

King's University College



UWO's King's University College Increases Student Enrolment and Retention, Enables Remote Work With Ricoh and Laserfiche

About the Customer

Colleges and universities have always been at the forefront of imagining change. And King's University College, an affiliate of Western University Canada, is no exception – having leveraged technology to navigate shifts in learning, culture, technology and student expectations, the college has relied on student success as its guide.

Founded in 1954, King's University College prides itself on maintaining internationally recognized academic programming, comprehensive student services and outstanding faculty, all while keeping class sizes small so that students receive the best possible education. In 2011, King's began to look for a system to digitize student files, giving the departments a better way to manage student information and align the student experience with the world-class education for which the college was known.

"In March, our whole world changed — we were at the peak of our admissions cycle when we suddenly had to do everything online"

Tracy Cunningham,
Associate Registrar



Challenge

In recent years, the college recognized a need to become more digitally driven to improve collaboration across departments and provide more responsive services to students. Using Laserfiche [enterprise content management \(ECM\)](#) to digitize student forms and automate business processes in various departments across campus, King's University College completely changed the way that departments communicate with each other and with students.

CASE STUDY: HIGHER EDUCATION

SOLUTION

With the ongoing support of Ricoh Canada, one of the college's workplace technology solution providers, King's University College implemented Laserfiche in Enrolment Services. Today, the college continues to monetize its investment as a key pillar of its digital transformation and resilience strategy.

One Solution for Digital Document Management, Electronic Forms and Process Automation

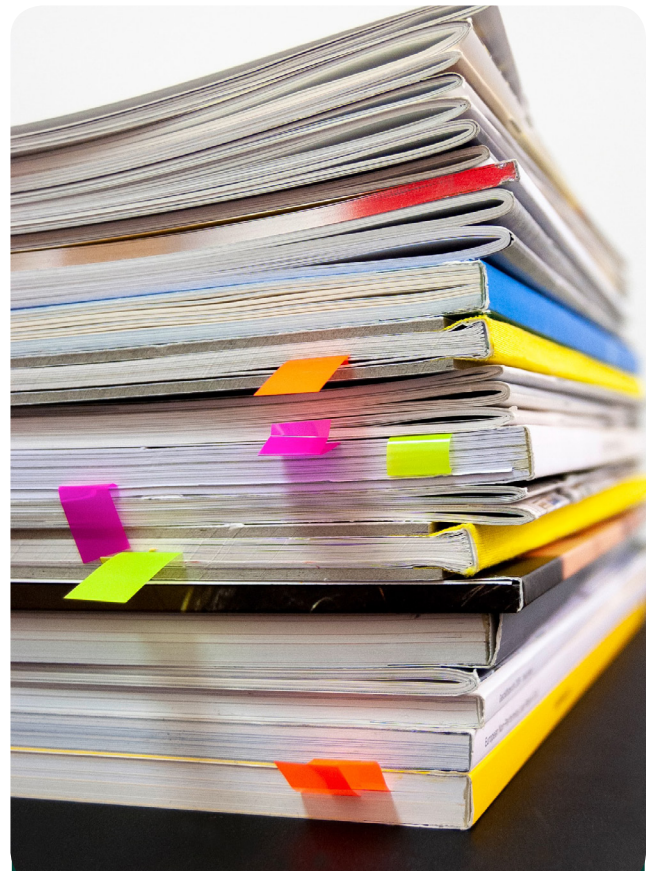
"The initial idea was to have files stored electronically," said King's University College **Associate Registrar Tracy Cunningham**.

"Although our campus is fairly compact, many of the student service departments are spread throughout different buildings. There was a lot of singular paper files moving between one office or another, making it difficult to track down at times."

More departments — including academic counseling services offered by the Academic Dean's Office — soon followed, digitizing their student files as well. The electronic access was a boon to King's efficiency and reduced the risk of lost documents while en route to other buildings or departments. With institutional records newly digitized, staff looked for more ways to deliver a more modern, streamlined experience to students.

After attending the Laserfiche Empower conference, a group of King's department leaders were inspired to explore the functionality of forms. With Ricoh's help, and over the span of just a few months, Enrolment Services was able to replace all paper admissions forms with electronic ones created in Laserfiche, and eliminate manual routing and other repetitive, manual tasks using Laserfiche business process automation.

"Everything is managed electronically in Laserfiche," said **Admissions Coordinator and Liaison Robin Ellis**. "Admissions letters are automatically sent out to the student and all documents are archived in Laserfiche. We're also able to go back and audit the workflows, to see what actions were taken and when. We saw what was possible at the conference, and just kept coming up with more ideas from there."



"The King's team has had a clear vision for using digital transformation to enhance the student experience since they began working with Ricoh Canada over five years ago. Their initiatives have since gone beyond storage and retrieval, and we have been excited to partner with them to implement innovative electronic forms, online student services and integrations that give King's students and employees access to the data and processes they need to be successful."

Eric Fletcher,
VP of Marketing
RicoH Canada

Results

This digital transformation prioritized student needs over time-intensive paperwork and manual processes. With the increased efficiency, King's continued to provide excellent service to its applicants while managing a 49% increase in applications. In addition, King's recruited more qualified students by increasing its admission requirement from 75% to 79%. With the higher average, more students were successful and retention increased over all years.

Building a Future-Ready Institution

Since COVID-19 forced many organizations to shift to remote work, King's has found further value in ECM, Laserfiche and its ongoing Ricoh partnership beyond improved efficiency.

"We ended up exceeding our enrolment goal this year, and I honestly don't know how we could have managed admissions through a pandemic — with everyone working from home — without Laserfiche," said Ellis. "We couldn't have timed it better. The admissions form went live this year, and we were able to use it for this fall semester."

