Proposal for Student Travel Database Software

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Ali Khraibani, Bridget Ryan, Ed Murphy, Kevin Anantawong, Rafik al Baccouche

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Executive Summary

Team Global IT was asked by the Directors of the Center for Global Education (CGE) and the Director of Emergency Preparedness and Response to investigate several student-tracking applications and make its recommendation of which program will be in the best interest of George Mason University. This proposal first investigates the current process that the Center for Global Education uses to track applications and why George Mason University (GMU) requires a new system. It then continues by presenting the four possible software solutions that the team investigated, implementation options, and the cost associated with each program. The team then makes its recommendation of which student tracking program it considers the best solution for GMU.

Problem

Discuss current Business Process shortly here: no more than two paragraphs explain how it does not satisfy the university's needs.

The Center for Global Education is currently operating with an in-house database solution designed by a teen-aged student in 2000. Through the years a number of GMU employees have assisted CGE in adapting the database as needed. There has never been a dedicated developer or team to work on this database and as a result the process for making these changes is a laborious one. First, a backup of the current data is made so as not to work on the active set. Next, a series of trial and error actions are performed on the database to make sure the requested change does not malfunction. Because the student who created the database is not available to make the changes to his original code, the capabilities of CGE are limited.

Team Global IT was tasked with providing a detailed analysis of all possible options for improvements to the current system. The section that follows details the current business process database fields and search functionality.

Multiple departments conduct travel
No central process (or webportal) for registering student or faculty travel
Need searchable database that can be used to locate students or faculty that maybe impacted by domestic or international emergencies.
Have a way of locating students if family or significant others must locate them in an emergency
The university needs a method to ensure consistency (i.e. insurance, etc.) across travel programs

Current Business Process

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The current process is out dated does not contain the desired information or functionality needed to track student and faculty travel. The data is presented to the staff in a Web format that offers a user-friendly interface. This interface enables them to access the back-end database where all applicant information is stored after administrator approval.

A variety of sources are involved to allow CGE to operate. The database is the repository of all applicant entries from the web form. The web site offers an applicant and an administrative interface that are used to store and recall the information from the database. Microsoft Excel also plays a pivotal role in this process.

Application Process
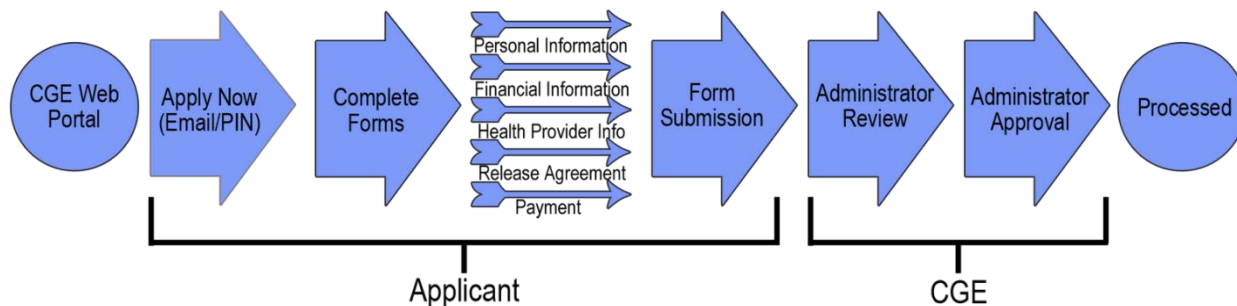
The graphic above demonstrates the process CGE uses to gather information for persons applying to a program. The applicant is greeted with a login screen that prompts for an email and PIN. This information is used to identify applicants and allow them to save the application and resume it to complete or edit information later, as the entire process takes an estimated fifteen to thirty minutes to complete.

After creating a login, five sections must be completed, which is shown in the chart by the set of miniature arrows. The application is not submitted for review by CGE staff until the final Payment section is completed and accepted.

When the applicant completes all five sections and submits payment, control shifts over to the Center for Global Education. CGE is responsible for reviewing new applicants, verifying program entries, and enrolling the applicants in the appropriate programs. Upon verification the applicant is tagged as processed and complete.

Applications for applicants in the wrong program or with incomplete applications are stored in the database under different categories.

Currently there is no notification system to alert CGE of new or incorrect applicants.

Search Requests
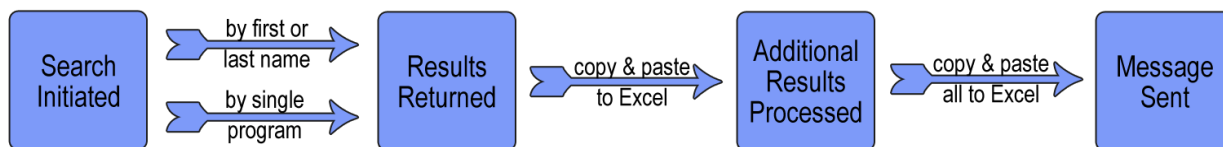
This illustration demonstrates the process being used to retrieve data from the database for reference or communication. Currently this is initiated in two basic formats: first and/or last name or individual program.

The results of this search are provided on a single web page with multiple fields represented, but the focus of most searches is on the email field.

If CGE needs to send communication to a single person or single program, the process is relatively quick and completes at the first results returned in the illustration. However, if additional programs or students must be found this process must be repeated for every instance.

The e-mails from each web page of results is then copied and pasted into an Excel file, and upon completion copying all entities the email field in the merged Excel file is copied and pasted into the email client and the message is sent out.

Please see Appendix B for screenshots of the current application and search process.

Future of Current System

At some point the size of the current database structure will grow to a point where it cannot accept further data. Also, important adaptations and addition of fields will not be implemented by CGE in fear of irreversible damage to the structure. This makes the existing design obsolete and provides no mechanism for scalability. While other institutions have implemented and enacted a student-tracking policy, GMU continues to fall behind in the technology and administration of students abroad.

Requested Solution

The stakeholders have requested that new system possess the following system features to facilitate the registration and tracking of students participating in domestic and international travel.

Central portal for all travel
One system to ensure consistency
One system to allow for easy query and tracking
Maintain individual college and university autonomy
Facilitate the collection and distribution of additional information that may be required prior to travel, (i.e. immunizations, insurance, etc.)

       a. Requested features
            i. Ease of use
          ii. Searchable
        iii. Ability to upload documents
               1. Proof of insurance

          2. Itineraries
      iv. Reporting functionality
      v. Distribution of information to students and faculty
   b. Applicability: Why a new system is worth the investment
      i. Multiple departments conducting travel
         1. School of Management (SOM)
         2. Center for Field studies (CFS)
         3. School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (SCAR)
         4. CGE
         5. Department of Intercollegiate Athletics (ICA)
         6. School of Public Policy (SPP)
      ii. No consistency in registration/tracking
      iii. Impossible to collect efficient location/status of programs
      iv. Applies to domestic and international travel

Peer Institution Best Practices

Team Global IT conducted an extensive research period during which we surveyed other institutions and product sales teams to find what programs other universities are using. The clear leader in the industry and the program used by most schools is StudioAbroad. The more shocking revelation was just how few schools had an in-house system in place like GMU currently does.

Provide List of Institutions and the software solutions they use.

Recommended Solutions

Team Global IT investigated four different software applications available to track students and their applications to programs. The following sections describe the pros and cons of each considered software application. Cost will be indicated in a later section.

I suggest that each section have one paragraph about the following
1. An overview of the company and link to the website
2. A brief explanation of how long the company has been providing these services
3. The reason that the company was selected as a one of the solutions explored

Save the features of each solution for the comparison provided in tables later.

StudioAbroad

StudioAbroad is sold by TerraDotta.

StudioAbroad has a login page that allows both students and faculty (administrators) to log in to their respective pages of the application. Administrators may designate different time frames for each part of the application process or creation of programs prior to registration. Students must fill out a variety of templates and pages throughout the application process. Each program may have forms regarding travel registration, health history, and program dates. On the administrative side, access control is given to staff users to perform their different functions. Queries are performed to gather information from applications, and they may be saved for future use. A section is provided for notes and saved reports. The saved reports may run every two weeks or at another interval scheduled by an administrator. Notifications may be set up to appear when a user logs into the system. Administrators and students have many different things they can or must do in StudioAbroad.

Business need and expectations
CGE has several business needs and expectations that must be met by any software GMU chooses. The following list below describes how StudioAbroad meets these needs and expectations. StudioAbroad also offers more functionality that CGE would like to have but does not absolutely need. These features are indicated under the last bullet point.
- Centralize and securely store student records for prospective participants, participants and alumni.
- Meet our stewardship responsibilities for travel registration and managing student emergencies abroad.
- Extract student data from SIS and reduce manual data-entry time.
- Offer on-line applications, document submission and status updates.
- Develop on-line pre-departure modules for students and parents.
- Maintain an electronic trail for admission decisions, course approvals and advising notes that can be accessed by multiple staff members (instead of stored in individual email accounts).
- Reallocate staff time to student advising and program development (instead of data entry and application tracking).
- The system could also support the following activities:
- Pre-departure planning and support services for the international internship program.
- Travel registration and emergency communications for all student organizations and project teams – both domestic and international.
- Improved tracking of students who travel independently for volunteer work, research, conferences, independent programs, etc. (both graduate and undergraduate).
- Improved tracking and information sharing for international visiting scholars. Departments/faculty could search for international visitors by country, research interests, etc.

Search

Users may run a variety of different queries. All programs may be viewed by CGE staff, not only public but also private (independent travel registration or risk management programs). Risk management programs are not viewable by the public. Users may single/multi-select properties to search and sort the search results by many criteria. Users have the ability to see who made changes to the information and when. Any changes are timed and dated and connected to a user using the user login ID. The Status tab and all tab aliases are changeable. A simple search may

be initiated by name, program, or term. Advanced searches may be initiated with a variety of selected parameters.

Once a program is active, administrators can search members by time and/or place. One may perform separate searches to narrow by counties or use a multi-selector in the locater search. A day or range of days can also be searched.

Communication

Mass-communication may be sent to many applicants or as few as a single applicant. StudioAbroad has a feature which can send regular email or text messages to mobile phones. This process is very simple and takes roughly 30 seconds. First the search query is saved, and then one can choose to audit the group to collect data or communicate by text messages or email.

Programs

Programs may be built with simple or elaborate information. A user can apply or just look at the basic information to decide if they want to apply. It is recommended to put users into groups. There may be ad-hoc programs such as independent travel. Exchange programs usually have a partner for obtaining credits.

Process

Many processes exist in the StudioAbroad system, including questionnaires, materials, application cycles, application preview, decision letters, reminders, home courses, advising recommendations, assessments, and learning content. The administrators may include any or all of these throughout the application process.

Reminders

Reminders may be set up to remind the applicants to complete their application on the schedule determined by the program. Personalized emails may be set up reminding them what they have completed and what needs to be done. These may be set up as the program administrator desires.

