



# Modernizing Processes and Delivering a 21st-Century Customer Experience

*How Technology Can Improve the Student Experience and Transform Corporate Engagement*



# How Tri-C is positioning non-credit programming for growth with Destiny One

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Offering robust and effective workforce development programming is challenging. As they're non-credit, learners enrolled in these programs aren't eligible for financial aid so they expect to see results immediately. Employers also have very specific expectations around the skills gaps they expect the college to be addressing.

For community colleges, this means workforce development programming needs to be agile and responsive to workforce needs. It needs to be accessible to students when they need it, whether a weekend or an evening or during the summer or over Christmas. It needs to deliver in-demand outcomes. And, on top of all that, it needs to deliver a holistic experience that supports students from the moment they enroll through completion and beyond.

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At Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C), the oldest public community college in Ohio, Tri-C's Corporate College division was looking for a system that would allow them to accomplish all this while also managing all other non-credit offerings delivered across the Tri-C ecosystem. So, not only did it have to effectively manage their robust workforce development and corporate programming, it also

had to support non-credit community education offerings, programming designed for adults 55 and older, personal development offerings and more.

To create this seamless experience across four academic campuses and four workforce campuses serving all non-credit students ranging from K-12 to senior citizens, Tri-C turned to Destiny One, the student lifecycle management SLM platform by Destiny Solutions. Crafted specifically for non-traditional education, Destiny One provides staff with the tools they need to efficiently manage all aspects of the learner lifecycle, including marketing, enrollment, curriculum, finance and more. The SLM software platform integrates with main-campus systems, engages students with an Amazon-like experience, optimizes staff efficiency, and provides business intelligence that empowers data-driven decision making.

Tri-C is leveraging Destiny One to transform their non-credit business by:

- Securing student data;
- Standardizing non-credit management; and
- Modernizing the registration process.

The ultimate aim for Tri-C is to expand non-credit accessibility and grow enrollments—but in a scalable and secure way. This is where the Destiny One SLM is expected to make the biggest impact.

## How Integration with Banner Delivers a Great Student Experience

The benefits of robust integration between the Destiny One SLM and the main campus Banner SIS system go beyond data security—it impacts the experience Tri-C can deliver its students and the way staff time is managed.

From a student experience perspective, learners expect their engagement with the entire college to be seamless and simple. Learners commonly enroll both in credit-bearing and non-credit offerings, especially at community colleges, since their goals are outcome-oriented. But without a tight integration between the non-credit and main campus systems, students could be forced to create multiple accounts and manage multiple engagements with the institution (sometimes simultaneously. This creates a cumbersome and complex learner experience.

From the staff perspective, trying to minimize the effect of this incongruity takes an incredible amount of time and effort, as they're often attempting to make highly manual processes seem automated. This work is often tedious and unrewarding, it's highly error-prone, and ultimately pulls staff away from time they could be spending on more high-value tasks.

With a tight integration between Tri-C's Destiny One SLM and Banner main campus system, facilitated by a connector within Destiny One, all these concerns slip into the background. The system automates the flow of information and ensures data is available where needed and accurate. It allows students to engage with the college at a single level, and allows staff to focus on work where their time can make a real difference.

## Securing Student Data

The first consideration for Tri-C when looking to move on from their sunsetted system was a robust and tight integration with their Banner main campus ERP, according to Tri-C Corporate College President and CEO Robert Peterson. This effort is critical to establishing a secure environment where student data and information is protected.

"If Destiny One didn't integrate with Banner, it would have created a two-step process where student registration and financial information would not automatically migrate into Banner—it would have to be downloaded and then uploaded," he said. "This is an inefficient process with the constant possibility of errors."

This integration is facilitated through a purpose-built connector that ensures information collected by the Destiny One SLM is uploaded directly and correctly into Tri-C's Banner ERP. As such, the possibility of duplicate record creation is prevented while ensuring the compliance of non-credit divisions with main campus policy and protecting the college and students from data loss or breach.

