



Follett Virtual Campus

Follett's virtual bookstore solution and excellent customer service helped Wakefield School reverse an unprofitable textbook procurement practice.

THE CHALLENGE

An independent day school located in The Plains, Virginia, Wakefield School is home to over 360 students from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade.

At its inception in 1972, Wakefield School chose to handle all of its own textbook purchasing. One employee was responsible for the monumental task of contacting multiple vendors, organizing the sale of books to families, charging student accounts, and handling book buy-back at the end of each school year. Since Wakefield only charged the actual cost of the book – rather than marking up the price or passing along labor and shipping costs – the process resulted in a rather large net financial loss to the school.

In 2003, Follett approached Wakefield with a way to streamline the process and remove the burden from administration – Follett would acquire and manage the course materials management process.

THE SOLUTION

Thanks to a powerful combination of superior customer attention and a cutting-edge ecommerce solution, Wakefield no longer has to struggle with bookstore operations.

Now, a whole team – including a Follett Client Manager, an inventory analyst, regional field members and customer service representatives – handles all aspects of operations, from training each contact person at Wakefield on roles and responsibilities and helping to meet deadlines, to ensuring a successful and profitable operation.

The Follett Virtual Campus website allows Wakefield families and teachers to access course materials, supplies, technology, study kits, lab equipment, apparel and more, and is customized to the needs of the school. Follett's Client Manager works closely with administrators to build a process and strategy around course material adoption, and provides training on Follett's Online Adoption Tool.

And at the end of the school year, the Client Manager takes care of all details surrounding the buyback of used books at competitive prices, a welcomed benefit for school administrators and families alike.

THE RESULTS

Wakefield administrators have been very pleased with the specialized attention they have received from Follett. Excellent client services, particularly from Follett's Client Manager, has allowed Wakefield not only to eliminate the net financial loss but realize a financial benefit by outsourcing the book process.

Follett's Client Manager also makes it easy for the school to assess sales and generate reports through Follett's online Partner Resource Center (PRC). Data collection and storage starts when the first sale is made and can be tracked by location, by student or by term, with customized reports available.

And Wakefield administrators rest easy knowing that the Follett team is continually searching for ways to help the school capitalize on industry trends to build a forward-looking adoption strategy. Listening to specific needs and providing customized attention and solutions – that's Follett's recipe for a profitable book operation.



"Our Client Manager is always upbeat, knowledgeable and customer-friendly, pays attention to all of the important details, and proactively follows up with us. He is part of the team and cares about getting our students the materials they need."

– John T. Kennedy
Assistant Headmaster
Wakefield School



Since 1873, Follett has served as the trusted partner in education for students and educators at all levels of learning. Today Follett serves more than 47 million students through the delivery of physical and digital learning materials, retail services, school content and management systems to more than 80,000 early childhood, primary and secondary schools, and on more than 1,000 college campuses. Follett is a privately held company headquartered in Westchester, Illinois.