

## Automated Admission System Industry Reviews

### Overview

The high education admission system has been continually adapting new technologies like AI and machine learning into the admission process. Salesforce, one of the software giants that develops AI algorithms for admission and recruiting reports that there are over “4,000 customers using its Education Cloud Software” (Pangburn). Such an automated admission system is highly demanded among different schools and companies for its incomparable efficiency and low cost. Our incentive to build this product, according to Professor Ari Trachtenberg, is to speed up the transcript review process during the graduate school admission, which is quite similar, but more specific, compared with what other automated admission software in the markets do. However, it is still necessary to investigate the industry and do some analysis before we start to build our own product.

### Competitors

(1) Ellucian:

<https://www.ellucian.com/solutions/ellucian-crm-recruit>

Configured / personalized environment --- dynamic portal

Increased volume through automation --- more data gathered for AI algorithm day after day

Successful user stories:

Challenge	Solution	Results
Implement a cloud-based recruitment system that enables access to the data to recruit more efficiently and effectively.	Ellucian CRM Recruit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cloud-based system provides 24/7 access</li> <li>The application process is faster and more effective</li> <li>Flexible system meets recruitment needs in different countries</li> </ul>

**Heriot-Watt University attracts students around the world using Ellucian CRM Recruit.**

**Paul Travis, Academic Registrar, Heriot-Watt University**

I'm Paul Travis, I'm the academic registrar at Heriot-Watt University. We have campuses in Scotland, Dubai, and Malaysia. How you recruit and apply to be an applicant in Malaysia or Dubai or the UK are all very different from each other.

And so, when we were looking for a new admissions system, we were really keen to find one that's really adapted to cope with different needs in different countries, but still meet the Heriot-Watt need of actually having simple standard processes that were effective and able to manage our data in a far better way than we were able to perform. And CRM Recruit just stood out as being the most modern effective application system we could find.

Between our campuses, we have staff working 16 hours a day, six days a week. Our Dubai campus operates Sunday to Thursday, and Malaysia and Scotland Monday to Friday. So actually, having time when we could take systems down to keep updates and backups was increasingly difficult. The cloud just gives us that solid stability 24-hour a day service. Staff can, if they're not recruiting, go out in the field at recruitment fairs, can just log on and access it through the web.

It's just completely changed the way we're able to do our admissions processes. What it's enabled us to do is actually pick up on applicants who started the process, and not quite completed the application. So, we can start to chase applicants. It's enabled us to start to look at our process times where we've had some inefficiencies in processing, and really speed that up, so that turning around the applicant's process from application through to decision making is far faster, and it's now a really effective system.

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Topic  
Enrollment and Retention,  
Modernizing the Campus,  
Operational Efficiency

Institution Type  
4-year Public Institution

Institution Size  
5,000 - 8,000

## Read how the University of North Alabama created a successful, scalable enrollment process.

In response to declining enrollments in its Master's in Business Administration (MBA) program, the University of North Alabama (UNA) College of Business dedicated itself to improving the recruiting experience and increasing efficiency in admissions and enrollment.

The College of Business (COB) decided to implement both a new process methodology and a new solution, Ellucian CRM Recruit, to eliminate redundant efforts and give its staff more time to offer in-depth assistance to prospects.

The COB's changes led to a doubling of its enrollment numbers—a result so significant that UNA's three other graduate schools have partnered with the COB team to learn its methods and create their own success stories.

Since the implementation of the new process and system in 2016:

- Graduate enrollments for the College of Arts and Sciences have **grown by 26 percent**, thanks to its new recruitment structure and improved online program promotion.
- Graduate enrollment at the College of Education and Human Sciences has **increased 11 percent**.
- The Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions' new family nurse practitioner track more than doubled the number of new student enrollment in the MSN program for Fall 2019.

"When you let the software accomplish work that it can do, and free up a recruiter for a substantive discussion, our relationship-building goes to a higher level than just a 'fill out the form' level," concludes Gregory Carnes, dean of the College of Business at the university. "Without CRM Recruit, the project would have not succeeded."

“ At every point when we're talking to a student, we take notes about the conversation and keep them all in CRM Recruit. There is no paper involved at all, which helps the whole team greatly. ”

Ning Wang, Manager of Online MBA Programs, University of North Alabama

[READ FULL CASE STUDY](#)

## (2) Salesforce

<https://www.salesforce.org/highered/recruiting/>


360 ° Prospect File --- all in one system; no need to move data around

Personalized Communications --- emails, SMS, web, etc.

Mobile Application

Partner companies with further solutions


Successful user stories:



“

At a small, tuition-dependent institution, aligning technology improvements to improved enrollment is key. Adding the expertise of Salesforce.org and its partners has added value in speed to implementation, and therefore speed to demonstrable results.”