Access Control

Pages and content may be built with CMS software. Pages can be added and moved easily. Admin has control for managing access control. Users easily can be limited to viewing only what they need to do what they need to do.

Help

24-hour support is provided to universities via training materials and questions/answers on the website. Videos are also available about usability and guidance. They are easy to use. There are client conferences every year for new "news" such as new updates and to get suggestions for future improvements. This year over 200 clients attended the conference.

Implementation/Installation
Implementation takes at least 1-4 months and 4-6 months is typical. Implementation during a low time for the department is highly recommended. Color schemes and logos are mandated by TerraDotta. Risk-management programs may be launched first and then the regular programs to have something available while at the same time still being able to take time to do the installation.

Horizons
Horizons is a study abroad management system produced by Symplicity. It offers most, but not all, of the important features that CGE is requesting. Students complete online application forms that are then reviewed and evaluated by CGE staff. These applications are coordinated in a central area and notes can easily be added by staff members. Students can be reminded easily of pending and overdue application items. An integrated portal for study-abroad opportunities is easily searchable by students to find programs that match their interests. The fields about the programs are completely customizable.

Horizons offers a customizable reporting engine which allows for real-time queries of the database and exports to Excel. Reports for information such as which students are abroad where, especially in a specific region, can be easily created. Reports can be saved for future use. The program easily matches letter-of-reference contacts to applicants. Course approval is also easily managed with Horizons. The program can be integrated with one of many payment gateways.

Horizons can easily integrate with several student information systems including Banner and supports many different authentication portals including LDAP. Also, Horizons can send information about appointments to Outlook or other compatible calendars.

GopherU

GopherU is a web-based application that offers several of the same excellent features offered by other available management programs. Enterprise-level security, and therefore the ability to limit what certain users can access, is supported. GopherU offers the ability to automatically bill students. It allows registration as individuals or groups. The program easily tracks all important information and documentation related to different programs and applicants. Queries of travelers can be run on demand. There is implementation training and post-implementation support.

However, there are several things that GopherU does not support which other applications do. The most significant of these is the fact it does not allow administrators to mass-communicate with travelers via e-mail. The e-mails must be gathered in reports and pasted into an e-mail client. It also does not allow the input of side trips to other locations. Also, it does not integrate with PeopleSoft at the moment (but implementation of this is in the works). There is also no procedure for submitting incident reports. Another negative is that GopherU does not support LDAP authentication.

AbroadOffice

In addition to third party options that CGE is considering, open source code could be developed and customized to suit its needs. Although open source allows manipulation of the code to add additional features, a dedicated IT specialist would need to invest the time to include these services. The main benefit of open source is that it allows a knowledgeable user to expand the functionality of a product without legal ramifications. Ultimately, the decision of whether to use open source or proprietary software depends on the clients' specific needs and the areas of the business that need improvements. In this section, an open-source product called Abroad Office and its ability to satisfy demands of the Center for Global Education will be discussed.

Because it is open-source, Abroad Office has one major advantage over proprietary software; cost.

However, AbroadOffice does have several disadvantages that outweighed the benefits and made AbroadOffice not the clear choice for CGE. The ongoing maintenance fees are important to consider. Also, AbroadOffice does not allow integration with PeopleSoft. PeopleSoft is a human resources management system (HRMS) software that CGE could potentially use but cannot with AbroadOffice. Another function AbroadOffice lacks is the ability to manage travel details. Since CGE deals with students that need to travel abroad, being able to gather important travel information allows CGE to confirm that consumers are eligible to enter a program, or directly contact them in case of an emergency.

Also, AbroadOffice does not provide the ability to enter information about side trips. This means that students who take trips to other areas while studying abroad cannot let anyone know through the application system where they will be. For example, someone studying in London could not let anyone know if he or she had planned a trip to Rome for a few days. AbroadOffice also cannot clearly indicate if a program has more than one location. This could be a concern when trying to track students involved in a program that visits more than one country or region.

Another key feature that AbroadOffice lacks is a procedure for submitting incident reports. Incident reports could potentially provide CGE with valuable information. This includes experiences or hurdles the group of students may have faced during the program. The incident report information would give CGE the opportunity to evaluate the incidents, examine how often they occur, and find a solution to resolve the issues and keep them from happening again. Having a better understanding of the areas where the incidents took place would allow CGE to evaluate whether they should drop or modify a program which in turn would help improve the study abroad experience.

Abroad office provides a hosted solution. Because of this, they, not CGE, are responsible for maintaining the database and website. As a result, Banner cannot be used with AbroadOffice which is potentially the biggest weakness of this software. Since the department is familiar with Banner and a lot of data is stored there, it would make sense to use a product that is able to connect directly to Banner. Not only would the system be easier for the staff to understand and implement, but also time would be saved. This time would be saved during the implementation process, and also due to the fact that CGE would not have to rely on external support to access data and maintain the system.

CGE has a list of qualifications they would like to see met with this new system. While its price makes AbroadOffice appealing, it fails to meet requirements determined by the Center for Global Education. AbroadOffice is able to handle most services, but the few services it is missing have made it easier to realize that this product is not the right option. The need to report incidents, locate students, gather travel information and the ability to integrate within the CGE systems are some of the matters that must be resolved before AbroadOffice could be the chosen solution.

Comparison of strengths and weaknesses
StudioAbroad

Product	Strengths	Weaknesses
Studio Abroad		
Horizons		

Strengths	Weaknesses
• It is the industry leader because it is used by both large and small universities across the country. • It has a communication system that is able to send mass or few regular emails or text messages to mobile phones in roughly 30 seconds.	• In order to push data out to university servers, an additional fee needs to be paid to handle the transfer process. • It has the highest application fee of $40 compared to Horizons $15.50.

v. Horizons

Strengths	Weaknesses
• It offers a customized reporting engine which allows for real-time queries of the database and exports the results to Excel. • The program can be integrated with one of many payment gateways.	• The annual costs range from $2000 to $7,500 depending on the size of school. • The one-time setup costs are $2000 to $3,500.

vi. GopherU

Strengths	Weaknesses
• It offers the ability to automatically bill students. • The program easily tracks all important information and documentation related to different programs and applicants.	• It doesn't allow administrators to mass-communicate with travelers via e-mail. • It doesn't allow the input of side trips to other locations.

      vii. AbroadOffice

Strengths	Weaknesses
• It doesn't allow administrators to mass-communicate with travelers via e-mail. • It doesn't allow the input of side trips to other locations.	• It does not provide the ability to enter information about side trips. • It lacks a procedure for submitting incident reports.

    c. Available Demos

        i. StudioAbroad

StudioAbroad:
Student:
studyabroad.teradotta.com
username: amycrosby
password: amycrosby
sample data: Thee fake students in Europe, mostly in Spain, and 60 in japan.

Admin:
1) risk.terradotta.com
2) studyabroad.teradotta.com
admin user: rparker
admin password: rparker

      ii. Horizons

Can schedule a demo using the form at:
http://www.symplicity.com/schedule_a_demo#contact_form.product=Horizons

     iii. GopherU
Can request a free demo using the form at the bottom of the page:
http://gopherapp.com/

     iv. AbroadOffice

Video tour available at: http://www.abroadoffice.net/why-use-abroad-office.html

Request a free demo at: http://www.abroadoffice.net/how-to-get-abroadoffice.html

Product	Email from system (individual,group)		Upload Documents	Work flows	Automated processes	Payment system integration	Scheduling	Texting	Hosting server	Reports	Privacy pages	Legacy Information	Support
Simplicity "Horizons"	Yes, Yes	Yes, Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No				?	Yes	
TerraDotta "Studio Abroad"	Yes, Yes	Yes, Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	?		Yes		?	Yes	
Hobsons	Yes, Yes	Yes, Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes.	Yes.			?	?	Yes	
Abroad Office									?	Yes.	Yes	Yes	

Implementation

The following section describes the implementation process for StudioAbroad, which is the program that Team Global IT is recommending to GMU.

Hosting Options: In-house vs. remote

Regardless of the option GMU ultimately chooses, there are two options for hosting the software. GMU can host the software on its own servers, or the software can be hosted on the servers of the company that provides the software. Each option has its pros and cons.

Hosting at GMU would be more cost effective once the initial period of break-even for the necessary servers has passed. We have the staff but we need to know what this process involves.

TerraDotta hosting services reduces the client's time, cost, and necessary resources. Servers and databases need to meet requirements for StudioAbroad. TerraDotta's servers are SAS 70 Type II certified data centers. TerraDotta is responsible for performing all server updates and maintenance to its servers. Terra Dotta also performs backups, hot-fixes, patches, version upgrades, and maintains their operating systems and web servers. However, GMU would be reliant on TerraDotta.

Implementation Phases

The chart below explains how much time the implementation process will take depending on whether GMU or TerraDotta hosts. Time can vary based on the availability of utilities, staff skill, data complexity and other factors. A description of each implementation phase follows the chart below:

	Installed on Campus	Hosted by Terra Dotta
Software Installation	4-6 hours after application server is configured (OS, network, etc.)	0 hours
SCL Integration	2-4 hours for LDAP integration. 4-8 hours (or more) for other systems. A "split login," where internal users are redirected to an authentication server, and single-sign-on (SSO) implementations may take longer, perhaps 12-16 hours.	1-2 hours of assistance to provide Terra Dotta integration engineers with documentation, network authorizations, etc.
SIS Integration	8-16 hours after data fields are agreed to between office and IT. IT will need to provide a queriable data table or database/data warehouse view provisioned with the needed data. IT will also need to create a routine to refresh the table/view on a regular basis (e.g., nightly).	8-16 hours after data fields are agreed to between office and IT. IT will need to provide a delimited data file to Terra Dotta provisioned with the needed data. IT will also need to create a routine to refresh the table/view on a regular basis (e.g., nightly).
HR Integration	4 hours or less if available in LDAP. Most institutions have the needed HR data in an LDAP directory. HR data needs are minimal and include name, email address, phone and possibly department.	1-2 hours of assistance to provide Terra Dotta integration engineers with documentation, network authorizations, etc.

Software Installation

During this first phase of implementation, the StudioAbroad app software is installed once the necessary servers have been configured. This part of the implementation would take 0 hours if the software is hosted by TerraDotta. However, if CGE were to host it would take 4-6 hours after the application server is configured to complete this section.

Secure Campus Login (SCL) Integration

If StudioAbroad is hosted by CGE, this process takes 2-4 hours for LDAP integration, or 4-8 hours or more for other systems. Split-login (internal users re-directed to an authentication server) and single-sign-on implementations may take anywhere from 12-16 hours. If StudioAbroad is hosted by TerraDotta, then this process takes only 1-2 hours in which the TerraDotta integration engineers are provided with documentation, network authorizations, and other similar pieces of information.

