



FIU | Online

Florida International University Online uses multi-pronged approach to boost enrollment in online degree programs

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Cristina Raecke
Executive Director, Marketing, Recruitment, and Enrollment
FIU Online

Reach highly targeted prospects for online degree programs

Florida International University is a public research-focused university based in Miami, Fla., with an enrollment of over 55,000 students. In addition to its on-campus presence, through its online division, FIU Online, the university offers a diverse array of online degree programs, including 19 undergraduate degrees and graduate degrees in the areas of business, communications, education and engineering.

FIU Online’s programs are highly specialized, so the school needed a tailored approach for reaching pre-qualified prospects with job experience in each educational vertical market.

Challenge

- Raise overall awareness of online master’s and bachelor’s degree programs
- Increase enrollment with the right kind of students
- Retarget lost prospects from their website

Solution

- LinkedIn Sponsored InMail, Sponsored Updates, and Lead Accelerator

Results

- InMail open rate up to **2x** LinkedIn benchmarks
- Up to **1.8%** engagement rate on Sponsored Updates
- Raised awareness of niche programs among very targeted audiences
- Ability to attribute leads directly to LinkedIn and connect on a personal level

In order to build interest for its online programs, FIU Online began using LinkedIn's self-service platform. After seeing results there, the school increased its investment, and worked with a dedicated account management team to leverage LinkedIn's portfolio of marketing solutions (Sponsored Updates, Sponsored InMail, and Lead Accelerator) as tools for building overall brand awareness and driving pre-qualified leads with the ultimate goal of increasing enrollment in these niche professional programs.

"We're always trying to find the right mix between brand awareness and lead generation, and I think that LinkedIn does a very good job of matching the two," says Cristina Raecke Executive Director of Marketing, Recruitment, and Enrollment. "Our goal is always to increase enrollment with the right qualified students, and LinkedIn makes it so easy for us to find the target audiences that we need for our programs."

A full-funnel marketing strategy

FIU Online segments its target audiences according to criteria including job function, education level, and field of study, and reaches each type of audience with a variety of LinkedIn marketing tools. For instance, when recruiting for the Master of Science in Human Resources Management, FIU Online displays Sponsored Updates to a segmented group of prospects who have undergraduate degrees and are working in an HR function, with dedicated creative that's been geared to that audience. FIU Online targets the same prospects with Sponsored InMail, offering a concise but detailed message explaining the benefits of the 12-month degree program, including a "learn more" CTA.

If prospects visit FIU Online's website but do not provide their email addresses, the school is able to follow up by retargeting them with relevant ads and content on LinkedIn and across the web, through Lead Accelerator. "It's enabled us to add another layer to our segmentation strategy," says Raecke. "Using anonymous data about who they are and what they're interested in - which we know from their visit to our website - we can deliver content that we know prospects will appreciate."

Know who you're reaching

While FIU Online spotlights the quality of the prospects they are able to reach on LinkedIn as a key benefit for investing in the platform, Raecke also appreciates the fact that, as opposed to many advertising platforms, it is simple to track the attribution of leads gained through the team's marketing spend through LinkedIn.

"It's been hard for me to directly track the students that come from search," she says. "If you were to match up our database to the students that came in through search, it really doesn't fit like a perfect puzzle, whereas on LinkedIn it does. It will be very easy for me to determine my ROI."

FIU Online uses Sponsored Updates and Sponsored InMail targeted to prospects who are most likely to be interested and qualified for their program.

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