

Maximising Employer Engagement Opportunities

A Focus on Business Case Study

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Castle College Nottingham was formed by the merger of Broxtowe College and the People's College in 2006. As a larger college they are able to offer more choice, progression opportunities and locations for study.

KEY FACTS

Number of users

- 50 staff in 4 departments

Products Used

- Microsoft Dynamics CRM V4.0
- SQL Server Reporting Services

Implementation Time

- 8 weeks

KEY BENEFITS

- Significantly streamlined the enquiry process
- Visibility of business development activity
- Supports new 'demand led' business processes
- Provides evidence for regulatory authorities and compliance



Castle College Nottingham selects FEEES from Focus on Business for their new CRM System

Background

Castle College Nottingham was established in 2006 following the merger of Broxtowe College and The People's College. The college is investing heavily in improved facilities and, as part of the improvements; they felt that they needed to replace their existing CRM system, which would be unable to cope with any future developments.

The Challenge

Jane Cunningham, Business and Market Intelligence Manager for Castle College, explains, "We needed a system that would track incoming enquiries, both from learners and employers. The product would also need to support the whole 'employer journey' by tracking employer engagement activities beyond the initial enquiry, including booking employer visits, carrying out organisational needs analyses, and providing quotes and service level agreements."

The Solution

The college therefore began to explore other options, visiting various colleges to look at systems in use. Following research they decided to deploy FEEES from Focus on Business, a tailored solution for the FE sector based on Microsoft Dynamics CRM system. The system went live in November 2008. Jane Cunningham describes the reasons for this decision:

"Firstly, we chose the system because it is a Microsoft product and is seamlessly integrated with Office, which meant it had a familiar look and feel for staff, as they were already using Outlook. Focus was also able to demonstrate that it would be simple to integrate with our existing systems, particularly our student database, EBS.

Secondly, because Focus has developed the product specifically for the Further Education sector it was much more than an 'off the shelf' package and also could be further tailored to the specific needs of the college. We also felt confident that Focus on Business was the right organisation for us to partner with and ensure we would be supported in the future."

Focus on Business – It's all about your customers

SUMMARY

User Verdict

- Familiar Microsoft environment makes it simple to adapt to and easy to use

Benefits

- A solution tailored to the needs of all college departments
- Product developed specifically for the education sector
- Product integrates well with existing systems in the college
- Thorough training
- Ongoing support

Outcomes

- The system will be able to support future developments within the college



Ongoing Support

When discussing the support from Focus to date, Jane Cunningham comments, "From day one Focus integrated the CRM system with the college's existing learner database. This made it easier for us to transfer employer details and learner information across the systems. They then held a scoping day, which enabled staff from different areas of the college to give their input as to what they needed from the new system."

Jane adds, "Throughout the customisation, implementation and testing phases I took part in regular meetings with the Focus Project Manager in order to discuss progress and examine how it fitted in with the college's particular needs. I also took part in the training that Focus provided so that I could give input regarding specific areas that related to the college."

Conclusion

The college staff are already benefitting from having a more streamlined CRM system that integrates well with existing software, and is capable of handling all their requirements.

Jane Cunningham comments: "Overall it has been an extremely positive experience and a successful launch, with very positive feedback from the users. The college and Focus have partnered well and next we will be looking at the NVQ module Focus has developed and integration with SharePoint."

Focus on Business Review

Jerry Lipman, Managing Director of Focus on Business comments: "The implementation of FEEES with Castle College has gone very smoothly. It has benefited from the college having strong, pro-active project management and the fact that the college has clear ideas on where CRM sits within their strategy. Because of this we have been able to work with them to identify their goals and develop and customise their system to meet those requirements. What has also helped is that the college was fully in agreement with a phased approach and were absolutely clear in agreeing that the system had to create quick wins to ensure users were rewarded by using the system. By approaching the project in this way the system can then evolve as needs dictate backed up by enthusiastic users."

"Focus understands FE College's challenges and meeting our client's expectations at all times is of paramount importance to us. We know that colleges will require a combination of partnering, mentoring and technical support within a long term relationship and we ensure that we have the processes and personnel to provide this."

Focus on Business – Company Profile

Focus on Business Ltd is a Microsoft Gold Partner ISV and Microsoft Dynamics Business Solutions Partner. Established since 1990 they have been specialising in CRM solutions since 1995 and have been developing CRM with the FE sector since 2006. The company also supplies CRM for other business sectors including stock broking, manufacturing and distribution, and Mortgage Provider. The company has offices in Reigate, Surrey, UK and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

For further information, please contact:

Jerry Lipman, Director of Focus on Business

Email: Jerry.Lipman@focusonbusiness.co.uk