The Los Angeles Film School Increases Lead Engagement by Over 33 Percent with Conversica

The Los Angeles Film School, located in the heart of Hollywood, has been serving the community and its students since 1999. This accredited, VA-approved institution offers career-focused Bachelor and Associate of Science degrees in Entertainment Business, Animation & VFX, Game Production & Design, Music Production, Recording Arts and Film. Its facilities include the historic RCA Building at 6363 Sunset Boulevard, and offers access to exceptional industry-standard equipment to its students. The Hollywood Reporter called The Los Angeles Film School “…one of the best-equipped private learning centers in the country.”

A school is all about people, so a personal touch permeates LA Film School’s marketing approach. For example the school markets itself predominantly via paid search and social – accounting for 85% of its leads – and fills the remainder with referrals or traditional media. And when a lead comes in, all first attempts to reach out are made via phone call. In fact sales reps are given a full seven attempts or seven days to make a touch before any automation is introduced.

The good news is that this approach has shown to be very well received by prospective students. But the downside was that salespeople, despite having first opportunity, were only making an average of 1.6 touches per lead rather than seven. This resulted in an annual conversion rate of 2-3%, which sales management believed could be improved. “Salespeople are people themselves, and that means sometimes they don’t fully engage with a prospect, or take the necessary time to really understand who’s on the other end of the line,” says Ben Chaib, Vice President of Admissions and Marketing at The Los Angeles Film School, “or sometimes a salesperson might simply have a bad day, and so be short in their email communication, which then gets misunderstood.”

The school needed a way to have more persistent, and consistent, conversations with their prospective students, so Ben decided to give Conversica a try.

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Ben Chaib, Vice President of Admissions and Marketing
The Los Angeles Film School
The Conversica Solution

Ben was able to slipstream Conversica smoothly into his existing processes. The salespeople still get their seven attempts or seven days, but now Conversica kicks in once those have gone by. “I know some people use Conversica from the start, and that works well for them, but in our situation we’ve had the best luck using it after seven or seven.” Conversica reaches out to the prospective student, presenting itself as a human sales assistant for the school. The language is very natural, and Conversica’s artificial intelligence allows it to interact with the prospect in a very human way.

“My peers get confused, they assume maybe Conversica is an auto-responder. But Conversica is definitely not an auto-responder, it’s an engagement tool that asks questions, so it is a very natural part of the sales process. I think this is a very powerful approach – ‘stop pitching, start asking’.

That’s what’s great about Conversica – it engages the prospect with questions versus ‘we’ve got a deal’, or ‘a sale’s going on’, etc. Instead it’s just ‘is there anything we can do to help?’”

He continues, “The beauty of Conversica is, it’s asking questions and getting the prospects involved in the sales process.” In fact, Ben has even seen prospects sell themselves before feeling bad for not responding to his Conversica assistant, ‘Stephanie’, in a timely manner. “I have literally seen situations where the person has completely sold themselves before getting on the phone – by the time the salesperson steps in, the deal is already done – all they have to do is just talk to the person.”

Ben also finds that Conversica not only sets his salespeople up for success with leads, but also helps ensure that they are following up consistently. Once a prospect has confirmed interest, Conversica hands them off to the salesperson, who is given an opportunity to follow up in person. “Then what I love is that Stephanie follows up with the prospect to be sure the salesperson really did reach out. If I’m a sales executive, I will spot check Conversica and sit down with the salesperson and say, ‘this prospect says they didn’t hear back from you – why not?’

So Conversica not only provides the tools for a successful engagement – such as phone number, best times to call, etc. – but it also provides a tool with which to keep the salesperson accountable.”

ConverscaAssists

“Our salespeople get first crack at inbound leads, and they convert 2-3% of those,” Ben says. “Then we hand the rest off to Stephanie. She does her magic and finds yet another 1% that want to engage. I attribute that full percent to Conversica, and that alone yields us substantial additional revenue.”

“This has been hugely successful for us. Conversica is just phenomenal at engaging people. It’s been a phenomenal product for us, and I just love it. Stephanie never calls in sick, never has an attitude. She’s super persistent and absolutely consistent.”

“The thing I love about Conversica is, not one person that I’ve seen has complained ‘stop spamming me’. Whatever it is that Conversica’s developers have done, they’ve done right, because by comparison we broadcast stuff through auto-responders and get some very, very angry responses. But with Conversica I’ve never seen that.”

Ben concludes, “I would bet my career on Conversica. I love the product. I believe in the product. I believe the product is a godsend.”