Student Information System (SIS) Integration

This part of the implementation process takes 8 to 16 hours after the data fields are agreed on between the office and IT regardless of where the software is hosted. If the software is hosted by CGE, IT will need to provide a query-able database with the data. A routine will need to be created to refresh the table or view on a regular basis such as nightly. If StudioAbroad is hosted by TerraDotta, IT will need to provide a delimited data file to TerraDotta with the needed data. The routine to refresh the data is also necessary.

Human Resource (HR) integration

If StudioAbroad is hosted by CGE, then this part of the process will take 4 hours, or less if the information is available in LDAP. Most institutions have this info available, and HR data needs are very minimal (name, e-mail, phone, and department). If the software is hosted by TerraDotta, this part of the process will take 1-2 hours, during which time CGE staff would provide TerraDotta engineers with documentation, network authorizations, and other information.

Access - Web Portal

This solution software will be accessible by web-portal. Depending on hosting options, the URL for the main portal and risk management portal would be assigned to the George Mason University's staff responsible for populating the information in the database through the web-portal.

    d. Who is expected to use it

        Ultimately, staff managing StudioAbroad has access management capability to limit what may be accessed by users. Users expected to use the software through a web portal are staff and administrators for each department including anyone who has students going on ad-hoc trips or study abroad within that department, emergency department, Mason students and also the community, those who are participating in any trips nationally or internationally.

    e. LDAP or Unique user-name and password

        Lightweight Directory Access Protocol is an Internet protocol that email and programs may use to look up information from a server. Information includes usernames and passwords of that user. User(s) responsible for managing StudioAbroad do have the task to assign specific usernames and passwords to roles for access control. StudioAbroad may use LDAP to connect to Banner and other servers on the George Mason University network.

Responsible Department of GMU

CGE vs. University-Wide: include introduction paragraph

1. StudioAbroad has the capability to be used and accessed by anyone related to Mason, depending on the user(s) managing StudioAbroad. Since StudioAbroad has an organized database and subject selection, this software should be used not only for CGE but also as a University scope.
2. CGE would be the main department responsible for managing the software as that would ease and express their responsibilities and roles. CGE may delegate staff rights and allow other users to manage their program(s) on the software.
3. It would be at most efficient as a University to have all departments utilize this tool to know where their students are going and to have the ability to trace new notifications or send immediate alerts. In case of an emergency, all staff with delegated permissions have the responsibility to notify any changes to stakeholders of George Mason University

Cost
Chart comparing the four solutions

	StudioAbroad	Horizon	GopherU	AbroadOffice
Start Up Cost	$20,800 (start-up) $12,400 (after 10 years)	$15,237	$21,500 - $26,900	Free
Annual Fee	17,300 First 10 Years			
One time cost & recurring costs	$4,900 annual license (paid annually for first 10 years) $8,800 annual maintenance and support	Depends on number of people inputted ($2,000-$7,500/yr) + one time set up costs ($2,000-$3,500), ranges with modular or full edition pricing -- 3.5% TU discount	Option 1 (Hosted Solution): $21,500/yr Option 2 (locally hosted): One-time payment of $21,500 + $5,400/yr	Free
Hosting/licensing	**$3,600/yr**	Hosted solution only offered. Price included in the annual fee.	Locally hosted: $5,400/yr Hosted: $21,500/yr	Hosted solution only offere
Cost per applicant	**N/A**	$15.50	N/A	N/A
Forecasted annual Cost	**$17,300 for years 1-10** **$12,400 after**	$7,500/yr after the initial payment.	Hosted solution: $21,500/yr Locally hosted: $5,400/yr after initial payment is made.	N/A
Unique Costs				

Total Average Annual Cost			

Information for each individual program

    ii. StudioAbroad cost information

Listed below are costs for purchasing and implementing StudioAbroad. Most of the one-time start up fees can be handled by the IT department with APIs and support that are provided at no charge.

License Fee	Years 1-10	Years 11+
Annual License (converts to perpetual license after 10th year)	$4,900	$0

Annual Fees	
Annual Maintenance & Support	$8,800
Annual Hosting Service (optional)	$3,600

Annual Maintenance & Support – Includes all enhancements and new features that are included in new software releases, maintenance patches, advice on the operation and use of the software; assistance with suspected problems; free online training videos; access to TerraDotta support resources available at TerraDottaUniversity.com, and access to TerraDotta Professional Services.

Hosting Service – TerraDotta offers hosting services to clients who do not have a data center or to those who prefer to use external resources to install and operate the Terra Dotta software. With hosting, Terra Dotta is responsible for all software installs and updates. This includes the server operating system, database software, ColdFusion, Terra Dotta software and all hot-fixes, patches and version upgrades.

Additional Services – Implementation of TerraDotta Software is a joint effort between the office purchasing the software, their campus IT group and TerraDotta Professional Services. These Professional Services are one-time project costs.

Additional Services	
Standard Data Integrations - SIS, Login, HR Directory	**$1,500**
Standard Graphical Integration	**$2,000**
Credit Card Payment Gateway Integration	**$2,000**
Custom Services	**$200/hour**
Content Development	**$50/hour**
Online Training	**Free/$395**
On-Campus Training (1 day)	**$995 + Travel**

Data Integration – TerraDotta Software can be integrated with other campus data systems such as the campus login system or data from the student information system or HR directory. TerraDotta will work with campus IT to set up standard integrations, using CAS, Shibboleth or LDAP authentication and secure file feeds or web-services for SIS data, for a fixed, one-time fee of $1,500. Data integrations using any other technologies are possible and are done on at a Professional Services rate of $200/hour.

Graphical Integration – A "skin" or graphic layout can be developed to match your institution's preferred web look and brand image. A simple logo and color scheme design can be implemented at no cost. A standard graphical layout can be developed to integrate the look of your Terra Dotta Software with your institution's web identity. TerraDotta provides documentation for your web team to perform the graphical integration or you can engage TerraDotta to create a standard layout to match your current web look for a fixed fee of $2,000. TerraDotta Professional Services can develop a more elaborate custom layout at a cost of $200/hour.

Credit Card Integration – TerraDotta Professional Services will work with your credit card service provider to integrate the software with payment processing to collect program and other fees from your applicants for a fixed, one-time fee of $2,000.

Custom Services – TerraDotta Professional Services can be contracted for special projects. Examples include development of custom reports, data exports, consulting, etc. Special projects vary in amount of time to complete depending on the requirements of the project and are charged at $200/hour.

Content Development – TerraDotta resources are available to help create the web-page, program and application material content so you can begin using the software more quickly. We recommend that the university staff develop some of the needed content as a way to learn to use the software, but TerraDotta assistance can be a valuable resource if staffing or timing are an issue.

Training – Over 30 hours of free online video training is available. TerraDotta also offers on-campus training at an additional cost. On-campus training agendas are custom designed to meet your specific requirements. You may include any number of participants in your training sessions. A 1-day on-campus session costs $995 plus travel costs. Web training is also available. A three and one half hour interactive web training session is also available for $395.

Important note - In contacting the sales team at StudioAbroad, Global IT was able to ascertain the following information - the contract has provisions for a possible 3% to 5% increase although TerraDotta has not activated increases.

Horizons

Horizons is a very affordable program. The company offers different prices based on the number of students a university has. The annual costs range from $2,000 to $7,500 depending on the size of school. The one-time setup costs are $2,000 to $3,500.

GopherU

GopherU would be a somewhat affordable solution for CGE. The annual license fee is $21,500 if GopherU were to host. However, if GMU were to host, then the software would be sold for a one-time charge of $5,400.

AbroadOffice

AbroadOffice is cheaper to obtain than proprietary software as are other types of open-source software. The application is hosted by AbroadOffice rather than in-house, which eliminates technology as an operational hurdle for CGE because the office does not have to hire technicians to maintain the database or ensure the servers and technology that is purchased is compatible with AbroadOffice. However, this does introduce additional maintenance fees. Even with the fees associated with hosting, the overall price is for using open-source is significantly cheaper than the proprietary software options Team Global IT researched and therefore could potentially make it the preferred solution.

B. Team Global IT's Recommendation

After investigating each of the four software options, Team Global IT believes that TerraDotta's StudioAbroad is the best program for GMU. It is the industry leader. StudioAbroad is used by both large and small universities across the country (Please see Appendix C for a list of schools). It does everything that the Center for Global Education needs it to do, plus several things that would be nice to have but not necessarily needed. For these reasons, Team Global IT believes the high cost of StudioAbroad can be justified.

In the event that it is not feasible at this time to purchase StudioAbroad, Team Global IT recommends that GMU choose Symplicity's Horizons software. It does everything that the Center for Global Education must have at a much more affordable price than StudioAbroad. However, it does not have all of the additional features that would be nice to have.

Conclusion

In this proposal, Team Global IT first recognized that George Mason University is in need of a new student tracking system. It then presented information about each of the four possible options it investigated, and gave a first and second choice recommendation of which program GMU should choose.

Choosing an application is only the first step in GMU's road to improving the way it does business with regard to tracking students. In addition to choosing a system, a university wide travel policy should be created to support the implementation and use of the selected system. The policy should address authority, who is required to use it, scope and applicability of registration systems, and other concepts applicable to travel registration and tracking.

Appendix A: Team Global IT Team Members
Ali Khraibani (1st semester team leader)

Ali will graduate with a Bachelor's degree in Applied Information Technology with a concentration in Information Security. He is professionally certified to work in the information technology field. Certifications include Microsoft Certified Professional, Microsoft Certified Desktop Support Technician, and Dell Certified Systems Expert. Currently he is a Junior Security Analyst contractor and is furthering his education in achieving professional certifications in security including Security+, CEH, and CISP. Ali is well experienced in user interaction after managing more than 20,000 employees and he continues to work with professionals (local employees to government contractors). His career goal is to become a Chief Information Security Officer.

Bridget Ryan (2nd semester team leader)

Bridget is pursuing a Databases and Programming concentration. She got her start in the wonderful world of programming by taking AP Computer Science as a senior in high school and passing the exam. Since then, she has enjoyed learning about the various areas of IT for her classes and focusing heavily on Java and Oracle databases for her concentration. She plans to begin pursuing a Master's in Library Science in the fall following graduation with the hope of working as a librarian someday.

Ed Murphy (team member)
Attending George Mason University as a student part time since 2006. A degree in information technology with a focus on security will be achieved in May of 2012. Worked for CRAssociates for the past 6 years. CRA provides healthcare solutions in a variety of arenas but most of the work is done within the VA system and providing care for veterans. Operating title is IT manager and works directly under the company CIO. Familiar with a variety of IT practices, procedures, and programs. Provides support to the company with an extensive knowledge and background in web development, graphics, and network administration. Manages 70 corporate employees in addition to 40 clinics and employees nationwide.

Additionally, besides career and school, home life is busy with a two daughters under the age of four. Married for seven years, wife currently works for the federal government in Alexandria.

