

AUSTIN COLLEGE: After partnering with RuffaloCODY, this institution's incoming freshman class swelled by 100 students -- shattering all previous enrollment records.

Austin College is a private liberal arts institution with an enrollment of more than 1,300 students located in Sherman, Texas, north of the Dallas / Fort Worth metroplex. The college's 1849 charter remains unchanged today, making it the oldest institution of higher education in Texas operating under its original charter. It also has the distinction being of the first college in Texas to ever grant a graduate degree.

When the institution recently set a series of positive changes into motion in Admission, Vice President for Institutional Enrollment Nan Davis says it began by carefully analyzing its own capabilities. "We have incredibly talented IT, college relations and admission staffs, but we didn't have the available staff members or infrastructure to do a comprehensive search campaign," said Davis. "I think that's the situation in which many institutions of our type find themselves."

The college determined it could use additional help with its student search, qualification and prospect management processes, according to Executive Director of Institutional Enrollment Matt Krov. "We went through about a year of research, inviting several firms to give us their proposals," said Krov. "Most of what we heard simply didn't interest us, because it took an 'off-the-rack' approach. But RuffaloCODY was different – they listened to us, then provided us with a range of options fine-tuned to our own processes, methods, and comfort level. We decided to bring them on board for telequalifying, and before long, we added RuffaloCODY's Enhanced Search Strategies and Enrollment Strategy Profiler programs."

Davis says the college's evolving new admission strategy also lent itself to a predictive modeling tool. "The type of student attracted to a predominately undergraduate, liberal arts and sciences residential college like ours is a much smaller subset of the admissions funnel," she said. "We felt it was imperative that we use predictive modeling to grow our qualified applicant pool by identifying them at the outset."

Krov says the results have been extremely positive, and he credits RuffaloCODY's qualification data with much of that success. "Austin College exceeded its previous record high incoming freshman class by 10%," he said. "Overall, we have 100 more students in our freshman class this year than we had last year, and I think that's because RuffaloCODY gives our admissions staff almost a 'can't miss' method for prioritizing the prospect pool. We now have the ability to focus on a much more manageable group of students whom we know are the most likely to enroll. Also, the depth of interaction between our staff and the incoming students is much richer than in past years."

Krov also praised the people on the RuffaloCODY team. "We were very pleased with the creative staff," he said. "Their attention to detail and work they did prior to the creative process really made for smooth sailing. Also, I was very impressed with the callers. They were very professional, because they had received very comprehensive training – not just in general telephone etiquette, but in really knowing the 'ins and outs' of Austin College. They nailed the messaging and the look we wanted, and we had far fewer revisions and edits to our materials than ever before."

Krov stresses that RuffaloCODY's strategy for enrollment management success draws heavily upon the company's years of experience in addition to the strengths of its products and people. "RuffaloCODY has access to the strongest attitudinal data of anybody -- hands down," he said. "Predictive modeling by itself can only get you so far, but when combined with the integrity of that attitudinal data, we can be absolutely sure about the model and the scores once they are in place. I don't know of anyone else out there who can duplicate that."



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“Ours is a really a great partnership ... we at RuffaloCODY bring our expertise to the table, and Austin College brings theirs,” said Associate Vice President and Enrollment Management Consultant Robert Heil. “It’s a very collaborative process, and by working together, we’ve developed some excellent strategies which have driven much of the college’s success.”

Krov adds that working with RuffaloCODY even generated some unintended benefits for Austin College. “We didn’t originally intend to expand our prospect pool, but one of the byproducts of our outreach via RuffaloCODY was a larger prospect pool than we have ever had before,” he said. “In fact, we’re up about 35% in both prospect and inquiry numbers over our previous three-year average. As a result, we’re currently working with RuffaloCODY to come up with a strategy for handling that. It’s actually a good ‘problem’ to have.”

Overall, both Krov and Davis say they couldn’t be happier with the success Austin College is experiencing. “We really haven’t seen anyone else offering the products and services that help us capitalize on all the other things we have in place,” said Davis. “RuffaloCODY’s Enrollment Management services have been a very good match for us; it’s exactly what we were looking for,” Krov said.

Information courtesy of Austin College. For more information about Austin College, please visit www.austincollege.edu.