

# University of Cincinnati

Boosting enrollment with moments that matter



# Streamlining the path from acceptance to enrollment

**When a student gets accepted to the University of Cincinnati (UC)—a large, urban research institution in Ohio—the congratulatory notification and admissions letter is a defining moment. After months, or even years, of anticipation, their Bearcat journey can officially commence. It's an event to celebrate.**

But this excitement is soon followed by a flurry of requests: confirming enrollment, creating a student profile, meeting with advisors, making housing arrangements, managing financials and scheduling

classes. The volume of tasks and communications to keep track of can become overwhelming, rather than a rite of passage. The similarity of requests from multiple units, colleges and offices created friction in the student experience.

UC aims to create an engaging, consistent and united experience for its students. With a goal to increase enrollment by 20% over the next ten years, UC saw an opportunity to maintain students' excitement for acceptance and create moments that matter at each step in the student journey.

By streamlining interactions from day one, it could broaden and enrich the student experience and help reduce melt—the phenomenon of college-bound students deciding not to attend during the period between admissions and the first day of class.

When tech meets human ingenuity

# Human-centered design for the student journey

**Together, UC and Accenture worked with students and staff across the organization to map out and then redesign the student journey from enrollment to attendance more holistically to maximize the moments that matter to them. This process involved an in-depth, collaborative assessment of current and future state touchpoints:**

**Leadership Visioning Sessions** helped establish the “One University” vision and guiding principles for the team to move forward in creating a better student yield experience.

**Stakeholder Research** involved interviewing current students, parents, UC student orientation leaders and melters—students who committed to UC but never showed up for classes—to capture their sentiments regarding the process from enrollment to attendance.

**Business Process Transformation Workshops** infused human-centered design thinking and continuous improvement methods to inform future-state processes with insights on industry leading practices, peer institution comparisons, and student experience trends.

**Cross-Channel Digital Assessment**, conducted by experience design experts, provided UC with a thorough digital analysis of issues impacting the student experience and a sample of potential digital experience solutions.

After identifying ways to reduce redundant processes and communications, UC and Accenture began the process of coordinating a roadmap to deliver these enhanced journeys using the university’s existing customer relationship management (CRM) and student information systems (SIS).





A valuable difference

# A “One University” culture

After eight straight years of record enrollment, UC hopes to grow from its current 46,000 students to 58,000 students by 2030. A large part of achieving this goal will focus on reducing conventional friction points to increase the enrollment of admitted students. The newly established design solutions will form the foundation for building a culture that holistically communicates with students in one voice, creating a journey that is:

**Student-centric.** Meeting students where they will provide a supportive environment.

**Seamless.** An effortless, clear process will allow students to enjoy the moments that matter to them, helping to motivate them to show up on the first day of classes.

**Intuitive.** A streamlined digital experience will match current digital behaviors and expectations.

**Comforting.** UC will build a connection and sense of affirmation with students and their families.

By creating high value engagements that trigger deep and lasting emotional impressions, UC can continuously remind students why they wanted to be part of the UC Bearcat family in the first place.

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