"We heavily rely upon Banner to operate and manage our college, so integration with the main campus ERP was very important for us," said Peterson. "The fact that Destiny One has a track record of successfully integrating with Banner—and given that we were able to verify the depth of the integration through the due

diligence process—gave us a certain level of comfort partnering with Destiny Solutions."

Destiny One goes beyond its robust Banner integration to safeguard data. With gold standard security certifications—including PCI PA-DSS—student information has the highest possible level of protection available. Additionally, by enforcing consistent IT policy across Tri-C's entire non-credit environment, the opportunity for data breach or loss is minimized while operational effectiveness and efficiency grow.

Furthermore, with role-based permissions in place, Destiny One ensures staff only have access to the information they need to see. This will help Tri-C maintain compliance with institutional and federal regulations and further protect student data from any possible misuse.

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With a tight integration between Destiny One and the Banner ERP, and Destiny Solutions' commitment to data security and protection at every level, Tri-C can have confidence that student and business information is both secure and leverageable.

# Standardizing Non-Credit Management

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While Tri-C's initial focus was on finding a system to help them manage their corporate education programming, the functionality of the Destiny One SLM allowed them to expand the scope of the software to support non-credit offerings across the entire college.

"The primary user was the non-credit workforce training area, but we had all these other smaller ancillary areas within the college that all needed to be able to use the system," said Peterson.

"We have our traditional non-credit workforce training. We have non-credit community education programs. We also have Encore, a senior's program for adults 55 and older, which is a unique program offering community education. The campuses also offer some community programs—things like dancing or swim lessons or yoga classes—that are not part of workforce training, but are non-credit and need to use the registration system."

With so many offices offering non-credit programming to such a diverse array of students across so many subject areas, establishing standardization is critical.

The first layer is delivering a consistent and smooth customer experience that's seamless for learners. From the customer's perspective, they don't realize they might be signing up for offerings from completely different divisions within an institution. From their perspective, they are taking multiple offerings from Tri-C. So, when there's inconsistency in the service they receive—a lack of historical enrollment information, an inability to easily access receipts, a lack of familiarity with processes—they get frustrated and it sours their experience.

As such, standardizing the experience students receive across all non-credit offerings at Tri-C is critical to delivering the modern customer experience today's students expect.

The second layer of this is in standardizing the management process for non-credit programming. This means the approach staff take from department to department to launch, track and manage their non-credit offerings is standardized within the Destiny One system. The SLM's automated workflows manage the development and approval process for offerings, ensuring offerings get to market quickly and effectively. Destiny One's reporting functionalities then illuminate deep insights that allow staff to track the performance of those offerings in real-time and ensure resources are being maximized.

Ultimately, by uniting the management of non-credit offerings within the Destiny One SLM, Tri-C is creating a standardized environment where offerings are being run and reported upon in the same way. Beyond that, there's minimal chance of any important element of program management falling through the cracks due to a legacy business process that only exists in one office. While this can often lead to concerns around change management, the clear benefits of the system for staff made them easy to overcome.

"There are a lot of capabilities in the Destiny system that are very exciting and of great interest and potential use for our users," said Peterson. "Once they saw how it would enhance the student experience, make their jobs easier, and help grow our enrollment, people started coming on board."

"Ultimately, we were able to change resistors into team players."



# Modernizing the Registration Process

Finally, by making the Destiny One SLM part of their management infrastructure, Tri-C is delivering an optimized registration process to its students, built upon best practices from the eCommerce industry. After all, today's students aren't comparing their registration process to that of other colleges and universities. They're comparing their shopping experience at the college to what they get from Amazon.

"If I have people that are angry, we have to talk them off the ledge, calm them down, and then get them registered for a class," Peterson said. "How many people don't call and just walk away and go to another college to take a workforce training non-credit class? We can't capture that but, intuitively, I know that we were losing students because people just got fed up."

