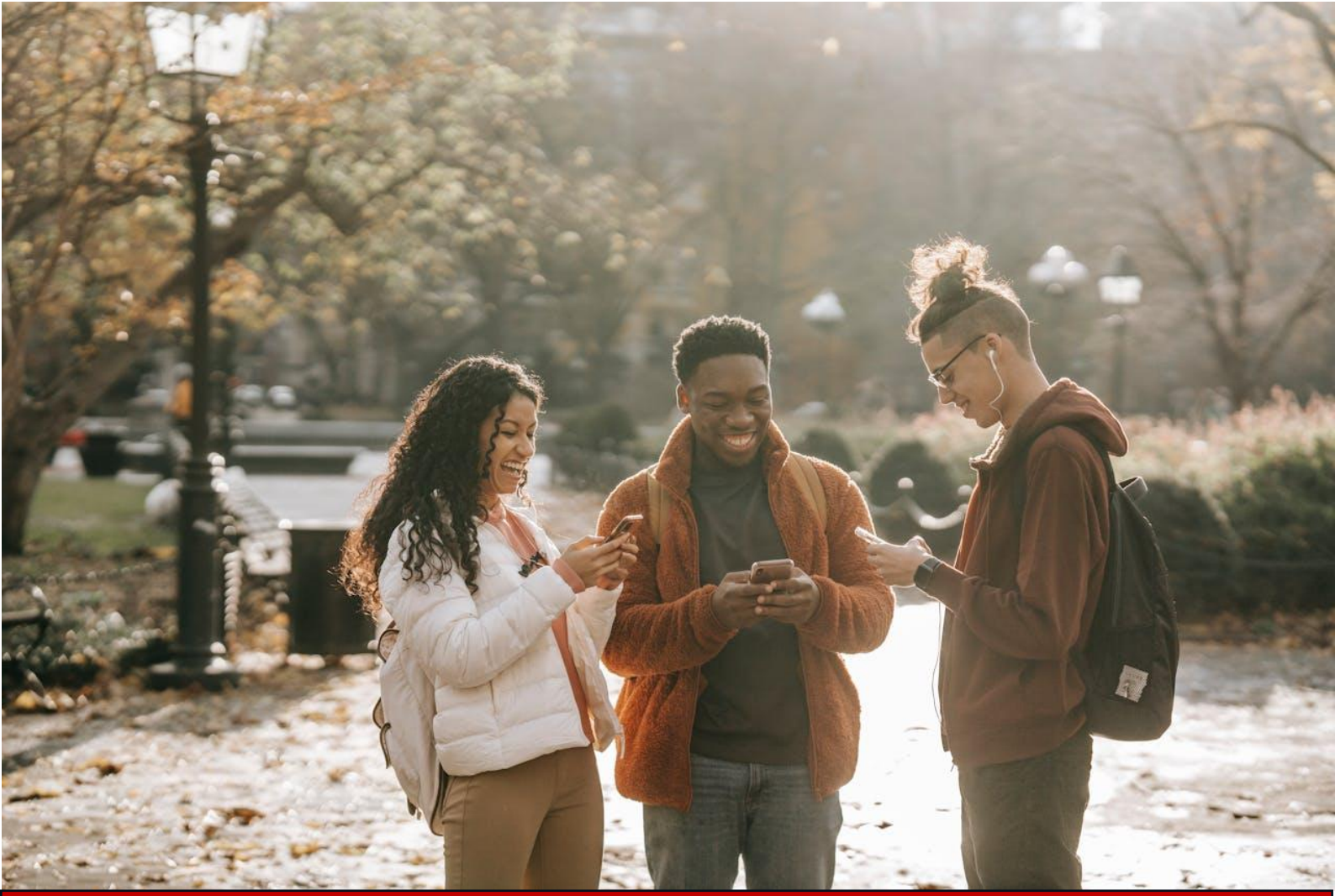
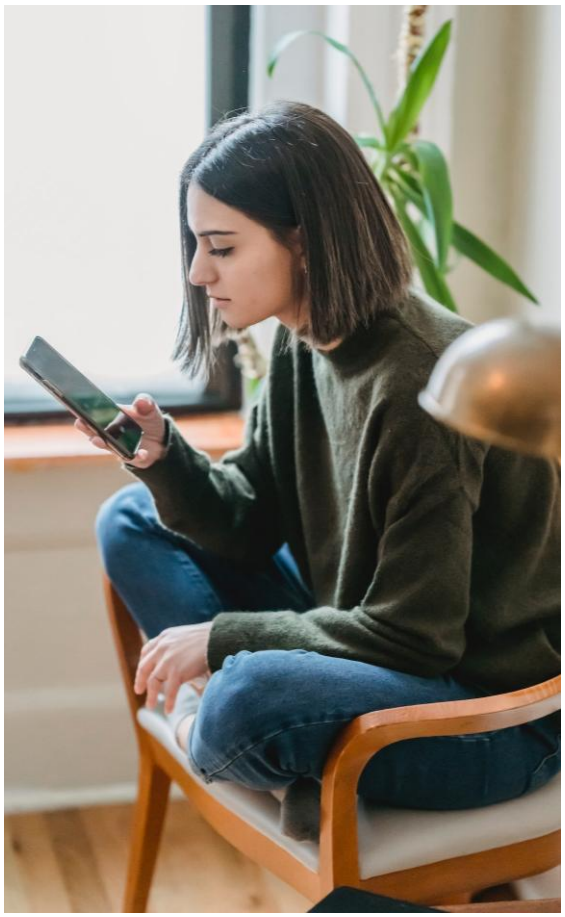


