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Too bad this is the first time these faces have appeared together. In compiling interview responses and photos from the career college sector's most innovative executives, it was tough for our editorial staff not to imagine what might happen if these leaders all sat down together in one room with an issue is solved ... or if certain conditions are needed for original thoughts to surge.

When it comes to innovation, there is much to be said about timing and circumstance, and maybe pressure. Those factors, in many cases, were the very things that led these men and women to do something innovative, to look at the normal approach to a challenge and answer with an extraordinary reaction.

Career College Central's list of innovators and their innovations span the full spectrum of the career college sector, from the expected areas of influence in the classroom and in regard to retention and training, to not-so-expected approaches to telemarketing and ensuring academic integrity on online exams. What might not be so evident is that they are continuing a long tradition of inventive thought.

Innovation and invention have been the hallmark of career colleges since the day they were founded. Training students for specific careers was different when business schools first began forming more than 150 years ago. So it only makes sense that in a sector whose roots are embedded in the unusual that there would be so many who could turn ideas and concepts on their ears.

"Thought leaders" sounded a bit too trendy – too much like a buzzword used in a motivational management book or a public relations spin. Referring to them as innovators is more straightforward than it is ... innovative, but we chose to go with something a little less flamboyant that gets to the core of who they are and what they have achieved.

If innovation could be defined simply as "taking things a step further," then these executives leapt forward with ideas that have influenced the higher education realm. They have not only adapted to change, but inspired it. Welcome to the forefront of out-of-the box thinking and creativity. We made our selections. You made yours via our web site. Our innovation is bringing them together.

Kevin Kuzma, Editor

EDITOR'S NOTE: *In the May/June edition of Career College Central, a quotation was wrongly attributed to Gary Herald of Ambassador College Bookstores. Below is the corrected version of his interview as well responses from all the innovators on our list.*

GARY HERALD, CEO and President, Ambassador College Bookstores

What is SourceOne? What aspect (or aspects) of SourceOne do you consider to be the most innovative?

Ambassador offers comprehensive, flexible, and individualized bookstore solutions, including on-campus brick and mortar bookstores, online, virtual bookstores, and auto-fill fulfillment services along with the industry's most robust vouchering system. By relying on our services and technology, career college administrators can focus their efforts on enhancing their operational excellence.

Unquestionably the most important innovation that Ambassador has brought to the career college sector is our proprietary supply chain technology, SourceOne. In response to the needs of our clients, SourceOne was designed to allow career colleges to manage all student transactions in real time. Some of the features of SourceOne include the capability to interactively upload student data, establish purchasing caps by student or for all students, place students on financial hold, generate retention and transaction reports, and automatically update all student purchasing data directly to each student ledger account.

In your opinion, what is the biggest innovation that Ambassador has brought to the career college sector? What was the motivation behind your innovation?

With our commitment to technology, we maintain strategic partnerships with other key sector leaders and have developed integrations that connect our SourceOne supply chain technology to ERP software for the purpose of pushing and pulling student data across our systems. And for our online learners, we have developed single-sign on integrations that seamlessly links students from their online platform to the school branded virtual bookstore hosted and supported by Ambassador. Additionally, we have developed integrations that will deliver e-textbooks directly to a student's desk top.

How have your innovations within in the realm of textbook production and sales helped career college administrators better educate students?

We provide a complete turnkey service to our clients and are an integral part of the operation at each of the schools we work with providing not only textbooks, but customized kits, course packs, scrubs, uniforms, and software. Additionally, in coordination with school administrators, our merchandising managers will design a full range of branded goods and student wear products all customized with each school's logo and colors. These items will be featured on a branded e-commerce merchandise site designed by Ambassador.

TONY DIGIOVANNI, Senior Vice President – Marketing and Admissions, Education Management Corporation

What would you say is your innovation in regard to helping education companies thrive (is it primarily organizational, strategy, etc.)? What led to your development of this innovation?

Innovation in the Higher Education sector comes from listening to your students. It's made possible when you have taken the time to build a well organized and agile management team who are able to effectively execute to changing market conditions.

