

Communication Boom at Kutztown University; 90% Open Rate with Digital CampusCommunicator



Johnée Border is a financial aid professional on a mission. Xe's passionate about social justice, and that's what drew Border to the position as the Customer Communications Specialist at Kutztown University. "I wanted to discover how financial aid could be involved in social equity, the pursuit of higher education, and creating more opportunity," xe explains. "I really use my time here to make our information as accessible as possible, and to create the opportunity for prospective students and our current students to understand better how they can afford their higher education."

But when xe started—and was literally folding thousands of offers to mail out—Border realized the school had to radically change the way it was communicating if it wanted to resonate with today's students. Not only were Kutztown's financial aid communications outdated and paper-based, they were also confusing. Staff members spent all day fielding nonstop questions from students and had little time for valuable one-to-one advising for high-need cases. "I work on a ton of different projects and so do the other people on the front line," Border says.

"A lot of the things we were working on just got pushed aside because we'd be talking until 4:30 p.m. on the phone, just call after call after call."

The financial aid office needed to cut out the confusion—and the paper. "No one's reading mail anymore," Border says. "We needed to do something that would speak to students on their level."

The Solution: CampusCommunicator by CampusLogic

Kutztown, part of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, found what they were looking for in CampusCommunicator. Mobile and interactive, CampusCommunicator helps schools send out personalized, dynamic communications throughout the awards cycle. It gives students the information they need when they need it, right where they want it—on their mobile devices.

Clear Communication Means Less Confusion

Kutztown's financial aid communications are no longer paper-based—or perplexing. Take their improved award letter, which is digital, immersive,

and makes the bottom line crystal clear. "Students really like the layout," Border reports. "They like how really in your face—and I say this with the utmost positivity—it is. This is what your bill is. This is what you're going to receive."

Less confusion means fewer questions, which has led to a drastic drop in call volume. "It's been near silence," Border says, adding that staff now have the time to focus on all those projects that used to get pushed to the backburner.

Getting Important Messages to Both Students and Parents

Border says they appreciate how CampusCommunicator is able to reach out not just to students, but parents, too. "I do a lot of generational research and with Gen Z, a lot is being done by the parents, so we need a way to ensure the information is getting to both," xe explains. "CampusCommunicator provides that to us because we send it to parent emails, student emails, and through texts. It's reaching them in all the possible ways."

Plus, they can actually measure that reach. “We’re not just sending letters and blindly hoping people are looking at them, only to later receive a million phone calls,” Border says. With CampusCommunicator, they can track open rates. Almost 50% of offers are opened within two hours of being sent. Overall, Kutztown has an amazing 90% open rate.

Minimizing Debt While Maximizing Opportunity

These improvements make the social justice warrior in Border happy. Xe likes to remind students that the college degrees they earn will be theirs for life. Optimized, simple communications help them understand exactly how they can make this important investment possible—and do it responsibly. “Minimizing debt is always great, but unfortunately with the climate now, debt-free education is near impossible,” xe says. “At least students can know what they are getting into beforehand, prepare themselves, and make those plans. They can understand that there are ways to make it happen for them—without being blindsided later or bogged down by something they may not understand at the age of 18. It’s important to give them these tools because college is invaluable.”



Ellucian innovates and delivers at speed for more than 2,900 customers across 50 countries, serving 28 million students. As a steadfast partner in transformation, Ellucian empowers institutions to accelerate their goals and help every student succeed. **To find out what’s next in higher education, visit [Ellucian.com](https://www.ellucian.com).**