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In This Issue

FAME is committed to providing relevant training and information to our clients. Webinars have been a vehicle recently tapped into as we provide real time topics which directly impact our clients interests concerning Title IV. In fact, the ongoing webinar series of Regulatory and Financial Aid related topics has been a huge hit. We are committed to keeping our clients up to date on regulatory changes as they develop so that your campus and staff are prepared and remain in compliance. After several webinars, Top 10 Audit Findings, Cash Management, VAWA to name a few, here are some client responses:

“Great information and perfect timing to have this webinar! Thank you!”;
“The webinar was very informative and thorough”.
“This was a hot topic covered very well. Thank you”
“Thank you FAME and Sally for your exceptional performance and keeping us all apprised of the latest and greatest.”

In addition to our webinars, we also produce video tutorials that are available on our Client Solution Center website. This type of learning is a simple click and play video with the standard controls such as pause/play and timeline navigation. Although the video tutorials do not have interaction, it is a simple alternative to get immediate answers to some of your most commonly asked questions. It’s access with a ‘straight to the point’ approach. We are currently producing new videos that will be available with the Advantage 3.8 release.

We are very excited to introduce E-Learning as part of our global initiative to advance training and development. This new foundation will help us further educate our clients and internal staff with CBT (Computer Based Training) programs. This E-Learning initiative will be unveiled with the newly designed Advantage FinAid (AFA), Our CBT’s are custom created with interactive sessions, advanced video presentations, software simulations and so much more. We have also developed our CBT programs with special attention to M-learning or ‘Mobile Learning’. M-Learning will give you a full computer based training experience right from your mobile device. With CBT, training can now be seamlessly interwoven into the intricate fabric of campus life, using technology, as end users can learn and take courses at their own pace, at school, home or on the go.

Are you excited yet? Click here or, on the link below to get a sneak peek.

E-Learning and CBT Development Initiative Video

By Jo McGrath, MPA, Client Training Specialist

Jo McGrath, Professional Trainer at FAME brings a strong commitment to education with 16 years in the higher education industry and over a decade in financial aid. Jo brings a dedication to delivering quality service, and a passion for educating clients. Throughout the myriad of positions, she has conducted workshops and delivered effective presentations.
Advantage FinAid
By Steven Pabom, Product Manager

The year end is fast approaching, but work for the AFA Team continues. Our latest release, 2.6.2, is due to be released shortly, with several enhancements to the Eligibility and Verification modules of the AFA application. These enhancements are in large part due to the U.S. Department of Education and increased regulations for both Third Party Servicers and schools. While these changes for the most part are rather straightforward, you will notice that we have added items for the school concerning the accuracy of student information being reported. These items include: verification that the student signature is on file, acknowledging ISIR corrections; that professional judgement data element changes are documented in the student’s file; that a signed enrollment contract exists for student; that the student’s file has been reviewed and no conflicts exist based on information provided by the student and that entrance counseling requirements have been met. These new items have also resulted in a process change for the application as well. AFA will now require that the school perform eligibility on all students who are to be awarded and packaged in the application. AFA will no longer attempt to auto complete eligibility for students who have no conflicting comment codes or flags on their ISIR, since these new items are not based on responses that we receive from the Department of Education, but in part from the schools who are collecting and affirming the student’s information.

In just a few short weeks we will release the updates for 2017-2018 ISIR’s. This is a first for us to have done two annual updates in one year for ISIRs, but based on the new guidelines set by the Department of Education, AFA will now allow schools to receive ISIR’s for 2017-2018 and also submit corrections to CPS. A future release will contain the updates for Eligibility and Verification for 2017-2018, which will allow the school to package and submit aid for the new award year.

The AFA team continues to innovate ways to improve not only the application but also how to simplify and expedite the awarding process. We are currently working on ways to shorten the awarding process and provide a better overview of the student’s award package and where they stand with their funds. Release 2.7 will bring this and more to our users and we are excited to get this out to you during Q1 of 2017. Our future releases will also include:

- Completion of credit hour functionality
- Enhancements to reprocessing student aid
- Enhancements to the Enrollment Reporting module
- 2017-2018 annual updates (Eligibility and Verification)
- Additional awarding reports for students and cohorts

This is just a small sample of what it is come over the next couple of months and we hope that you are just as excited as we are to see what 2017 will bring.

