

Dallas Baptist University

Convenience and Control, Built Right In

TouchNet Raises the Service, Efficiency Bar at DBU

- Dallas, Texas
- Private university
- Founded: 1898
- Enrollment: 5,422
- Featured TouchNet technology: U.Commerce[®] (Payment Gateway, Bill+Payment, Cashiering, Marketplace, Mobile)



In an ever more complex and increasingly technical world, administrators and students appreciate simplicity and convenience more than ever. And few universities can claim to give the same level of attention to their students as Dallas Baptist University.

Grey Hoff, assistant vice president for financial affairs at DBU, is committed to creating a campus commerce environment that takes care of its own, and that includes helping students and parents make the most of their financial investment at DBU. The commitment to student service took a huge step forward with a recent implementation of TouchNet U.Commerce.

Among a host of benefits, the school's new campus commerce management system enables students to take care of everyday business at their convenience, freeing up more staff and resources for one-on-one time with students with real issues. But there's more to the story.

One Less Thing to Worry About

Students have a lot on their minds – juggling curriculum with a new lifestyle, while also learning a new level of fiscal responsibility – and bills can sometimes fall through the cracks.

“Students today have high expectations of what they can do financially online, and we needed to live up to those expectations,” says Hoff.

With products such as Bill+Payment and U.Commerce Mobile, students have more convenience with a little less to think about. Hoff describes this combination of products as a “one-stop shop for all our students to manage their finances.”

TouchNet's technology allows students to not only check statements online and on the go, but also receive text message updates regarding payments. They can also arrange a payment schedule, keeping payments on time while saving the university money in paper and postage.

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Doing More With Less

With mounting growing pains in the IT and cashier's departments, Hoff happily reports that the TouchNet system has had a positive effect on the efficiency and effectiveness of his own team and all departments connected to TouchNet services.

"We couldn't keep hiring staff," he says, nor could the school's cashiers continue devoting excessive time to paperwork and working in an old system they couldn't get ahead of.

Self-automation is built into every TouchNet product in use. For instance, students can set up their accounts to automatically pay bills as they come due, and notices and updates can be automatically emailed or sent via text message to keep them in the loop with their university financials. All of this happens real-time and is posted back to the account.

"Now, instead of pushing papers, our staff can truly impact students' lives," he adds. "It's definitely more fulfilling, and a much more effective use of their time."

Punching the E-Commerce Ticket

Another game-changer was the recent addition of TouchNet's Marketplace product. Hoff says adding it has opened up a world of e-commerce

opportunities across all campus departments, as well as streamlining all types of processing.

The initial use of Marketplace was to put in place an online ticket source that served the new state-of-the-art baseball stadium. DBU chose TouchNet Ready Partner University Tickets to administer the online ticket sales. Purchase options quickly expanded to basketball, and then to fine arts events, athletic camps, and even student activities.

"Marketplace is just a terrific product all the way around," Hoff says. "The best part is that it integrates directly with our ERP."

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A Good Deal Gets Better

Specifically, Hoff is talking about Colleague by Ellucian. Shortly after DBU purchased its first TouchNet products, Ellucian and TouchNet announced the formation of a strategic partnership that brought about the Ellucian Payment Center by TouchNet, a scalable, deeply integrated and expandable solution that unifies campuswide payments.

After hearing the news, Hoff walked into his chief financial officer's office and said, "I think we made the right decision."

What the Future Holds

"We want to save money in the long run, and we can do that with what's happening at DBU," says Hoff.

Choosing to do business with TouchNet has allowed DBU to take a step back and better analyze its own processes and determine what it can do differently to be more effective and efficient. "It has really allowed us to investigate how and why we do business and to think through our business logic," says Hoff.

"These are exciting times for DBU," says Hoff. "We absolutely feel that TouchNet has played, and will continue to play, a tremendous role in helping us stay cutting edge when it comes to providing our students with state-of-the-art business processes that simplify their lives and help them make the most of their financial investment in a DBU education." ●



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