A great example of innovation in recent years is the student portal. Through the web, we have been able to broaden student services to register for classes, check grades, chat with fellow students and faculty, coordinate financial aid, check on job postings, etc., etc. We've taken 9am to 5pm services to a whole new level of 24/7 assistance. And innovations like this have benefited both students and staff.

How have your innovations at EDMC helped advance the company's ability to change students' lives?

Career and alumni services across many of our schools play a major role in tracking trends in this regard. The quality of our program offerings, flexible delivery models, and the focus on student and graduate success all require innovation. Our ability to "live" the EDMC mission of "Education that builds Careers" is tied to constant innovation and introduction of academic programs in high growth career fields.

Today's economic climate has made innovation an even greater business imperative from a student perspective. Our point of differentiation for the future is ensuring that we do our best to identify where the jobs will be in the next decade. Areas like healthcare, green technologies, human services, graphic and media arts, and business on the web will demand both innovative curriculum and educational processes to assist with workforce growth.

Our sector has made substantial strides in responding to the demand for a well-educated workforce prepared for the future. We can be proud that we have been an important part of shaping higher education in the U.S. and globally.

How do you best communicate to a prospective student?

From marketing research initiatives to informal student surveys and focus groups, EDMC has always endeavored to learn as much as possible about our prospective students; how we reach them most effectively; and what we can do to better meet their educational needs and expectations. Ten years ago, broadcast, direct mail, and local print may have been the rule. Today, these traditional media strategies combine with digital and social networking opportunities on an entirely different level to afford us unique and targeted access to prospective students. .

The bottom line in effective communication is the ability to understand the distinctive characteristics of our students and meet their evolving needs. As the sector has grown, we have become much more sophisticated in our communication strategies with the wide variety of programs, degree levels, and delivery modalities.

Adult learners, traditional high school graduates, and career changers, for example, are distinctly different in how they may be wired for receptivity about our schools, our programs and our faculty.

How does a student want to learn and how do we make sure we're delivering a good product?

The world has changed. In the past, business, medicine, law, and education were very traditional career paths. Today, even those professions rely upon the innovative variety of educational delivery models offered by our schools. Our students socialize in virtual worlds, blog, shop, pay bills, read, and conduct research via today's technology, a vast difference from a few short years ago.

From the classroom, to blended delivery, to a totally online experience, we are ensuring that the needs of students come first. Old structures and models for delivering higher education continue to dissolve, and more and more people than ever before complete their degrees online.

We are responding in-kind by providing access to education on their turf, wherever that may be. In recent years, for example, a lieutenant colonel in the Army completed his Argosy University doctoral dissertation while stationed in the deserts of Iraq. While there is no substitute for human interaction, learning now extends beyond the four walls of a traditional classroom. Today's traditional students and working adults demand a new kind of accessibility in their pursuit of a higher education that was previously not possible. And we think it's our job to make that happen!. Students want exceptional faculty, involvement of industry professionals, programs that meet the needs of employers, and most importantly, flexible delivery modes.

How do you make sure we're delivering a good product?

Students want to learn in ways that can assure them a successful outcome, and for most, that is defined as a good job after graduation. We like to say that "if you find a job you love, you'll never work a day in your life!" The success of our graduates to establish themselves in a career that they love is the ultimate measure of our success as educators. We make sure that we're delivering on our promise of a quality education by constantly benchmarking student success metrics, such as completion rates, job placement, and ongoing feedback from industry.

STEVE COOPER, Chief Executive Officer, TeamEDU

What aspect (or aspects) of the Tech University of America do you consider to be the most innovative?

Our innovative, disruptive and recession-resistant business model will make a global impact by delivering zero-tuition education targeted to the out of popular favor "international" students by leveraging the monetization potential and technological relevancies of the most popular social networking sites. Our first-class leadership team and world-class board of directors is introducing a series of institutes in highly practical areas (criminal justice, construction management, sports management, business & entrepreneurship, sustainability, and computer science) under a new university brand (with full accreditation – anticipated in two years). Given the power of the global economy, it's time for a truly global educational system delivered via the Internet.

