

# Case Study

CAMPUS<sup>SM</sup>  
MANAGEMENT



“Avalon has increased retention by 10 percent on average across the four schools since implementing Campus Management’s student information system.”

Mark Schillereff  
Corporate Director of Information Technology  
Avalon School of Cosmetology



Established 1967  
**Specialties:** Cosmetology, Esthetics, and Advanced Beauty programs  
**Locations:** Arizona, California, Utah  
**Enrollment:** 1000+

## Challenges

- Manual processes at four schools in three states using different systems
- Student attrition resulting from lack of visibility into student progress
- Increased regulatory pressure and reporting requirements

## Solution

- Campus Management’s open and flexible student information system
- Career Services module

## Results

- Doubled enrollment in one year while reducing staff
- Increased retention by 10 percent across four schools in one year
- Increased placement of graduates in careers
- Increased tuition collection

# Avalon School of Cosmetology

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Today, when Avalon Cosmetology students attend class at any one of the school's four locations in Arizona, California, and Utah, they swipe in and out with their magnetic I.D. badges at the door, which automatically records their attendance in the school's next generation student information system. This is just one example of the real-time information now available for immediate access and reporting by the central campus in Scottsdale – or any of the four campuses.

This is in marked contrast to the way Avalon operated prior to turning to Campus Management's platform in 2013, when each campus operated and reported independently. At the time, the four campuses were on separate systems. The California school was using one brand of student information system, while the Utah and Arizona locations were using another brand. Admissions functions were on a third-party hosted application and financial aid processes were managed through EDEXpress, the government agency application. If one campus needed data from another location for reporting purposes, the only way to access that data was through a remote terminal.

In terms of recruitment, admissions counselors did an effective job working with local high schools and the Veterans Administration to recruit students, as well as getting leads from direct mail campaigns and the school's website, but those leads would be posted to yet another system for recruiting purposes. When and if those students enrolled, there would be a desperate scramble on start dates to update the recruiting system and the student information system at the same time.

"Start dates were madness," says Mark Schillereff, Corporate Director of Information Technology at Avalon Cosmetology. "It wasn't a very efficient process. We were making double entries and manually tracking and reconciling spreadsheets, which was not only labor intensive but made it difficult to track and report on student outcomes or intervene in time to help students. Our goal was to grow, but we were actually having difficulty keeping the students we had. We needed a new system that was as flexible and responsive as our programs if we were going to increase enrollment and help more students succeed."

## Retention

With the lack of visibility into student academic progress, Avalon wasn't able to intervene early enough with students at risk. As a cosmetology

school, Avalon not only has to track theory and class time, but hours of hands-on training in their working salons. The program requires that students complete 200 haircuts on a mannequin or live client, with their test results coming from the Point of Sale (POS) system at the salon to calculate grades.

"With the old system, we only posted hours once a week in a spreadsheet because it was so difficult," recalls Schillereff. "We really didn't have a good handle on student progress. If someone was scoring below 75 percent on chapter tests in a particular course (below 75 percent is failing at Avalon), administrators wouldn't become aware of this until the student was three or four chapters into the next class, whereas now the chapters are reported into the system's weekly grade book. Now if we see test results below 75 percent, we're immediately working with those students to see if they need additional instruction or tutoring. We give them the option of making up the test in the same five week period with only the makeup test reflected in their grade if they do it within the five weeks. The same is true for attendance. If a student has missed class a couple days in a row, we're on the phone right away."

In terms of retention, the new system gives Avalon much greater visibility. One of the first reports the school wrote was a completion report. Each school is now required to run the report on a weekly basis to see where it's tracking on retention rates on a year-to-date, current-year, prior-year, and next-year basis.

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Avalon also now posts progress reports every day for students. They know exactly where they stand in terms of academics and attendance. "As a result of this greater visibility and proactive intervention, Avalon

has increased retention by 10 percent on average across the four locations since implementing the new system,” says Schillereff.

## Growth

As importantly, Avalon has grown as a result of increased efficiencies across the four schools, even with increased competition. In one year, Avalon has doubled enrollment from 500 students to more than 1000 – while reducing staff.

## Flexibility

Serving a school that credits and certifies students by clock hours, offers four separate tracks, combines theory and practical classes for each unit, and has to process time in the hands-on salon, the system had to allow for easy configuration to Avalon’s processes. “We have a lot of unique things going on that you don’t necessarily find at four-year colleges or in systems hardwired for traditional academics, so the system had to be flexible enough to align with our workflows,” says Schillereff. “Today, it’s easy to add another program or campus location to the system. We already have the curriculum built and it’s still one database across the entire school system.”

## Streamlined Financial Aid

The flexibility of the system also enables Avalon to adjust financial aid dynamically based on the different start dates and the progress of students. The school added a Student Pace Evaluator which evaluates students every day and asks if they are on track for their individual projected graduation dates and adjusts disbursement dates up or back based on their progress. “With clock hours, we also have to report on changes to payment periods,” says Schillereff. “Without this solution, it would be impossible to accurately track and report on those students in a timely manner.”

## Compliance

As a cosmetology school that operates in multiple states, Avalon not only has to comply with the National Agency for the Institutional Accreditation of Cosmetology Arts and Sciences (NACCAS), it has to track individual state requirements as well. “The accreditor has standards for completion rates and career placement, but graduates must also take

a state licensing test where they plan to practice, so the system needs to track when students take or retake the test, and whether they passed or failed,” says Schillereff. “All that information now gets reported back to the accreditor, along with placement rates, quickly and easily.” In the near future, Avalon will also be using the career services module within the new solution to track certification requirements state by state.

## Outcomes and Career Placement

Avalon was using yet another application for matching students with employers prior to deploying Campus Management’s solution. With the system’s career services model, the school has already seen a significant increase in placement success. “We went live with the career services module last month and have already seen an increase in matching students with employers through the system,” says Schillereff. “We have a relationship with more than 1500 employers, so we do exit interviews with graduates and capture that information in the career services module to align their skills and preferences with employer needs.

## Increased Tuition Collection

One of the unanticipated benefits of having the new system in place at Avalon is that tuition collection has improved. The automated processes trigger more communications with students about their financial status.

## Why Campus Management

During the selection process, Avalon invited a few vendors in that had clock-hour functionality for cosmetology schools. “Campus Management’s solution stood out as a mature product,” says Schillereff. “The platform is configurable to our environment and brings all functionality and processes under one system. Some of the competition said they worked with third parties to process financial aid, for example. We wanted one system to do it all. And that’s what we have with Campus Management’s student information system.”

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## About Campus Management Corp.

Campus Management is a leading provider of software, strategies and services which enable institutions of higher education to offer dynamic models of engagement & delivery. Over the past 27 years, Campus Management has supported higher education, both proprietary and traditional institutions, as well as foundations and other organizations through its cutting-edge student information system; constituent relationship management (CRM) software; and finance, human resources and payroll solutions.

Campus Management's solutions are specifically designed to provide institutions the flexibility they need to compete in the ever-changing higher education landscape by offering products that support changes in education delivery, recruitment, financial aid, finance, human resources, payroll, and regulatory compliance. Today, nearly 2,000 campuses in 18 countries utilize Campus Management to unite campuses and workflows, improve student outcomes and achieve goals.



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