New Mexico’s Largest Community College Transforms Advising with Salesforce

An Opportunity Arises

New Mexico is the 5th largest state in America in terms of physical size, encompassing more than 121,000 square miles. In light of its vast size, relationships matter.

“New Mexico, perhaps more than other states, is very much a relationship-based community and state,” explained Ann Lyn Hall, Executive Director of CNM Connect Services.

It’s fitting, then, that during a periodic accreditation process, CNM zeroed in on a requirement around what capabilities the college had in place to map out stakeholder relationships and communicate with key stakeholders. To best address the requirement, CNM began looking for a powerful customer relationship management (CRM) platform for the college.

Salesforce.org Education Cloud provided an ideal solution to give CNM a single consolidated view of all its interactions with various entities – from students and alumni, to parents and donors, all the way through to the employers that hire its students. All engagements and interactions can be viewed in a single place.

CNM was well-positioned to focus on specific areas within the college that they wanted to enhance, like student advising.
“CNM is the largest higher education institution in New Mexico in terms of undergraduate enrollment, so we have a lot of students to assist,” said Hall. “We have several advising resources that do that, including the Connect Services department, the academic affairs department, and other resources. Our goal is to empower students to be active participants in the planning of their educational and career goals.”

The college’s existing technological tools, however, made it difficult to provide a seamless advising experience.

“While we had an appointment system that allowed students to schedule an appointment with an advisor, it didn’t allow the students to select a specific advisor to meet with if they had a favorite,” said Lidia Martinez, Associate Director of CNM Connect Services. “Also, all of our advising notes were kept in a separate system from the appointment system – and it was hard to get the two systems to talk to each other. We wanted to find a smoother flow for our advising processes.”

Unified Advising, Enabled by an Intuitive Product

Salesforce Advisor Link provided an ideal solution to help CNM better deliver advising services to its student population.

Salesforce Advisor Link offers a consolidated and holistic approach for advisors to be more efficient and proactive, and for students to be more successful.

Features include a unified advising record that all advisors and support staff can collaborate on; mobile appointment booking and the ability to manage check-ins and walk-ins; and advising notes that let advisors keep up-to-date with each student, share notes across teams, monitor student progress, and take proactive action as needed.

CNM has taken a phased implementation approach to Salesforce Advisor Link, rolling out core functionality like appointments and notes, and utilizing Salesforce “super users” in each of its campus locations to assist with the rollout.

Throughout, the Salesforce Advisor Link user community on Salesforce.org’s Power of Us Hub has served as a terrific resource. “The Salesforce Advisor Link user community has been tremendously helpful,” said Hall. “They helped us understand and think about our implementation in ways we hadn’t considered, and they were very generous in sharing their knowledge and expertise.”

Additionally, the intuitive nature of Salesforce Advisor Link quickly became apparent, assisting with uptake and adoption of the product across CNM.

“Within the first couple of weeks of implementation of Salesforce Advisor Link, we received an email from an academic coach who generally doesn’t like technological changes telling us how much she appreciated Salesforce Advisor Link and how it had made her job so much easier,” said Martinez. “We took that as an early sign of success.”

Delivering an Enhanced Advising Experience

Across CNM’s campuses, Salesforce Advisor Link has been invaluable. In the 15-week period after going live, CNM used Salesforce Advisor Link to assist with 21,000 advising appointments.

The college uses Salesforce Advisor Link to gather information not just for active students, but for prospective students as well – a group they didn’t have a way of easily tracking data about in the past, since notes were siloed in a separate ERP system. This makes advising notes easy to capture for all types of students.
About Central New Mexico Community College

Founded in 1964, Central New Mexico Community College (CNM) is New Mexico’s largest and premier community college, delivering 200 innovative degrees and certificate programs. CNM serves approximately 23,300 students, the largest undergraduate student body in the state, from its nine physical locations across the Albuquerque and Rio Rancho metropolitan areas, as well as through its prolific online learning offerings.