This isn't the next Starbucks, but it is the next University of Phoenix. We will become the Blackboard AND Facebook of higher education, with one difference: we will provide an opportunity for anyone/any organization who uses our courses and eTextbooks to earn money, rather than paying for services, which is something that has never been done in higher education. We have developed a way to monetize the student life cycle (online learning and eTextbooks) which allows us to subsidize tuition. Moreover, our new model affords us the opportunity to reduce the student acquisition cost to nearly zero by leveraging the sheer volume of traffic generated from the most popular websites. Our scalable infrastructure allows us to add academic programs based on student demand.

By redirecting and offering online education to the masses at social networking sites we greatly reduce our student acquisition cost, lessen the learning curve and eliminate expensive learning management fees while empowering faculty and students to participate in engaging, zero-tuition, global education which we can subsidize by monetizing the student life cycle through standard fees, hyper targeted banner ads and affiliate marketing, course upgrades and relevant up selling.

Finally, the ultimate goal of this model is provide thousands of college courses in social networking sites, free of charge (to include the etextbooks) to people around the world. With the integration of the Bio-Pen (see www.StudentPen.com) we can ensure academic integrity of our programs while licensing the courses to universities. However, instead of schools paying us as they would other learning management systems, we will pay them a percent of the revenue we earn from advertisers.

What was the motivation behind your innovation? In other words, what led you to develop the Tech University of America?

I was inspired by William's story to develop Tech University of America. William was able to build a windmill because he had access to a book about alternative energy sources. As a result, he was able to provide energy for his family in Africa. By making an open university, and pushing the content to where people hang out (social networking sites) even those who can't afford our nominal fees, they can still learn everything our college students are learning (Link).

How have your innovations helped career college administrators and executives improve in regard to education delivery, operation and profitability?

They say imitation is the highest form of flattery. One accredited school started implementing my ideas the day after they flew out to Arizona to meet with me despite having signed two nondisclosure agreements. Another education entrepreneur has launched a similar model, and while I think it is a brilliant plan, accrediting bodies have already publicly denounced his

venture, in part, because it diverts too far from traditional academia.

DAVE ADMIRE, CEO, PlattForm Advertising

What is the innovation behind Career Advisor Live Transfer?

Career Advisor is a calling campaign that generates high-quality, high-converting leads by immediately connecting trained admissions reps with our clients' interested Internet leads. We've learned through our experience in direct response advertising campaigns that the best time to talk to prospects is at their highest point of interest. The high point for a prospective student is as soon they'd made their first inquiry with a school. The innovation here is in having a former admissions representative make the call - someone who has an extensive background and the training to walk students through their options so that make a wise decision about their academic future.

What led to this innovation?

We found that if you spend a little time with some prospective students and guided them through the school selection process, our success rates were higher. I personally made some calls before the service existed, and I found that I was having a great deal of success by focusing in on their needs.

How does Career Advisor work?

Our predictive dialer calls numbers from our record database. The numbers belong to prospects that expressed interest in continuing education and would be good candidates for continuing education.

One of our Career Advisors will help the prospect find a school in his or her area. If there is more than one participating school in the area, the prospect will choose a campus. If the prospect agrees to a live transfer, we will forward the call to an admissions representative. After the transfer, the elected school will receive an email confirmation with all of the prospect's contact information.

GARRY JONES, President, Full Sail University

What aspect (or aspects) of Full Sail University do you consider to be the most innovative?

From the onset of Full Sail's educational offerings, we have always believed in moving our students through programs delivered at an accelerated pace. This concept works well for individuals that are both focused and passionate about a career path and, in the case of Full Sail University, passionate about a career in entertainment and media. A typical school week at this University comprises approximately 37 hours of learning experiences made up of both lab and classroom time. Students move from lectures where the theory of a subject is presented to a four-hour, hands-on exercise later that same day in a studio and/or lab environment where the same subject matter from earlier in the day is explored via tactile experiences. Thanks to low student-to-teacher ratios in those labs, each student benefits from improved retention garnered by coupling both of these methods of learning.

A tenant of the Full Sail educational model is to remain current with technology that is on the cutting edge of professional production in the entertainment industry. Full Sail aggressively reinvests each year in the latest software, new generations of computers, and in the upgrading of the large “anchor” pieces of gear found in more than 110 studios and production suites. The obvious merits of this investing are that the student learning experience relates directly to the employment demands they will find post Full Sail University.

