



## Lone Star College Provides Students with The Mobile Experience They Demand

The Lone Star College consists of six main campuses and an additional 13 instructional centers in the northern Houston area. Nearly 8,000 employees serve approximately 100,000 students and that number is growing at three to five percent every year. Contributing to this growth is the expanding geographic region and the system's focus on the workforce. While the schools have traditionally been known as transfer institutions with their strong partnerships with many four-year institutions, the advanced technology centers are drawing more workforce students into the mix.

Student completion and success is the primary focus of Lone Star College. They offer a cost-effective and customized path towards college graduation by helping students plan their educational journeys to take only the classes they need to complete their degree requirements. Students typically complete their core degree requirements at Lone Star College before transferring to a four-year college to obtain their degree.



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Associate Vice Chancellor  
of Enterprise Applications  
Lone Star College

### CHALLENGE:

## Deliver A Cost-Effective Yet Robust Mobile Experience

Mobility has become a hot topic for higher education institutions. Students are increasingly relying on mobile devices yet many schools struggle to provide a rich user experience students expect. IT departments are generally ill-equipped to develop adequate mobile applications or the cost to do so is prohibitive.

Many schools avoid the topic altogether in favor of online portals, but these have their limitations. While portals have replaced paper documentation, students want greater accessibility and functionality from their devices. They want to be more self-sufficient and statistics show self-sufficiency can be a key factor in student success.

"As we were upgrading our ERP system to handle our increasing size, we recognized the need to give students mobility options to manage their experience in the easiest way to improve outcomes," says Link Alander, vice chancellor and chief executive officer at Lone Star College. "It is critical to give students access to their information from their mobile devices if we want them to succeed."

As with most campuses, student information is often locked inside of business systems, such as Oracle's PeopleSoft Campus Solutions. Lone Star realized this information could be of greater use to students if they had access to it from the devices they carry and use everyday but they were concerned. At certain times of the year, their ERP is bombarded and the load significantly increases. "We wanted an easy-to-maintain mobile app that could handle our capacity and expand with our load," explains Alander. "In the past, we were told by vendors that they could handle our load but it took them two to three semesters before they could actually manage our volume."

### SOLUTION:

## HighPoint Mobile Improves Student Self-Sufficiency and Overall Success

When looking for mobile solutions, scalability, capacity and user experience were top priorities. Mario Berry, associate vice chancellor of enterprise applications at Lone Star College, found HighPoint Mobile could meet the system's demands and provide something of even greater value: an ongoing partnership. "HighPoint develops enhancements based on Oracle

upgrades and customer feedback," explains Berry. "They proactively come to us when there's a new opportunity to add capabilities and allow us to pilot different technological advancements from the mobile perspective as well as the integration with PeopleSoft. When we reviewed mobile solutions, HighPoint provided us the ability to address web components and mobile device enhancements that no one else could."

HighPoint's strong relationship with Oracle is based on its close proximity to the PeopleSoft Campus Solution. In fact, HighPoint resides inside of PeopleSoft and HighPoint developers are constantly enhancing product features based on Oracle advancements. This is significant because customers like Lone Star College don't have to invest in an application development team to build and constantly tweak their mobile app. "The days of thinking that an institution's IT operation should be building a mobile app is long gone," says Alander. "It's not our core business. It's much easier and cheaper in the long run to rely on HighPoint's expertise to keep us on the cutting edge of student demand."



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## RESULTS

### Students Embrace Rich Mobile Experience

The mobile experience has been readily adopted by students of all demographics. On opening day this past spring semester, Lone Star College handled approximately 83,000 mobile sessions and 127,000 portal site sessions. The remarkable statistic to note is that this was a 23 percent increase over the same day last year for mobile and nine percent for the portal, with only a one percent increase in student enrollment.

"The spike in mobile use proves one thing: students are increasingly relying on their mobile devices to manage their college experience," says Alander. "They aren't carrying papers or checking email to see what classes they have and where to go. They want the same mobile functionality they use in their daily lives but they want it to be engaging, unique, and responsive. Not all mobile solutions can deliver but HighPoint can."

Lone Star's upgraded ERP system and HighPoint Mobile have been able to handle the load. For the entire year of 2016, the college experienced over 930,000 mobile logins and six million sessions. Already in the first two months of 2017, there have been 190,000 logins and over one million sessions.

Students use their mobile app to search for, schedule, enroll, and pay for classes. They make changes to classes and schedules, interact with friends and social media, and track their progress towards their degree. Perhaps the greatest benefit to students is they become self-sufficient and have fewer meetings with their advisors and administrators. In turn, these staff members have more time to focus on other tasks, such as student outreach and direct assistance.

"Mobile is now more of a core foundational item college campuses must have available," says Berry. "It's an expectation, not a luxury. HighPoint allows us to continually provide resources that are readily available in students' hands. This adds to our brand as well as our capability to meet student demand wherever they are."

#### IN ONE DAY:

- **83,000** Mobile sessions
- **127,000** Portal site sessions
- **23%** Increase in mobile use
- **9%** Increase in portal use

#### IN ONE YEAR:

- **930,000** Mobile logins
- **6 Million** Mobile sessions

