

# HIGHER ED MARKETING

## HIGHER EDUCATION MARKETING REPORT

VOL. XXV, NO. II

February 2011

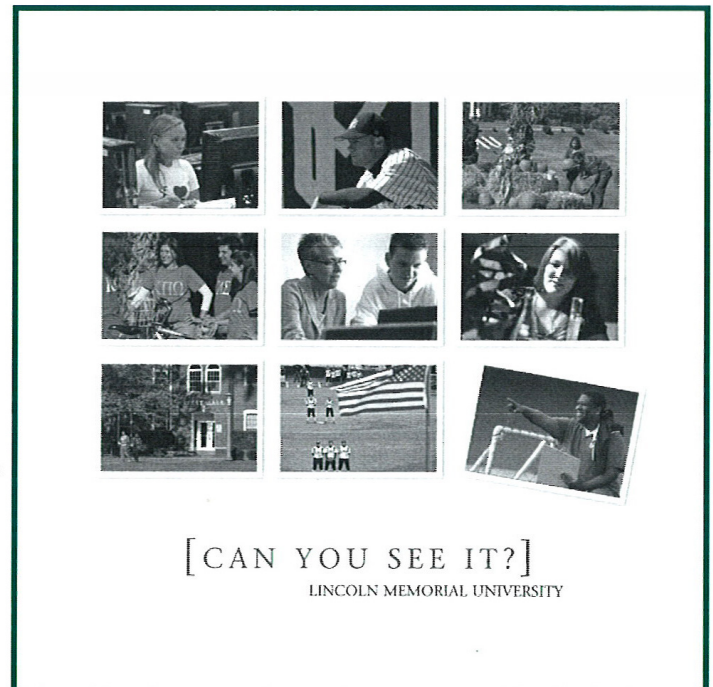
### Multivariable Testing Helps Lincoln Memorial University Improve Recruitment

Lincoln Memorial University in Harrogate, Tennessee, wanted to increase the profile of the incoming students who attended the liberal arts school. Charles Holland, Chairman and CEO of QualPro, is an alumnus of Lincoln Memorial University. He is also the guru of multivariable testing (MVT® Process), using it for the manufacturing, retail and healthcare industries, but never for higher education.

What Lincoln Memorial has accomplished using the MVT process was the subject of a session at QualPro's 21st Annual Quality Leadership Symposium, held this past October in Atlanta. Dr. Cindy Skaruppa, Vice President, Enrollment Management and Student Services told the audience that the university's goals included making the school a top tier choice regionally and beyond, improving retention and graduation rates, and improving its reputation and selectivity.

#### The MVT Process

According to QualPro's web site, the MVT® Process is a way "to use statistics to test dozens or hundreds of business improvement ideas, discover the synergies among them, and prove with certainty which ones are the most powerful and profitable under real-world conditions... . The MVT® Process tests many different variables/solutions/business improvement ideas simultaneously."



Explaining the process a bit more in detail, Lee Hord, Sr., a Consultant with the Knoxville, Tennessee-based QualPro, said that the first step is to brainstorm to generate ideas and then winnow the list down using some parameters. These include: practicality, the ability of the idea to be tested quickly, be something that is within budget, and presents a bold learning opportunity. Then, through the company's experimental design methodology, recipes are constructed. These are groups of variables put together for the purpose of testing.

Then, as the tests roll out, it becomes clear which recipes are working better than others. Additionally, using algorithms the company can see within a

particular recipe which ideas are working better than others.

The idea is to make adjustments as soon as results become clear so that the ideas that work best can be put in place as quickly as possible.

## How It Played Out at Lincoln Memorial

“We did two experiments,” Skaruppa told the audience. “One of them was increasing applications of highly qualified students. The other was improving our net yield (# of deposits).”

The first experiment evaluated 22 factors including: recruiters, direct mail, telephonic, emails, counselors, and parent messaging. A 24 recipe MVT was used to find the most effective and least effective techniques. This experiment was completed between November 2009 and January 2010 and involved 56 high schools in the communications stream.

What worked and what didn’t? Skaruppa told the audience that the recruitment technique that worked the best was a search pool insert. This was an insert put into the second search mailing with general information on financial aid. Other techniques that worked included: the frequency of high school visits (the more visits that were made, the higher the applications) student recruitment (this includes students contacting prospective students by phone and also via direct mail), and recruiter calls (this one was somewhat less effective than the other strategies).