At Full Sail University, not only do we teach students the creative and technical elements involved in the Entertainment and Media industry, but we also focus on the optimization of the traits and expectations that employers demand of new hires. Through Full Sail's unique Global Professionalism Standards program, a constant thread of both professional and altruistic behaviors is woven into students' educational experiences. The result is graduates that are cognizant of how their interface with people and their willingness to move in a professional manner results in favorable employment conditions. Verification of the Global Professionalism Standards – as well as contributions to its developments – have come from many of Full Sail's 3,000 plus employers that continue to rely upon this university for future generations of employees.

What was the motivation behind your innovation? In other words, what led you to found Full Sail?

The motivation for the creation of Full Sail stemmed from two things: a void in the realm of education for the world of entertainment and media, and a desire to create a school dedicated to those that are passionate about careers in entertainment. By designing an educational model to specifically serve students who know what they want to do with their lives, Full Sail became a vehicle through which students could further their goals faster and go farther than through other method. And with a team of faculty and staff dedicated to providing an extraordinary student experience, Full Sail's culture propagates the concept of “doing what you love.” To this day, 30 years later, this University places significance on student satisfaction, student completion, and employment.

How have your innovations helped other career college administrators and executives improve in regard to education delivery, operation and profitability?

For three decades Full Sail has served as an inspiration to those who visit the school, tours the campus, and/or experienced this university's online learning model. Whether it's touring multi-million dollar studios that rival the finest production environments in the world or experiencing the vibe – the culture – that is exuded throughout our halls, guests of Full Sail typically walk away with an acute understanding of what investing in the student experience can do for any school, college or university. For those institutions willing to reinvest heavily and regularly in the necessary tools to create current world-class learning environments and for those institutions who are willing to commit themselves to not just a great education but to an extraordinary life experience for their students, the inspiration that can be gleaned from Full Sail can become a prolific catalyst for stellar student experiences in any educational organization.

ART KEISER, President, Keiser University

How do you go about establishing relationships with the people who are able to make legislative changes?

It's a process. We believe our students are funded by the federal government. Most people, for some reason, don't seem to see that nexus between schools and government. So it's important to be involved. Our involvement has been a big part of

our success and our growth. We recognize that the people who make public policy are the elected officials, and of course the professional government people: the bureaucrats, the administration. We make it a critical point to know who they are and become their friends. You do that in a variety of ways. In terms of bureaucracy: meeting with them, being in front of them ... we're part of the solution to their issues and problems. The more contacts you have with political people, the more they respect you. It also helps to be involved in raising funds for them, letting them visit campus, helping them get re-elected, etc.

What are the most critical issues facing our industry under the new administration?

Well, all proprietary schools are dealing with challenges regarding the 90/10 rule and the decrease in availability of private funds. And of course, at this stage, the economy poses a huge challenge for students trying to pay their loans back. Right now, mortgages are defaulting at 11%, so you can imagine the rate at which student loans are defaulting.

What was the motivation behind your innovation? In other words, what led you to take action in regards to government focus on education?

Survival. Information is power. If you know what's going to happen, you're better able to change the way you operate and your direction. It's important to try to understand what the rocks in the road are going to be. Back in the late 80s, schools didn't see default rates and the student loan crisis coming, and we lost 100s of schools. Lack of preparation along with changes in public policy wreaked havoc on the industry. Now, I feel that we have a responsibility to be better prepared

CHARLES WARE, President, Capstone Education Marketing

What led to the creation of Capstone events and selling the concept of partnering with other schools to offer these programs?

With the surge in health care, there is a need for skills ready, qualified individuals to lead the way. The U.S. Department of Labor has some interesting statistics surrounding the health and fitness industry. They project the healthcare industry to undergo the largest growth of any other industry, with an estimated 4 million new jobs by 2012. And the percentage that jobs in the fitness industry are expected to increase between 2006 and 2016 is 27 percent.