Steven is the Product Manager for Advantage FinAid and FAME ESP. Prior to his Product Management role he was the Supervisor for FAME Customer Service Department. His dedication and commitment to providing exceptional customer service continue to be a hallmark of both his previous and current role.
As we enter the final quarter of 2016, the Development and Quality Assurance teams are wrapping up their initiatives for year-end. Because of the lengthy re-write and updates to the Admissions module that we discussed in the last quarterly newsletter, we have 3 separate initiatives that we are bringing to market in rapid succession. In December, we will be shipping for general release, a service pack that contains the Winter IPEDS updates, along with the automation of pushing 1098T data back to FAME for us to process for your students, if you have opted for this service. In addition, we will be releasing the FAME mobility application functionality so that your students have access to their grades, attendance progress, and other items associated to their student profile through their smart phones. If you would like to see a demonstration of this available offering, please contact your FAME sales representative.

For 2017, FAME development will start work on financial aid satisfactory academic progress, and will also work on the attendance types to accommodate learning management systems and the various forms of attendance that are not tied to traditional rule-sets in higher education. Continued streamline of the user interface and usability of the Advantage application will continue to be an area of focus for FAME, and we will announce and introduce these changes in 2017.

As always, we look forward to your feedback on our products and services and we wish you a successful 4th quarter.

We have had a successful beta launch of the QuickBooks integration with Freedom, and are preparing a roll-out plan, if this is a feature that you are interested in, you will be able to take advantage of the new functionality in the next few weeks. In essence, this enhancement will eliminate the need for your staff to double-key your student financial transactions into your chart of accounts in QuickBooks.

And finally, for this calendar year, we will be providing to you the Freedom Financial Aid annual updates so that you can process FAFSAs and ISIRs prior to 2017.

Next year looks to be just as action-packed as this year, and we will be announcing our 2017 initiatives in the next quarterly newsletter. Wishing you a successful Fall!
We hear a lot about “engagement” today—whether it is engaging students in school or engaging employees in the workplace. One of the most important common threads relating to engagement, regardless of the setting is the power of communication. When, how often, and why you would communicate can differ across all environments, but I think we can all agree that communicating is a good thing. For the purpose of this post, I’ll focus on communication as a vehicle for engaging students in an online environment.

One would think that it is just good sense to be proactive with communication in this setting because those touch points help to bridge the miles gap between the institution and its students. This activity is often left up to faculty (and more recently, supportive Student Success teams who mostly work with students at-risk). Still, there are numerous untapped opportunities for bringing students closer to your campus, especially for the institutions’ online learners. At the heart of the matter is the concept of social integration.

The publication of Vincent Tinto’s (1975) landmark student integration model paved the way for numerous studies on undergraduate retention. He theorized that the more a student socially integrates or interacts with the campus community, the more likely he or she is to commit or persist toward graduation. Higher education has come a long way since Vincent Tinto’s (1975) seminal work and the ways that students socially integrate have changed too, mostly due to technological advances.

What if there was a way to leverage the technology in your LMS to deliver personalized communication to segmented groups of your population? dialogEDU’s next generation LMS has a unique feature called, “targeting,” which permits administrators (think Admissions, Program Directors, Chairs, Deans, Student Services etc.) to share regular and purposeful communications with students to create the feeling of a campus community.

I’d like to offer an example: As a former online administrator, I would pull grade data from my LMS, to quickly learn which students received their first “F” grade in their respective programs. I also reviewed the grade data on students who earned their first “A” grade. Each set of students received communication from me, either congratulating them or encouraging them not to give up. Those students who earned an F grade in their first class were the most vulnerable and outreach from caring school personnel was important at that critical moment, while some of them may have been contemplating dropping out.

What if I could efficiently manage my proactive personalized communications by using the LMS to deliver the message?

Just like customer relationship management (CRM) software tools, the targeting feature in dialogEDU can track sent emails, opens, bounce backs etc. Not only can I be efficient with my targeted communication, but I can get important data back from my efforts.

If like Tinto proposed, social integration impacts engagement, then you can configure your LMS’s landing page to emulate a student union. You can draw your students closer to the virtual campus community by using social engagement tools such as linkages to social media, public forums (think clubs), events and webinars, guest speakers and other like activities. Here, targeting can be employed in selecting which groups can see specific content on the homepage and/or in a special area personalized for each student called, “My Locker.” For example, if you have an event lined up for Nursing students, you can post a video, flyer, or a webinar announcement that only Nursing students will see on their homepage.

Because dialogEDU is LTI compliant, tools that you may already be using to engage students will seamlessly integrate with this platform. There are a host of wonderful products available that work effectively to “nudge” students and help them stay organized for success. Nudging is a concept shared recently in another LinkedIn post by Mel Roberts from Connected Campus.

