

KIOSK TECHNOLOGY AND DISTANCE EDUCATION ENROLLMENT

Report Overview

by

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Research Support

Center of Black Business
History, Entrepreneurship and Technology

IC2 Institute

University of Texas at Austin
“What Starts Here Changes the World”

2005

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RESEARCH PROJECT OVERVIEW

Innovations in information technology, especially, the increasing use of **KIOSKS**, concomitant with changes, especially, in air travel, can be utilized to increase college enrollment and graduation rates of working adults, especially among minorities. This research project includes three reports which introduce technological path-breaking innovative strategies for the Distance Education Industry, which will prove successful in increasing student enrollment.

1. **“COMPETITORS FOR KIOSKS AND TRAVELER ENROLLMENT BOOTHS FOR DISTANCE ON-LINE EDUCATION REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT”**
2. **“IF YOU BUILD IT THEY WILL COME “: KIOSKS AND TRAVELER BOOTHS FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION ENROLLMENT AT AIRPORTS, TRAIN STATIONS AND RETAIL VENUES**
3. **“ADVANTAGES TO LOCATING KIOSKS AND TRAVELER BOOTHS AT BALTIMORE-WASHINGTON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT”**

Specifically, establishing admission and course enrollment **kiosks** and **traveler booths** in terminal concession areas at airports and train stations and in large-scale retail venues can greatly expand the promotional and advertising reach now being made in the Distance Education Industry in its efforts to attract a larger pool of the target market group of potential distance education online students. Particularly, in response to the nation's increasingly multicultural population, especially African Americans and people of Latin descents, and their continuing educational and economic inequities, this study represents a concerned effort to counter the present methods and processes that distinguish, as well as limit, adult, especially minority, student recruitment and enrollment efforts in brick and mortar institutions, as contrasted with efforts being made in the On-Line Distance Education Industry.

CRITICAL NEED EXISTS TO BROADEN HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINORITIES

With an ever-changing labor market, increasingly demanding employees with college degrees, for minorities, especially African Americans and Latinos, distance education institutions can provide opportunities for these groups beyond that in traditional brick and mortar institutions. Until recently, traditional brick and mortar institutions have been limited in response to meeting the needs of this market, especially among minorities, as compared to the Distance OnLine Industry, where it has been emphasized, as one article notes that: **“Even without affirmative action, almost half of for-profit students are minorities,” while presently:**

One-third of whites who are 25 and older now have a college degree.

Only 17.3 percent of blacks 25 and older have college degrees?

Only 11.4 percent of Latins have finished college.

In response to the nation's increasingly multicultural population and the continuing educational and economic inequities, this study represents a concerned response to present contrasting but also limited methods and processes that distinguish adult, especially minority student recruitment and enrollment efforts that distinguish brick and mortar institutions, as contrasted with efforts being made in the On-Line Distance Education Industry. For African Americans, specifically, see Report Part 1 for the following:

July 8, 2004, "Black Students Are Embracing Distance Education," **The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education**, JBHE Weekly Bulletin.

July 1, 2004 "Among Private Black Colleges, Hampton University Leads The Way In Distance Learning," **The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education**, JBHE Weekly Bulletin.

July 9, 1998. Michele N-K Collison, "Proprietary Preference: For-Profit Colleges Gain Momentum in Producing Graduates of Color." **Black Issues in Higher Education**: 30-32, 34 .

Moreover, there has been an expansion in the number of working adults over 25 seeking college degrees. Studies in higher education show that this target market will continue to expand. Presently, according to the U.S. Department of Education, "over 5.9 million, or 39%, of all students enrolled in higher education programs are over the age of 24. This number is projected to reach 6.6 million in 2007 and 6.9 million in 2012." Many of these individuals have embraced the new culture of air travel, whether for work or for leisure. Travel venues, then, provide a new and innovative way of tapping this group.

Studies in higher education show that this target market will continue to expand. Presently, according to the U.S. Department of Education, "over 5.9 million, or 39%, of all students enrolled in higher education programs are over the age of 24. This number is projected to reach 6.6 million in 2007 and 6.9 million in 2012."

Consequently, this three-part report provides a basis for implementing a pilot program for increasing enrollment in institutions in the Distance Education Industry. Specifically, the proposed model includes establishing **both** admission and course enrollment **kiosks** and **booths** at travel venues, specifically in this instance, at the Baltimore-Washington International Airport (BWI) as well as the Washington, DC Union Station. See Reports 2 and 3.

