



California Institute of Technology

Admissions

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Richard Bischoff
 Director of Admissions
 California Institute of Technology

Each year, the admissions office at California Institute of Technology (Caltech), one of the world’s leading research and educational institutions, is inundated with student applications. Manually processing between 40 and 50 pages of documentation for each applicant diverted staff members away from other responsibilities, increased overhead and inhibited the ability of the admissions office to serve students effectively.

Benefits of a Hosted Deployment

Administrators realized that implementing a document management, imaging and workflow system would replace paper-related problems with new efficiencies. These considerations led Caltech to select ImageNow and take advantage of Perceptive Software’s hosted deployment option.

“The ability of ImageNow to integrate with our Recruitment PLUS host system and to simplify workflow made it stand out,” says Richard Bischoff, director of admissions at Caltech. “The price of Perceptive Software’s hosted deployment option was more reasonable than other managed services plans we evaluated.”

Students who want to attend Caltech can either apply by the Regular Action deadline in January, or by the Early Action deadline in November. For Fall 2007 candidates, Caltech had an Early Action deadline of November 1, and had to mail decision letters on December 11. This brief time frame made the quick installation of ImageNow essential.

“We signed a contract with Perceptive Software in early September and were up and running with ImageNow on the Thursday before Halloween,” Bischoff says. “This timely implementation allowed us to process Early Action applications faster than ever before.”

Perceptive Software’s traditional delivery of ImageNow is proven to deliver a rapid return on investment (ROI). The company’s hosted deployment option enabled Caltech to experience an even quicker ROI, as Perceptive Software hosts and manages every stage of the ImageNow project, freeing Caltech’s resources to focus on core responsibilities.

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Another benefit that the hosted deployment option provides Caltech is the peace of mind that all student records are protected at the SAS 70-compliant Perceptive Software Data Center. Around the clock, skilled technical resources proactively manage the environment that is protected with state-of-the-art physical, electronic, application and data security measures.

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“Choosing a hosted environment puts our document management system in the hands of IT professionals who are data security experts,” Bischoff says.

In addition to having confidence that ImageNow preserves student confidentiality, Bischoff is impressed with the reliability of Caltech’s document management solution.

“We’ve had zero downtime with ImageNow,” he says. “That’s another benefit of Perceptive Software’s hosted deployment option; we don’t rely on an in-house system to provide continuous data access.”

Using patented LearnMode™ technology, ImageNow seamlessly integrated with Caltech’s Recruitment PLUS admissions system, facilitating single-click retrieval of supporting documents from Recruitment PLUS screens.

“The integration between ImageNow and Recruitment PLUS allows us to make better decisions because we can access documents instantly,” Bischoff says.

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A More Efficient Admissions Cycle

Before ImageNow installation, admissions associates at Caltech manually sorted incoming applications and pulled out Early Action documents for priority processing. Once they finished working with these applications, employees switched their attention to piles of Regular Action packets.

Now, associates scan inbound paperwork into ImageNow and separate Early and Regular Action applications without labor-intensive manual sorting. They review both types of application in ImageNow simultaneously, instead of waiting a month to get to Regular Action folders.

“ImageNow improves our ability to manage applications at peak times,” Bischoff says. “Document processing is at least 33 percent more efficient, resulting in us being up to date with Regular Action applications one month earlier than usual.”

A Happier, More Productive Staff

By eliminating manual document processing, ImageNow reduces spending on office supplies, allows associates to focus on students and removes the expense of hiring temporary staff to cope with the inundation of applications that occurs annually between October and January.



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"Our full time processing staff members can do 40 percent more in a day since we deployed ImageNow," Bischoff says. "The time they used to spend on processing paper is now dedicated to serving students."

Bischoff believes that the positive effect ImageNow has on productivity is secondary to the impact it has on associates' job satisfaction.

"Working with stacks of paperwork and being unable to answer student inquiries quickly is demoralizing," he says. "ImageNow eliminates these difficulties and helps employees be more successful and satisfied. This improves my ability to retain valuable staff members."

When an admissions associate at Caltech told Bischoff that she was moving to New York, he knew that the remote document access offered by WebNow™, the browser-based complement to ImageNow, would enable her to continue reading applications remotely during the busy Regular Action admissions cycle.

"ImageNow helped me retain a key staff member at a time of year when I couldn't have replaced her," Bischoff says. "This wouldn't have been possible with paper, as we can't ship documents back and forth across the country."

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Enhancing Recruiting and Student Service

In the summer of 2006, several admissions employees spent a day searching for a student's application. With ImageNow, users can pull up any applicant's folder on their screen with a single click, facilitating immediate student service and sidestepping the redundant effort associated with a manual search.

"The ability ImageNow gives us to take a phone call and instantly answer a question for an applicant, with confidence, is very powerful," Bischoff says.

Since replacing slow, labor-intensive processes with electronic document management, Caltech's admissions department is not only working faster, but also smarter. With 31 Nobel Prize recipients and numerous other award winners as alumni, Caltech has a history of enrolling talented individuals. Bischoff believes that ImageNow enhances his department's ability to recruit gifted students.

"ImageNow allowed us to change our admissions processes in a way that helps us better serve prospects," Bischoff says. "We're recruiting more effectively, which benefits students and the school."

Admissions counselors at Caltech often review applications from home. Instead of traveling to and from campus to pick up and drop off files, these associates retrieve student folders with a single click in WebNow.

"Using WebNow to review applications online increased counselors' productivity, reduced errors and enhanced my ability to give quick, informed feedback to my staff about the reviews they undertake," Bischoff says. "Working in WebNow at home is just like being in the office."

Expansion Plans

The success of ImageNow in the admissions office has led to inquiries from other departments. As Caltech's document management project is managed and hosted by Perceptive Software, expanding ImageNow will not divert Caltech's staff away from other duties.

"Perceptive Software's hosted deployment program has been the key to the success of implementing ImageNow," Bischoff says. "Our internal resources simply don't have the time to provide the dedicated project management and responsive technical support we receive from Perceptive Software."

The Challenges

Slow, paper-based processes hinder admissions activities

Manual tasks divert staff away from recruiting and serving students

Managing paperwork requires additional, temporary staff and increases overhead

Brief implementation time frame

Find a document management system that can be effectively hosted and administered off site in a highly secure environment

The Results

Regular Action applications processed one month earlier, a 33% improvement

Automating document management boosted productivity by 40%, enhancing student service and recruiting

Elimination of the need for additional employees and reduction in office supply costs

Rapid deployment delivered immediate return on investment

Perceptive Software's hosted deployment option manages and delivers powerful ImageNow functionality through the company's SAS 70-compliant data center

Quick Stats

Name:

California Institute of Technology

Integration:

Recruitment PLUS

Products in use:

ImageNow, WebNow, ImageNow Workflow

perceptivesoftware

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