

Fathom Ohio Business College Case Study

Fathom Finds Big 56% Conversion Rate Gains for a Small College with Interactive Content



THE COMPANY

Fathom is a Cleveland, Ohio-based data-driven marketing firm of 150 employees. Focusing on SEO, PPC, marketing automation and content creation, Fathom has been named one of Advertising Age's top 25 search marketing agencies six years in a row. Their clients range from tech companies and consumer brands to hospitals and universities. Their goal is to raise \$2 billion in revenue for clients by 2020.

THE CHALLENGE

Fathom was approached by Ohio Business College, a small career college looking to increase enrollment by focusing on lead generation, brand awareness and engagement. From the onset, Abigail Birmingham, manager of creative for Fathom Education, knew that standard static content wasn't going to help OBC stand out in an already saturated market.

"Because they were so focused on lead gen, we knew we had to produce content that not only engages but drives relationships," Birmingham says. "Static content often falls short. We needed to use interactive content to tie our pieces together and really differentiate OBC from the other colleges."

However, since Ohio Business College has a small team and a limited content budget, Fathom had to create content that would maximize spend while keeping costs down.

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Abigail Birmingham
Creative Manager
Fathom Education

THE SOLUTION

Fathom began by using ion's Quick Start Cloud, a series of prefabricated interactive experiences that can be easily branded, personalized and launched, to quickly design low-cost content that OBC could begin using immediately.

"Quick Starts were incredibly helpful," Birmingham says. "They allowed us to create more content at a quicker pace. We were able to spend more time on strategy as well as fine tuning copy and messaging, and spend less time on production."



THE PROCESS

The first step was to revamp the college's static PPC landing page into a new program-specific landing page that walks potential students through career pathways, student testimonials and even campus locations.

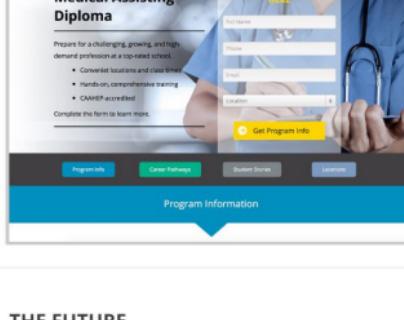
"The original landing page had a very generic overview," Birmingham says. "So last July we worked with ion to build OBC a landing page with a four-month trial."

The trial worked. The interactive landing page performed 56% better—earning a 5.78% conversion rate, compared to the 3.70% conversion rate of the static landing page.



From there, the team focused on interactive financial aid content. Since the college hosts career-focused, non-traditional students, it was important for OBC to produce content that helped prospects make the best decisions for their education and future careers.

For example, Fathom created an interactive infographic that helps students see the cost trends of a college education as well as the ROI of degrees from different types of schools. Engagement with the infographic was phenomenal, with an average of nearly four and a half minutes spent on the page, a huge jump from the 15 second average most web content gets."



THE RESULTS

To date, Fathom has helped Ohio Business College create five pieces of interactive content that address each stage of the student journey, which has not only increased engagement and directly led to new enrollments, but also empowered a small team with no CRM to build stronger relationships with potential students.

"Being a small school with a small team, OBC lacked the time and the budget to create differentiated content so they could stand out among their competition," Birmingham says. "The number of students entering college is decreasing and the number of colleges, as well as prices, are increasing. But by partnering with us and utilizing interactive content, they were able to take a unique perspective on higher education and rapidly deploy differentiated messaging to stand out among the competition."

THE FUTURE

Once OBC saw the benefits of interactive content in both lead gen and user engagement, they were eager to continue their partnership with Fathom and use interactive elements in their admissions process as well.

"They've given us a lot of freedom to buy into our strategy because it's working so well," Birmingham says. "We're continuing to fill in content gaps and dabbling into getting the admissions team to use interactive content as well."