Driving Engagement and Response Rates in Higher Education With GirikSMS App

GirikSMS

Messaging Solutions for Future Ready Businesses



Overview

Our client operates a higher education institution in Australia. Over 12000 students from more than 60 countries attend the school's undergraduate, graduate, and doctorate programs in a variety of subjects. They also provide specific programs that may be completed using their distant learning platform.

Challenge

The client's conversion rate over the phone was dismal. While they made a significant investment in acquiring leads, only 40% of their outbound calls were answered. Because the school only calls leads who have shown an interest in their program, it is critical to contact them soon and while their enthusiasm is strong. The school realized that if they speak with only 40% of leads via outbound calls, there are a number of leads that are being missed.

Addressing the Challenge

The client discovered that calling potential students or their working parents and expecting to have detailed conversations with them during normal working hours was impossible. They asked prospective students about their preferred means of communication, and it was no surprise that many chose to text. Counselors began texting students and when they received responses, the school sought a more formal solution. The school was already using Salesforce as their CRM platform and its IT department evaluated several SMS messaging solutions that integrated easily with Salesforce and offered detailed reporting and analytics. GirikSMS checked all the boxes, was 100% native with Salesforce and tracks messages and automatically links them to leads and contacts in Salesforce.

How the Client Uses Messaging

The client delivers SMS messages to potential students, their parents, and those who register for their courses. SMS messaging is also used to retain students, schedule appointments, send reminders, and convey other critical information.

Messaging Potential Students

The client used SMS messaging throughout the admissions process, from inquiry to application, through to admissions and enrollment.

The institution adopts three SMS messaging approaches for quick identification of a student's outreach purpose.

Re-engaging potential students

Previously, potential students were more likely to call school and indicate they had encountered a stumbling block in the process or were unable to enroll at their institution. Following repeated contact with the student, some texted back indicating they were more likely to engage in deeper over text, which could be followed up by a scheduled phone call appointment.

The counselor handling that student's case receives a notification of the incoming SMS. Because messaging is less intrusive than a phone call, the counselor can respond via text and plan a follow-up call to discuss things further.

Deadline reminders

The school sends out outbound SMS campaigns with deadline reminders, confirmations for campus visits, and other time-sensitive information. One of their best practices is to ask applicants questions via SMS to maximize response rates. The counselors develop an optimal plan for each SMS campaign and after launching the campaign, they assess the response rate and, if necessary, refine their plan for the next campaign.

The school sends campus visit or event reminders to students periodically: one week before, three days before, and on the day of the event. The school also sends personalized reminders to students to complete their applications.

Conversing with parents

Text messaging has also allowed parents to communicate more directly with the school. Most of the time, they get the school's text messaging number from the student.

Parents send messages inquiring about campus visits, financial aid, payment deadlines, and other application-related information.

The school's enrollment team consists of 12 counselors who have targets of reaching out to a specified number of students each week. They also text prospective applicants to set up calls.

With GirikSMS, they have been very successful in connecting with students who did not answer previous phone calls from the school. The school IT team segmented the leads based on their application status and texted them.

Student/segments include:

- Applied but certain application information is missing or incomplete.
- Applied for financial aid with relevant details.
- Ones who are scheduled to attend events (physical or online).

Messaging to Follow Up on Marketing Leads

The school advertises on social media and search engines to direct interested applications to their website where they can fill out a short form that captures basic details. This generates a lead in Salesforce and assigns a counselor for follow-up. The counselor uses SMS messaging to set up an appointment with the prospect. Each advisor contacts a minimum of 50 leads per day. The same counselor engages with the lead throughout the application to enrolment process, establishing a personal relationship. The whole cycle can stretch up to 6 months, so their relationship with the counselor is critical for conversion. Text messaging helps to strengthen the bond between the applicant and the school.

Messaging to Set Appointments

Because many of the students are accustomed to messaging, the school achieved a substantially higher open and response rate via SMS as compared to email. They use it for reminders, appointments, submissions, and more. Students always check their messages even if they can't take a phone call.

