

From Pilots to Prosperous Programs

An Insider's View on Inclusive Access

What's it take for campus stores to champion the introduction and scaling of an Inclusive Access program?

The rapid growth of Inclusive Access (IA) comes as no surprise when student affordability continues to be at the forefront of discussion in higher ed. The course materials delivery model provides materials that are below competitive market rates while ensuring that students have their required materials by the first day of class. It's an all-around win when it comes to student affordability and accessibility.

As the model rapidly gains popularity, more and more campuses are launching new programs or scaling existing ones. San Diego State University and Minneapolis College are two institutions that introduced IA within the last five years and now have established programs. In order to help their fellow campus stores find the same success, they share some of their best pieces of advice for managing the program.

Minneapolis College

The IA concept found its way to Minneapolis College—a member of Minnesota State, a system of 30 colleges and seven universities—via a student senate that was introduced to the idea through a McGraw-Hill informational session. Student demand inspired the formation of a cross-functional committee that launched a limited pilot in fall 2016.

Today, Direct Digital (Minneapolis College's branded version of IA) has grown to a total of six campuses. Anthony Ross is the Course Materials Manager for The Bookstore Collaboration and works on the team that oversees the Direct Digital program for five of those campuses. After several years of managing the program, Anthony shares his top three tips for fostering success.

1. Establish a cross-departmental committee. Leading up to the pilot of Direct Digital, Minneapolis College formed a cross-departmental committee that drove the vision and execution of the program. The committee included a bookstore manager, a faculty member, the CFO, and the D2L admin, giving representation to all stakeholders involved. This model ensured that key issues like affordability, academic freedom, IT integrations, and more were discussed from multiple viewpoints.

2. Utilize publishers to promote faculty buy-in. After the pilot, Minneapolis College looked to grow the program organically. While they made efforts to share Direct Digital via avenues such as the intranet and faculty word-of-mouth, they found the most effective method was enabling publisher representatives to recruit instructors. Anthony was in constant contact with the publisher reps and closely collaborated with them as they connected with instructors on the benefits of Direct Digital, especially around student savings.



Anthony Ross
Course Materials Manager
Bookstore Collaboration

The Bookstore Collaboration Direct Digital '17-'19



330

Participating Courses



\$2.3 Million

Total Savings



Ben Compton
Course Materials Manager-Buying Group
Aztec Shops

3. Bring on a digital distribution partner to help scale.

During the program pilot phase, Anthony and the team were manually managing billing, communication, and opting. When they looked to move beyond the pilot, they knew continuing with a manual process would be an IT nightmare. As a solution for scaling, in summer 2017 they brought on RedShelf as a digital content distributor to help automate the process for the five participating campuses.

San Diego State University

San Diego State University (SDSU) has a vision for a digital-first campus, and Immediate Access is helping pave the way. Conversations around an IA program took root in 2013, with a two-course pilot launching in spring 2016.

RedShelf came on board in fall 2016 as a digital content distributor, and in 2018-2019 SDSU has scaled the program to serve 232 courses with more than 42,000 participating seats. As the Course Materials Manager-Buying Group at Aztec Shops, Ben Compton has played a strong hand in growing Immediate Access on campus and has learned some invaluable lessons along the way.

1. Don't grow too big too quickly. SDSU ran a two-course pilot over two terms to get an initial feel for the program. Once ready to expand, they targeted professors who fit the program as well as high-usage materials for the greatest impact. By strategically and methodically scaling the program, they were able to measure their success and build trust with faculty and students.

2. Find a distribution partner that aligns with your mission.

When it's time to scale the program, you not only need a partner that can provide an automated solution, you also need someone that passionately cares about their customers. At their core, SDSU relentlessly views their programs through the student perspective. When it came time to scale Immediate Access with a digital content distributor, Aztec Shops chose to partner with RedShelf. These shared student-centric and customer service values reinforced their partnership and the mission as a group.

3. Remember that over-communication is impossible.

Early on, SDSU realized the value of clear communication for a successful launch to faculty and students. Efforts ranged from distributing information on Immediate Access through the Cashier's Office to providing faculty with messaging for the LMS and syllabi. Providing an abundance of clear and consistent communication to both faculty and students ahead of time makes for smoother implementation in the long-run.

Immediate Access

In '18-'19



232

Participating Courses



42,000

Participating Seats



\$4.1 Million

Total Savings

To learn more about how you can introduce or scale an Inclusive Access program on campus, head to about.redshelf.com/campus

 RedShelf