

CASE STUDY

Increasing Online Applications Through SEO + CRO



Client Overview

A nationally ranked Christian university was struggling to generate enough online applications from its website.

The university had already made initial website design changes, but search visibility and website conversion performance were still limiting application volume.



Challenge

The university needed to attract higher-quality traffic from Google while making it easier for prospective students to move from the website to the online application.

The strategy needed to address both sides of the problem: how prospective students found the university and how effectively the website converted that interest into applications.



SEO + CRO Strategy

SmartFinds developed an integrated SEO and conversion rate optimization strategy focused on increasing online applications.

Over a four-month implementation period, SmartFinds completed a technical marketing review and implemented targeted SEO improvements.

The CRO program then focused on optimizing website content, page layouts, and calls to action to create a clearer path to the online application page.

Performance was measured using Google Analytics, Google Search Console, and A/B testing tools.

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Key Results

25 % INCREASE IN
ONLINE APPLICATIONS
YEAR OVER YEAR

43 % INCREASE IN
APRIL ONLINE APPLICATIONS
YEAR OVER YEAR



Optimization Approach

- Technical marketing review
- Search engine optimization
- Website content optimization
- Page layout improvements
- Call-to-action optimization
- Application-path improvements
- A/B testing
- Analytics and search performance measurement



Impact

The strategy helped turn more prospective student interest into completed online applications.

By improving both search performance and the on-site application journey, SmartFinds addressed traffic quality and conversion performance together rather than treating them as separate problems.

Within four months of implementation, online applications increased 25% year over year, with April applications increasing 43% compared with the previous April.



Summary

SmartFinds combined SEO, conversion rate optimization, content improvements, and A/B testing to create a clearer path from search to application. The result was a 25% year-over-year increase in online applications and a 43% increase during a critical application month.