

Leeds City College Case Study

College chooses TextAnywhere as their SMS communications and campaign partner.

Leeds City College's Keighley Campus dates back to 1825 when it was originally set up to educate engineers. Over time the College became known as Keighley College and merged with Park Lane College in the summer of 2007 to become Park Lane College Keighley.

In April 2009 Park Lane College Keighley merged with Leeds College of Technology to become Leeds City College.

The College has over 590 full-time 16 – 19 year old students, and 2,000 part-time adults, with over 600 courses available.

Project Requirements

The initial idea to use text messaging to communicate with students came from the College's principal, who wanted to send out a New Year's Eve greeting to all students.

Following very positive feedback from the students, the deputy principal funded a trial to contact students-at-risk by SMS, which soon expanded to be a full service for all students.

Text messages are now sent covering many topics:

- Chasing up un-authorised absences.
- Communicating room changes.
- Providing reminders for coursework and exam deadlines.

- Detailing revision and homework questions.
- Confirming appointments with tutors.
- Providing individual feedback on coursework.
- Confirming teams and times for sporting fixtures.
- Communicating with part-time members of staff.

Project Solution

The College considered a number of SMS suppliers, including some from outside of the UK, before selecting TextAnywhere as their text-messaging partner.

"We chose TextAnywhere because the service was reliable, the messages were cheap compared to others, and the service confirms to the Data Protection Act – a very important consideration", commented Ian Garner of Leeds City College in Keighley.

The College uses the TextOnline and TextCampaign web-based applications to send individual messages and SMS campaigns to larger groups of students. Tutors have their own secure login to be able to send messages to their classes from any PC that has a web browser.

As well as sending messages out to students, students can also reply back. This standard feature enables students to respond appropriately to the topic of the message – perhaps confirming availability for a sports team, or attendance at a tutorial.

“It is important for us to have a flexible and full-featured text service as the College has many, many users, each with their own particular requirement. Two-way texting, delivery confirmations, sending to members of an online address book, using a spreadsheet to maintain recipients, and sending SMS via email, were just some of the features we needed”, added Ian Garner.

Project Successes

Since the introduction of SMS services through TextAnywhere in 2005, text messaging has become a key communication medium for staff and students alike.

“Since using SMS technology we have seen improvements in both student attendance and on-time coursework submissions”, commented Ian Garner. “As nearly all of our messages arrive in less than 10 seconds, tutors can rely on the service. Contacting students has become much more effective and time-efficient.”

In a survey carried out by the College to determine the students’ view of text messaging within the College, 94% of students considered the SMS service an effective means of communication.

The system allows a personalised, individually addressed SMS to be sent, greatly adding to the effectiveness of a class-wide message. Asking for a student’s mobile number is now part of the enrolment process.

“As well as being highly efficient, text messaging also saves us money. Sending a message is cheaper than making a phone call, and with TextAnywhere we just pay for the messages we send. The use of SMS will certainly continue to grow within the College as we find new and innovative uses for text messaging”, adds Ian Garner

Secure Company

Since 2002, TextAnywhere has offered a range of text services that focus on reliability, ease of use, security and good value, backed by quality support from a financially secure, profitable organisation.

Range of Services

TextAnywhere provides commercial and public sector organisations with text messaging services that enable the sending and receiving of SMS messages from individual desktops or handheld devices, through online and email applications. These can be through a simple pre-paid model or monthly account terms.

The company also offers a Developer Toolkit for clients to integrate texting in to their own applications, as well as a White Label service for partners who wish to offer TextAnywhere’s services as their own, branded text messaging services.

If you would like to find out more about how TextAnywhere can help your business communications, please visit our website www.textanywhere.net or call the sales team on 08451 221 302, or email us on: welcome@textanywhere.net.