Personal training is a growing field and many colleges are jumping on board offering health and fitness programming. CEM/Professional Fitness Institute has delivered the personal training curriculum to fitness professionals for over five years. Providing strong, quality, sound education to those individuals is essential to everyone involved. In 2007 CEM decided to partner with career colleges to bring the PFI Personal Training program exclusively to their markets. By bringing in short term education and training that leads to direct entry-level employment, you will increase your student population. CEM can provide you with a program that is one of today's most exciting and popular careers.

How do the programs offered by Capstone Education Marketing help students build confidence?

That's the question students ask me most often. Confidence is not merely a by-product of exceptional knowledge. Confidence is something you can learn and develop. Confidence is about believing in oneself. Gaining the confidence of others is one of the key ways in which a self-confident person finds success. One of the ways that Capstone Education

Marketing (CEM) helps to develop student success is through our capstone events. Capstone events allow for students to enhance their skills and to create career opportunities. Your students will get a chance to participate in compelling, creative programming unlike any other. During the capstone event at program's end, students from all over the country undergo rigorous hands on training but more importantly they get to share their experiences and knowledge with others. Students enrolled in capstone events also get the opportunity to network with industry professionals. This is where students learn the in and outs of what it takes to be the best in the profession.

Describe the innovation behind the “capstone” events for each program you offer?

CEM has been providing capstone events, mainly for its personal training curriculum, since 2005. CEM delivers a stimulating one of a kind program that is easy to market, promote and can instantly make your school stand out from the competition. You'll attract serious students who want to take advantage of an exceptional training experience which means increased retention and improved graduation rates. In addition to increasing confidence, capstone events enable your students to be more prepared, more knowledgeable and more qualified.

LOREN KROH, President and Cofounder, Corvus LLC

Campus ToolKit is certainly one of the more innovative campus management programs and also one of the first available. How does it differ from competing programs? In what areas can it make the biggest impact?

As a point of clarification, Campus ToolKit isn't a campus management system. Campus ToolKit is an online suite of success tools, information and assessments designed to increase student persistence. The web-based portion of Campus ToolKit forges meaningful connections between students and their institution. This mentor relationship encourages better communication, early identification of at-risk students and increased student satisfaction.

The online system also assesses gaps in student knowledge, and then gives them the tools, resources and knowledge modules to help build the skills they need to improve. There is also an optional supporting textbook.

Its biggest impact is on the connection with students and the development of student self-awareness that helps them confront and overcome barriers to their success.

Can you explain where the idea for Campus ToolKit came from and what led to its invention?

As a former school owner, I was always frustrated to have students drop out because of problems that had a simple solution - if only we'd known about them earlier. This led to the development of a software program that allowed us to get feedback about a student's current frame of mind. It identifies the source and intensity of stress and its intensity, and allows for intervention on a timely basis.

Subsequently, we have added 8 more assessments that begin a process of self-discovery and improvement. Tools have been added to help students get focused and organized. All this is geared to giving students what they need to overcome problems and graduate.

All this information becomes part of a password protected database that can be accessed by the student as well as faculty and support staff for use in advisement.

What's Campus ToolKit's greatest contribution to the career college sector?

Our greatest contribution to the career college sector is a system, which if properly implemented, can increase the bottom line by helping students help themselves. It's a process that tightens student connections to the school, provides faculty and staff with the tools to demonstrate that they truly do care about student success, and gives administrators the information they need to make the student experience one that will have graduates referring their friends and family to the school.

It can very effective. We saw a 10% improvement in retention. One of our early adapters saw a 42% program cohort year over year over year program cohort improvement in student persistence after introducing Campus ToolKit and rolling out a concerted focus on improved retention practices.

LYNELLE LYNCH, President of Belus Academy

How do you go about influencing people who are able to make legislative changes?

I am proud to serve as an Executive Board member for the American Association of Cosmetology Schools (AACCS), which is in the midst of the Negotiated Rulemaking Process defining the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) that was passed in 2008. In addition, I sit on a state-by-state State Relations committee through AACCS. In my home state of California, I am honored to be a member of the Board of the California Association of Private and Postsecondary Schools (CAPPS)

What was the motivation behind your innovation? In other words, what led you to get so involved in government relations in regards to our industry?

