



Brockenhurst College

Delivering an exceptional student experience with personalised learning pathways

Overview

The need

How could Brockenhurst College gain deeper insight into student needs and learning styles, and use this information to shape a more immersive educational experience, from application to graduation?

The solution

Brockenhurst will use IBM digital marketing, predictive analytics and social portal solutions – underpinned by a cloud platform – to shape a more engaging and personalised student experience.

The benefit

Over a five-year period, Brockenhurst expects to boost student recruitment and retention by 15 percent, and increase its reputation by 30 percent. Choosing a cloud solution will help save GBP500,000.

Imagine if educational institutions could understand each student's unique style of learning and interests – and continually adapt learning pathways to meet these needs, from application to graduation, and beyond. How much more engaging and rewarding would the educational experience be if it was tailored to each learner's requirements?

Brockenhurst College is taking advantage of the latest digital marketing, predictive analytics and social portal solutions from IBM to personalise each student's learning journey.

By making smarter decisions about how to best attract, motivate and retain students, the college expects to improve student recruitment and retention by 15 percent over a five-year period. Higher achievement, added value and employability for students, coupled with greater social brand sentiment will potentially boost Brockenhurst's reputation by 30 percent.

“Brockenhurst is expanding internationally, and already has links to two sister schools in China. IBM solutions give us a flexible platform for supporting new ventures, and allow our students to interact on a truly global basis, opening up their educational and social horizons,” says Di Roberts, Principal and Chief Executive, Brockenhurst College.



“IBM Connections and Sametime will allow students to learn and interact in ways that were simply not possible before.”

— Dom Chapman, Head of Division, Creative, English and Computing Studies, Brockenhurst College

Solution Components

Software

- IBM® Cognos® Business Intelligence
- IBM Connections
- IBM Digital Analytics
- IBM Sametime®
- IBM SPSS® Modeler

Services

- Softlayer®

IBM Business Partner

- Portal
-

Staying on top of the competition

At a time when competition in the further education sector has never been stronger, Brockenhurst is constantly looking for new ways to attract students – and ensure that they remain at the college for their entire learner journey.

Alex Scott, Vice Principal at Brockenhurst College, elaborates: “The quality of the student experience is critical to the success of an institution, and our aim is to ensure that all learners get the most out of their time at Brockenhurst.

“We wanted to personalise the experience that our students receive, from the moment they enrol on a course all the way through to completion. To achieve this, we needed deeper insight into each student’s needs and learning style, so we could tailor teaching and support to ensure a perfect fit for every individual.”

Improving the student experience

Brockenhurst selected IBM® Exceptional Student Experience technology – a suite of solutions that help educational institutions to deliver deep engagement throughout a student’s academic career. The college joined forces with IBM Premier Business Partner Portal, taking advantage of Portal’s expertise to guarantee swift and successful delivery of the new solutions.

To drive a more collaborative and interconnected learning environment, Brockenhurst is launching its own private social network, built on IBM Connections and IBM Sametime® social portal solutions. For the first time, students will be able to access learning resources, including course materials and videos of lessons, and communicate with their peers and teachers anytime, anywhere and on any device.

Dom Chapman, Head of Division, Creative, English and Computing Studies, comments: “IBM Connections and Sametime will allow students to learn and interact in ways that were simply not possible before.

“Take homework, for instance, which can typically be a very solitary activity. With the new platform, students can use online groups and instant messaging to work on assignments, share knowledge and solve problems. We believe that the IBM solutions will help create a much better support system for students, and allow them to learn and work with their peers more effectively.”

New students will be able to take advantage of this online community before they even set foot on campus, as Alex Scott explains: “Once a student has been accepted, he or she will be able to go online and access learning materials, engage with teachers and support staff and connect with other students, all before they ever get to campus.

“The first few days at college are a critical point in a student’s academic journey – having a pre-established support network will give students a great head start, making them feel more connected to the Brockenhurst community so they can get right down to learning and flourishing.”

“IBM solutions will help us attract more students and continue to provide them with an outstanding learning experience.”