"In March 2020, our whole world changed — we were at the peak of our admissions cycle when we suddenly had to do everything online," added Cunningham. "Fortunately, we put our summer academic orientation — which all our first years go through — online. We created one-on-one course counselling sessions allowing new-to-King's students the opportunity to meet with a counsellor and follow along on a Laserfiche form as we went through it with them. Copies were automatically emailed to students and routed to their folders. Having all these Laserfiche processes in place helped us provide a user-friendly experience for students. The feedback of students was excellent. Our personal approach online was supported by Ricoh, the Laserfiche form as well as the fast delivery of their registration and timetable documents."



CASE STUDY: HIGHER EDUCATION

Quickly Adapting to Change

King's benefited from having implemented digital solutions for admissions before the pandemic hit, however, staff continue to find new uses for Laserfiche even as employees continue to work from home, and faculty and students have transitioned to remote learning.

For example, Information Technology Services (ITS) used a Laserfiche form to securely distribute account information for a recently rolled out VoIP-based phone system, to avoid having to email individual passwords to staff. In addition, the ITS team was also able to quickly deploy a form that gave instructors a central place to sign up for webinars on pedagogy and curriculum when professors were faced with moving their courses online within days as a result of COVID. Pulling from the college's authentication system, users are verified before they get access to these forms.

"Being able to authenticate makes a big difference that has saved ITS a lot of time," said **Systems Analyst Sheldon Lopes**.

Other student-facing processes that have been transformed by Ricoh and Laserfiche include scholarship applications, which previously required students to conduct research scattered in different databases and submit duplicate paperwork if they wanted to apply for multiple scholarships. Today, an integration with Western University's PeopleSoft ERP system enables the enrollment management team to manage the flow of information and pre-populate Laserfiche Forms with existing student data. The form creates a centralized experience for students to search scholarships by keyword, returning the scholarships for which the student is qualified. If the same information or documentation is required for multiple scholarships, the student only needs to enter or upload it once, and it is routed to the relevant scholarship applications. Once a decision is made on the scholarship, the integration enables an immediate update to the student's information in PeopleSoft.

"This form is phenomenal, and really easy for students and staff," said Ellis. "Laserfiche automatically sends scholarship information to the student finance office, and students can be automatically emailed if they receive a scholarship. It's been a win-win for everyone." With the new scholarship form, the number of student applications skyrocketed. In the past, King's had difficulty having students apply. With this new success, King's will look to Laserfiche to find more ways to automate the process.

Leveraging Ricoh's knowledge and experience with Laserfiche has made a significant impact in how students interact with King's, which may be most evident in the academic counseling department.



"We had students emailing our team with academic questions — and oftentimes they would email many members of our team with the same question," said **Academic Data and Operations Coordinator Thomas Gray**. "As a result, response times were slow and inquiries were difficult to track."

The academic counseling team worked with Ricoh Canada to develop an inquiry submission form in Laserfiche. Now, students submit the form with their question and it is automatically triaged to a specific team member based on student information in King's student database that is automatically populated in Laserfiche Forms.

"This enabled us to manage the workload and improve our student service," Gray added. "King's also has students from across Canada and around the world. We found that international students can connect to us and communicate seamlessly through Laserfiche Forms."

The academic counselling department also analyzed Laserfiche Forms data from process flows and reporting dashboards to inform smarter decision making. They were able to identify certain inquiries as more common than others, enabling them to better allocate resources toward responding to those inquiries. The team also noticed the times during which students preferred to contact them, and as such adjusted the department's hours to better accommodate student schedules. The impact of insuring that inquiries are only received once, and immediately are directed to the right person was huge. The change in office hours was applauded publicly by the King's University College Student Council as a result of the students' appreciation.

CASE STUDY: HIGHER EDUCATION



Planning for the Future

King's use of Laserfiche and Ricoh team support has facilitated a campus-wide digital transformation, which aims to enable King's to adapt and respond to change, facilitate ongoing improvement and maintain the flow of communication.

"Digital transformation is letting people break down the digital siloes that they didn't know existed," said **Manager of Infrastructure and Digital Pedagogies David Thuss**.

"We know that we have one true data source, and we can truly share information. We've seen a reduction in error rates that comes with data entry, and don't have to worry about what information is the most updated."

Since 2012, King's has increased its applications, its admissions average and its student retention. The shining achievement is an increase of 15% in student enrolment this year in the midst of a pandemic. With the majority of universities in the region seeing a decrease in enrolment and many smaller institutions (like King's) facing financial difficulties including deficits and staff reductions, King's has been able to achieve significant milestones through its Laserfiche initiatives, Ricoh partnership and digital transformation efforts.

"We are constantly looking to support students in a way that's more efficient so we can focus on program planning or retention work," said Gray. "We can use our time more wisely and do more meaningful work. This meaningful work creates an enriching experience for all of our community-students, staff and faculty."

ABOUT RICOH

Ricoh Canada Inc. is a leading provider of document solutions for Canadian businesses. Our solutions connect people to information – and each other - so they can innovate and collaborate to drive growth. Benefit from our proactive expertise in the digital and virtual workplace. Trust in our ability to recommend the solutions that are right for your business and be there with you - every step of the way.

Today's workplace needs experts, which is why we're here. Our people help yours do their jobs better, faster and more securely. We connect our customers with the right technology and back it with the expertise to support your success.

Today's work requires better processes, better collaboration and better results. So let us help you redefine work and Change. For better.

"Laserfiche has helped us function faster, more collaboratively and has positively affected our student retention. It helps us communicate as a campus in real time."

Tracy Cunningham,
Associate Registrar



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To learn more about the Ricoh Digital Document Management, Electronic Forms and Process Automation, contact a Ricoh representative today.

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