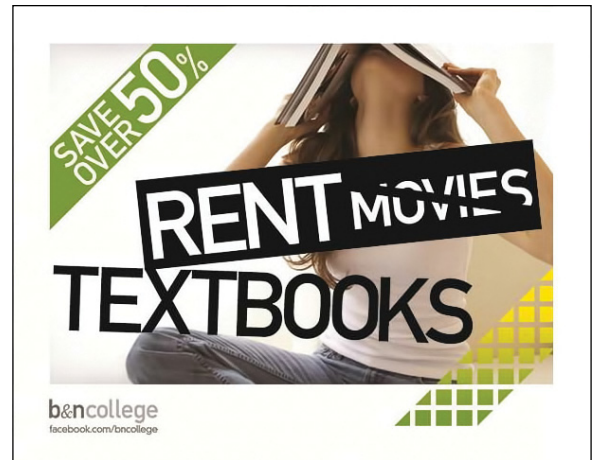


ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY DELIVERS TEXTBOOK  
COST-SAVINGS

# University of Nevada, Las Vegas Rental Program Reduces Textbook Costs for Students



## University of Nevada, Las Vegas



### CHALLENGE

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) is a thriving urban research institution that has managed to keep pace with one of the country's fastest-growing cities. Known for its "innovative frontier spirit," UNLV has a long-standing relationship with another company known for innovative practices: Barnes & Noble College. A trusted campus partner for more than 25 years, Barnes & Noble has kept pace with both the University's evolving mission as well as rapidly changing student expectations for its bookstore.

One such change has been the rising cost of textbooks, which often causes students to search for less expensive alternatives from off-campus or online vendors. To save its customers money, Barnes & Noble sought out further choices to offer to students. In addition to new textbooks, used and digital became a new cost-saving option for students. But they didn't stop there. In January 2010, Barnes & Noble introduced yet another textbook option that would save students even more money: a textbook rental program.

### SOLUTION

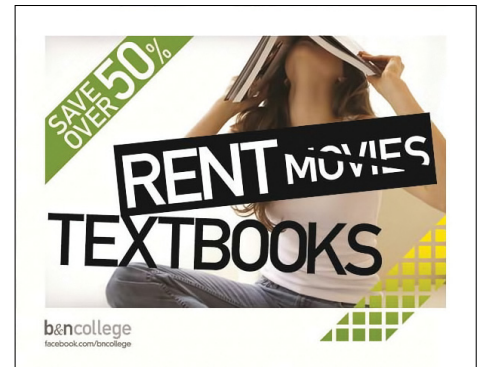
One of just 20 campuses to test the rental program that semester, the UNLV bookstore started by offering approximately 180 titles for rent. When it launched the program, Barnes & Noble contacted each academic department to let them know about the new option, encouraging them to let their students know that the rental program would save them 50 percent off the price of a new textbook.

"With our rental program, not only are students saving money, but it's convenient for them too," said Mondana Eghdami, general manager of UNLV's Barnes & Noble bookstore. "By renting from Barnes & Noble instead of an online source, they don't have to worry about shipping or damages. They can pick up their books right on campus and talk face-to-face with our customer service staff if they have problems or questions."

To establish a strong operational foundation, Barnes & Noble set up new processes to ensure that the program would run smoothly and successfully. Thanks to the advanced technology installed in-store,

# “Barnes & Noble always seems to be on the forefront of whatever innovations are available.”

*Anne Kingsley – executive financial officer of UNLV*



Barnes & Noble was able to track each book that was rented and returned. The following semester, Barnes & Noble set up netbooks in-store that allowed for even easier and quicker ordering and processing.

Barnes & Noble also instituted ongoing communication with the students to ensure that rentals were returned at the end of the semester. Several reminder emails were sent in the week leading up to the due date, and if a book was not returned, Barnes & Noble called the student. Due to Barnes & Noble's diligence in reaching out to the students who rented books, UNLV experienced an extremely low non-return rate compared to other schools.

“Before this program started, we saw a lot of students coming to the store mid-semester to purchase a book – they would wait until then to see if they really needed it,” said Eghdami. “Now, students who usually wait, or don't buy the book at all, are finding the rental option really appealing. They pay half the price and still get the book for the whole semester. It's much less of an investment for them, and they are better prepared academically.”

## RESULTS

Word of this cost-saving program spread like wild fire across the UNLV campus. Thanks to this powerful peer-to-peer network, 22 percent of students chose to rent their textbooks. The following semester, UNLV expanded the program and saw the student rental number jump to 28 percent. And in spring of 2011, one year after the program's launch, that number went up to 35 percent.

“I've been in the store when a student picks up a textbook and says, 'Wow, I can rent this?' They're so excited to have that option,” said Anne Kingsley, executive financial officer of UNLV. “We always try to find ways to help the students with the high costs of books, and Barnes & Noble came up with a way for us to do that – at no risk to us. They manage the entire process.”

Today, UNLV offers nearly 600 titles through Barnes & Noble's rental program. This fall, the store expects the rental percentage to jump to 40 or 45 percent.

“Barnes & Noble always seems to be on the forefront of whatever innovations are available,” said Kingsley. “They do whatever it takes to keep up with the changing market, and they do it in the most well-organized and professional way. We never to have worry because we know Barnes & Noble will do it right.”