Kevin Anantawong (team member)

Kevin is pursuing a Network and Telecommunication concentration. He got started when he was at Northern Virginia Community College by taking several IT classes. Since then, he had learned a lot and experience different technology aspects. He is ready to go on to the real world hoping to get entry level IT consultant or IT analyst as first job right out of college and one day have his business with couple of close friends.

Rafik Al Baccouche (team member)

Rafik is an international student from Oman. His journey in the field of information technology started in NOVA studying computer science. After moving to the George Mason University, and after realizing the importance, and great attention information security received in Oman, he decided to switch directions and pursue a degree in information technology, concentrating in security. His short term plan is to gain experience in an IT organization within the United States, while also obtaining certifications in CCNA and Security+. Rafik's long term goal is to return to Oman and use the skills and experiences gained to support and aid the department of IT Security and Standards related to the Royal Court Affairs.

    a. StudioAbroad Documentation
        i. Links to Information
          The following list is one of links to information from TerraDotta about StudioAbroad
- Main Information Website: http://www.terradotta.com/studioabroad.html
- Demonstration Video: http://www.terradotta.com/studioabroad_demonstration_videos.html
  - This is a video that explains how StudioAbroad works
- Technical Documents: http://www.terradotta.com/tech_documents.html
- Technical FAQs: http://www.terradotta.com/studioabroad_technical_considerations.html
- Purchasing Information: http://www.terradotta.com/studioabroad_purchasing_information.html
  - this is the basic purchasing information available on TerraDotta's website
        ii. Information from StudioAbroad (sent via e-mail to team members)
          1. Off-Campus Studies Proposal for Purchasing StudioAbroad Software

Off-Campus Studies Proposal for Purchasing StudioAbroad Software
Overview of Request:
The Off-Campus Studies office is requesting the purchase of the office management software StudioAbroad (*http://www.terradotta.com/studioabroad.html*), a web-based software system that will help streamline workload by automating office processes. Overall, StudioAbroad will reduce data entry and consolidate information, increase efficiency and eliminate paperwork, assist in the maintenance of current program data and mitigate risks when students and staff are traveling. This in turn will free up the OCS office to focus more on programming, encouraging the integration of the off-campus experience into student education, and helping students develop Graduate Qualities of Global Engagement and a Respect for Diversity.
The OCS office sends approximately 200 students off-campus each year on semester-long and faculty-led programs. The OCS staff consists of one full-time Director and a part-time Assistant Director for Global Engagement who coordinates faculty-led programs. The four part-time student assistants are shared by the entirety of the Center for Diversity and Global Engagement. Previously, each student applicant was required to complete a paper application; new online survey software

used by the College does not allow for completion of the application in several sessions. Resource-heavy administrative issues that arise in the application process and afterward include time-consuming data entry, filing, creation and maintenance of e-mail lists and Excel tables, printing of paper forms, contacting/reminding students of deadlines, updating applications, etc.

An increasing number of institutions, many similar to ours (*http://www.terradotta.com/about_client_list.html#studioAbroad*), are choosing to use StudioAbroad software:

<mark>The Director of OCS has discussed this software with NAME HERE from IT, whose letter of support accompanies this proposal.</mark>

Rationale:

OCS requests the purchasing of StudioAbroad for the following reasons:

1. Increased Efficiency:
   - All application forms and required documents will be located within the StudioAbroad website in electronic format, thereby eliminating paperwork and providing easy and immediate access by students and faculty.
   - StudioAbroad allows for the creation of a system of checks and balances. Students will know where they are at during each step of the application process by following along their personal online checklist. They are immediately notified when a form has been completed and can keep track of the forms they are still working on. This in turn will reduce the amount of time we spend notifying students of the status of their applications. The software will also increase accuracy of information.
   - StudioAbroad is capable of integrating with the campus database, thereby updating student data automatically and reducing time spent by OCS and the Registrar to verify student eligibility.
   - Information is consolidated into a single database, increasing the accuracy of data collection.
   - StudioAbroad is capable of integrating with HTH health insurance, eliminating the necessity of individually enrolling students.
   - Faculty leading programs can access applications as they are submitted online, increasing accurate and consistent communication between the OCS office and faculty leaders.
2. Accurate Program Data:
   - StudioAbroad automatically creates a digital program catalog for affiliated programs. The information in the catalog is automatically updated and easily searchable and accessible for students and advisors.
   - StudioAbroad will assist with proper data management, as we look towards the upcoming HLC review and the continuing culture of assessment. Currently, it is often difficult to collect accurate data, since students change their plans without always informing the OCS office.
3. Risk Management:
   - With our current system students need to submit Emergency Contact information on their application and an Emergency Contact Card. They list the primary contact

person, which we keep on file in paper format. With StudioAbroad, this will be a part of the online application, providing OCS and faculty leaders with immediate online access to the students' emergency contact information.

- o StudioAbroad incorporates online registration forms for any student or faculty travel during programs. Using the software's locator feature, we will have the ability to know exactly where students are during all travel. In the future we may consider purchasing a Risk License from StudioAbroad to manage all off campus travel, including one day and short term field trips, Copeland research trips, athletic trips, volunteer trips, etc.
- o StudioAbroad has the ability to complete batch registrations with the State Department on the students' behalf.
- o StudioAbroad allows for online incident reporting during faculty-led programs. Currently, programs do not require incident reporting, which is a best practice for risk management.

4. Cost Saving:

- o The 2011-2012 academic year brought record numbers of students studying off campus. As we continue to see these semester-long and faculty-led trips grow, workload is increasing for the small OCS staff. If Global Engagement continues to be a strategic priority for The College, StudioAbroad will allow us to better manage the workload without hiring additional staff in the immediate future.
- o The online system will reduce paper and photocopying costs.

Estimated Cost:

	Cost Year 1	Cost Year 2 and future
One-Time Set up Fee	$1500*	-
Annual License Fee	$2,500	$2,500
Application Fee (per-student)	$25(per student) X 200 students	$25(per student) X 200 students
Total	$9,000 (based on 200 students)	$7500 (based on 200 students)
*One Time Optional Fee	$2,000	-
Total including optional fee	$11,000	$6,250

*Includes integration with the OCS web interface and campus database. StudioAbroad offers content and development services: integration with the OCS web interface would cost an additional one-time set-up fee of $2000. Also, StudioAbroad can complete all of the initial content development ($50/hour), or OCS could hire a student to do so. This would incur further costs.

Payment Options:

- Option 1: College covers total expense (based on costs savings listed above).
- Option 2: Students cover the application fee costs. Students would be charged an additional $25 for submitting an application. The College would cover one-time set-up and annual license fees.
- Option 3: Students cover all costs. Students would be charged $55 for submitting an application.

- Option 4: The OCS Administrative Fee is increased to 1.25% of the Campus Comprehensive Fee. The increase (from $476 to $595 for 2011-2012) would cover both the application fee as well as the set-up and license fees.

Note: For options 2 & 3, this would require fee collection via the Business Office and student billing which would then be used for payment of the annual and set-up fees. While the application fee or increased administrative fee might solidify student commitment by students, it might also prove to be a deterrent to student applications. For option 4, some students might apply, incurring a $25 application fee, but not study off-campus and not pay the administrative fee.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4*
Student Fee (200 Students)	0	$25	$55	$119
Total College Contribution	$11000	$6000	0	0
Grand Total	$11000	$11000	$11000	($11550 surplus)

* Assumes 25% more students will apply then actually study off-campus.

With the increased emphasis on Global Engagement and the growing student population, if the College cannot support adding an additional staff member at this time, then adding this software package will a allow us to continue to manage our current responsibilities efficiently.

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2. Scope of Work/Specifications

C. **SCOPE OF WORK / SPECIFICATIONS**

Items listed below are requirements for the study abroad database software application. Those features that are optional, yet preferred, are noted with a "(preferred)" label following.

Specifications:

1) Features/System Capabilities to be included in application are:

a. Front Desk Management/Advising Management Capabilities:
i. Student can log into database system during each office visit using university unique identifier (e.g. "Mailbox" ID or "VIP" ID).
ii. System generates advising record upon log-in that is pre-populated with general student information from University records system.
iii. Advising record on-line form includes customizable drop-down and/or fill-in fields to be completed by student.
iv. Data fields can be required and/or restricted.
v. Upon log-in, student can update advising record as needed.
vi. Advising record can be printed in readable "form" (e.g. PDF form) format at any time.

vii. Database maintains electronic student record (account) with section for advisor comments, comments accessible by staff only.

viii. Student log-in function allows tracking of student visits to office and automatically updates student record with last visit date (date/time stamp) and updated information from University records system.

ix. Provides for electronic signature capture.

x. Ability to query students according to multiple fields in advising record and email according to specified fields/categories.

b. Application Management Capabilities:

i. System Interfaces with/is able to pull student data from existing University student data system to populate application.

ii. Allows students to create/access account, apply online, and upload supporting documents for all three types of programs:

1. Exchange/direct enroll programs

2. Third party programs (provider programs)

3. USC faculty-led programs

iii. Allows for electronic signature on application.

iv. Allows staff to customize application fields and drop down menus, and/or modify existing fields.

v. Automatically notifies appropriate staff member by email of new application submission for exchange/direct enroll program category.

vi. Automatic generation of email reminders for missing documents according to program type, orientation registration, and like items, e.g.:

1. host institution materials

2. third party program provider materials

3. faculty-led program application supplement

4. Secondary application forms

vii. Allows student to monitor application status by clearly indicating application status and required next steps.

viii. Allows staff to monitor application status and classify application (e.g. accepted, denied, pending, etc)

ix. Automatically notifies applicant by email of acceptance.

x. Allows electronic signature for acceptance of program placement.

xi. Prohibits late applications from being submitted.

1. Presents late application submission with late fee required statement;

2. Holds late applications as pending until staff approves application for submission.

c. Communications Management Capabilities:

i. Automatically generates email notice to students and staff, flagging incomplete applications following deadline.

ii. Automatically alerts staff of applications requiring medical follow up (i.e. when student indicates YES on medical section of application).

iii. Allows student to cancel application.

1. Upon cancellation, automatically generates dropdown menu with reasons for cancellation requiring student to choose one.

