

# University of Tampa

With Lexmark process and content management technology, University of Tampa (UT) decreased admissions processing time from weeks to less than a day, and accelerated the distribution of award letters to students. Using Lexmark solutions, UT also reduced the need for temporary and outside support resources, delivering even greater savings to the bottom line.

## Challenge

In recent years, admissions applications at University of Tampa (UT) began to dramatically increase. The university recognized that a data automation solution was needed to reduce recruiting costs, use staff resources more effectively and better meet students' needs. Integration with Jenzabar CX and the university's online admission applications was also an important requirement, to allow for future growth and expansion. After researching technology solutions, UT selected data automation and content management solutions from Lexmark, including Perceptive DataTransfer and Perceptive Nolij Web.

## Solution

### Speeding admissions decision

Like many institutions, UT struggled with workflow bottlenecks associated with paper-based admissions processes. For example, UT's admissions department received 5,000 applications in one year. Processing these applications and matching them with associated documents took approximately two weeks, resulting in delays that put UT at a competitive disadvantage. In addition, the university had no mechanism to upload online applications, which meant staff had to print out electronic data and hand it to another person for manual entry.

Several years ago, UT went live with Perceptive DataTransfer for two of its online applications, and shortly afterwards leveraged the solution to load ACT and SAT test scores along with several types of inquiry files. UT now loads dozens of file types for undergraduate and graduate admissions including online applications, test scores, inquiry files from recruiting websites and more. The solution automatically processes duplicate-free file uploads and consistently applies data validation rules, ensuring the integrity of the university's data systems.

## Meet University of Tampa

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- ▶ **Programs:** 160
- ▶ **Location:** Tampa, FL
- ▶ **Students:** 7,000

**Products in use:** Perceptive DataTransfer, Perceptive Nolij Web

**Integration:** Jenzabar, custom applications

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**Brent Benner**

Director of Enrollment Management, UT

## Results

### Handling a massive increase in applications

Since its first deployment, processing volume at UT has increased by 30,000, which the admissions department easily handles without adding additional staff. In fact, a reduction in seasonal overtime and a reduced need to use temporary and outside resources during peak processing times has saved UT nearly \$25,000 annually. And tasks that used to take two weeks when done by hand are now processed in less than a day, with nearly 100% accuracy.

“Perceptive DataTransfer allowed us to reduce the response time between when we receive an inquiry, and a student receives their first communication,” says Brent Benner, Director of Enrollment Management at UT. “This has helped recruitment and allowed UT to increase enrollment each year since deploying Perceptive DataTransfer, as well as increase our student waitlist to over 2,000 students.”

### Eliminating errors and improving collaboration

Once application entry bottlenecks were eliminated with Perceptive DataTransfer, the admissions office leveraged Perceptive NoliWeb to further accelerate daily processes. A single sign-on interface allows readers and evaluators to interact with web-based eForms from any location, without logging into the student information system (SIS). Using this functionality, users can easily key in decisions, calculate GPAs and add comments directly on the screen. The solution also automatically updates the SIS, eliminating the need to return files to the support staff for manual decision entry.

In addition to streamlining admissions processes, Lexmark technology has enhanced collaboration among UT's departments and campuses. Previously, users routed hard copies of documents to recipients in different locations, and waited for the information to be reviewed and returned. Now, electronic data is securely routed between departments, and routine processes such as transfer credit evaluation and academic review of applications are significantly shortened. Plus evaluators have instant access to information on campus, at a home office, in an airport or around the world.

### Improving student acceptance rates

Financial aid processing is a complex, paper-intensive area for most universities, and UT is no exception. For example, creating a student's financial aid award prospectus was an ongoing challenge at UT. The university decided to outsource the printing of award letters to expedite delivery, but even greater efficiencies were needed to get information into students' hands faster. Another concern was the outdated letter design, which was difficult to read and negatively impacted acceptance rates; plus the letters did not meet federally-mandated formatting requirements.

What UT needed was a solution that would integrate with existing financial aid processes to speed award decisions, and ensure compliance by tracking the amount of time between award data downloads and the delivery of letters.

Here's how Perceptive DataTransfer facilitates the outsourcing process: the university receives a PDF copy along with an associated index file to confirm that day's correspondence after the vendor prints and mails award letters. The solution updates the SIS communication plan and indexes an image of the letter into Perceptive NoliWeb, allowing counselors to view the same document that students received in the mail.

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Users have visibility into the amount of time elapsed between sending award data and mailing the letters, ensuring vendor compliance. UT’s financial aid award prospectuses are now visually appealing, contain targeted information and produce a higher conversion rate...all while being delivered to students much more quickly.

#### **Protecting student data, improving responsiveness**

Along with processing efficiencies, UT knew a technology solution would protect critical data in the event of a natural disaster. Hurricanes, tropical storms and flooding are all a reality in the Tampa Bay area, with the potential to devastate administrative documents, student records and archives. Prior to implementing a content management system, filing cabinets had to be moved from the first floor to the fourth in order to protect documents during weather events; after Hurricane Katrina, disaster recovery became an even more important focus at UT.

With Perceptive Noli Web, all types of files, records and content are stored in a secure, centralized repository, giving administrators peace of mind. Sensitive information that could be compromised by human error is also protected, as Lexmark technology eliminates the need for multiple copies, faxes and hard copy files. With the solution, UT has significantly reduced physical storage requirements, which frees up space for offices and collaborative areas.

#### **Flexibility for future growth**

Currently, UT loads over 75 different types of files for processing. The university’s most recent integrations helped simplify end-of-semester processing, which used to take multiple people six weeks to complete; the entire process is now done in five minutes.

“Perceptive DataTransfer has given us the ability to eliminate manual processes and free up our staff for proactive problem solving and better customer service,” says Benner.

Recognizing the potential to further enhance its technology investment, UT has expanded upon this success in other departments. Along with admissions and financial aid, Lexmark solutions are used in advancement, academic advising, graduate admissions, office of the registrar and retention management, with more to follow. The flexible, scalable design of Lexmark technology appeals to IT stakeholders because of its quick deployment and rapid return on investment; they also appreciate that users can easily manage content within familiar host applications, enabling fast user adoption.

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