



Success Story



ILLINOIS
WESLEYAN
UNIVERSITY

Aid

Increasing Early Deposits with a Financial Aid Model

Developing and executing a financial aid strategy is never easy, but it has never been more important. Of the many, family-to-family variables that influence whether an admitted student will deposit, affordability is among the most important.

Illinois Wesleyan University, a nationally recognized, highly selective liberal arts institution, knows the challenges that come with navigating the turbulent waters of financial aid packaging. They also know that just because an admitted student deposits doesn't mean they will enroll. Having experienced larger than usual melt during the previous recruitment cycle, the school wanted to leverage financial aid to increase their early deposit pool.

Enter Capture

A long-standing recruitment and enrollment partner with Illinois Wesleyan, Capture was asked to develop an AID predictive model.

"We've built a partnership of trust with Capture over the years. In many ways, they are an extension of our team," says LeAnn Hugues, Vice President of Enrollment and Marketing at Illinois Wesleyan University. "Given their expertise in behavioral data and predictive modeling, it made sense to see what they could do with us in terms of financial aid strategy."

The Capture AID model, one of three predictive modeling products within the Behavioral Intelligence Platform (BIP) that is managed by a data science team, optimizes financial aid awards and increases enrollment by using machine learning. It makes predictions at the student level to provide insights into how a student will react should their aid package be increased or decreased, and by what amount.

For Illinois Wesleyan, the goal was to increase early deposits while getting an early assessment of likelihood to enroll. Guided by the AID model, the university provided an extra \$2,000 to the 150 students most likely to be positively influenced by the additional financial aid. The school also made the offers with a stipulation to deposit by Feb. 1. Requests for deposit extensions were quickly provided. As responses came in, additional offers were made to the next subset of students predicted to respond favorably to the additional aid.

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The results?

Eighty-seven students responded favorably to the additional aid. IWU is up 47 deposits compared to this time last year, a 13% increase. Meanwhile, melt is less of a concern this cycle.

Capture's AID model provided Illinois Wesleyan a way to target the additional aid to those most likely to respond favorably. This shielded IWU from the risk of increasing all offers by that amount or increasing offers based on less strategic considerations.