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Top-ranked U.S. Ivy League University finally finds reliability, with Quadient mailing systems



One of the oldest and top-ranked Ivy League universities in the U.S. enrolls over 30,000 students each year, with almost 9,000 students enrolled in the undergraduate schools. Admissions mailings are critical for maintaining timely communications with prospective students.

“THE QUADIENT
MACHINES HAVE BEEN
A PLEASURE
TO WORK WITH.”

Brian Rocheny,
Processing Coordinator
of Operations, Columbia
University Local 2110 Union



Challenge

The undergraduate schools of Columbia University perform vital mailings to prospective students throughout the school year. The university's undergraduate operations center had been using a well-known postage meter provider for over 20 years but had been encountering increasing breakdowns with their equipment. The disruption in the mail process would cause not only frustration and delay to the operators, but also a loss of time in waiting for the machine to be fixed and additional work for damaged mail pieces to be recreated.

Solution

The operations team chose a combination of an IN-700 Series Mailing System, a DS-75i Folder Inserter, and an IM-2112 Automatic Mail Opener from Quadient for a reliable, smooth, and faster outbound mail production solution.

Results

In addition to a stress-free workday, the team saves on average two business days every two weeks from not having to call and wait for servicing on mailing equipment that would interrupt production and cause damage to mail pieces. With this full set of Quadient mail solutions, the mailing process is smooth, and the equipment takes up much less space, requires no additional maintenance, and does what it is supposed to without errors.



The undergraduate schools of Columbia University perform regular mailings and a couple of large jobs throughout the school year. In December, approximately 700 packets are mailed for the early decision admissions and in March/April, 3,000 packets are mailed for the early decision and regular decision admissions. During the Covid-19 pandemic, undergraduate applications rose by 50% to 60,000, resulting in increased mailings to prospective students. Acceptance letters mailed to prospective students include information for admittance, campus, financial aid, and housing. These packets range from 5-12 pages and may also include university publications, such as alumni magazines. There are three different undergraduate schools, so each uses its own integrity codes for its mailings.



Defective equipment a thing of the past

The university's undergraduate operations center, which supports admissions, financial aid, and advising, had been using a well-known postage meter provider for over 20 years but had been encountering increasing breakdowns with their equipment. Brian Rocheny, the undergraduate schools' Processing Coordinator of Operations who had been in this role for 30 years, felt it was time to move on to a more reliable vendor and equipment. "It was extremely frustrating that the machine was constantly jamming and breaking down every couple of weeks or about every 200 mailings. I would have to call the company up for a repair person to come in each time this happened because the machine is designed in such a way that it has to be taken apart just to clear a paper jam," explained Rocheny. "I was even told by our previous vendor that we needed a dehumidifier for where we placed their machine, which also took up the entire room. We simply didn't want to continue to invest in space and other supplemental machines."

The time had come to break this cycle of disruption. Rocheny solicited recommendations of mailing solutions from peers and Quadient came highly recommended among different vendors, considered as a lot more competitive in pricing and leasing and offering a wider selection of machines. Their previous vendor also submitted pricing and it turned out their offer was less competitive. Choosing Quadient was an easy decision. The department leased a full set of mail production equipment, including an IN-700 Series Mailing System, a DS-75i Folder Inserter, and an IM-2112 Automatic Mail Opener.

Reliable, efficient equipment saves the day (or two)

Since using Quadient equipment, the department's mailing process has been smooth. "I just want to get the job done instead of wasting a whole day waiting for a repair person. The constant breakdowns of our previous equipment would throw us off a couple of days, which delayed our correspondence with students. We have such a limited window with which to get the mailings out so that the students have everything they need to get their applications completed and returned in time. With Quadient's mail solutions, it's so smooth, and faster as well," remarked Rocheny.

With the Quadient IN-700 Series, accurate postal class selection and value are ensured with the Rate Wizard and mail and shipping operations and associated postage costs can be managed, tracked, and controlled with online tools that come with the mailing system.

The Quadient equipment also kept all documents pristine, as Rocheny noted, "We would frequently experience disruption and damaged documents, requiring those items to be reprinted. There would be a stack of these, so that would be more time spent to sort out the damaged pieces because you're not going to run the whole program again and you had to reprint each one individually. It was a waste of time, money, and foremost, of paper. Our packets can contain up to 12 pages each, so think of all the waste, this was really not eco-friendly."

The Quadient equipment takes up much less space, requires no additional maintenance, and does what it is supposed to in a much more efficient way. “Before we switched to Quadient, I actually had to flap open the envelopes myself,” remarked Roeheny, whereas the Quadient DS-75i Folder Inserter easily loads documents and envelopes, automatically measures the materials, and sets itself up to fold and insert up to 3,800 mail pieces per hour. The folder inserter’s Contact Image Sensor (CIS) scanning technology reads the coding used for the various undergraduate schools and applies them accordingly.

“On the rare times that there is a paper jam, I can easily clear that myself instead of having to call for servicing. All we wanted were manageable machines and our Quadient ones are that and more,” said Roeheny.

Implementation of the Quadient equipment was straightforward and took less than a week to set up, which allowed the mailing production to resume in full speed with nearly no disruption or delays.



“During the pandemic, I was in the office one day a week to get everything done. So, the machine really needed to work seamlessly with no interruptions. I know I can rely on Quadient’s machines to achieve my output mail production in no time. Quadient really is the wind beneath my wings. I was only able to grow wings because I was less stressed and stopped pulling my feathers out once I switched to Quadient. Now look at me, I’m flying high.”

– Brian Roeheny, Processing Coordinator of Operations,
Columbia University Local 2110 Union



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