About Arizona State University

- Located in Tempe, Arizona
- 3 Campuses
- Awarded Research I status in 1994
- 47,359 Students at Main Campus
  (5th Largest in U.S – US News/World Report)
- 6,580 Full-Time employees
- 1,839 Full-Time Faculty
- http://www.asu.edu

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

August 21, 2001
Tempe, Arizona

Dear Diary,
We were just asked by the Provost’s Office to help with a retention project. We’re not even sure if we know what retention means. Do we know what we’re getting ourselves into?...
What Was Decided…

- Need More Than Just a Web-Site with Static Data
- “First-Time Freshmen” would be the cohort (approximately 6,500 students)
- Need to Better Understand the Problem and Issues associated with Retention
- Need University Support to be successful
- **Build a Dynamic Student Retention Tool**

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Student Retention

First-time freshmen who have:

- graduated from high school within 1 year from entering college
- have less than 12 transfer hours
- matriculate through their first entering fall semester to the next fall semester at the same institution
ASU Retention Rates

Retention Rates vs. Peers*

*Institutions of like size and other demographics
November 8, 2001
Tempe, Arizona

Dear Diary,
Today we meet with a focus group made up of faculty, advisors and administrators to discuss system requirements for the tool.

We will have several meetings. Should be interesting….

What Some Team Members Said…

• “A system like this is long overdue”
• “Do we know if students come here with the intention to graduate?”
• “I could use this system to weed-out students”
• “Will this system be used to track faculty performance?”
• “Can we really affect retention?”
December 16, 2001
Tempe, Arizona

Dear Diary,

We are making great progress on this system. We have the data, but putting it together will not be a simple task.

And there is a lot of data that we don’t capture that we could use....

Data and Technology

- Decided to build system using Data Warehouse data…query accessible
- Secured Web application that is J2EE compliant (Java)
- Some data questionable, some not captured or some not in electronic form
- Needed way to include “external data” not found in our systems? (i.e. orientation data, band data, etc.)
January 28, 2002
Tempe, Arizona

Dear Diary,
The development server is up and running and we can now give a demo. We have scheduled about 10 demos to various groups. Those include advising group as well as teams in various colleges and departments around campus. Can’t wait to see their reaction.

Reaction Over Next Few Months…

• “When will this tool be available?”
• “Will we be able to look at particular groups of students as well?”
• “I don’t think you should be showing that data!”
• “This is the start of a CRM (Customer Relationship Management System)!”
• “Can’t believe all the data you have!”
• “Now is a good opportunity to change some University Policies!”
May 8, 2002
Tempe, Arizona

Dear Diary,
Today we attended a presentation on “Retention and Advising” from a national expert who is a faculty member here at ASU. He validated our efforts and even gave our new retention tool a plug to the audience. (He had just seen the tool the day before).

What Gary Hanson* Had to Say…

• Preparation Counts
• Orientation/On-Campus Housing Important
• Participation in Retention Pgms. Important
• “Gate-keeping” Courses have Effect
• Advisors are Crucial
• Financial Aid Improves Retention
• Being able to affect Policy is Important

* Gary Hanson is currently a Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at ASU and spent considerable time researching retention at University of Texas @ Austin
Dear Diary,
Today we will be rolling out our application to some selected folks in various colleges and departments on campus. Will be interesting to see if the system will be used.

Last Fall...

- Official roll-out in August
- Retention & Graduation Task Force Team created
- Continued working with Students and Academic Affairs Departments on coordinating contact with students as well as look at necessary policy change(s)
- No major enhancements planned until we evaluate usage and effectiveness
December 19th, 2002
Tempe, Arizona

Dear Diary,
Today we had a “retention” party for all the pilot users of the system. We had some good food and talked about our experiences.

We even performed a retention song for them.

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY
January 14, 2003
Tempe, Arizona

Dear Diary,
We sent a list of all students not returning for the Spring to each college dean. We also got the Provost to send out a memo at the same time.

Results from Inquiry...

- Amazing how colleges and departments respond when note from the Provost is included!!
- Many colleges sent back the original Excel spreadsheet with responses from phone inquiries to students
- Student and/or parents were happy to hear from ASU, regardless if coming back
- Plan to continue/expand this student inquiry
Dear Diary,
Today we present at the CUMREC conference. It’s nice to see all our colleagues from other institutions. Our presentation is right after lunch.

We hope the attendees can stay awake!!

What’s Next

• Expanding “student groups”
• Better integrate our tool with the student operational system?
• Adding SAT/ACT “self-reported” data
• Developing a predictive model for retention
• Continue working with Retention & Graduation Task Force Group
• Continue awareness of retention efforts
What’s Next

• Looking to Partner with a Higher Education Software developer – Education Systems
• http://www.emaspro.com

Time Now to See a Live Demo…
About the Presenters

Katherine Alford (kjalford@asu.edu) is a Senior Systems Analyst for Data Administration - Data Warehouse department at Arizona State University. Her professional background in information systems extends over a decade. Early experience developing and maintaining client-server applications for peer to peer processes, and later leading the implementation of web accessible database applications has helped cultivate her continually expanding knowledge base. Today, her ASU Retention Project work challenges her to meet client needs specific to the educational community she serves.

John Rome (John.Rome@asu.edu) is Director of Data Administration and Data Warehousing at Arizona State University. Involved with Data Warehousing since its inception, he is the project leader and chief architect of ASU’s Data Warehouse. An expert in database design, Rome spent ten years of a “previous life” as a database administrator and programmer/analyst. Along with his Data Administration and Data Warehousing functions, he is currently working on building a student retention tool as well as looking into ETL (extract, transform and load) tools for ASU’s Data Warehouse.

http://www.asu.edu/data_admin/