

TOP OF MIND

With The Tambellini Group

Ellucian Hits a Grand Slam with Banner 9

Guest Columnist: Michael Mathews
Member of The Tambellini Group Executive Advisory Council

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For the past two months Oral Roberts University has been transitioning to the Banner 9 system. This decision follows 18-months of considering our options to transition off the Banner system. After all factors were considered, the decision was made to stay with the Banner system, but only if we could get users excited about a system that appeared to be 10-years out of date. In all seriousness, my number one job this summer was to make Banner appear like a 'new' system. This included motivating users who were worn-out with the past promises of Banner improvements. We desperately needed users to believe that this upgrade was more transformational than the last 10-years of upgrades.

To help build the necessary excitement, we started a new email list for all Banner users called Banner9success@oru.edu. We took a leap-of-faith and decided to put nothing but positive news about the Banner 9 improvements on this email list. The leap of faith paid off, and the attitudes toward Banner started turning toward the enhancements vs. years of frustration. To date, we have sent out 35 positive messages that conveyed 'new-and-definitely-improved' truths of Banner 9.



In hind-sight, the decision to turn the minds toward the Banner 9 enhancements allowed all users to take a fresh and objective look at the new features. Within a few weeks, faculty, staff, students, and IT were all heading toward higher ground together. As providence would

have it, the changes in Banner 9 were far greater than we first heard. The 1) New course registration, 2) Student profile with attendance, 3) Employee dashboard, and 4) Administration screens became the Grand Slam we needed to envision a fresh-new-

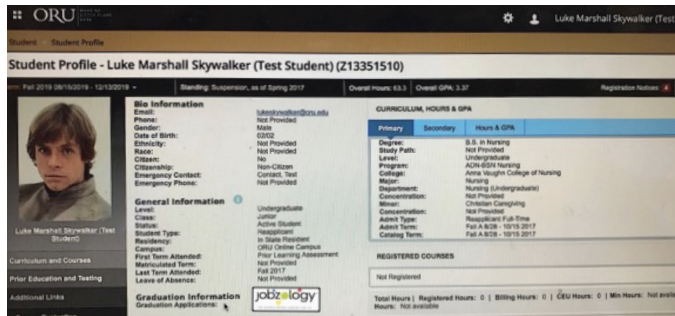
start at leveraging the Banner system for student success.

The four big changes in Banner, which I will refer to as a home-run grand slam by Ellucian, was long overdue—but the answer we needed for student success. The Student Profile was the major breakthrough that allowed faculty and advisors to find the neutral ground they finally had with students within the Banner system. For the first time ever, faculty could easily view from one screen the students' degree plan, GPA, advisor notes, attendance, and class list. However, the big lightbulb went off when we realized that the Banner system



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allowed us to embed applications and/or links to applications to career planning tools such as Jobzology. This capability throughout the Banner system has created a new excitement around Banner—and our decision to stay on Banner. The figure below shows our fictitious Luke Skywalker’s student profile with the Jobzology logo link. What this means from



a student success perspective is that the students, faculty, and advisors can truly help students navigate their entire education and career journey from one screen that contains all the necessary information. The career advisement output of Jobzology can be saved within the student profile as well.

The student profile, employee dashboard, and attendance improvements have given student success a huge boost and simplified the Banner system. The Provost, ORU Academic Deans, and AVP for Student Success have fully endorsed the improvements of Banner and concur that this was a **Grand Slam** for the Banner system and students. Of least importance, is the selfish gratification that the decision to stay on the Banner system was by far the best decision we made. On one hand,

the Ellucian improvements required less of a leap-of faith than we first thought. On the other hand, the leap-of faith was required to get the long standing deferred hope in Banner regenerated.

This writer has been fairly fatigued, vocal, and frustrated by the many years of SIS system promises. However, I close this summer as a happy camper who was done right by Ellucian for the betterment of student success, the students, faculty and staff.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of The Tambellini Group. To express your views in this forum, please contact Mary McDaniel, Chief Marketing Officer, The Tambellini Group, at mary.mcdaniel@thetambellinigroup.com.



Guest Columnist — Michael Mathews

Associate Vice President of Technology and Innovation, Oral Roberts University

Mike Mathews serves Oral Roberts University as CIO and AVP for Technology and Innovation. Mr. Mathews has successfully led a 2-year initiative to transform “Information Technology” toward “Innovation and Technology.” This transformation has allowed ORU to enjoy global attention through digitizing the entire campus experience. Prior to joining ORU, Mr. Mathews invested eleven years as a CIO, Business Development Officer, and VP of Academic Technology for Ellucian.