

DELIVERING CHOICES TO SOLVE TEXTBOOK AFFORDABILITY ISSUES

Adelphi Students Save \$250,000 in One Semester with Textbook Rental Program



Adelphi University



CHALLENGE

College textbook purchasing has become fiercely competitive on many campuses across the country, including Long Island, N.Y.'s Adelphi University. With its main campus in Garden City and centers in Manhattan, Hauppauge and Hudson Valley, Adelphi serves nearly 8,000 undergraduate and graduate students, who often seek out less expensive outside sources to meet their textbook needs.

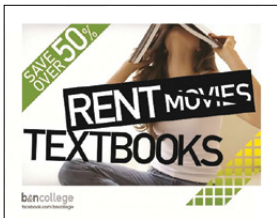
An important part of competing in today's textbook industry is offering an array of choices – students want their bookstore to give them different options that will keep money in their wallets while still meeting their course needs. So, in addition to offering new, used and digital textbooks, Adelphi worked with Barnes & Noble College to introduce a new cost-saving option for students – a textbook rental program.

SOLUTION

Adelphi began its rental program in August 2010 with more than 350 book titles. Barnes & Noble and Adelphi knew they needed to engage both students and faculty in order for success. Before the semester began, Barnes & Noble developed strategic marketing tactics to appeal to the students and generate word of mouth. For example, they drew on pop culture references by creating posters to resemble the Star Wars "opening crawl." It didn't take long for students to notice the easy and convenient way to save more than 50 percent by renting a textbook instead of buying.

The most important tactic was to inform Adelphi's faculty about the new rental option. Barnes & Noble sent personalized emails to each Adelphi professor letting them know which of their textbooks were available for rent, laying out the exact price difference between a new version of their textbook and a rental. It was vital for the faculty to be aware of the program, as Barnes & Noble knew they would be an integral communication channel between the bookstore and the students.

"The cooperation of the Adelphi faculty was a key component to the success of the rental program," said Will Giler, manager of Adelphi's Barnes & Noble bookstore. "We let the faculty know about the new option and the savings opportunity it presented for students. We encouraged them to tell their students about it, and then they took it from there."



“Barnes & Noble did a great job getting the word out about textbook rentals to the students and faculty.”

Alain Lanz – director of auxiliary services at Adelphi



RESULTS

Together, Adelphi and Barnes & Noble have lightened the student expense load with their successful rental program. During the 2011 spring semester, wherever a rental title was made available, 39 percent of students at Adelphi chose to rent instead of buy their textbooks. According to Barnes & Noble regional manager Ray McGale, the rental program saved Adelphi students \$250,000 during its inaugural academic year.

“Barnes & Noble did a great job getting the word out about textbook rentals to the students and faculty,” said Alain Lanz, director of auxiliary services at Adelphi. “We are very happy to be onboard with them, and we can’t wait to see next year’s rental numbers.”

According to Giler, another benefit of the rental program is the improved relations between the students and the bookstore.

“There’s no longer a misnomer that the bookstore only cares about making a profit,” Giler said. “The students are happy that Barnes & Noble offers this new option that will save them more money in the end. We’ve never had more positive feedback from the student body as we’ve had since we started the rental program.”