

## CASE STUDY:

# Mobile Marketing in Higher Education

## CUnet's mobile pay-per-call proves a high-performing, low-cost channel for schools

### OVERVIEW:

In today's competitive environment, higher education marketers are actively searching for creative ways to diversify their media mix. In fact, our 2012 Benchmarking Survey results showed significant increase in focus on areas like targeted display advertising, paid search, and mobile inquiry generation compared to 2011. Mobile marketing seems to be of particular interest to schools, as it can offer a low-cost, high-growth environment for generating exclusive inquiries.

With that in mind, we compiled data from three schools that were using CUnet's mobile pay-per-call service in Q4 2011 and Q1 2012 in an attempt to study how inbound calls from mobile marketing can affect cost per enrollment (CPE) and conversion rates. The schools ranged in size from a campus-based enrollment of 5,000 students to a combined campus/online program enrollment of over 15,000 students. Their CPE goals ranged from \$1,300 to \$1,500, and all three schools were looking for similar conversion rates to their other affiliate channels. We tracked the mobile campaigns over a period of 3 to 12 months, depending on the school.

### Results At a Glance

Mobile pay-per-call campaigns proved to be a low-cost, high-converting channel, with schools experiencing:

- As much as a 33% lower cost-per-enrollment than other affiliate channels being used
- An average enrollment rate of 7.6—approximately 50% higher than typical rates in most other affiliate channels

### MOBILE PAY-PER-CALL CAMPAIGN RESULTS

Prior to using mobile marketing campaigns, the schools largely relied on online affiliate cost-per-inquiry channels drawing on sources like display advertising, paid search, SEO, approved call centers, and various education directory sites to generate inquiries. Using those channels as a benchmark, the schools set their goal CPE for mobile campaigns to ensure the campaigns were cost-effective and equal to their other affiliate opportunities.

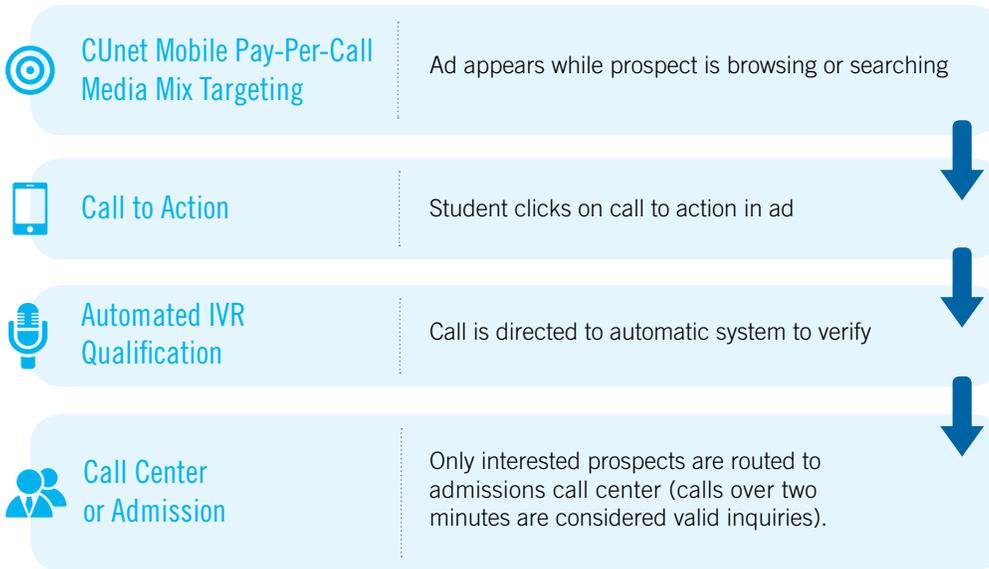
After running campaigns for a few months, the mobile pay-per-call inquiries not only met those goals, but exceeded them. In fact, at an average of \$932, the CPE was 28% to 33% less than the schools' initial goals and significantly less than other online affiliate channels (Figure 1). Enrollment rates were also significantly better than with other online cost-per-inquiry channels. The average enrollment rate (defined as the percentage of valid inquiries that enrolled) was 7.6% (Figure 1); by comparison, other online affiliate channels typically result in an enrollment rate of 3% to 4% (high-performing channels like pay-per-click can lead to enrollment rates of 10% to 12%, but they also have a much higher cost per inquiry). Ultimately, the mobile campaigns delivered high-quality inquiries to the schools, at a much lower price point than other affiliate channels.

Figure 1

School A	Average Mobile Enrollment Rate	Average Mobile CPE	Goal CPE	CPE difference
<p>Size: Large school (over 15,000 students) Program offerings: Both online and campus-based programs Goal: To learn what mobile channels would work best for which campuses and programs, and to specifically generate mobile inquiries for their campus-based programs CPE goal: Different for each campus, with an average of \$1,380 Campaign duration: Three months</p>	7%	\$990	\$1,380	\$390
<p>Size: Medium-sized school (approx. 5,000 students) Program offerings: Campus-based programs only Goal: To expand their digital marketing efforts into the mobile channel and find out which mobile channels would provide the best inquiries CPE goal: \$1,300 Campaign duration: One year</p>	9%	\$848	\$1,300	\$452
<p>Size: Large school (over 15,000 students) Program offerings: Local campuses and national online programs Goal: To test mobile marketing as a way to generate exclusive inquiries for their online programs that were being offered across the country CPE goal: \$1,500 Campaign duration: Six months</p>	5%	\$958	\$1,500	\$542
<b>Average</b>	<b>7.6%</b>	<b>\$932</b>	<b>\$1,393</b>	<b>\$461</b>

## HOW DOES A MOBILE PAY-PER-CALL CAMPAIGN WORK?

For many schools, mobile marketing is a brand new channel. Therefore, CUnet's mobile media team is committed to educating schools on what is involved in a mobile pay-per-call campaign, and guiding them through the entire process. For all three schools profiled in this case study, our mobile team provided a comprehensive experience, from a customized, strategic plan and creative resources, to tracking and monitoring campaign results. This enabled schools to easily test and track this new channel, and quickly understand what was working and what wasn't.



## KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Mobile campaigns offer a new universe of prospective student inquires and enrollments.
2. Enrollment cost and conversion rates from mobile pay-per-call campaigns that are done correctly are highly competitive.
3. Optimizing the mobile media funnel across stages from click to enrollment is key for success.

## RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

It isn't enough to just post a mobile ad and hope for the best. For a mobile pay-per-call campaign to have the best chance of success, it needs to be done correctly. The three schools profiled in this study took the right steps to ensure that they were set up for success. These steps included:

- Infrastructure: The schools all had a ready call center admissions team that could take inbound calls
- Training: Admissions/call center teams were trained to respond to mobile inquiries
- Time: There was a waiting period of 60 to 90 days for the inquiry life cycle to reveal conversion data; during that time, schools reported results back to CUnet for continuous campaign optimization
- Technology: Three forms of technology were implemented throughout the mobile campaigns
  - Media tracking and measurement technology (CUnet's Sparkroom technology was used)
  - Call tracking and recording platform (CUnet's EnrollCall was used)
  - Schools' call centers and admissions teams also tagged and tracked mobile inquiries through their CRM systems

To learn more about CUnet's Mobile Marketing Services, contact your account manager or email [sales@cunet.com](mailto:sales@cunet.com).