

## About the University of the Southwest



Since 1962, the University of the Southwest has been educating young minds, helping mold the next generation of leaders through Christ-centered values.

Located in Hobbs, NM, USW is a community of dedicated, caring, talented scholars who are engaged in an educational pilgrimage - the active pursuit of knowledge.

## CHALLENGE

In 2011, USW was facing challenges in growing its student population of 350 students. In order to survive and be sustainable for the future, USW realized it needed to make a bold move and made the decision to begin offering undergraduate and graduate programs online.

USW was seeking a partner to provide an end-to-end solution to generate qualified leads, follow-up on these leads immediately, engage prospective students and nurture them through the enrollment pipeline to application and enrollment and then keep in close contact with students to address any challenges they were facing and ensure they were administratively ready each term to enroll.

### It was essential that their partner:

- Understood their brand, mission, programs and processes so they could seamlessly represent their brand.
- Was proactive and driving continuous improvement to increase enrollments while minimizing recruitment costs.
- Could cost effectively recruit students and meet mutually agreed upon enrollment targets.
- Would allow USW to compete with regional and national institutions.

## SOLUTION

AnswerNet Education Services conducted a 3-day consultation and assessment to evaluate USW's online programs and current staffing from a student marketing, recruitment, enrollment management and retention standpoint.

AnswerNet recommended an end-to-end enrollment solution including marketing, lead qualification, enrollment counseling and retention counseling. Based on the trust built and understanding of USW's culture, mission, goals and staff capabilities, AnswerNet and USW partnered in March 2011 to provide the full suite of services to grow USW's online programs.

AnswerNet enrollment and retention counselors were trained on campus so the counselors could fully understand the institution, the student experience and the student journey.

An integrated process was implemented to ensure that:

- Leads were captured and followed up on within minutes.
- Qualified leads were warm transferred to enrollment counselors to drive them to application and enrollment.
- Retention counselors worked with students on a regular basis to drive reenrollment.

A marketing and lead generation plan was developed and implemented including leading education portals, search engine marketing, banner ads and internet radio.

A new web site was created to enhance the USW brand and improve the user experience for both undergraduate on-campus students and online students.



“AnswerNet conveys an abundance of knowledge of best practices in online learning to higher education. In addition, AnswerNet has invested personnel, time, and fiscal resources into our campus. I would say the best part of our relationship with AnswerNet has been the collaboration and working together to meet our needs.”

James H. Smith, Ph.D.  
Provost  
University of the Southwest

## RESULTS

Generation of over 1,000 leads per month from education portals, search engine marketing and internet radio regionally and nationally.

Nearly 5% percent lead to enroll conversion rate overall. Graduate 5%. Undergraduate 3.6%.

14% increase in conversion from inquiry to application versus previous year.

Over the past three plus years, AnswerNet has helped drive online enrollment growth to over 1,200 new students.

314% growth in starting student body past 18 months.

Term-by-term retention over 90%. Undergraduate retention increased 18% over previous 6 months.

**AnswerNet has consistently hit mutually agreed upon enrollment, conversion and USW revenue goals.**