said Dr. Baugher.