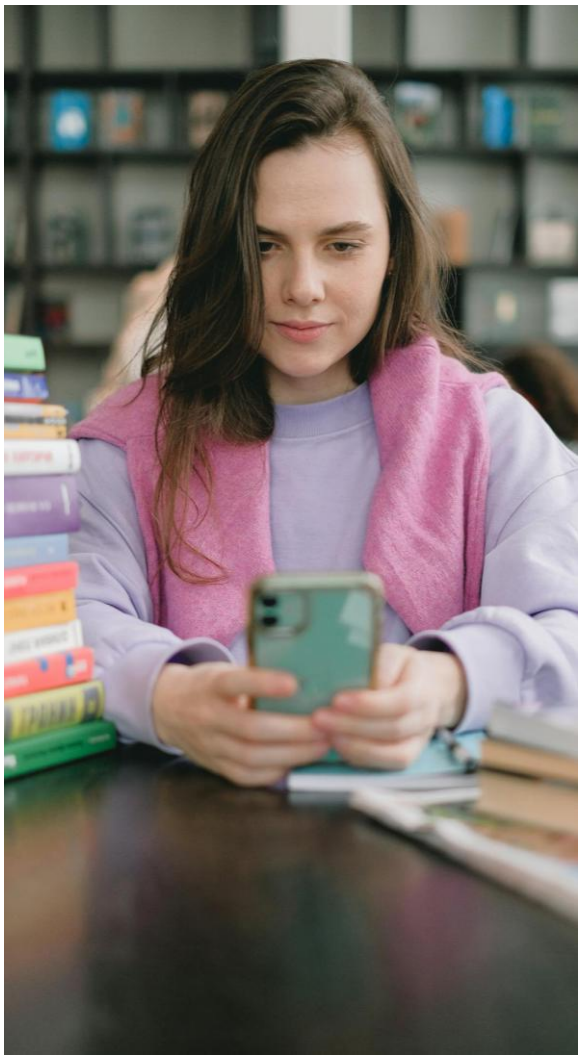
Students who have researched the course online prefer to engage with advisers via text message for document submissions and deadlines, rather than email. The school sends a link to the application form via SMS to students who prefer to connect by text.

Messaging for School Counselors

To help students complete their admissions applications, the school sends SMS messages with links to their website or app, where they can submit transcripts and test scores. and other details. Admissions counselors are the ones who filter the applications for the institution. Students provide their contact information on the school portal to submit necessary details like mark sheets and statements of purpose. The school follows up with texts to counselors, reminding them to close pending cases.

Messaging for Administration

The client also employs SMS messaging to collect necessary documents from students. This includes health and immunization documents, as well as housing needs, via message. In addition, class schedules and orientation information are distributed via SMS before students begin classes for the upcoming session. With GirikSMS-powered text messaging, the school has significantly improved the engagement they've had with students throughout the funnel.



Messaging for Student Support

The client's student support team also texts students to remind them to download the online exam schedule and meet other approaching deadlines. They found that SMS messaging is more reliable than email and phone calls.

Reduced cycle time.
Texting has allowed the school to convert students more quickly and with less effort from their staff.

Better student engagement.
SMS messaging improved engagement with their students by over 15%.

Cost-effective.
SMS messaging is a far more cost-effective approach to connect with leads and students compared to emails and phone calls.

College education is a significant investment for parents, and our client spends heavily to attract new students. SMS messaging enables the school to engage with more students and boost enrollment.

The Business Value of SMS Messaging

Greater student engagement. When the client uses text messaging to schedule phone calls with students and parents, they see a 15% increase in response rates.

Higher conversions. With increased engagement via SMS, the school has seen a 7% increase in completed admission forms.

Reduced no-shows. With the help of SMS messaging, the school has been able to reduce event no-shows by 85%.

More accessible to students. Students have better access to resources with texting which allows parents to communicate more easily and freely with the school.

Higher productivity. When a particular counselor is on leave, another counselor can access the messaging history in Salesforce. This allows them to understand student preferences and communicate with them more effectively.

SMS messaging enables our client to achieve top-of-mind awareness with prospects and students by engaging them more effectively. This has allowed counselors to begin interactions with students early, boosting the likelihood of conversion. Students consider the school to be more approachable since it leverages their favorite communication method, texting.

With GirikSMS, our client is able to deliver tailored text messages to students to help them be successful in applying to college and make sure they attend and reach graduation. Texting helps the school and its counselors ensure students stay on track and allows students the flexibility and freedom to seek assistance whenever they need it.

Connect. Automate. Engage.

GirikSMS is a 100% Salesforce native messaging platform that leverages your CRM to send tailored messages to leads and customers. Now you can drive customer engagement at scale, acquire more business, and foster lasting relationships that drive sustainable growth over the world's most preferred communication channel- texting.

Book a FREE 30 Day Trial today →