- 1). *increasing amount of time spent by travelers in airports*
- 2). *increasing numbers of air passengers*
- 3). *new developments in the use of terminal travel spaces to accommodate passengers whose flights have been delayed. .*

Specifically, the target groups of potential students would be inclusive of individuals traveling from and to the Baltimore-Washington, DC metropolitan areas. Recent studies show that in 2003, about 19.7 million passengers traveled through BWI, an increase of 3.6% from the passenger figures for 2002. This continued growth is particularly significant when compared with the nationwide average, which showed a decline of 2.7%. (See Report 3).

To attract this potential market, the strategy would be for institution/s in the On-Line Distance Education Industry to establish Admission and Course Enrollment **Booths** and **Kiosks** at BWI. These prospective students would include not only residents in the Baltimore-Washington DC areas, but also out-of-state

travelers and visitors and international travelers in addition to the more than 15,000 BWI employees as well as personnel that work for the various airline carriers with terminals at BWI.

The **Kiosks** would provide immediate access to the institution's On-Line Internet Programs website, where information would be available on its computerized educational delivery system. Also, the **Kiosks** can be used for potential students to apply directly to an on-line distant education institution for admission. Also, for those already enrolled, the **Kiosk** can be used for course registration.

The **Traveler Booth** could be staffed by an academic advisor or associate from that On-Line Distance Education institution. This advisor would provide information that would emphasize the opportunities available through its institutions for prospective students to earn both undergraduate and graduate degrees.

ADVANTAGES OF DISTANCE EDUCATION ENROLLMENT BOOTHS AND KIOSKS AT TRAVEL VENUES

With millions of travelers from throughout our United States, as well as international travelers, who pass through both Maryland and Washington, DC, if a Distance On-Line Institution could process admission for only 1 percent of this target group, this could greatly enrollment by tens of thousands a year.

Also, with the increase in distance learning being pursued by competitive traditional institutions of higher learning, in the twenty-first century, Distance On-Line institutions must become more flexible, aggressive and innovative in its efforts to attract the ever-expanding upwardly mobile working population, both those seeking undergraduate degrees as well as those seeking graduate degrees as a basis to expand their career opportunities.

Also, while there have always been advertisements from various academic institutions, most of these advertisements are on the Internet and are so commonplace that often they are ignored, especially those ads from distance on-line education providers. In this instance, then, the on-site Traveler's Booth would be a first, representative of a full service university academic office, much as that found in traditional brick and mortar institutions. At the airport, then, it is possible that these on-site travel booth advisors also would be able to provide on-site information that would assist individuals with their career goals, while they are waiting to proceed on to their next destination.

Furthermore, implementing a Distance Education OnLine Academic & Admission Booth pilot program for travelers challenges the paradigm of traditional brick and mortar student recruitments on campus, such as college/graduate fairs, invariably, limited to prospective high school graduates as opposed to an adult market of working individuals over 25 years of age. The Travelers Academic & Admission Booths and Kiosks program for travelers, then, expands applicant reach programs in two ways: for one, it taps a heretofore ignored applicant; and, secondly, it brings information directly to this pool, travelers, who will be able to learn:

IMPLEMENTATION OF PROPOSAL PILOT MODEL

As a pilot program, the proposed Online Academic & Admission Enrollment **Booths** and **Kiosks** model could be implemented in places such as the BWI Airport, Reagan National Airport, Dulles Airport, Penn Station and the Union Station. In addition, there is the possibility that University of Phoenix Online Academic & Admission Kiosks Booths could be located in various retail venues such as Wal-Mart and Home Depot. (See Report 2)

The Washington, D.C Metropolitan area, especially, is unique in regards to any other major city in United States. As the nation's capital, the city attracts both tourist and business travelers, as well as international visitors for several reasons not only to view the historical sites and conduct business, but also international travelers seek opportunities to increase their contacts with American institutions. In this sense, these traveling venues will provide the University of Phoenix Online Academic & Admission Booth advisors an opportunity to be part of an ambassadorship to online distance education.

Of the above traveling venues suggested for the location of the proposed On-line traveler booths and kiosks pilot program, the Baltimore-Washington International Airport, offers the most advantages based on the following:

1. passenger traffic, number
2. passenger composition includes a large number of the distance online target market
3. an airport infrastructure that provides a manageable space to test the effectiveness of this proposal.
4. limited variety of airport concessions at BWI to occupy traveler's during flight delays
5. the advantages of Southwest Airline terminals for location of traveler booths and kiosks

See Report 3, which includes two maps of BWI that detail the location of airline carrier terminals and airport concession. Simply put, considering the increase in "down time," at the nation's airports, there is a captive market. Particularly, for business travelers at BWI, the available concessions provide few goods and services that would prove advantageous in providing information that would help advance the careers, especially that of the target market group.

