

Georgia State University

Replacing a long-time vendor with an updated off-campus housing solution

CASE STUDY

About

Georgia State University is a public research institution founded in 1913, offering six campus locations throughout the metro Atlanta area. The university's main campus is located in downtown Atlanta, with perimeter campus locations in Dunwoody, Clarkston, Alpharetta, Decatur and Newton. Collectively, Georgia State serves over 53,000 full and part-time undergraduates and graduate students, including over 3,000 international students. On-campus housing is offered to roughly 6,000 students each year and primarily housed within the downtown Atlanta campus.

New Student Orientation is Georgia State's official undergraduate student orientation program. Attendance is required for incoming freshmen and strongly encouraged for transfer students. Orientation and programming within this department introduces new students to Georgia State and prepares them to make the most of their academic and cocurricular experiences. Along with providing educational resources and information sessions, New Student Orientation also assists the GSU community in their search for off campus housing.

Challenge

For over 10 years, Georgia State University held a partnership with a previous vendor to provide an off- campus housing website for students, faculty and staff members. Initially, the website provided a valuable resource to students, but with time, it began to lack some key tools and resources. The university desired a solution that could provide students with additional services to enhance the user's experience for both the tenant and the landlord. Additionally, it became increasingly challenging to deliver housing options to those attending or needing to reside close to one of the perimeter campuses. Since on-campus housing is only offered to students on the downtown Atlanta campus, finding a way to assist those attending other campus locations was a huge need.

Solution

Off Campus Partners' proposed solution provides the undergraduates, graduates students, faculty and staff members of Georgia State University with a fully hosted, university-branded off-campus housing service. This one-stop-shop includes a housing locator to serve all students, no matter the GSU campus location they attend. Students can search by distance to campus, locate roommates based on their primary campus, and plan their commute to and from the campus of their choice. A roommate finder allows GSU students to connect with one another and is exclusive to those with a GSU campus ID and password, using Single Sign-On technology. A robust resources section supplies an additional outlet for the office of New Student Orientation to continue providing students with educational resources available, on and off campus.

Results

Despite a tight timeline in order to introduce the resource to students before the 2020 Spring semester began, Off Campus Partners was able to deliver the website on time with a plethora of options located near all campuses. In the first year, 17,391 unique visitors browsed the new Georgia State University off-campus housing site 28,864 times and viewed 151,751 pages. Across six campus locations, students can browse 70+ property listings, comprised of larger apartment communities, management companies, and individual owners. And, a total of 233 roommate profiles have been created since the resource launched on January 13, 2020. Georgia State University can now feel confident that this all-encompassing platform is inclusive for every one of their students, faculty and staff members.