Higher Educational Institutions must have a positive and collaborative relationship with our government to ensure quality educational standards and that financial access is available so students can achieve their educational dreams.

Working with the legislature is a priority and is critical to ensure the success of our Industry. I am honored to serve on both Boards and to work closely with the talented school owners who dedicate their personal time to the betterment of our Industry.

What are the most critical issues facing our industry under the new administration?

The critical issues that the Negotiated Rulemaking sessions are addressing deal with student access to loans, the schools accountability for default rates and the 90 / 10 financial calculations. All 3 issues are critical issues and will impact the schools operational abilities in the future. With the economic crisis of 2009 and the lending crisis, maintaining access to both public and private loans is the most important issue impacting the future of our schools. The continued efforts to work with the government to ensure access will support not just the Cosmetology schools but all colleges, universities and higher educational institutions.

The State Relations committee that I serve on is working to ensure Cosmetology's legal and government issues are addressed in the best interest of the professional. One top priority is the mobility of licenses from state to state which is treated very differently in each state. The State Relations committee is advocating to improve mobility and for all states to recognize the license and training offered in another state.

DR. AMIR MOGHADAM, President/CEO, MaxKnowledge, Inc.

What aspect (or aspects) of MaxKnowledge do you consider to be the most innovative?

Our company is totally driven by innovation. We constantly seek innovative ways to increase the effectiveness of our online professional development and continuing education programs. Our training methodologies and processes combine interactive content and advanced technology with expert course facilitators to provide a customized and meaningful learning experience for our target audience - the faculty, staff and administrators of career colleges and schools. The most innovative aspect of MaxKnowledge is our lifecycle training solution for faculty development. We have created a comprehensive program, based on a series of training cycles, that blends online faculty development courses with onsite activities and assessments. Our program is designed to transfer the instructor learning experience to the classroom and produce measurable performance results.

What led to your innovation?

Student success is the driving factor for everything that we do at MaxKnowledge. Research in our sector shows that improving employee and organizational performance leads to greater student outcomes. Our passion for student success has led us to create and deliver practical online training programs in all areas of career college operations. We focus on maximizing the performance of faculty, staff and administrators to increase institutional effectiveness and enhance student retention.

How have your innovations helped career college administrators and executives improve in regard to education delivery, operation and profitability?

As career colleges strive to increase their operational efficiency and competitive edge, they are focusing more and more on maximizing the performance of their employees. Seasoned career college executives realize that effective employee training and development is one of the most important factors impacting both organizational success and the bottom line. With thousands of participants in our various programs, we believe that we are making a lasting difference in the quality, efficiency and profitability of the institutions we serve. In this regard, Ron Obstfeld, Vice President of Learning and Development at Universal Technical Institute states: "We look at MaxKnowledge as our strategic partner in maximizing our instructional staff's performance and student outcomes. They offer solutions that turn training into performance."

DR. RICHARD C. KIM, President, Dynamic Biometric Systems, Inc.

What aspect (or aspects) of the Bio-Pen do you consider to be the most innovative?

The Bio-Pen hardware is a security token with a unique ID that can be verified by the system. So, each pen can be assigned to a single student, like a student ID card, or some pens can be designated for a group use. Each pen has its own processing capability (like a mini computer inside the pen) so it cannot be corrupted by the PC operating system (for example, like virus or Phishing). While the computer display and keyboard (being standard I/O devices) can be manipulated to show false images and capture the keystrokes, the external hardware cannot be manipulated. This makes the mutual authentication possible, meaning, school can verify who is at the client end, but also just as importantly, the student can verify the proper site and server integrity by looking at the LED on the pen.

What was the motivation behind your innovation? In other words, what led you to develop the Bio-Pen?

Initially, I was consulting for improving the algorithm efficacy for biometric data processing, specifically, for fingerprint, iris and signature. Image processing, in a nutshell is, once you captured the image and extracted the features, you have a whole bunch of lines and patterns – and then you try to match them to some reference template. Usually, as you increase the resolution (meaning, you can see more details, but you also increased the amount of data to be processed), you then have to work hard to optimize the algorithm to decrease the processing time (or minimize the computing resources), so that you can obtain accurate results in a reasonable amount of time and cost.

