

2019 Conversion Communication Plan

Last updated Feb. 8, 2019

Situational analysis

Enrolment remains a top priority for Georgian College, worthy of attention and investment. The domestic student market remains as competitive as ever, and demographics are working against us.

Since 2015, the Office of the Registrar, Marketing and Communications, and Information Technology have been working together to improve applicant communication. Despite these efforts, some challenges remain:

- Evaluation of tactics is inconsistent and informal. Results aren't regularly shared between departments.
- All teams lack resources and time to invest in improvements that would result in more personalized, timely, and relevant communication through existing tools (like CRM) and potentially new tools (like AI).

Georgian must continue to work toward addressing these challenges if it is to retain its share of the market. With the new CRM system, we have an opportunity to be ahead of the pack.

Plan overview

In addition to offering an overview of goals, audiences, and messaging, this plan sketches out conversion tactics in five sections:

- Current projects: tactics we're undertaking specifically to improve 2019 conversion
- Ongoing tasks: channels we continue to maintain and update as required
- Aspirations: tactics we're talking about implementing in 2020 and beyond
- Completed tactics: projects we undertook between 2015 and 2019 that we consider done
- Ideas to evaluate: tactics that have been discussed, but that need reexamining

Note that this is a living document, to be updated as tactics are evaluated and new data becomes available. As other college strategies are developed, this plan will be adapted with an eye to integration.

Acronyms

To save space, we've used the following acronyms throughout the document.

- RO – Registrar's Office

- MC – Marketing and Communications
- IT – Information Technology
- AAs – Academic areas
- AOs – Admissions officers
- CRM – Constituent Relationship Management System (Salesforce and Eloqua)
- SF – Salesforce
- BRM – Banner Relationship Management (old system we plan to sunset)
- CTA – Call to action
- Campus acronyms: BA, MI, MU, OR, OS, OV, SGB
- OH – Open House
- AR – Applicant Reception

Target audiences

The target audience for this conversion plan is **domestic applicants who have been offered a spot (final or conditional acceptance) in a full-time program, but haven't paid their enrolment deposit or registered for courses**. In other words, full-time domestic applicants in the accept-confirm-pay-register segment of the student life cycle.

The focus is on applicants registering for Fall 2019. Many of these tactics will be reused for Winter 2020 applicants. Secondary audiences include influencers like parents and guidance counsellors.

With the new CRM system, one of our aspirational goals is to better target specific audiences and groups within these broader audiences.

Goals

The overall goal is to exceed last year's full-time, domestic applicant conversion rate (applicant to registered ratio by Day 1) by 0.5 per cent. Our conversion rates for the 18-19 cycle were:

Fall 2018 - 5:1 or 20.4%

Winter 2018 – 4:1 or 24.0%

Strategies for 2019

At a high-level, this year's tactics aimed to:

- Offer a more personalized experience through as many channels as possible, from print, to email, to on-campus visits
- Pilot the use of the CRM system for applicant communication
- Collect and share data on effectiveness of tactics

Key messages

Georgian's overall messages

- Accelerate your success
- Experience Georgian
 - o Committed faculty
 - o #1 co-op college
 - o Resources and support
 - o A great culture
 - o Four-season playground
 - o Changemaker campus
 - o Advanced technology

Process-related messaging for applicants

- Accept your offer
 - o meet conditions
 - o contact us
- Pay your fees
- Register for courses
- Join the Georgian community
 - o You have to see it to experience it
 - o Plus into campus life
- For declined applicants:
 - o Explore academic upgrading
 - o Contact your admissions officer

Tactics

Current projects

Description	Audience	Messages	Lead	Timing	Evaluation
Personalized printed package - Name on cover - Clearer calls to action - Personalized letter	Accepted applicants	Accept your offer	Tina Marie Franks/ Mikaela Lefaive	Feb. 1 being mailout, then ongoing	Conversion rate Visits to microsite
OCAS conversion calls - Feb. 1 onward - Scripts provided by GC	Accepted applicants	Accept your offer Visit us	Tina Marie Franks / Mikaela Lefaive	Feb. 1 to March 4	Conversion rate by program Microsite

Refreshed congrats page - Mirrors package - Highlights "accept your offer"	Accepted Applicants	Accept your offer Pay your deposit	Taline Hepburn/ Tina Marie Franks/ Mikaela Lefaive	Feb. 1 launch	Conversion rate Bounce rate Click through rates
Remarketing to congrats page visitors	Accepted Applicants	Accept your offer	Taline Hepburn	?	Click through rates
Applicant Reception - New conversion event - AAs organizing "events-within-events" - Alumni and employer speakers	Accepted Applicants	Accept your offer	Jessica Lovett/ AAs/ Mikaela Lefaive	March 23	Attendance Post-event conversion Survey
New Eloqua campaigns - Accept your offer (1 email) - Personalized video (1 email) - Register/ pay (TBC) - Winter Open House (4-6 emails) - Applicant Reception (4 emails) - Facebook group invite (1 email)	All applicants	Accept your offer/ Visit us	Tina Marie Franks/ Mikaela Lefaive	- OH: Early Jan to Feb. 15 - Accept: Feb. 1, ongoing - AR: Feb. 12 to - March 30 FB: Late March	Open rates Click throughs Conversion
Conversion mailing - Focused on applicant reception - Personalized with name and specific AR details for student	Accepted applicants	Come to Applicant Reception	Taline Hepburn/ Jessica Lovett	End of Feb.	Unique URL? Conversion

