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Janet txt helps Stockport College improve student engagement and reduce carbon footprint

With strong values centred on respect, excellence and collaboration, the College's marketing team wanted to adopt an SMS system to engage with pupils in a quick and efficient way. Having previously used a rival SMS service, which staff deemed to be overly complex, unreliable and often taking a long time to deliver messages, the College turned to Janet txt.

Despite a slight reluctance from parts of the college to return to the practice of using text messaging, PageOne's system provided positive results almost immediately. Notifications regarding college closures, EMA delays and book renewals became the focal point for their SMS communications and with a successful response from students other departments were soon keen to adopt the service themselves.

Marketing spreads the word

With the help of PageOne, Stockport's Marketing department began promoting the service to other divisions within the College. Initially this came through the development of a presentation delivered to five different staff groups across the college to which focused on the benefits of SMS as an effective communications tool. This was then followed by training sessions for each department that displayed an interest in order to put their minds at rest by demonstrating Janet txt's ease of use, reliability and its value as a communications tool. As a result, the service was quickly taken up by the College Library, Quality Unit and College Information Systems, meaning it was well on its way towards mainstream use right across the college.

Stockport College had a number of expected outcomes in mind when taking on the Janet txt service. These were:

- > **Demonstrable cost savings in other areas**
- > **More effective communication with students**
- > **Reduction in carbon footprint**

Cost savings

The service really came into its own during a crisis management situation when the College was forced to close down following a power cut. On previous occasions, Stockport would have no choice but to ask the administrative team to come in and contact each student to get the message out. However, with the service firmly embedded into the organisation, one member of staff was able to alleviate the pressure of contacting students by using their Janet txt account to broadcast a single message over 550 pupils from their home. Not only did this prove to be timesaving, but the College made huge savings in respect to the fuel, utility usage and staff overtime.

Effective communication with students

Using the Janet txt service to communicate via SMS has proved hugely popular and highly effective with students. When the service was first adopted, several pupils regularly changed their mobile phone number and were not in the habit of updating their College records when they did so. However, following heavy snowfall one winter and the regular use of text messaging to keep individuals informed of the status of college closures, students and staff began to rely on the service and have

since proactively ensured that their contact details are kept up to date.

Stockport's measurement and evaluation process revealed positive feedback for communicating timely messages through SMS from both current and prospective students. The process also revealed that in comparison to other channels of communication such as email, 99.9 per cent of messages delivered by SMS were successfully read by students.

Reduction in carbon footprint

Having cut back on more traditional means of engaging with students, Stockport has been able to achieve additional savings in terms of materials such as paper, ink and other costly resources. As a result the college has also seen a considerable reduction in their carbon footprint, subsequently leading to a Highly Commended award for 'Sustainability' at the FE First Awards.

The Janet txt service has exceeded all expectations, and by reducing costs, ensuring quick and effective communications across its 12,000 students and 950 staff while also reducing its carbon footprint. Furthermore, Janet txt has also helped Stockport reduce storage requirements enabling them to use reclaimed space to increase classroom capacity without resorting to the expense of new buildings.

About Stockport College

Based in the North West of England, Stockport College are a major provider of post 16 education and training as well as key national and regional centre for a range of specialist courses.

Further Information

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