You may have used those signature pads at the stores where you sign after you swipe the credit card. You can write anything on those pads and the system will accept it, since it does not verify your signature. Our Bio-Pen is much different – it captures and analyzes the pen movement data in real-time and verifies it. Instead of just looking at what you wrote, it is recording and analyzing “how you write” (your pen movement behavior).

How have your innovations helped career college administrators and executives improve in regard to education delivery, operation and profitability?

The Bio-Pen is compatible any distance learning management systems as well as all popular social networking sites.

When you sign with the Bio-Pen, the following 3 things occur simultaneously: (1) Local PC verifies the Student’s signature (along with Pen ID, IP address, time, etc.). If verified, then (2) the User ID and Password are passed to the designated site (allowing the student to login automatically); and then (3) the authentication is recorded to the separate server creating an independent audit log.

From the student point of view, the processes of verification and login become a simple single step. The users do not have to remember (or write down) the complicated passwords – since they are securely stored (any number of sites and user id/password combinations) in the Bio-Pen PWVault. You simply sign and the login, verification and audit log are generated automatically.

From the hosting (school or content delivery) site point of view, they don’t have to change anything from their end – and the security is enhanced now that the users are not using simple, easy to remember, easy to crack, passwords. So no additional cost or burden is imposed to the traditional systems.

From the school's point of view, an administrator can login to the secure hosting website using their own admin pen and monitor all authentication activities per each user, pen and/or group. The administrator can integrate the audit data in the school's own system for their records, or we can provide the independent log data to regulators at no additional cost.

TIMOTHY B. LOOMER, President & CEO, Campus Management: Talisma Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

What led to the innovation of Talisma?

In terms of the post-education sector, Talisma focuses on student recruitment and retention. We were trying to become super efficient in giving students the fastest possible service. That benefit was the key to success for the for-profit school market in particular, giving them the edge in recruiting and completing student (applications) faster so that they could keep them on strong academic paths. The CRM is a key ingredient to that. We've always had CRM like software in our programs. CRM helps us turn up the heat.

Campus Management has done a good job of managing student lifecycles, tracking students as they march their way through their educational careers. That's what we wanted to do. Really, the market has changed. People no longer look at the market the same way. It's a more competitive environment for schools to fill a roster of students and handle not just the management of students on campus, but the lifecycle of the past, present and future, from the time they are first recruited to the endowment phase. And Talisma can assist with the future – who's next and where to find the next crop of students. It can provide a communication tool about what campus needs to take student from point of interest straight through enrollment. It can address financial aid and possibly tie a student together with a mentor in a career field.

What aspect (or aspects) of Talisma do you consider to be the most innovative?

What you have to keep in mind is that the software has to be used by a wide range of people from campus directors to part-time employees and everything in between. One of the nice features, first of all, from the user's point of view, is that there is a drag-and-drop workflow tool so that you can map out what you want to do. An interactive flowchart lets you drop in email and printed letters, then you can setup 5-7 auto steps based on how the candidate reacts to you as an institution. You can set up an auto response with different responses or stimulus based on how students have behaved previously, and it can sound like the responses have been sent by a human being.

From the outside looking in, what is innovative about this product is its all in open formation. As a potential student or customer, so to speak, you can choose your adventure based on how you like to roll. If you like to chat and are thinking about a nursing degree, Talisma has chat built in. If you want notice of a third letter arriving at a school, you can get an SMS text message. If you're online and you don't understand how to find housing in a certain area, you can have a person on chat take you directly to the web page you need to on through screen share.

How have your innovations helped career college administrators and executives improve in regard to education delivery, operation and profitability?

The ROI has been incredible. This type of software brings career colleges and traditional colleges into the era of modern day marketing. Instead of ready, fire, aim, where you shoot and hope the ducks fly over. You not only get cost and efficiency, but

you are able to target the people you want to talk to. That way, you are reducing waste in the secondary stage, putting you in a different position with incredible efficiency and savings. You can talk to the people who are most interested in your school by spending your time and energy on them. You are able to focus on them better, instead of talking to the world, you're talking to the 10,000 or so folks and you have a chance to get them. Talisma brings school into the 21st Century.