Thompson Rivers University Adopts Comm100 Live Chat & Chatbot Across 5 Departments

Industry: Higher Education
Headquarters: Kamloops, Canada
Solution: Comm100 Live Chat
Comm100 Customer: Since 2019
The Organization

Thompson Rivers University (TRU) is a public teaching and research university offering undergraduate and graduate degrees and vocational training. Founded in 1970, the university now serves more than 25,000 students on its campuses in Kamloops and Williams Lake, and via distance or online courses and programs through Open Learning. From traditional academics to trades, from certificates to graduate degrees, TRU offers over 140 on-campus programs and 60-plus Open Learning programs.

The Challenge

Thompson Rivers University prides itself on delivering excellent support to its students throughout their experience with the university, from enrolment all the way through to post-graduation. To deliver this support, the university was primarily relying on telephone and email support. However, with an increasingly tech-savvy student population, TRU recognized that these channels alone weren’t meeting their students’ support expectations. Grown up surrounded by technology, today’s students want to connect with brands of any industry digitally so they can experience the speed and convenience that digital communication offers.

As Lachlan Todd, Communications & Systems Coordinator in the Future Students department at TRU, explained to us:

“The traditional way of communicating over just phone and email has become antiquated, especially within higher education. If you’re only offering phone and email support, you aren’t providing your students with the experience they need and expect, and this could damage everything from enrolment to drop-out rates.”

The Results

Recognizing that they urgently needed to digitize their support offering, Thompson Rivers University began researching what channels would meet their students’ digital support expectations. Live chat was immediately identified as the ideal solution for this, so TRU began researching potential vendors that catered to their needs.

Firstly, with strict privacy rules within the Canadian higher education system, the live chat solution had to be hosted in Canada. Secondly, it could not be too costly given budget constraints. And lastly, the live chat software had to offer a chatbot integration. They soon discovered that Comm100 ticked each of these boxes, and many more, so partnered with Comm100.

At first, Comm100 Live Chat was implemented within the university’s Future Students team to help them connect with more students and schools to boost recruitment. After immediate success, four more departments within the university quickly adopted Comm100 Live Chat too to support key areas of the university’s services – IT Service Desk, International Office, Wellness Center, and Student Development.

The Results in Numbers

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<tr>
<th>LIVE CHAT CSAT</th>
<th>4.28/5</th>
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<tr>
<td>WAIT TIME</td>
<td>25 sec</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHATS HANDLED BY CHATBOT</td>
<td>83%</td>
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By offering live chat, the International Office can now connect with more prospective and current international students to boost enrolment and engagement. On the other hand, TRU’s Wellness Center department is using live chat to provide emotional, physical and social support to its students, utilizing live chat’s ability to personalize interactions and provide genuine, one-to-one support.

With Comm100 Live Chat now set up across five departments, TRU is meeting its students’ digital expectations by providing them with fast and convenient support where and how they want it. They now are enjoying a strong 4.28 customer satisfaction score (CSAT) alongside an average 25 second wait time. By meeting their students’ support expectations, TRU is connecting with more prospective students and improving the CX for enrolled students.

“We know that some of our students dread the thought of calling us when they have a question. This just isn’t the case with live chat. Live chat breaks down this barrier and lets our students connect with us in a way that they feel most comfortable with. And rather than waiting days for a response by email, our students can now receive immediate responses via live chat and get on with their day.”

— Lachlan Todd, Communications & Systems Coordinator, Future Students, Thompson Rivers University

The next step: Introducing chatbots to provide round-the-clock support

While Comm100 Live Chat being extremely well received by students, faculty and agents alike, Thompson Rivers University knew they couldn’t afford to offer the service outside of their business hours. However, they recognized that offering live chat from just 9am to 4pm was damaging the student experience and creating a significant barrier to engagement.

To solve this challenge, TRU approached Comm100 to discuss setting up their chatbot within the live chat software. By importing their support FAQs into Comm100’s bot platform, Lachlan built out the chatbot intents to automate the most repetitive and simple questions. With Comm100 Chatbot now in place, when the team is offline TRU can offer 24/7 support to students without any human supervision, ensuring that their students receive the support that they expect. TRU’s chatbot now handles 83% of all incoming chats within the Future Student department.
Without any technical knowledge or coding experience, TRU were initially wary of adopting a chatbot. However, they soon discovered that this uncertainty was misplaced as Comm100’s chatbot is incredibly easy to build and program.

“I don’t have a computer science or programming background so finding a chatbot that was simple to build and code-free was crucial – and Comm100 Chatbot delivered on this. With a little learning and guidance from Comm100’s bot architect team, I built our bot from scratch with no technical knowledge. I think anyone who has a social media account can build a Comm100 Chatbot.”

— Lachlan Todd

Wrap Up

With five departments across Thompson Rivers University using Comm100 Live Chat & Chatbot, the university expects even more departments to adopt the technology as they see the significant benefits it has created across their school.

“The team at Comm100 has been excellent. Anytime I got stuck, had a question, or identified a new product or feature that I wanted to be added to the platform, it was taken care of and implemented. It’s been a great experience.”
Let’s Chat!

Comm100 is a leading global provider of omnichannel customer experience solutions with a mission to make online service and support delivery more genuine, more personalized, and more productive through meaningful conversations.

Let us show you how.

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