

Coventry University boost course applications with text messaging campaign

SMS deemed fundamental communication tool

With fewer people choosing Occupational Therapy (OT) as a career, the NHS decided to launch an initiative to promote OT courses and encourage candidates to join the profession. Coventry University, a well-respected institution in this field was selected by the NHS to receive additional funding to implement a marketing campaign.

The aim of the campaign was to boost the number of students signing up to Occupational Therapy courses at Coventry University and to promote OT as a valuable and rewarding career.

Poster advertising and an array of social and multimedia components were used to drive the campaign. Recognising that many students use SMS as a fundamental communication tool, Coventry University identified the need to offer an SMS solution. Aware of the use of Short Codes – where individuals can text a memorable keyword to a five digit number, Coventry believed this would provide a functional and convenient mechanism to interact with students and drive additional expressions of interest.

Selecting a supplier was easy. PageOne's reputation in the public sector, particularly the NHS, is strong. With a solution specifically tailored to meet the requirements of the education community. Janet txt's Campaign Manager provided an exact fit – flexible, easy-to-use and cost-effective. Accessed via a secure web console, a Short Code could be applied to the University's account

and a campaign set up in minutes. With a detailed reporting function also built into the infrastructure, incoming messages could be managed quickly and easily and further action taken as appropriate. Those students that expressed an interest in OT by sending a text to the Short Code were sent additional information and invited via SMS to recruitment and other related events.

Bringing the campaign to life

The objective of the 'Hear My Story' campaign was to inform, educate and inspire people to take a positive action by signing up to one of Coventry University's OT courses. Using real life case studies of OT students and graduates helped to draw on the emotional element of the campaign. By adding SMS functionality to the campaign Coventry University offered a more immediate and familiar way to communicate with students, bringing the campaign to life.

Encouraging participation

The 'Hear My Story' poster campaign ran on multiple sites across Birmingham over a four week period. These included commuter routes, bus shelters, the local shopping centre and in three cinemas in the city centre, maximising 'opportunities to see'. Interested parties were encouraged to visit a dedicated microsite or send a text to the Short Code.

"PageOne's knowledge and support in getting the SMS campaign up and running was invaluable,"

says Gail Williams, Marketing Admissions and Recruitment Manager, at Coventry University.

"The product itself was extremely easy to use but we needed guidance in a few other areas and PageOne's team were always on hand to help or steer us in the right direction".

A fantastic result

The university was very happy with PageOne Campaign Manager. The easy generation of a database of replies combined with the simple set-up of the system makes it a useful addition to the communication suite of a modern marketing campaign. 15 per cent of respondents to the advertising campaign were recruited through the Short Code, attendance to the open day was up 200 per cent on previous years and the university saw a 17.6 per cent increase in applications year-on-year. The OT campaign was the first time that the University had offered an SMS Short Code as a method of communication and it sees the use of PageOne's Campaign Manager as a powerful tool for use in future campaigns.

About Coventry University

Coventry University are a forward-looking, modern university with a proud tradition as a provider of high quality education and a focus on applied research. With a major presence in Coventry and through links with leading edge businesses and organisations students are great kick-start to enhance their working lives.

Further Information