Institutions that are thoughtful about creating opportunities for social integration and who leverage technology to do so, can positively impact student engagement and therefore, student persistence. Not only do students win by meeting their academic and career goals, but leveraging your technology for efficiency and scalability also benefit your institution.

Dr. Kramer is the Vice President of Client and Academic Services. She and her team provide faculty and administrators the tools to successfully implement their online initiatives with dialogEDU’s state of the art Learning Management System (LMS). She designs and delivers customized training for dialogEDU’s clients and educational partners. Dr. Kramer brings her extensive years of online teaching and learning expertise to eLearners and administrators as she helps them to assimilate and creatively utilize the platform’s unique capabilities.
FAME MOBILITY UPDATE...

By Lindsay Gombos, Director of Klient Services, Klass Apps Inc.

We are excited to bring you new features available on your FAME Mobility App. Once students and staff update their App, they will have access to these new features:

- Staff members will have the ability to log into the App and message students and other staff members from their mobile device in real time.
- Staff members can assign student tasks through the portal and set up automated reminders/notifications until tasks are completed.
- Students have the ability to e-sign documents using their fingertips and scan documents through their mobile devices.
- The FAME Mobility App portal can now store completed documents in individual electronic student files.

KLASS AR is available for students to scan over an object with their mobile device camera and “a come to life” video will begin to play.

Contact Lindsay to start building your AR library. lindsay@klassapp.com

TIPS:

* Use the ACTIVATE tab to reset students’ login password.
* Create Auto Disable functions according to different student statuses. Go to the web portal Students > Students (Manage Students and Groups) > 3rd down on the left Status Types.
* Set up “Intelligent Triggers” notifying students of a specific date and event. A few examples include disbursement information, wishing students a happy birthday or a start date coming up.
* Give Employers access to the portal to publish their job openings for your students. Go to College > External Employers > Add and complete the required fields.

contact lindsay@klassapp.com for any questions.

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New Self Service Portal

By Ricky Alfaro, Director of Implementations & Technical Support

Over the last 6 months we have been working hard to implement a new self service portal for our customers. We are excited to announce that we have now migrated our Client Solution Center website over to a new site called the FAME Help Center.

One Site Fits All

The biggest change you’ll notice in the new Help Center is that it was designed with a modern look and feel that adapts to any device. The Help Center uses a responsive theme, keeping both traditional monitors and touchscreens in mind. It seamlessly scales from a large 24” monitor down to a 5” smartphone screen without the need for a separate mobile app or mobile version of the site.

Two Sites in One

Our previous site had a single Support Forum which housed all of our training documents, product feature suggestions and other useful articles. All of these articles were combined into one support forum and search results would list articles from all sections in one list. All the articles from the Support Forum are being migrated over, but will now have two distinct areas: The Knowledge Base and Community. These two sections will be separated in search results to make it easier to find the answers you’re looking for.

Knowledge Base

Here you will now find all the articles created by FAME. We have restructured our help articles to include the following Sections and Topics:

- Getting Started
  - New User Help
  - Product Requirements
  - Training Registration
- Communications and Announcements
  - Important Announcements
  - Did You Know?
- What’s New in our Products
  - Advantage FinAid
  - Advantage
  - ESP
  - Freedom and Freedom FinAid
- Help Articles
  - Advantage FinAid
  - Advantage
  - ESP
  - Freedom and Freedom FinAid
  - Financial Aid and Regulatory Resources

Community

This section is where you will find feature suggestions posted by other users. You can even post your own feature suggestions and others in the FAME Community can vote on your suggestions. The feedback received in our Community will help us determine what our customers want to see in our products and what are some of the things we should focus on in future product releases.

Submitting a Request for Assistance

With the new Help Center, it is just as easy to submit a request with the added benefit of being able to have more control on how you sort and find your requests. Behind the scenes our support team’s agent interface has also been upgraded to allow them to easily manage and resolve incoming tickets. With a new integration into the internal systems used by our developers, they can now get answers from our software development experts much quicker.

Now that we have migrated to a much simpler and modern design, the next step is to continue to add more help articles and videos so the Help Center can provide a better self service experience for our customers. We know that offering as many support channels as possible and making it easy to get the answers you need is extremely important in today’s fast paced world. We are committed to keeping up with the latest in support technologies so our support teams can continue to provide world class service to every customer.

Ricky is the Director of Implementations & Technical Support for FAME’s Client Solution Center. He oversees the overall customer experience and long term process improvements for our Customer Service, Technical Support, and Implementation departments. He has over 10 years of management and process improvement experience as well as a true passion to teach and mentor others.