— Di Roberts, Principal and Chief Executive, Brockenhurst College

Smarter marketing strategy

In addition to enhancing the educational experience for existing students, Brockenhurst is improving the way it markets itself to prospective learners.

With IBM Digital Analytics solutions, the college will be able to capture rich data on visitors to its website and social media pages, and use it to build more effective marketing campaigns.

Alex Scott notes: “With better insight into how visitors are interacting with our web channels, we can understand what different people are looking for and shape our marketing strategy and curriculum accordingly. This will improve the effectiveness of each and every campaign, and ensure that our educational offerings meet both local learner and employer needs.”

Stronger support for students

Behind the scenes, Brockenhurst will take advantage of IBM Cognos® Business Intelligence and IBM SPSS® Modeler software to dig deep into data on students, uncovering new insights that can be used to shape a more engaging and effective educational experience.

With predictive analytics, the college will be able to better understand each student’s learning style – for example, if a student is a visual learner – and, where possible, match them with the teaching and support services that best support their unique needs.

In addition, the SPSS solution will allow Brockenhurst to identify common risk factors that indicate a student is at risk of under-performing.

Di Roberts, Principal and Chief Executive at Brockenhurst College, elaborates: “IBM analytics technology will offer us a better view of which learners are not reaching their full potential. This gives us a chance to put intervention strategies in place early on and get students back on track.

“We already enjoy an excellent rate of student retention at Brockenhurst – IBM solutions will help us increase conversion from application to enrolment, reduce drop-outs that occur in the first few weeks of student’s academic career, and improve retention overall.

New insights drive better outcomes

Brockenhurst College will use IBM Cognos Business Intelligence to provide management with enhanced understanding of students and performance. A set of personalised dashboards will give managers real-time insight into a variety of metrics, including grades, attendance and engagement, allowing them to make more informed decisions about how to best support students.

Di Roberts states: “IBM Cognos will allow us to act on insight rather than pure instinct. Putting real-time data into the hands of front-line staff will empower them to make smarter decisions, helping them provide each student with the right resources and support at the right time to improve academic engagement and outcomes.”

Moving to the cloud

The entire suite of IBM solutions will run on the Softlayer® cloud infrastructure, hosted and supported by Portal. Alex Scott remarks: “By moving to the cloud, Brockenhurst will avoid the GBP500,000 cost of purchasing physical infrastructure. Choosing a managed service means that we don’t have to lift a finger – we can count on Portal to guarantee top levels of service around the clock.”

Supporting growth

IBM technology will offer Brockenhurst an intelligent way of managing the way that it attracts, motivates and supports students, providing a holistic overview of every single student’s personalised academic journey.

Di Roberts concludes: “With improved digital marketing and deeper student engagement, we expect to increase recruitment by 15 percent and improve retention by 15 percent over a 5-year period. Higher academic achievement, employability and value added, coupled with greater social brand sentiment will potentially boost the college’s reputation by 30 percent.

“Better social collaboration will allow Brockenhurst to connect more easily with our sister colleges in China and support more efficient global expansion. IBM solutions will help us attract more students and provide them with an outstanding learning experience, driving better outcomes for learners, the college and the community as a whole.”

About Brockenhurst College

Brockenhurst College is a high-achieving academic institution, located in the heart of the New Forest in England. Rated as “Outstanding” by Ofsted, Brockenhurst welcomes more than 3,000 full-time students at its main campus, and has two sister schools in China.

To find out more about Brockenhurst College, visit www.brock.ac.uk

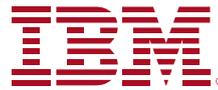
About Portal

Portal is an award-winning IT consultancy with specialist expertise in social, insight and mobile. Portal was formed in 2006 from a merger of several IBM business partners, each expert in their own field. Since then, the company has gone from strength to strength, culminating in being named the IBM Business Partner of the Year in 2011 and entering the Sunday Times Tech Track 100 in 2012.

To learn more about products, services and solutions from Portal, visit www.chooseportal.com

For more information

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Produced in the United Kingdom
November 2014

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