2. Tracks cancellations by program duration and rationale for cancellation.

3. Maintains cancelled records with comments in database for specified period, accessible by staff.
iv. Allows student to electronically request faculty recommendation.
1. Includes link to on-line form faculty can complete.
2. Allows for electronic signature on faculty recommendation form.
3. Submission automatically uploads recommendation to student application account.
4. Student notified by email when recommendation has been submitted and by whom, but actual recommendation viewable only by office staff.
v. Allows students to register for specific events, e.g. pre-departure orientation (preferred).
vi. Allows students to view available appointment times and schedule appointments on-line, interfacing with Office's Outlook calendar (preferred).
vii. Ability staff to post announcements on the main "Log in" page (preferred).

d. Data Reporting Management Capabilities:
i. Allows for fully customizable query generation and data manipulation.
ii. Ability to upload/convert existing access database information into new database system.
i. Provides for remote access to student information, while adhering to University security requirements.
ii. Ability to upload and store multiple documents (e.g. passport copies) to individual student accounts.
iii. Ability to generate reports and automatically insert information into custom generated letters and emails

e. Privacy Management Capabilities:
i. Ability to limit access to student information; provide various levels of information access dependent on staff clearance.
ii. Compliant with University student privacy provisions.

f. Technical Requirements and Capabilities:
i. Ability to interface with University IMS system and Banner system.
ii. System should preferably be able to force all user input data to be converted to upper case, or at least provide non-case sensitive searching and reporting.
iii. System should provide customizable data field edits in online application form completion, at the minimum to specify and enforce fields that require data entry (those that cannot be left blank).
iv. Manager/ Supervisor should have the ability to reset or disable administrative account passwords.
v. System should have provision for locking out user accounts after repeated incorrect login attempts.
vi. Ability to lock down the system in the event that data, accounts or passwords are believed to be compromised or under attack.
vii. Vendor should provide formal problem reporting procedure with normal expected response time to reported problems and expected restoral time in the event of system or network outages.
viii. Vendor should provide technical support contact information, report severity classifications and formal escalation procedures for critical problems.

ix. Vendor should have procedures in place to provide archived backup data in PGP encrypted file format.

x. Ability to enforce secure user connection using https, ssh and/or secure ftp.

xi. Ability to create custom reports and download them securely in standard file formats (xls, csv, doc).

xii. Ability to upload and download brochures, calendars, application forms, and other pdf documents via ftp.

xiii. Log in page can be accessed via University's VIP system.

xiv. Email functions must be fully compatible with Microsoft Outlook 2007, "gmail" and "Live" email systems.

g. Other Requirements:

i. Ability to complete implementation by May 31, 2009

ii. Provides for USC specific customizations, e.g. uploading of USC major codes, study abroad program specific information.

h. Installation, Training and Support Requirements

i. Provide onsite training for all purchased modules

ii. No fee access to online training, web seminars, and other virtual training modules

iii. Telephone and internet support

3. Sample Software Proposal

SAMPLE

The purpose of this document is to provide information about StudioAbroad and to request funding from the university to purchase the product. It is a sample. Text in *italics* indicates that university-specific information should be entered in that area.

StudioAbroad Software for Applications and Student Records
Product Snapshot

StudioAbroad is a software product designed to make study abroad offices run more efficiently and manage information for administrators, students, and parents. It provides a content management system, web-based application system and an application management and database solution. While the product is focused on traditional study abroad, it has the flexibility to include a broad range of international programs including internships, volunteer work, exchanges, student organization travel, independent research, etc.

Product page: http://www.terradotta.com/studioabroad.html

Demonstration Videos: http://www.terradotta.com/studioabroad_demonstration_videos.html

Partial Client List

Advice: Provide a select list of clients that are most comparable to your university. If your university uses PeopleSoft, indicate which of those clients are also PeopleSoft schools. If your university uses Banner, indicate which of those clients are Banner clients.

- *Drexel University – Banner - SaaS*

- *Saint Mary's – Banner - SaaS*
- *University of Connecticut – Full License – People Soft*
- *University of Florida – Full License – People Soft*
-
- *Insert Client University Name Here*
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Detailed Client List: http://www.terradotta.com/about_client_list.html

SAMPLE
StudioAbroad Software for Applications and Student Records
Strategic Funding Request

Objectives: Streamline administration, build capacity for growth and provide better service to students.

Funding: Requesting funds for initial software license, customization and legacy data import plus a recurring allocation for annual maintenance, data hosting, SIS/graphical integration and training.

Needs Assessment: The system should meet the following business needs:

- Centralize and securely store student records for prospectives, participants and alumni.
- Meet our stewardship responsibilities for travel registration and managing student emergencies abroad.
- Extract student data from SIS and reduce manual data entry time.
- Offer on-line applications, document submission and status updates.
- Develop on-line pre-departure modules for students and parents.
- Maintain an electronic trail for admission decisions, course approvals and advising notes that can be accessed by multiple staff members (instead of stored in individual email accounts).
- Reallocate staff time to student advising and program development (instead of data entry and application tracking).

The system could also support the following activities:

- Pre-departure planning and support services for the international internship program.
- Travel registration and emergency communications for all student organizations and project teams – both domestic and international.
- Improved tracking of students who travel independently for volunteer work, research, conferences, independent programs, etc. (both graduate and undergraduate).
- Improved tracking and information sharing for international visiting scholars. Departments/faculty could search for international visitors by country, research interests, etc.

Based on our evaluations of other units and peer institutions, we determined that *StudioAbroad*, a commercial product designed specifically for study abroad administration, would be the most time and cost -effective solution. We considered other options, such as modifying the current database or working with a consultant to develop our own system, but the quoted costs and technical support staff needed for maintenance and future modifications did not make this a viable option.

System Features:

- Program database with multiple search functions (country, discipline, term, course, etc.)
- On-line applications and student advising accounts accessible with campus login.
- Capacity to collect and review all supporting documents on-line.
- Electronic signature feature for insurance, health and other required forms.
- Integrated internship registry for work abroad.
- On-line review of course approvals and updates for equivalencies.
- Automated requests and on-line forms for faculty recommendations.
- On-line advising notes and ability for multiple advisors to respond/view student email correspondence.
- Automated email reminders, group announcements and text messaging capabilities.
- Extensive queries and reports.
- Data exports for partner institutions, health insurance, student accounts, etc.
- Interactive quizzes and on-line pre-departure modules. Content can be modified by advisors (e.g. health and safety, visa applications, cultural adjustment, etc.).
- Automatic web updates & web metrics.
- Student pages (photos, blogs, testimonials, peer networking, storage of information, etc.)

Implementation: The following units were consulted and agreed to support StudioAbroad implementation:

- Student records and data security: Registrar *(List specific names)*
- PeopleSoft data access and SIS integration: PeopleSoft support *(List specific names)*
- Web support, graphical integration, data security and hosting: Computing Support *(List specific names)*

4. International Programs Database Proposal

PROPOSAL FOR A WEB-BASED DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS OFFICE

Historical Background of International Programs Office

I. **Outgoing students**

	INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS OFFICE PARTICIPANTS/APPLICANTS (% ACCEPTED)			
	FALL	WINTER	SPRING	SUMMER	TOTAL
2006	147/320 (46%)	143/282 (51%)	37/66 (56%)	18/34 (53%)	345/702 (49%)
2007	142/296 (48%)	178/337 (53%)	34/54 (63%)	21/26 (81%)	375/713 (53%)
2008	149/338 (44%)	125/267 (47%)	44/63 (70%)	34/51 (67%)	352/719 (49%)
2009	154/272 (57%)	159/303 (52%)	47/62 (76%)	25/32 (78%)	385/669 (58%)
2010	137/263 (52%)	192/317 (61%)	47/82 (57%)	11/13 (86%)	387/675 (57%)
5-YR AVG PART/APP	**146/299 (49%)**	**160/301 (53%)**	**42/66 (64%)**	**22/31 (71%)**	**368/696 (53%)**

II.

Looking at a five-year average, the International Programs office receives closes to 700 applications and sends more than 50% of those applicants abroad. Students wishing to study abroad apply two terms prior to the term in which they wish to go abroad. For example, a student going abroad in the fall term would apply in the winter term of the previous academic year. Looking at the above numbers, the fall and winter programs have the highest number of applicants, which means the busiest times in the office are the winter and spring terms.

STUDY ABROAD PROCESS EACH TERM

EXAMPLE OF STUDY ABROAD PROCESS

As an example, if we look at winter programs in the 2010-11 academic year, the International Programs office received 317 applications. Each complete application packet is comprised of the application form, which has grown from two to four pages, a 1-page essay (now included as part of the application) and student transcripts.

For tracking purposes, the 317 applications were received at the end of week 3 of the Winter term. These needed to be logged with student name, ID and program. Each application needs to be scanned and sent to the appropriate faculty and his/her committee for review. Concurrently, all student names are sent to Counseling, Dean of Students, Dean

of Studies and Finance offices to ensure they are in good standing.

Approximately two weeks are given for review. At approximately week 5 of the winter term, upon hearing back from the committees and offices, decision letters are created and need to be cross-referenced for those students who have applied to more than one program. Students who have applied to more than one program need to received individualized letters explaining the outcome of each program. Letters are placed in mailboxes by the end of week 6.

Students typically have two weeks to respond and confirm participation by providing a $200 deposit to the Finance Office. They are given a receipt that they must bring to the International Programs Office. The remainder of the term is generally used to finalize the fall programs. As an example, if a student applied to two programs and was accepted to both, once s/he makes a decision, there is an opening in the program from which s/he withdrew.

In the spring term, meetings are held to discuss documentation and program information. Students are given a soft deadline to complete paperwork by week 5. The hard deadline occurs week 7-8.

Example: Winter Cycle Summary (12 programs) – 192 participants/317 applicants

Process	Time to Complete	Average Program Time (Minutes)	Issues	Interfering Factors
Work with Professors to set up Information Meetings	30 minutes per program			- General Phone Inquiries - Answering student email inquiries - Answering parent email inquiries - Answering student phone inquiries - Answering parent phone inquiries - Answering students' questions as they come in - Reconciling budgets for each program - Managing director's calendar
		30		

				• Preparing for another cycle of programs • Students dropping out of a program • Preparing statistics for different office/departments
Create and promote information sessions (Copy flyers, create on campus calendar, create mass email)	30 minutes per program	30		
Update/Create web page for each program	Once received from professor – 30-60 minutes to finalize	45		
Review and Enter Student Application	One-Two Minutes per Application	55	• Incorrect spelling, use of nicknames • Error inputting student IDs • Omit application entry to master list • Students dropping off application without awaiting review	

Alphabetize applications by Program	Up to 3 hours	15	• Sorted incorrectly	
Scan each application and prepare to send to committee	6-8 hours	40	• Realize an item may be missing from application • Removing staples and clips even though have asked students not to use them • Scanner issues	
Send applications and instructions to committees	15 minutes per program	15		
Send master list of applicants to Union offices for review	5 minutes	5		
Review decisions and prepare letters for programs	1 – 1.5 hours per program; Two-Three hours per program in fall when need to crosscheck applicants who applied to two programs against other programs	60		

Place decision letters in mail box	1 hour	5	• Letters placed in wrong box	
Receive deposits for acceptance	1 minute per accepted student	15	• Students don't know to bring receipt to IP office	
Finalize program participants: • Work with professors and outreach to student • Create master Excel file for each program • Create file for each student • Create email distribution list for each program	2 hours per program	120	• Sometimes spreadsheet has not been updated, reflecting incorrect information	
Preparation of first pre-departure orientation session	2-3 hours	15		
Review/update required paperwork students must complete	Varies	10		
Email paperwork and instructions to students	30-60 minutes	5		
Prepare second pre-departure	30 minutes	30		

meeting with students: • Coordinate schedules with Director of IP and Faculty Leader • Reserve Room • Inform Students	per program			
Review student paperwork turned in	For complete paperwork – up to five minutes	80		
Notarize student signature	2 minutes per student	32		
Notarize Director's signature	2 minutes per document	32		
Follow-up with students with missing paperwork • Review spreadsheet • Confirm missing items by reviewing file • Send email(s)	About 35% of students' paperwork is incomplete. It takes up to 15 minutes per student to follow-up	84		
Create ISIC card: • Prepare master list with name, DOB and validity	10 minutes per card	160	• Incorrect entry of name • Incorrect entry of DOB • Incorrect entry of	

			card number	
• Prepare and cut photos • Create card: adhere photo, label and a clear top cover over the entire card • Write card number on student application • Enter student and card information on spreadsheet to send to ISIC provider				
Prepare student Meal Allowance if needed	15 minutes per program	15		
Prepare faculty meal allowance/stipend	10 minutes per program	10		
Send IP manual and CRI cards to faculty	15 minutes per program			
<mark>Prepare contact/medical information for each student on program to send to faculty</mark>	<mark>30-60 minutes per program</mark>	<mark>60</mark>	<mark></mark>	

Note: The first row continues from the previous page with "date to print labels" at the top of the first column.