ENROLLMENT INFORMATION PROVIDED AT TRAVELERS BOOTH

In the proposed pilot program, placement of an onsite Academic Admission Booth is important. For one, while the public has becoming increasingly familiar with the use of kiosks, the use of Enrollment Kiosks for online college admission and enrollment would be somewhat unique, especially among some applicants in the potential target market, who might need reassurance that they can, indeed, use the Kiosk for admission application and enrollment.

Until the public becomes familiar with kiosk distance on-line enrollment, on-site advisors can answer questions that can increase confidence in the use of these kiosks as well as take application admissions for that segment of the target market that wants assurance on their on-line application.

Additionally, on-site advisor can provide information on both Bachelor and Graduate degree programs, as well as various certificates programs. Most important, information on Financial Aid would be provided by these advisors or associates as well as information that could direct interested people in the target market group who live in the Baltimore-Washington, DC metropolitan area to four Maryland locations.

In addition, while the prospective student traveler is waiting to depart to various designations throughout the country and the world, the Admission Booth Academic Advisor could provide an Orientation to Distance Education by providing a Kiosk Web class tour on a computer located in the booth. The booth would be a great access to thousands of our active military service people while they are in transit as they that pass through the nation's airport. Also, the Academic advisors at the Traveler's Booth could provide information on the possibility of college credit for previous specialized work experience.

ADVANTAGES OF KIOSKS AND TRAVELER ENROLLMENT BOOTHS

The most important advantage for establishing Distance Education On-line Academic & Admission Kiosk and Traveler Booth model program for travelers is that it provides for a flexible admission process compared to traditional colleges and universities.

Specifically, Distance On-line Traveler Booth advisors would have, as it presently does, the capacity to process an admission on the spot, which would also be the case if an enrollment Kiosk was used. The advantage is that potential applicants would not have to wait months before they would know whether or not their applications for admission have been accepted.

Consequently, the combination **Traveler's Enrollment Booths and Kiosks** provide a unique advantage for an institution in the Distance Education Industry to capture large percentages of travelers during the time they wait to depart to their next destination. With heightened security, travelers are now spending three times as long at these venues. Quite frankly, during this down time, there is only so much a traveler can eat and only so many shops to browse in, while waiting for their departure flight time.

Distance on-line Academic & Admission Kiosk and Traveler Booth, then provides a basis that can lead to an expansion of information in an institution's on-going process of marketing its institution not only nationally but also globally. Through establishing On-Line Distance Education Academic and Admission Booths for Travelers, with the goals of making available not only university academic information but also entrance admission directly to potential applicants, specifically travelers while they wait to board planes, and trains, can be a significant factor in greatly expanding enrollment.

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ALKERJ & ASSOCIATES EDUCATIONAL CONSULTING, established by Jeffrey E. Walker, specializes in Distance Education, providing planning and consulting services and business development proposals.. Mr. Walker has had ten years of experience in higher education at Johns Hopkins, Southeastern University (DC) and, presently, the University of Maryland University College (UMUC), Department of Student Affairs/ Degree Audit Team (DAT), as Advanced Evaluator / Senior Advisor, with responsibilities in providing advising information to nontraditional students in UMUC degree programs in online distance education programs as well as to UMUC's brick and mortar students, including course planning, degree and certificate completion requirements, registration, program changes, and Bachelors' degree course evaluation.

ALKERJ & ASSOCIATES EDUCATIONAL CONSULTING also provides conference planning and develops community historic preservation activities. Mr. Walker is President of the Free Frank New Philadelphia Historic Preservation Foundation and has appeared in The Learning Channel (TLC) documentary, "Understanding Mysteries of Memory. " He has won service and planning awards from the American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing,(ASPRS), the University of Maryland University College, and the University of Texas at Austin's Center of Black Business History, Entrepreneurship. Technology. Jeffrey Walker has a B.A. in American History, Loyola University, Chicago, IL, with graduate work in the School of Education, Loyola College, Baltimore, MD. He has published entries in the *Encyclopedia of African American Business History* and has written several Distance Education reports including: "The Competitors for Traveler Enrollment Booths and Kiosks For Distance On-Line Education Registration and Enrollment, "If You Build It They Will Come ": Traveler Booths and Kiosks, for Distance Education Enrollment at Airports, Train Stations and Retail Venues," and "Advantages to Locating Kiosks and Traveler Booths at Baltimore-Washington Thurgood Marshall International Airport."