CAROL THOMAS, VICE PRESIDENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY  
NEW ENGLAND COLLEGE



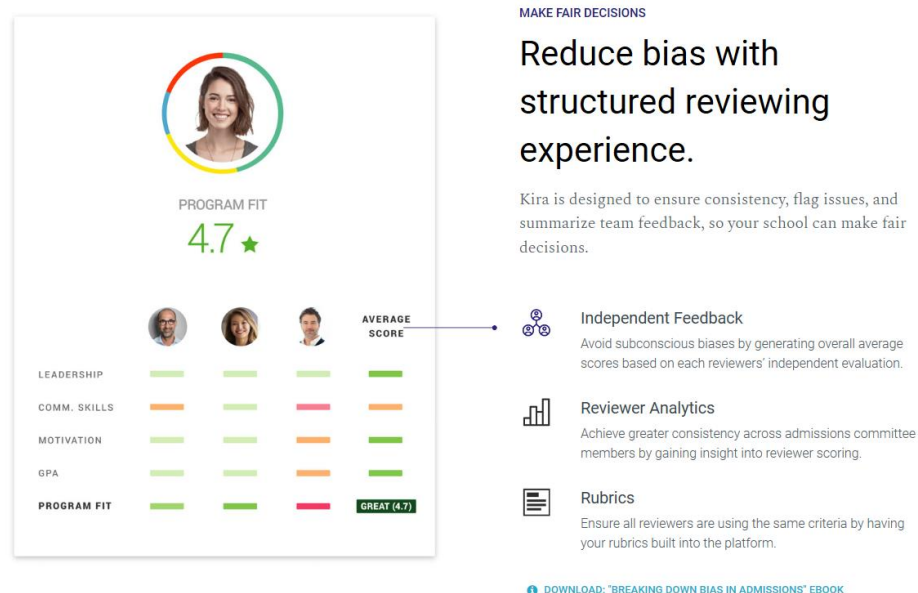
Forward

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### (3) Kira Talent: “Kira Platform”

<https://www.kiratalent.com/product/>

Competency-based evaluation --- based on test scores and grades; independent, same rubric for all students



Timed video assessment --- no more interviews needed

Timed written assessment

Successful user story:

*“What Kira has been able to do for us is assess applicants for not only communication and language, but also their motivation, commitment and drive. It allows us to know the candidate deeper which helps us make an admission decision and feel more comfortable with that decision.”*

**Eric Olson**  
Executive Director of Enrollment Operations  
Wake Forest University Business School

WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY

## Industry Debates

### (1) Bias

There are people arguing that AI admission softwares help eliminate biases that admission officers used to have when they read everything about the applicant by themselves. That is because that AI algorithm could hide certain factors as  $x$  and  $y$  from the admission officers, so that they do not know what exact factor it is and they would not be able to build bias from there. However, it is still possible that AI admission softwares have biases. Most AI admission softwares in the market are trained by the admission results from past years to make better predictions about which students to admit. And those past year data are done by humans with biases. If the machine learns from those biases, it would continue to show biases towards certain group of applicants (Pangburn).

### (2) Dislike for AI algorithms

Schools like University of Wisconsin-Madison insists not using any AI techniques for admission decisions, and they still prefer having the officers manually reading the materials of the applicants, without using “any minimums, ranges or formulas” (Pangburn). Such institutions will not be able to enjoy the services of admission softwares, like our product.

## Our advantages

### (1) Particularity

Our product is designed especially for graduate admission process with some particular functions like transcript procession, recommendation letter analyzing. Even though we do not have that many functions and features like other well-developed softwares, our system could already solve what most graduate school admission officers need.

### (2) Fairness

Since our product would only cover transcripts processing and recommendation letter sentiment analysis, it provides a relatively fair analysis for applicants' performance, which would be at this moment unrelated to the applicant's race,

ethnicity, gender, etc.

## **Our limitations**

### **(1) Limited Data Access**

To build our AI admission officer, we would need access to admission data from past years. However, most universities would not disclose their applicant's information to us. The transcripts, recommendation letters, etc. that we have are very limited.

### **(2) Limited Factors**

There are many factors to consider when admitting a student, software companies like Salesforce has included a completed matrix of different factors of the students that should be considered for admission. However, our group probably would not be able to cover too many factors and what we include now are only the transcript and the recommendation letters.

**Work Cited:**

Pangburn, DJ. "Schools Are Using Software to Help Pick Who Gets in. What Could Go Wrong?"

*Fast Company*, Fast Company, 17 May 2019,

<https://www.fastcompany.com/90342596/schools-are-quietly-turning-to-ai-to-help-pick-who-gets-in-what-could-go-wrong>.