What did not work, and indeed “hurt us,” included the Top 10 reasons to come to Lincoln Memorial that included t-shirts and a student produced

**CONTENTS**

A Message From the Dean	2
AOA President Visits LMU-DCOM	3
Rowlman Honored by ACOFP	3
LMU-DCOM Recognizes Outstanding Students & Faculty	4
PA Students to Train in Yale University Teaching System	5
LMU-DCOM Students Touch Local Community	6
Virginia Digital Libraries Visit LMU-DCOM	7
LMU Hosts Fifth RAM Clinic	8
Rotations Roundup	8-9
PA Faculty Member Teaches on Two Continents	10-11
LMU-DCOM Student Club Updates	14-18
Grants Update	12

**LMU-DCOM Students Spend Spring Break On Medical Mission**

A group of 19 first- and second-year LMU-DCOM students spent their spring break working long hours providing medical care to individuals in the Dominican Republic and Haiti on the island of Hispaniola. Their trip came three months after the 7.0 magnitude earthquake that devastated the region on January 12, 2010.

The medical mission trip was a collaborative effort between Dr. John Williamson, assistant professor and chair of OB/GYN, and local physician Dr. Neil G. Barry, III. Williamson serves as the faculty advisor to the LMU-DCOM Christian and Medical Dental Association (CMDA) chapter, and had been planning a medical mission trip to Haiti for some time after training Haiti in July 2009. At that time no one could have predicted how needed the spring break 2010 mission trip would be.

Last summer Williamson accompanied Barry and Barry's son, OMS-I Neil G. Barry, IV, on a trip to Haiti, where Dr. Barry serves as vice chairman of the board of directors of The Janssi Project, a nonprofit organization founded by medical, business and clergy professionals. The group built a hospital on the Haitian border to provide medical assistance to the island of Hispaniola. Construction began on the project in 2004, and the hospital facility was completed in 2007.

The hospital facility is currently operated by Le Bon Samaritan (The Good Samaritan). Prior to the earthquake the hospital served as a training facility for Dominican and Haitian pastors and as a hospital and lodging facility for U.S. surgical teams. The organization is noted for performing the first caesarean section and the first clinical transplant in the country.

*Continued on page 12*

**COMMunity LINC** is dedicated to being the community link between faculty, students and the greater community. Just as the musculoskeletal system is the core of wellness for the body, communication is the core of wellness for the community.

Lincoln Memorial University  
DeBusk College of Osteopathic Medicine  
Values • Education • Service

video placed on YouTube. “The message on why we’re different, hurt us,” she said. “Faculty emails didn’t work and financial aid phone calls hurt us.” This latter strategy had financial aid counselors calling families and asking how they could help them with scholarship and financial aid information.

Skaruppa said the problem wasn’t necessarily making the call, but the timing. It simply came too early in the recruitment process.

Prospective students were saying “I’m just interested, now you are calling me up,” she said.

With this information in hand, the university was able to go with what works and stop what wasn’t working. The result, she told the audience, was a 95 percent increase in applications from upper crust schools. Additionally, there were 11 upper crust schools the university targeted in which it received no applications in 2009, but received applications from nine of the 11 in 2010.

Then there was the fall 2010 deposit yield experiment. Nineteen factors were evaluated including: tours, calls, direct mail, emails, student recruitment and postcards. There were 20 recipes put in place during this May-June 2010 experiment. Among the strategies that worked was depth sounding. This was the financial aid folks contacting students after award letters were sent out and asking how satisfied with the awards were they? If a student indicated a low score on this, then the financial aid folks went back to see if they could do more for the student.

Contacting upper crust students also worked as did asking for the deposit. What did not work was a LMU is growing message, a congratulations you've been admitted postcard, and a communication that the university normally sends using the survival theme—here is what you need to go to college. Also not working was a parent flyer and Facebook email.

