

University of Denver Builds True Communities with ZeeMee

Overview

The admissions team at the University of Denver (DU) was seeking a solution that was more than a recruitment tool. They needed a way to create a strong community for incoming students, which would result in higher yield and lower melt.

Challenges

- DU had used general social media platforms and email but found that platforms like Facebook were simply too broad to build the type of deeper community the university was seeking.
- With an up to 10-month period between early admissions and start of school, DU was also seeking a way to foster engagement to reduce summer melt.
- Not every student can visit campus, so DU needed a way to share the campus experience in a new way.

Solution

Since ZeeMee is a platform created specifically for college students, its specific focus allows for the deeper level of engagement that the team at DU was hoping to find.

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We saw that ZeeMee very quickly could transform our higher education landscape,” said Allana Forte, Director of Admissions at University of Denver. “Even before students step on campus.”

The platform allows the DU admissions staff to showcase the university and engage with incoming students, especially during the long period the university has between first admitting students in November and December, and the start of school the following September.

DU has enlisted the help of student ambassadors, to create and share content in the app. Through these ambassadors, potential students are able to see themselves on campus—from the fun and excitement to what some of the challenges are, and where they can find support. It's this element of authentic connection that ZeeMee fosters that the admissions team finds especially unique compared to traditional social media platforms.

“There's a lot of pressure right now in our society with social media, and there's this comparison that's creating a lot of mental health issues.” said Forte. “As we're reading applications, we see the amount of anxiety and self-medicating that students are facing, it's pervasive—and it's not a good space. And so the healthiness of what ZeeMee provides completely changes what typical social media does for these students.”

The admissions team includes the ZeeMee icon in all of its communications, integrating it in a way that felt natural. It's included both in the new student packet as well as the admission letters as one

of the few websites they write out, inviting students to join DU Community and connect in smaller affinity groups. ZeeMee also helps DU students come to campus with relationships already formed. The university finds that helping incoming students make connections with other students already on campus can make the transition to campus life easier—and helps to retain students beyond the first semester. One of the key elements to creating this type of engagement is providing a way for incoming students to get a real sneak peek of campus life through videos and other content created by the ambassadors.

“At some point,” shared Rachel Balows, Director of Communication for Enrollment at University of Denver. “they (incoming students) no longer want to hear from a professional—they want the raw view of campus life from current students.”

Results

72%

Students use ZeeMee

166K+

University video views

24K+

Chats in channels

\$3M+

Saved in melt prevention

The latest numbers from DU show a phenomenal impact. Of incoming students, 72% are using ZeeMee. And in the first year of using ZeeMee, the university had over 166,000 video views and more than 24,000 chats in public channels alone. This level of engagement far exceeds anything DU experienced with platforms like Facebook. This high level of engagement provided a higher yield—4x the rate of students that were not engaged in the ZeeMee community. In addition, DU found that students in the ZeeMee community melted at one-third the rate of those not engaged, which represents a savings of over \$3 million in melt prevention.

Overall, the high adoption rate of ZeeMee by prospective and incoming students at DU is transforming the way the university is able to build community and to create the optimum experience for students at every stage.

“

ZeeMee has the professionalism where it's a phenomenal product and it really, really helps us in a space we truly need. But also, they're just great partners. They're flexible, they're open, they're innovative. They build improvements looking at the marketplace but also looking to their clients,” Forte said. “I credit the team with really, really respecting the student outcome experience; I think that's is very special. It's not just that about the business—long-term, it's about the communities we're building and how important people are.”

