

CASE STUDY

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Builds a Connected Enrollment Strategy With Liaison TargetX

The University of Texas
Rio Grande Valley



Overview

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) was facing fragmented enrollment operations across departments and systems, resulting in inefficiencies and missed opportunities. Facing challenges including redundant inquiry forms, unclear communication tracking, and lagging response times, UTRGV needed a more cohesive approach to support its growing enrollment ambitions.

Since the implementation of Liaison TargetX, the CRM has become a cornerstone of UTRGV's recruitment and admissions infrastructure across undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs. The centralized platform now empowers the team to collaborate more effectively, respond to students faster, and make informed decisions that support enrollment growth.

The Challenge

Disconnected Tools and Limited Visibility

Before adopting TargetX, UTRGV managed graduate and undergraduate admissions in separate systems. Each team had its own set of inquiry forms and communications, making it difficult to get a holistic view of a student's interests or engagement history. The graduate team alone was juggling 50 to 70 inquiry forms, creating administrative burdens and inconsistent data.

Beyond the operational complexity, teams struggled to coordinate communications, prioritize outreach, and assess engagement effectively. According to Vice President for Strategic Enrollment Griselda Castilla, Ph.D., "We didn't have insight into all the student interactions. That meant it was harder to guide applicants through the funnel and ensure timely follow-up."

Additionally, transitions from undergraduate to graduate programs lacked automation. The team often relied on manual processes that delayed decisions and slowed down critical next steps.



The Solution

Streamlined Operations and Scaling With TargetX

UTRGV selected TargetX to unify its enrollment strategy while preserving the unique needs of graduate, undergraduate, and professional programs. The graduate team quickly cut down from dozens of inquiry forms to just four, using the platform's URL pre-fill feature to customize forms across programs without duplicating back-end setup. This change improved data integrity and drastically reduced staff workload. As Director of Graduate Recruitment and Outreach Stephanie Ozuna Larralde explained, "TargetX has transformed our ability to capture a full picture of prospective students' interests and customize our email communications accordingly. This has been a game changer for us."

On the back end, integration with the university's student information system via Axiom and Informatica gave the technical team more ownership over workflows. According to Executive Director for Enrollment Systems Brenda Garcia, "One of the biggest improvements is that we can now make changes more independently, without having to rely heavily on IT or vendors for every update."

The UTRGV team also took a strategic approach to implementation. “Rather than replicating our old systems, we saw implementation as a fresh start,” said Garcia. “The Liaison team guided us through a critical evaluation of our business processes, helping us design smarter workflows from the start.”

The features in TargetX for centralized communication tracking, customizable campaigns, and seamless integration with application systems such as the Texas Medical and Dental Schools Application Service have all contributed to a more strategic, scalable enrollment infrastructure.

“TargetX has been extremely valuable. Having that full picture of all communications going out to students has helped us refine our communications and streamline our processes.”



GRISELDA CASTILLA, Ed.D.
*Vice President for
Strategic Enrollment*
**The University of Texas
Rio Grande Valley**

The Outcome

Measurable Wins Across the Student Journey

Since adopting TargetX, UTRGV has seen real results. Enrollment numbers for both summer and fall increased, due in large part to the institution's ability to respond faster and communicate more effectively. “We can now automate decisions by logging into the SIS, which saves time and helps students get answers sooner,” said Garcia.

Other outcomes include:

- ✔ Improved inquiry-to-application conversion rates, thanks to more personalized and timely campaigns.
- ✔ Faster internal workflows that reduce bottlenecks and improve team responsiveness.
- ✔ Higher staff confidence and engagement, with team members now more involved in system optimization.

On the applicant side, students have responded positively to the intuitive application experience. Staff also report smoother collaboration across teams, with the CRM's centralized system supporting a shared understanding of goals and progress.

As Garcia noted, “Team members appreciate the speed and functionality of TargetX. They feel empowered to suggest improvements, which has helped us build a feedback loop that improves our processes continuously.”



Future Plans: Growth, Innovation, and Expansion

UTRGV plans to deepen its use of Liaison tools by exploring more TargetX features including Engage for managing walk-ins and Telecounseling for outbound recruitment calls. Team leaders are also preparing to integrate AACPMAS, Liaison's Centralized Application Service for the American Association of Colleges of Podiatric Medicine.

According to Ozuna Larralde, "We're definitely not done setting up and exploring and utilizing what TargetX has to offer. We're excited to further evolve our graduate recruitment strategy with this CRM."

The technical team is also working to integrate Mongoose SMS with TargetX to provide a complete view of student communication touchpoints. As Dr. Castilla noted, "We're embedding the CRM into every aspect of our enrollment strategy—from developing new academic pathways to strengthening retention. It's now foundational to our success."

As UTRGV looks to the future, its story demonstrates how the right technology, paired with cross-functional collaboration and a trusted partner, can transform recruitment, streamline operations, and deliver a better student experience.



About

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) is a nationally recognized leader in higher education, proudly ranked the No. 1 university in Texas by *Washington Monthly's* 2024 College Guide and Rankings. With a mission rooted in student success and community impact, UTRGV continues to transform lives across the region and beyond with:

- ✔ A commitment to becoming a premier Hispanic-serving, bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate institution.
- ✔ A focus on academic excellence, research innovation, and meaningful community partnerships.
- ✔ Constant advancement of faculty diversity, especially in STEM, through initiatives such as the NSF ADVANCE grant.
- ✔ A drive for institutional progress through UTRGV's Transforming Our World Strategic Plan, with student success at its core.



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