Tracking Student Courses to send to Registrar	10 minutes per student	160		
Receiving Emergency Contact Information and entering into Spreadsheet	10 minutes per student	160		
TOTAL TIME PER PROGRAM		• **1280 minutes or** • **22 hours**		
TOTAL TIME FOR ALL WINTER PROGRAMS		• **256 hours** • **Almost 7 weeks**		

II. **Incoming students**

The International Programs office is responsible for processing the applications of incoming exchange students. On average the office receives 25-30 applications for an academic year. The students attend one, two or three terms. Regardless of length of stay, the majority of the students apply at the end of the winter term of the academic year prior to the one in which they will attend. During the spring term of the academic year prior to the one in which they will attend, processing, acceptance and mailing of DS-2019 occurs in coordination with International Student Services office and involvement of Modern language faculty in the selection process for the Language Assistants.
ANNUAL APPLICATION PROCESS FOR INCOMING AND OUTGOING STUDENTS 2010-2011 ACADEMIC YEAR EXAMPLE:

The goal of a Study Abroad Management System is to automate all facets of the study abroad cycle (Promotion, Application, Acceptance, Abroad, Returning, Alumni) for both incoming and outgoing students. The office would like to reduce it carbon footprint in particular with the amount of paper generated and also minimize the repetitive tasks required. Also, it would like to empower students to be more self-directed in the application process so they can see where they stand at any point. Students would also have access to this information while abroad if they would need to access it, e.g. in the case of a lost/stolen passport or a medical issue which requires producing medical history.
Having a database would certainly reduce the amount of the many tasks listed in the table above. The expected time savings from specific tasks, together with the

reduction/elimination of certain errors, is shown below (tasks were highlighted in yellow in the table above):

Process	Time to Complete	Average Program Time (Minutes)	Issues
Review and Enter Student Application	One-Two Minutes per Application	55	• Incorrect spelling, use of nicknames • Error inputting student IDs • Omit application entry to master list • Students dropping off application without awaiting review
Alphabetize applications by Program	Up to 3 hours	15	• Sorted incorrectly
Scan each application and prepare to send to committee	6-8 hours	40	• Realize an item may be missing from application • Removing staples and clips even though have asked students not to use them • Scanner issues
Send applications and instructions to committees	15 minutes per program	15	
Review decisions and prepare letters for programs	1 – 1.5 hours per program; Two-Three hours per program in fall when need to	60	

	crosscheck applicants who applied to two programs against other programs		
Receive deposits for acceptance	1 minute per accepted student	15	• Students don't know to bring receipt to IP office
Finalize program participants: • Work with professors and outreach to student • Create master Excel file for each program • Create file for each student • Create email distribution list for each program	2 hours per program	120	• Sometimes spreadsheet has not been updated, reflecting incorrect information
Email paperwork and instructions to students	30-60 minutes	5	
Follow-up with students with missing paperwork • Review spreadsheet • Confirm missing items by reviewing file • Send email(s)	About 35% of students' paperwork is incomplete. It takes up to 15 minutes per student to follow-up	84	
Prepare contact/medical information for each	30-60 minutes per program	60	

student on program to send to faculty			
Tracking Student Courses to send to Registrar	10 minutes per student	160	
Receiving Emergency Contact Information and entering into Spreadsheet	10 minutes per student	160	
Projected Time Savings Per Program		- **794 minutes or** - **13 hours**	
PROJECTED TOTAL TIME SAVINGS FOR ALL WINTER PROGRAMS		- **159 hours or** - **4 weeks**	

General Goals of the Database:

- **Promotion**
- Program descriptions, photos, blogs, videos, meetings
- Reduce printing costs
- **Application**
- Receive applications online
- Receive advisor and faculty recommendations online
- Schedule Online appointments
- Reduce printing costs
- **Acceptance**
- Students
    - Prepare acceptance letters
    - Track incoming forms, including course approval forms
    - Notify students automatically of what's missing
    - Reminders to prepare meal allowance checks
- Faculty
    - Prepare paperwork, if necessary
    - Prepare Meal Allowance/Stipend
- **Abroad (Risk Management)**
- Track student and faculty travel - domestically and abroad
- Send emails to individuals/groups if necessary
- Create/collect incident reports
- **Returning**
- Assessment & Feedback on program

- **Alumni (not currently doing)**
- Track alumni

Reporting

- See how many students are currently abroad and how many visiting students are on campus
- Immediately contact current students abroad in a specific geographic area
- Provide on-time reporting to different offices on campus and for reporting (such as Open Doors)

Database

- Integrate with Union College systems
  - Datatel
  - IFAS
  - Student ID photos taken by Campus Safety(?)
- Searchable
- Track what's missing

PROGRAMS REVIEWED
In considering how to review our options based on the above criteria, we looked both internally and externally. Our findings of four options are summarized below:

17.   **Internal Database**: We looked at the possibility of creating our own internal database in Access and spoke to the study abroad office at Skidmore College in Saratoga. In addition, we spoke to our IT liaison and also reviewed an international educator's online listserv for feedback on this option.
  - **Pros**
    - Easy to do reporting
    i. Able to share reporting with other departments/faculty
    ii. Long term guarantee (unlike external company which may go out of business)
  a. **Cons**
    - May take too long to build
    i. There can be issues with troubleshooting
    ii. May not have the personnel needed to fix if the support person leaves
    iii. As build out a program or functions, it may make the entire database more "fragile"
    iv. Still dealing with a lot of paper work
18. **GopherU**: A web-based data management system with many of the features of the two other programs we reviewed: customizable, application tracking, messaging capabilities, reporting, invoicing, etc.

The office ruled out this program given that the sales person did not invite confidence in the product. This is a newer company and they are still working out a lot of their issues with what seems to be their main client, NYU. Also, when we spoke to them, the option to track incoming international students was not available.

0. **AbroadOffice:** AbroadOffice was initially developed during a joint initiative between HACU (the Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities) and Global Learning Semesters with the objective of promoting study abroad for Hispanic students. It is a study abroad website integrated with a student and program database. It can be customized to include college/university policies and procedures, faculty-led, exchange, and third-party provider program listings. AbroadOffice is hosted in a corporate-grade IT facility and requires no software, hardware or IT support to use.
     . **Pros**
          . Customizable
          i. Application Tracking
          ii. Messaging
          iii. Reporting Features
          iv. Secure hosting
          v. Company will set up your programs
          vi. Free
          a. **Cons**
     . Cannot customize as much as with the other products
          i. Unable to track waitlist and waitpool candidates; only accepted
          ii. Harder to run more complex reporting queries
          iii. Not many study abroad offices use AbroadOffice
          iv. Contact could not confirm whether any trimester/quarter universities use AbroadOffice
          v. What if the company becomes insolvent?

Horizons (Symplicity Corp.): A web-based data management system. Symplicity Corporation was formed in 1996 to address an information gap that existed between college recruiters and graduating students, beginning with a publication to highlight employers. As more colleges began to subscribe to the publication guide, it quickly became apparent that the information Symplicity provided was more appropriate as a web based tool for students and career centers. Their partnerships are vast and now extend career services, judicial affairs, residence life, campus activities, admissions, orientation offices, event setup offices, and many others, including study abroad offices.
     . **Pros**
     i. Customizable
          ii. Application Tracking
          iii. Data Integration
          iv. Messaging
          v. Reporting Features
          vi. Invoicing
          vii. Secure hosting
          viii. Lower price than the Studio Abroad product

      a. **Cons**
- Inconsistent feedback concerning support
  - i. Not as many study abroad offices use Horizons
  - ii. Not many trimester/quarter universities use Horizons
  - iii. What if the company becomes insolvent?

Studio Abroad (Terra Dotta): Terra Dotta, which means learned world in Italian, was founded by Brandon S. Lee and Garrett Christian in 2001. Their vision is to enhance the delivery of learning capabilities and the administration of schools and other educational organizations through web-based interfaces available on any computer or mobile device connected to the Internet. StudioAbroad was born after a demonstration of UNC's new online processes at a NAFSA conference generated interest from many other study abroad program offices. A team of seven programmers, database experts, graphical artists, and designers worked for 18 months before releasing the initial version of StudioAbroad. Terra Dotta has since expanded the software product line to address the need for automated enrollment processing in other areas within a university setting, resulting in RiskInfoSys, i3s, Colloquia, WorldCompetencies and ApplicationGateway that meet a wide range of campus needs. Over the years, Terra Dotta software has continued to grow and adapt based on customer feedback in an effort to meet the ever-changing needs of the international and higher education communities

- **Pros**
- Customizable
  - i. Application Tracking
  - ii. Data Integration
  - iii. Messaging
  - iv. Reporting Features
  - v. Invoicing
  - vi. Secure hosting
  - vii. Adaptable product
  - a. **Cons**
- What if the company becomes insolvent?
  - i. Costly

Common Features of AbroadOffice, Horizons and Studio Abroad

		AbroadOffice	Horizons (Symplicity)	Studio Abroad (TerraDotta)
Customizable (branding, forms, tabs, menu)	X (tabs not customizable; limited branding)		X	X
Application Tracking	X		X	X
Comprehensive program & provider databases	X		X	X
Student management database with document	X		X	X

management, flags, and counseling/advising notes				
Batch communication and e-newsletter tools	X (not sure about newsletter tools)		X	X
Data Integration			X	X
Integrated calendaring and event management			X	X
Messaging	X		X	X
Reporting	X		X	X
Training	X		X	X
Consulting Services				X
Secure hosting	X		X	X
Single Sign On (CAS or LDAP)			X	X

