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Haverford College adopts automated shipping and tracking for campus parcels and mail

Client profile

Haverford College
haverford.edu

- A private, co-educational liberal arts college, founded in 1833 and located outside of Philadelphia, PA
- A leading American liberal arts college that is known for its academic rigor, Honor Code and beautiful arboretum campus.
- Student body is comprised of approximately 1,225 undergraduate students of which 98 percent live on campus

HAVERFORD
COLLEGE

Streamlining inbound and outbound mail

Each day, Haverford College receives more than 400 packages and is responsible for getting these into the hands of its students and faculty. Faced with mounting complaints from both parents and students over the years, the College needed a more efficient way to manage the large volumes of inbound parcels. Unaccounted for spend on campus and added carrier address correction fees also required the College to adopt a more effective system for outgoing shipments by faculty and staff. The College quickly turned to Pitney Bowes for its inbound and outbound parcel solutions.

Business challenge

With the majority of its students living on campus, Haverford College receives large volumes of packages and parcels on a daily basis. The mail center sorts these deliveries and notifies students that they have packages for pick-up.

"The biggest issue was receiving the packages, logging them and getting the notifications out to our students," explains Geoff Labe, Director of Conferences, Events and Campus Center Services. "We recorded every package in our system by typing in the recipient's name. At the end of each day, the system would print between 200 to 400 student pick-up notification pages. On each of those pages were four package slips that needed to be cut and inserted into student mailboxes. It was an extremely time consuming and inefficient process."

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—Geoff Labe, Director of Conferences, Events and Campus Center Services

Solution

Haverford College looked to Pitney Bowes to implement SendSuite® Tracking software to streamline the receiving and tracking process. SendSuite Tracking software automates package handling for the College, while also providing full accountability for parcels until they are delivered to students and faculty. Barcode readers, electronic signature capture, and tracking and reporting functions also helped the College simplify the management of inbound parcels by recording the details of each parcel, including date, time, carrier, sender and intended recipient.

"Now, we use the handheld devices to log all packages. The system automatically generates an e-mail to our students and staff. If they have a package, they know in less than an hour after it arrives on campus. Obviously, our students and staff are much happier," says Labe.

The College also selected SendSuite® Live software to address outbound shipping concerns and to eliminate carrier address correction fees as well as unaccounted for spend on-campus. In addition, Haverford required a solution to ensure it was receiving the best rates from the carriers for delivery objectives required for students and faculty. SendSuite Live software is a scalable parcel and logistics management solution that allows shippers to compare rates from multiple carriers, gain visibility into global shipping operations, and optimize and streamline shipping operations.

Benefits

By implementing SendSuite Tracking software, the College knows the exact location and status of inbound parcels – making it easier to locate misplaced or lost items. "The accountability, the communication and the customer service have all improved dramatically with SendSuite," Labe says. The software also has increased the efficiency of the mail center by improving productivity levels, eliminating manual parcel recording and reducing time spent searching for requested items and notifying recipients of the items received.

"We've gone from four days to two hours in our processing time," states Labe. "This is a real benefit. Our efficiency has increased dramatically, so staff spends more time getting packages out to the students and the departments rather than putting slips of paper into mailboxes."

To further streamline the process, Pitney Bowes worked with the College to link barcode information on packages with students' ID cards. Every student's ID card is now the primary key in the system, allowing staff to easily locate packages in the mail center by scanning the card. This eliminates the use of log books and spreadsheets – reducing the occurrences of human error through manual recording and providing precise accountability of items from sender to receiver.

Technology used

• SendSuite® Tracking software
• SendSuite® Live software

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The College also automated its outbound shipping process with SendSuite Live software. Account numbers for faculty departments are built into the system, making it easy to reconcile and run financial reports. "The mail center was taking a big hit on packages because we didn't account for items correctly. Now, that doesn't happen at all," explains Labe. With SendSuite Live software, reporting information is transmitted electronically to the accounting department, and individual departments are charged for their carrier spend in an automated fashion.

For the College, consolidated billing through carrier payments is another added benefit to SendSuite Live software. Instead of paying shipping carriers directly on a weekly basis, the carriers bill Pitney Bowes directly. "Pitney Bowes pays the carriers electronically and then provides us with a monthly invoice for our package and carrier spending. We've taken what amounted to roughly 10 to 12 invoices per month down to one consolidated invoice," Labe says.

"Our Chief Administrative Officer, Mitch Wein, charged us with operating our departments in a highly professional manner with excellent customer service in support of the institution's mission and college community," adds Labe. "SendSuite Tracking and SendSuite Live helped us achieve this."

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