The Destiny One SLM was designed specifically to help postsecondary divisions turn their websites into enrollment engines that convert visitors into registered customers. Destiny One offers prospective customers a clear and visual shopping cart to show what they're purchasing, a secure mechanism to make online credit card payments, and immediate provisioning into offering resources. There's even an automated abandoned shopping cart recovery function, where the site will automatically save a shopping cart and send an email to the prospect encouraging them

to come back to the site and complete their purchase if they leave the page without following through on a registration in progress.

These simple functionalities—commonplace in the eCommerce world—are unique in higher education and alone can help set a college apart as an educational partner for students. This is especially important in non-credit programming, where students are engaged in lifelong education and the experience plays a huge part in whether they decide to re-enroll for future learning opportunities.

In the first six months live with Destiny One, Tri-C noticed immediate impact from its implementation of the Destiny One SLM. Enrollments in publicly-available non-credit programming grew 16%, to over 35,000 registrations. What's more, the percentage of students registering online grew 52% over the same six-month period the previous year.

"In less than six months, we've seen an increase in the number of students that are registering online using Destiny," said Peterson. "That's an early positive indicator."

Not only is Tri-C now delivering a customer experience that its prospective students expect, by allowing students to drive their own enrollment experience, it's freeing up staff time to focus on more high-value and engaging work.

## Leveraging the Corporate Engagement Manager



Another aspect of Tri-C Corporate College's business is supporting the ongoing education of employees at local companies, and the Destiny One Corporate Engagement Manager (CEM) will play a significant role in driving that work.

The CEM module, an optional add-on to the core Destiny One SLM, is designed specifically to deliver a great experience to corporate learning partners.

"The Corporate Engagement Manager will allow the HR manager to have a view of what courses their employees are already taking," said Peterson. "It will allow them to register employees directly, and see who's completed their certificates, and who has not."

That visibility and user-friendliness makes the corporate experience of engaging with colleges much easier and that, in addition to high-quality and relevant programming, can transform a one-time learning engagement into a long-term and lucrative partnership.

"We'll be able to customize the look and the feel of each company's portal, and give our clients access to it," he added. "It's going to be another selling tool for us as we work with employers in Northeast Ohio, because it's going to make life easier for the human resource manager—who is our customer and point of contact."

# From Necessity to Opportunity: How Tri-C Is Leveraging the Destiny One SLM

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Cuyahoga Community College's Corporate College was only in the market for a new system because their existing one was being sunsetted, and they were concerned about how the lack of ongoing support might affect their operations over the long-term.

The outcome in shifting to the Destiny One Student Lifecycle Management platform, however, has set them on a trajectory for significant growth.

"What we expect to gain from implementing Destiny One is, number one, an increase in overall enrollment, but also a surge in people that register online. Our goal is to move from 20 percent online enrollments, which is unacceptable, to 80 percent," said Peterson. "It's going to take a two- to three-year period before we get to where we want to be with those metrics."

Ultimately, in today's hypercompetitive postsecondary market, community colleges need to go beyond high-quality programming to attract students and retain them as lifelong learners. It needs to deliver a customer experience that's intuitive and supportive of the students' own growth.

"If your student has a bad experience, that could cause them to leave the institution and go someplace else," he said.

"Our system is much more user friendly, and we focus a lot of our attention and efforts on creating a positive student experience."



# About Destiny One

Destiny One is student lifecycle management software for higher education administrators serving non-traditional students. It integrates with main-campus systems, engages students with an Amazon-like experience, optimizes staff efficiency, and provides business intelligence, empowering data-driven decisions. Destiny One lets schools unite, understand and control all aspects of their business at once.

Destiny One manages the entire learner lifecycle:

## Curriculum

Plans and manages courses, certificates and programs

## Marketing

Targets marketing campaigns and defines consistent branding

## System Administration

Configures workflows, staff roles and permissions, and business rules and fees

## Reporting

Leverages dashboards and reports to make business-intelligent decisions

## Finance

Governs accounting transactions and manages financial information

## Enrollment

Increases registrations by engaging learners and automating the enrollment process

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## Want to learn more?

Contact us at  
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