Timeline
Based on discussion with various offices and the companies, the timeline for implementation seems to be 2-4 months assuming that all parties who need to be involved are ready to be involved. Based on this, below is a tentative timeline:
Mid-July 2011: Meet with CIO to discuss proposal
Early August 2011: Plan on-campus visit of Database company representatives if necessary with campus-wide stakeholders
Late August 2011: Select Product
Sept-December 2011: Prepare roll-out for ISAs/NonUnion/William Cady Stone
July-August 2012: Roll-out program for other Union Programs
December 2012: Roll-out program for Incoming Exchange Students

5. StudioAbroad Software Unique Features

StudioAbroad Software Unique Features

StudioAbroad Directory
Thousands of schools and hundreds of program providers host countless study abroad programs in every part of the world. Program information is extensive, changes constantly, and requires a huge effort to keep current. StudioAbroad Directory is a free service that Terra Dotta offers to the International Education Community. Through StudioAbroad Directory, program providers and

institutions can minimize the efforts required to provide accurate program information to potential study abroad applicants. StudioAbroad Directory is a central repository where any program provider can publish their program information for free! This is a public website where any student or institution can search for study abroad information. Every educational institution using StudioAbroad can download program information directly from StudioAbroad Directory into their StudioAbroad program catalog.
Click here to visit StudioAbroad Directory

Benefits of StudioAbroad Directory for StudioAbroad Clients:
With StudioAbroad Directory, you no longer have to input or update information about hundreds of provider programs. Terra Dotta clients can browse StudioAbroad Directory and subscribe to the desired provider programs. After subscribing, you can choose which aspects of the program information to download into your program catalog. When the provider updates the program information, you are notified and can then download the new information. This method is quick, easy, and ensures that your institution's information about provider programs is current and accurate.

Integration with insurers and emergency evacuation providers

With StudioAbroad you can safely and securely pass data like your travel roster to your evacuation carrier such as ISOS or Medex. At the request from some insurance companies working in the field of international education an integration was developed and deployed. We are able to expand this relationship with insurance and evacuation services for our clients.

Annual User Conference and the value of the SA community

Users of Terra Dotta software gather annually at Terra Dotta University, a conference that offers a variety of sessions on different topics. During this conference, users come together to explore new features of Terra Dotta software or creative uses of existing features, network with colleagues, and share best practices. In-depth workshops for new users and advanced users are offered pre and post conference. Sessions are presented by Terra Dotta staff as well as client institutions and all current Terra Dotta users are encouraged to attend. To learn more, visit our Terra Dotta University Conference Information page.

Travel risk management

With StudioAbroad you can quickly search for travelers' emergency contact and medical information, maintain time-sensitive content on your website, and implement campus-wide travel reporting, incident reporting, and risk procedure training.
Features that make StudioAbroad unique will be your ability to:

- Register side trips
- Locator search
- Communicate with travels via; text, phone, email

o   Prepare travelers with videos with specific to their destination

To view demonstrations of our risk management abilities please review these videos:

\> [Lost Passport](#) (3.5 mins.)
\> [Natural Disaster](#) (4 mins.)
\> [Student Accident](#) (3.5 mins.)

Targeted applications

Applications can be built specific to: the student, program, and timeframe/term. Within the student information profile, you can identify whatever fields in the student's information that you determine to be key. So for example if the dean of the economics department wants all economic majors to be issued a few extra questions on their application you can set this up. On the program level you will be able to launch specific applications so even though your London center has basic application the globe theater application is not the same as the international business. If the semester programs have different housing requirements than the faculty led programs, and that is also different that the summer housing you will be able to fine tune all this with our software.

Integration with any SCL/SIS

We can integrate with any student information system and secure sign on. Our software is designed to be flexible and we have documentation to help your IT department with any questions that they might have.

Learning content, assessments

To prepare your student, staff, faculty, and campus travelers before they leave campus your office can deploy learning content specific to the student, traveler, program, and term. On the risk management side this is a very powerful preparation tool. On the academic side you will be able to test cultural competency before, during, and after.

Application process configurable to your process

While many campuses are similar they are not the same. Our software is very flexible and can conform to your processes, cycles, and workflow. If you allow students to fill out 3 applications for Fall or if they have to apply to a program only from your vetted list of programs. You will be able to continue with your processes instead of conforming to our software.

Configurable reporting

Our software will allow you the ability to report on many elements of the application, applicant, and the program. Knowing that you have powerful searching and reporting capabilities will give you the ability to add information elements into your applications and report on them later. For example, program evaluations, housing evaluations, student surveys, incident reports, check on application

numbers and see the level of completion prior to deadline, reporting on exchanges, reporting on 3rd party participation, etc. Once you have your information pulling it out to Excel or securely sharing this information with a colleague is your choice.

Multiple recommendation types

Collecting recommendations electronically is great – having the ability to separate these recommendations into types is truly unique.

Data permissions and fine grain control

Your office will have the ability to control access to data access and functionality within the software. If your office determines that all faculty leaders should only have access to applications to their program once that student has been advised by your office you can do that. Your office will be able to set the data access level by group, by person, by program, and even by time frame within the application.
There are no charges for adding additional people to share your software.

        d. List of Contacted Universities and which system they use
            i. Information collected by Team Global IT

            StudioAbroad is used by approximately 200 schools. The following list of schools which use StudioAbroad can also be found at http://www.terradotta.com/about_client_list.html#studioAbroad.

Team Global IT also contacted several schools to ask what system they use to track students. Each team member of our team contacted 10 universities, for a total of 50 universities, and only 29 universities responded back. Below are the school data and statistic of software used in each individual university. Short comments received from some schools can be found next to their names.

Program Used by Contacted Study Abroad Offices
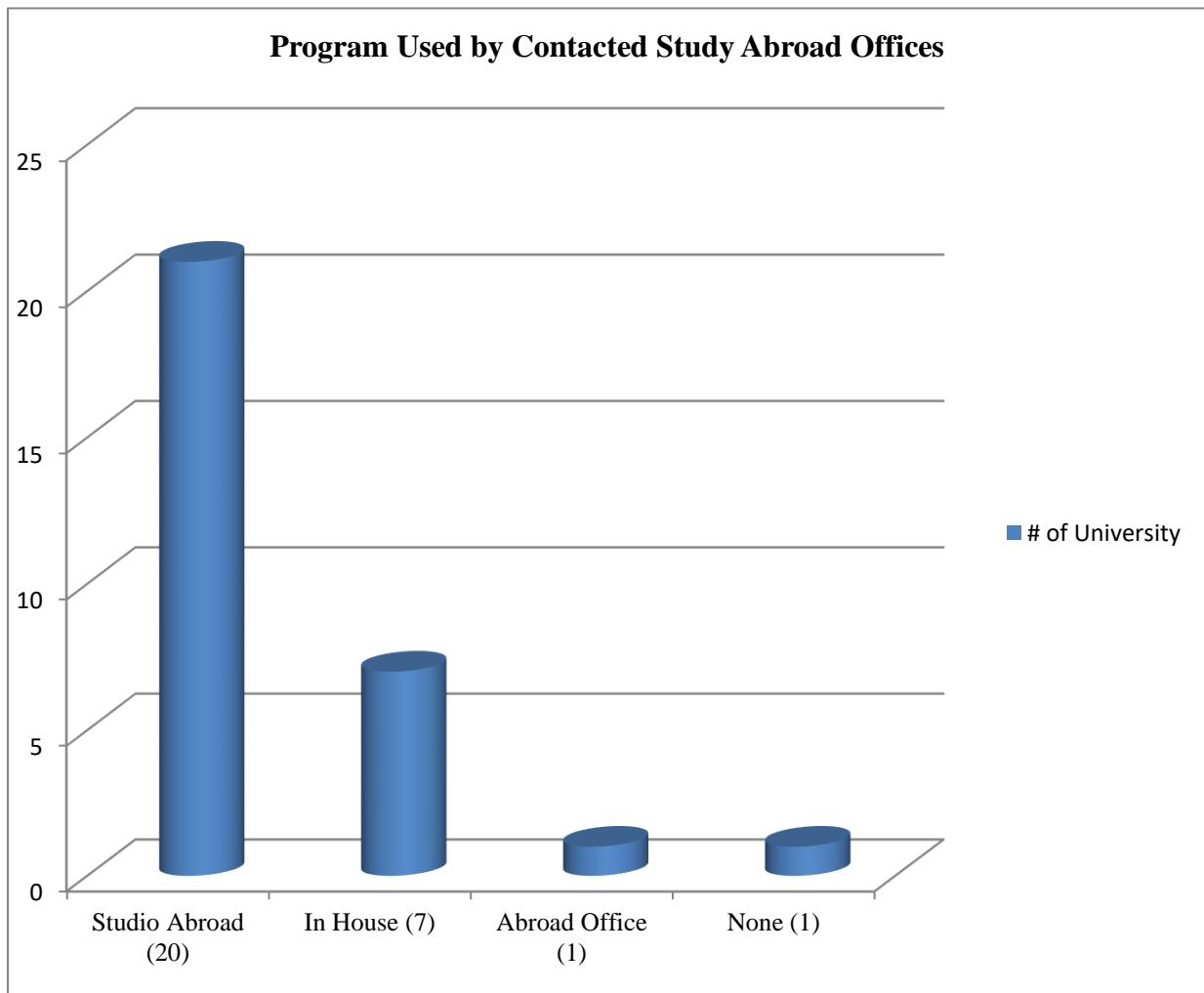
StudioAbroad:
- Chapman University
- Colorado University
- Fairfield University
- Yale University
- Wake Forest University
- Athena University
- North Dakota University
- New York University

- Wofford College
- University of Pittsburgh
- Virginia Tech
- Georgetown University
- William and Mary – not perfect, but overall pleased with it
- University of Florida – have been using the program for 7 years
- Vanderbilt – minor frustration with it as with probably any software
- University of Virginia
- University of Nevada
- University of Miami
- Texas Tech University – when they initially started using, were 10 other universities
- Texas A& M – overall satisfied with the capabilities of the software

In-House:
- Michigan Tech University
- Catholic University
- University of Notre Dame
- Carnegie Mellon University – uses Outlook as an e-mail client, MS Access, and a custom website
- Boston University
- University of California at Berkeley
- Marymount University

AbroadOffice:
- Boise State University

None:
- University of Charleston – don't use software because their programs are in the infancy stage

ii.   Information Collected by TerraDotta in a survey

Team Global IT requested information from TerraDotta about how many and the different kinds of schools that use StudioAbroad. The following is a study that was performed by TerraDotta containing this information.

Executive Summary

The Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange was written with data provided by the Institution of International Education (IIE) and the Forum on Education Abroad. It gives details for study abroad enrollment for the 2010 to 2011 school year; Information about non-credit program and data about non-U.S. citizens enrolled in various institution programs is also included.

