Delivering on the Vision of a Unified Student Experience

A top-tier business school in Norway, BI Norwegian Business School’s leadership sought to establish BI as an innovative market leader globally. Given BI’s core values of student-centricity and innovation, it was not surprising that its leaders regarded the digital transformation of the student experience as the key to surpassing their international competition.

BI leaders’ vision for this new student experience was crystal clear. They wanted to start the journey to revolutionise how they interact with each student, personalise each student’s journey from prospect to graduate, and connect their four campuses as well as all back-office functions. By engaging with the student more effectively, they expected to boost enrolment and retention rates. They also aimed to improve their ability to forecast these rates and Education Cloud provides the functionality required for following-up on activities.

Transforming the BI Ecosystem

To achieve their bold, innovative vision, BI leaders focused on re-thinking their institutional structure. “We needed to transform our entire ecosystem,” shares Amund Bergan, BI’s Head of Digital Development. “We wanted to more seamlessly integrate across the organisation.” To do so, BI wanted to introduce one single point of contact where both current and prospective students from all four campuses could get the support they needed.

To create this single point of contact, BI streamlined all student services into one new department, InfoHub. “With InfoHub, we now have a single, centralised, cross-functional team to support, facilitate, and track each student’s journey,” says Lisa Nausthaug, Director of Shared Services and responsible for the new department.
At-risk students are pro-actively contacted by our advisers. Here, we are using Campaigns to coordinate outbound communication, and Advisor Link to deliver personalised support. This way, the platform is helping us support student success.

— Lisa Nausthaug, Director of Shared Services

Beyond Digitalisation to Digital Transformation

For more than a decade, BI leaders have taken a digital-first approach. They built numerous custom solutions designed to help the student. However, BI still had more than seventy contacts listed on their website and more than 100 BI employees answering student inquiries. From a student perspective, it was challenging to find the correct recipient for a question, and for staff, it was nearly impossible to track previous communication.

“As software offerings have increased and improved, we have shifted our mindset from building and maintaining tailored solutions to acquiring enterprise-wide digital platforms,” states Bergan.

A Unified, Enterprise-Wide Digital Student Experience Solution

After a thorough exploration of six vendors, BI selected Salesforce Education Cloud to power their first-class student experience. They believed that Salesforce delivered the most competitive, relevant, and modern digital services for their students. “We chose Salesforce simply because it was the best DCX (digital customer experience) platform on the market and offered the richest digital capabilities for our needs today and well into the future,” states Bergan. “There is simply no better solution than Salesforce at the moment.”

With Salesforce, BI gained:

> A single point of access for students that connects them to services and faculty using their channel of choice.

> A unified platform for BI staff that fosters team collaboration, deploys automation at scale, and enables artificial intelligence.

> A 360-degree view of each student based on the integration of all student data into a single, secure platform—Education Cloud—that connects all departments and functions.

> Marketing and communication automation that enables BI to deliver a relevant and personalised experience on the right channel at the right time.

> A customised website experience based upon the user’s role and lifecycle stage.

> Dashboards that enable the BI team to monitor activity, act quickly, and continuously improve.

> Live chat which immediately became the preferred channel BI students.
Proof: This Ground-Breaking Student Experience Works

Within only eight months, BI completed their extensive reorganisation and moved all 360 administrative staff onto Salesforce’s single platform. The BI team quickly realised tremendous success with its new ecosystem powered by Salesforce, Nausthaug explains.

Salesforce has enabled BI to demonstrate various success proof points, including:

➤ More than 80% of inquiries are now resolved in first contact.

➤ Increased student satisfaction related to quicker and better answers.

➤ Improved student retention follow-up.

➤ Enhanced cross-departmental collaboration.

➤ Delivery of a rapid, targeted response to the COVID-19 pandemic via timely communication and by empowering the BI team to work from home.

“We’ve worked with many American companies and have never experienced the level of customer service from a technology partner as we have with Salesforce,” states Bergan.

Future Ambitions

BI’s team is just getting started and expects to roll-out a new streamlined application and admission solution. They are interested in deploying Salesforce Communities to further extend self-service capabilities to their constituents, and intend on using Salesforce to actively engage alumni.

“Salesforce gives us a good foundation to take our digital transformation further,” concludes Bergan. “The change in our internal mindset and deployment of the Salesforce platform has instilled a shared sense of excitement about what the future holds.”

About BI Norwegian Business School

BI Norwegian Business School is an independent, not-for-profit foundation and the primary provider of research-based knowledge on business and management disciplines in Norway. Founded in 1943 by Bedriftøkonomisk Institutt (hence the abbreviation BI), BI is the largest business school in Norway and the second largest in Europe. BI offers bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degrees, as well as executive education and tailored business-specific programs, to approximately 20,000 students across four campuses. It is accredited by the three largest international accrediting bodies, making it a “Triple Crown” school, an elite status that only a few have achieved. It is highly ranked in both the Financial Times Ranking and Eduniversal’s Top Business Schools Worldwide.