Students at Oregon State University Show Up on Time…Thanks to TimeTrade

The Challenge

Academic advisors providing guidance to students in the OSU College of Engineering previously relied on custom-developed software to schedule meetings. This created several challenges for both advisors and students:

- The software did not integrate with the email calendars, so advisors had to go back and forth frequently to make sure they avoided schedule conflicts and did not miss any student meetings.

- The scheduling software also did not send out reminders to students.

- Students could not cancel or change appointments online.

- These challenges often led to students missing advisor appointments or showing up late when another meeting was already in progress.

In addition to delaying the timeframe in which students could receive important advice and information for their academic planning, the situation also caused extra administrative work for the advisors. They had to reschedule missed appointments twice—first through the scheduling software and then their email calendars.

About OSU

Founded in 1889, the Oregon State University College of Engineering creates solutions that promote strong economies, healthy people and a sustainable natural environment. Through nearly 30 degree programs at the graduate and undergraduate level, the College of Engineering has a long history of graduating world-class engineers who have made major impacts on civilization through significant contributions in science and technology. Alumni achievements include breakthrough innovations such as the first artificial heart valve, the computer mouse and the concept of email.

"Few companies listen to the requests of customers, but TimeTrade is one of the rare ones—they listen to our needs and use this information to continue matching the solution capabilities with market needs. Online Appointment Scheduling allows our students to book appointments themselves while giving our academic advisors one less thing to worry about."

Todd Shechter, IT Director, Oregon State University College of Engineering

The Solution

To solve this challenge, the OSU College of Engineering turned to TimeTrade. Their software-as-a-service platform enables higher education institutions like OSU to unify campus scheduling with an online self-service application. The solution also makes it easy and fast for students when scheduling office hours, admissions appointments, testing sessions, financial aid consultations, and other time-scheduled activities on campus.

Online Appointment Scheduling is now the campus standard for faculty and staff in the OSU College of Engineering. The solution gives students the flexibility to manage their advisor appointments without having to call or physically visit advisor offices to change schedules.

Students can just go online and access TimeTrade directly from their student portal making it convenient to book. The appointments and any future changes automatically sync with each advisor's email calendars, which eliminates the need for advisors to check back-and-forth between both applications.

"One of our key initiatives in deploying the TimeTrade Online Appointment Scheduling solution was to make it possible for all freshman and first-year students to come to one location for academic advising," says IT Director Todd Shechter. "TimeTrade helps organize all the students and advisors and their schedules. When necessary, advisors can set the meeting to conduct their sessions using online conferencing or by phone."

The Results

The Online Appointment Scheduling solution TimeTrade deployed for the OSU College of Engineering gives advisors and students several key scheduling capabilities:

- Appointment booking is embedded into the student portal making the solution easy to access and providing a seamless experience.
- Basic information is pre-populated into a scheduling form along with additional pre-meeting questions that the students answer to help advisors prepare for the meetings.
- The students then choose the date and time they prefer to confirm the appointment.

New students attending the OSU College of Engineering can also use TimeTrade to schedule their mandatory orientation workshops and other group meetings—using the same interface as advisor appointments.

"We have the flexibility to set up any type of scheduling process using the same application," Shechter says. "This is important because giving students a similar and consistent online experience for all appointments makes it easier to use and increases their use of the scheduling app. TimeTrade helps ensure one-on-one meetings and events get booked correctly."

Measuring Success

The number of OSU students in the College of Engineering that arrive on time as scheduled for advisor appointments has risen to 98% since deploying TimeTrade Online Appointment Scheduling.

"This rate is much higher than before thanks to TimeTrade," says Shechter. "If students can't make an appointment, they can now easily reschedule or cancel in advance so their advisors are aware and can adjust their schedules."

Now that the College of Engineering has successfully pioneered the use of TimeTrade at OSU, other colleges at the university are considering the scheduling tool as well. Academic advisors and students campus-wide can then benefit from on-time appointments that keep the students' academic plans on-track.

"The technical support we receive from TimeTrade and the results of the deployment have been phenomenal. The solution can scale easily to accommodate all the data of our large student population."

-Todd Shechter, IT Director, Oregon State University College of Engineering