

Streamlining International Graduate Admissions

Now Able to Handle Admissions Efficiently from Start to Finish



Photos by Dominique Meienberg, Ralph Bensberg, and ETH Zurich

Inside

ETH Zurich

Zurich, Switzerland

Products:

ApplyWeb® Administration System, *Intelligent Connections*® Contact Manager, Online Recommendation System

International Graduate School Applications:

After implementing ApplyWeb's solution in 2006, the number of international applicants surged from 462 to 1272.

Why Contact Manager?

- Solution precisely meets the needs of ETH Zurich
- Workflow engine that pushes each application through the process
- No extra infrastructure needed
- Fast implementation
- Customer service

The Savings:

Savings were twofold: processing time and admissions staff resources! Because the Contact Manager gave academic and admissions staff transparent access to all information, the decision process could be streamlined. "The Contact Manager has become an interactive coordination platform. All involved persons can fulfill their tasks along the decision process at the right time, with all relevant information at their fingertips."

—Rudy Stadler, IT Project Engineer

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ETH Zurich, a prestigious European university, aimed to boost the numbers of international students in their graduate programs. By switching to an online application form, they are now able to handle admissions efficiently from start to finish.

Business Profile

ETH Zurich, the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, was founded in 1855 as one of the first technical universities in Europe. Today, ETH Zurich is a university with global outreach and is constantly ranked within the top tier worldwide. With a faculty of 360 professors and a research staff of 5000, the university serves over 13,000 students, approximately half of them graduate students. Twenty-one Nobel Prize winners have been either graduate students or professors there, quite an impressive track record!

The challenge

The "Bologna Reform" of 1999, which introduced a two-tiered curriculum structure with Bachelor and Master degrees across Europe, caused ETH Zurich to change their admissions strategy. To attract more international graduate students, the language of instruction of most graduate programs was changed from German to English. This presented a challenge to international admissions, which used to be a paper-based and cumbersome process, often hampered by incomplete documents, late decisions and frequent inquiries from applicants. To effectively recruit a large number of new students, ETH Zurich had to offer the ability to apply online in English and also to make admissions decisions early enough for applicants to have time to arrange their stay in Zurich. In addition, the larger number of applications needed to be handled without unduly increasing admission office resources.



Photo by ETH Zurich

Solution

The Contact Manager allowed ETH Zurich to implement an entirely new two-step application process with a paperless pre-application that goes directly to the appropriate department. Faculty and other admissions staff access candidates' data in the Contact Manager and give early feedback about their chances of being accepted. After passing this initial step, candidates complete their applications, amend their information where necessary and send in the required paper documents. Candidates pay a reduced fee for such "follow-up applications," which are given privileged handling. This saves time for both students and the admissions office.

Benefits

- Applicants get early information at a reduced fee on their chances of being admitted.
- Applicants need to enter their data just once, with the option to update it for the final application.
- Department staff can handle applications efficiently with tailored data views and tools that guide their decisions at the program level and empower them to control the application process.
- The decision process is transparent which makes it easy to inquire into special cases.
- Letters of recommendation are handled electronically, being merged automatically to the appropriate application.

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