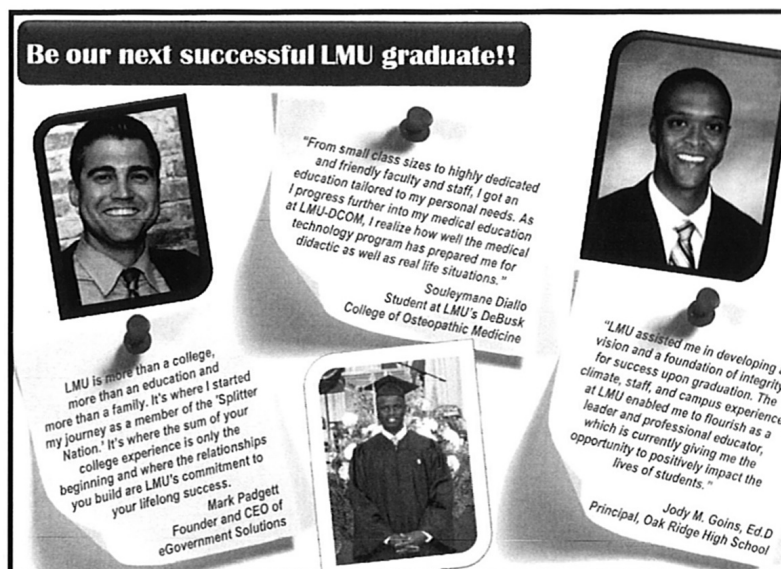
### Impact of these Experiments

Skaruppa told the audience that the university achieved a 94 percent increase in students whose ACT scores were 24 and above and a 50 percent increase in the number of students with an ACT score of 29 or greater. The number of applications for fall 2010 increased by 18 percent and the overall freshman enrollment increased by 19 percent.

Hord explained the ideas that worked well have now been implemented in the university's current recruitment cycle and that additional testing is being done to further refine what works best with its prospective student population.

### The University

Lincoln Memorial University was founded in 1897 as a living memorial to Abraham Lincoln. For

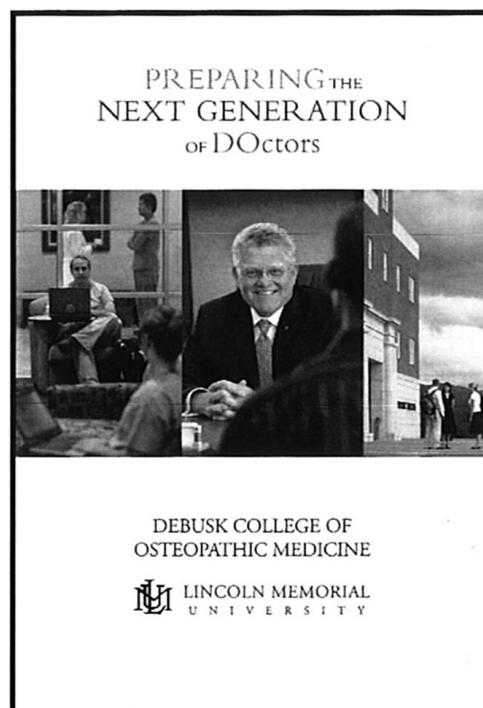


the fall of 2010, the university had 4,445 students, with 1,786 undergraduates, 1,755 graduate students, and 904 professional students. The latter two areas played a big part in the reason why the university wanted to increase the academic quality of its student body.

Skaruppa told the audience that “we are not just recruiting for undergraduate, but seamlessly into our graduate and professional programs.” The idea is that students who are graduating the university make great candidates for the school's graduate and professionals programs.

Among the challenges the school has in recruitment is location in a setting 55 miles north of Knoxville. For some students, its location away from the city is a turn-off, she said, but the school works to counter that with a message of safety and security.

For its prospective student population, she said, the number one reason that is very important in influencing their decision is a good academic program, followed by graduates getting good jobs. That is why the school recently rolled out a postcard campaign showing several pictures of graduates and testimonial quotes from them about the value of an LMU education.





# QUALPRO

**BREAKTHROUGH BUSINESS RESULTS WITH THE MVT<sup>®</sup> PROCESS**

**Want to learn how your organization can achieve  
breakthrough results using the MVT Process?**

**Call QualPro at 800-500-1722 to discuss how QualPro  
clients in education have achieved  
breakthrough improvement using the MVT Process.**



3117 Pellissippi Parkway  
Knoxville, Tennessee 37931  
800-500-1722

Website: [www.qualproinc.com](http://www.qualproinc.com)  
E-mail: [info@qualproinc.com](mailto:info@qualproinc.com)