Ongoing tasks

Description	Audience	Messages	Lead	Timing	Evaluation
AO calls for conditional offers - Complements OCAS calls - High touch, problem-solving approach	Accepted applicants with conditional offers	Accept your offer/ Meet conditions	Tina Marie Franks	Feb. 1 onward	Called vs. not called conversion
AO calls for missing requirements - Calls to people who don't meet requirements - Offering academic upgrading as an alternative	Unaccepted applicants	Meet conditions (if possible) OR academic upgrading	Tina Marie Franks	Feb. 1 onward	Called vs. not called conversion
Faculty conversion calls - Offer helpful tools and templates, with clear instruction	Accepted applicants	Come to Applicant Reception	AAs / Mikaela Lefaive	March 4 to 15 this year	Call log sent to RO. Hopefully data can be compared to conversion data in SF.
New student Facebook group - Unmediated space for new students	Accepted applicants and registered students	Join the group	Taline Hepburn	Email late March	Likes, comments, posts

Reactive customer service - AOs and welcome centre - Social media - Faculty	All	All — typically process focused	RO, MC, AAs	Ongoing	
Rolling out/ improving web templates - Web team is constantly rolling out the new (improved!) template on new pages - Also improving site, in general, using analytics	All	All	Taline Hepburn and page editors	Ongoing	Clicks Bounces
Book a tour enhancements - Hoping for better integration with SF	Prospect and applicants	All – typically process focused	Jessica Lovett	Ongoing	Bounces Tour numbers
Conversion event enhancements - Constantly tweaking Open House - Evaluating Applicant Reception pilot	Prospect and applicants	All	Jessica Lovett	Ongoing	
Improving event promotion - paid digital and traditional ads - owned channels like email and social - third party like event listings and media	All	Come to _____	Taline Hepburn/ Mikaela Lefaive	Ongoing	
Internal coms about supporting enrolment and events - Communication about what we're doing - How to support events like Open House and Applicant Reception - Faculty memos for call campaign	Staff and students	Help with _____	Mikaela Lefaive/ Jessica Lovett	Ongoing	
Advertising campaigns that support conversion - Open House - Remarketing to /congrats visitors TALINE TO INSERT DETAILS	Applicants	Multiple	Taline Hepburn	Feb. 1 to June	
Secret shopper Apply to competitors to assess their materials/timing	Staff	N/A	Tina Marie Franks		

Aspirations

Description	Audience	Messages	Lead	Timing	Evaluation
Rebrand/refresh the admissions portal: - MyGC - Better look, more visual cues, clearer CTAs	Applicants and students	All process messages	Tina Marie Franks/ Taline Hepburn/ Mikaela Lefaive	Feb. 2020	
Admissions webpage revisions: - Create roadmap-style content that can be	Applicants	All process messages:	Tina Marie Franks/	Summer 2020	Web analytics and overall

reused across multiple platforms - better links to PT/international - AODA compliant videos		accepted your offer, pay your deposit, register for courses	Taline Hepburn		conversion rates at each step
Customized web experience for applicants - custom URLs - customized experience (based on CRM data)	Applicants	Tailored to individual applicants	Taline Hepburn/ Tina Marie Franks/ Mikaela Lefaive	TBC	
Sunset old email systems (BRM and Constant Contact) - Ensure good data - Forms/RSVPs linked to SF - Build all campaigns in new CRM	BRM: Registered and current students CC: Prospects and applicants	All	BRM: RO CC: MC	TBC	Better data should be available through the new CRM: SF/Eloqua
Chatbots to support customer services - Chat-style answering services on our website, run by AI - Live chat already piloted by recruitment, with good uptake by international prospects - Would look for better integration with SF	TBC	Process messages	TBC	TBC	
Text messaging for transactional/emergency content: - tuition fee charges and payment reminders - Course registration reminders - Campus closure notices - Safety alerts (already in place?)	Applicants and current students	Process messages	?	TBC	

Completed tactics

Description	Audience	Messages	Lead	Evaluation
Website architecture refresh	All	All	Marcom	
Program and academic area page refresh	All	Program-specific	Marcom	
Experience Georgian webpage	All	Experience Georgian	Marcom	
Book a tour online system improvements	Prospects and applicants	Book a tour	Marcom	
Launch CRM system	Currently prospects and applicants	Varied	Marcom and RO	

Ideas to evaluate

Description	Audience	Messages	Lead	Evaluation
Integrated calendaring strategy: - One tool for all events and platforms (inc. website) - Tags, so they can be filtered by audience - Includes religious holidays	All GC stakeholders	Varied	IT	
Social media ambassadors - So much potential, so many roadblocks!	All external	Varied	Marcom	
Front-ended grants Offer people money before they accept their offer, to be applied to their GC accounts when they're students	Prospects and applicants	Become a Georgian student and get \$ toward tuition	RO	
Grants to applicants who refused GC - Have previously offered \$1,000 to students who chose other schools - Calls by AOs	Applicants who decline	Accept your offer and get \$	RO	
Re-structure customer service at Georgian - One central call centre - New phone triage - CRM integration - Online knowledgebase	All external	Varied	All depts	
Refresh priority programs list - This list used to guide our marketing efforts - Which programs do we focus on for promo? How do we decide?	All external		RO and Marcom	
Improve program outlines - Involve marcom in editing program outlines - Improve consistency	All	Varied	AAs and Marcom	