



“Utilizing Brainstorm’s digital marketing expertise, ideation and leadership, we converted a 3% decrease in admissions to a 12% increase within one admissions year cycle.”

Dr. Michael Collette V.P. for Enrollment Management and IS, Anderson University

Anderson University’s message was relevant—even inspirational. But it wasn’t being delivered in channels that mattered to prospective students. We used digital marketing to make AU something young people wanted to be a part of.

Challenge

After a previous 10-year run of enrollment increases, Anderson University (a 2,700-student private Christian institution) found itself facing an unexpected challenge. Applications and enrollment were suddenly in decline.

The reason? Competing schools across the Midwest had improved their strategy for reaching out to prospective students. Suddenly, AU was behind the curve. The university needed increased visibility and enhanced enrollment, fast.

Solution

After an analysis of the situation, it was clear AU had an opportunity to leverage search, social media and other digital marketing opportunities. Used properly, we knew these tools could provide the quick-but-sustainable impact they needed.

Our team identified site and code updates for search engine optimization. But that was only the beginning. We also designed and developed an admissions web site specifically for potential students.

The highlight of our solution was an invitation-only social network for accepted students. The network essentially took

the AU experience to incoming freshman, providing them with a format to meet, connect, and begin living the college life.

Results

Within weeks, search rankings soared and anderson.edu became one of the top listings in its category. Today, an impressive 80% of AU’s applications are received online. Of those, 45% are from students not previously identified as prospects—meaning our SEO efforts are working.

AU’s private social network proved capable of boosting enrollment as well. Today, over 85% of the young people who join the network arrive on campus in the fall.

Key Benefits

24.7% increase in traffic for Admissions

47% increase in traffic from search (up 18.5% yoy)

49% of search traffic are new visits

85% retention of social network members

62% of students participated in new social networks

+15% net change in enrollment (yoy)

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