The problem:

The Center for Global Education (CGE) is currently using in-house software to help track and organize its applicants and program attendees. The problem with the software is lack of communication to students who are currently overseas in study abroad programs. By purchasing StudioAbroad, features such as alert emails of emergency situations would be available to CGE

Respondent Profile
Forum member institutions and 153 IEE Network responded to the survey. Most of respondents (85%) were universities and U.S. four year colleges. About 46% (70 respondents) were public institutions and organizations and 54% (83 respondents) were private. Below is a percentage breakdown by institution.

Type of Institution	% of Total	% Public	% Private
Doctorate Institutions	36.6 (56)	67.9 (38)	32.1 (18)
Master's Institutions	18.3 (28)	39.3 (11)	60.7 (17)
Bachelor Institutions	30.1 (46)	19.6 (9)	80.4 (37)
Associate's Institutions	5.9 (9)	88.9 (8)	11.1 (1)
Independent Program Providers	6.50 (10)	10.0 (1)	90.0 (9)
Other (Non-U.S. Institutions	2.6 (4)	75.0 (3)	25.0 (1)
Total	**100 (153)**	**45.80 (70)**	**54.2 (83)**
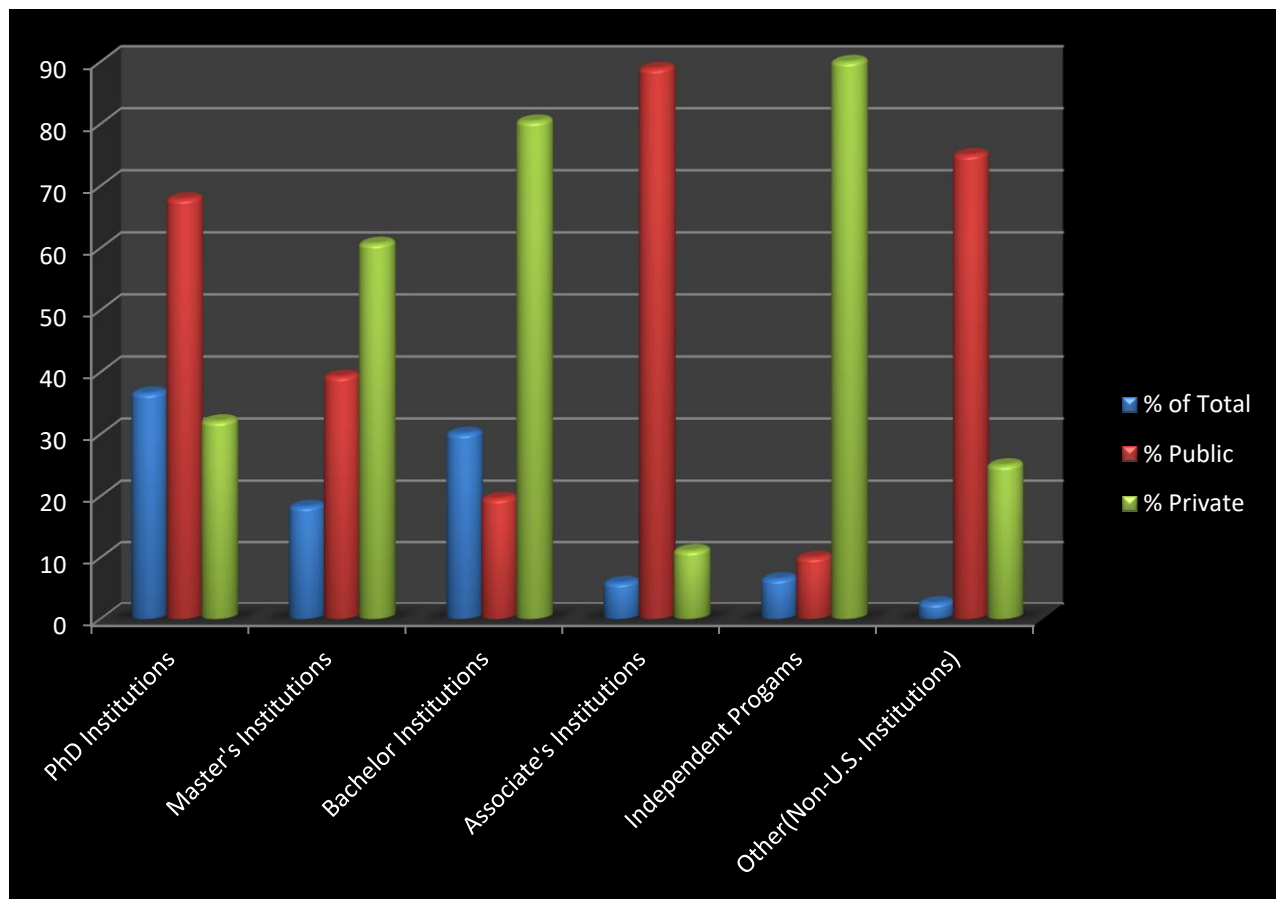
Survey Results:

- From 2010-2011 there was a growth to 53% of the survey respondents reporting increases in enrollment.
- There were new foreign and domestic institutions formed along with many short term faculty programs.
- From 2010-2011 over 6,700 students participated in non-credit study abroad activities.

Appendix B: University Testimonials

Texas Tech University:

Texas Tech University (TTU) has been using StudioAbroad for about 4 years now. Team Global IT was able to talk to Sandy Crosier, the Director of the study abroad department in TTU, who was kind enough to provide us with an idea about their experience using StudioAbroad.

Based on their experience using StudioAbroad, Sandy Crosier stated that the personnel spend about ¾ of their working time using the software. StudioAbroad has allowed Texas Tech to go almost paperless. The only use 3 paper forms since they implemented StudioAbroad. Sandy also stated that they have managed to save time because of the reduced paper clutter and also because the software is able to handle the majority of the task and services that they need to provide. StudioAbroad has allowed TTU to increase the number of student applicants applying for study abroad programs. The reason they were able to achieve this is due to the simplicity for students

to locate programs. The programs search feature is very detailed. It allows students to search based on languages, location, major and term. By refining the search process, it allows students to locate specific programs that may be of interest to them.

With regards to pricing, the information Sandy provided was identical to the rates StudioAbroad mentioned. TTU were allowed to pay the initial $50,000 fee over 2 payments and now they only pay an annual fee of $8,000 to maintain their services. Sandy also raised an interesting fact related to cost. She mentioned that since TTU had the framework that StudioAbroad uses already established, it would cost them less to integrate the software within other departments. TTU are very satisfied with the capabilities of the software. StudioAbroad allows them to respond faster. There are also yearly updates to ensure the software is continuously improving and meeting the demands of their consumers. Additionally, faculty are able to be more directly involved since they will also have access to the software. Faculty would be able to review and accept students into the program.

Another neat feature Sandy mentioned is that the applications that were integrated within the software could be automatically monitored. Their systems are able to automatically monitor the application progress for students using a checklist that shows the completed portions of the student application. The system is then able to periodically email applicants automatically to remind them about completing sections of their application.

With regards to implementation, Sandy stated that their systems were constructed in a record time. StudioAbroad were able to integrate their software in a span of a month and a half. That doesn't necessarily mean that implementation would be as swift integrating StudioAbroad at GMU. The length of the implementation phase could be estimated after StudioAbroad has been able to analyze CGE's systems.

University of Miami:
 The University of Miami (UM) started their implementation phase about two months ago. Their systems are currently running and in use, but they are still in the process of customizing their services to meet their needs.

They are using a hosted approach. Basically, TerraDotta is responsible to maintain student information and the portal that is used by the students. This is approach entails additional fees, but according to John Billow, the IT specialist for UM study abroad department, a hosted approach has its advantages. John stated that StudioAbroad would be responsible for software updates and the whole technical aspect of running StudioAbroad. This could procedure could reduce the effort needed to maintain the system within CGE and allow staff to focus on other matters. If CGE implements StudioAbroad locally, they would be responsible for maintaining and updating their systems.

A hosted approach would cost an additional $3,500-3,600 annually but it would relieve CGE from the task of maintaining their systems. The only disadvantage about using a hosted solution is that data can't be pushed from StudioAbroad servers to university servers for free. In order to push data out to university servers and additional fee needs to be paid to TerraDotta to handle the transfer process.

According the John Billow, another disadvantage for using the hosted solution is the StudioAbroad Support system. Their support system uses a time ticket to identify the order of which customer needs to be served first. The response time usually take a day to 3 days to get a response. In CGE's case, since an IT technician will be available, the use of the support service will be reduced. The IT technician will able to ensure functionality and maintenance of the system.

With regards to authentication, John Billow stated that UM uses 2 login approaches. The first way to authenticate consumer is by using university login information. The second would a login mechanism that comes with StudioAbroad. This would greatly benefit CGE since they require a procedure to allow non-Mason students to register to the study abroad programs. This provides CGE with an alternative solution to accommodate this need.

Texas A&M University:
Lisa Tauferner is the Associate Director of Study Abroad Office at Texas A&M University. Lisa was able to further provide us information related to their experience using Studio Abroad. Lisa mentioned that Texas A&M University is one of the bigger StudioAbroad clients. The implementation process took Texas A&M about 4 months. The reason it took them this long was because of importing program data and student information to their new server.

Lisa Tauferner was very satisfied by the overall improvements to their business process. Their department is able to efficiently manage application processes, track students and monitor their application progress using an automated system that sends emails and reminders to applicants. StudioAbroad has managed to automatically overhaul their application process. Lisa mentioned that the application process is so efficient that they decided to use the system to handle orientation applications.

The Study Abroad Office at Texas A&M uses a locally hosted solution. According to Lisa, this approach has several advantages. It initially makes the implementation process easier since StudioAbroad technicians will be working together with the Study Abroad IT specialists. This would reduce the time needed to implement the system everyone will be able to understand the requirements faster.

Additionally, Lisa mentions that they don't heavily rely on the StudioAbroad support service since their IT experts handle most maintenance. In the instance that they did require to use the support service, StudioAbroad usually took 1 business day to respond. Since StudioAbroad won't be responsible for updating and maintaining their system, they would be able to provide feedback faster since they don't handle maintenance operations.

Notre Dame University:
Dear Team Global IT,

We have a customized application which has served us well for ten years and that we like very much. Our current web-based application supports multiple applications per student, integration with the Banner system for auto-populated and student-generated data, transcript, and photo,

online input from deans, academic references, and a rector/RA reference. The application is accessible to authorized users by assigned role and the capability by assigned role to have multiple file readers accessing information on lie in an attractive compiled application file. The admin side of the application permits us to access data and administer the data sort and reports.

However, with changes in technology over the years, we now need to move to a vendor-supported application and data management system. We are in the process of examining two vendors—Terra Dotta and Symplicity for Studio Abroad and Horizons respectively. I would appreciate if you could share the results that you collect.

Best,
Kathleen Opel

Catholic University:

Dear Team Global IT,
We use a home-developed online application but that does not feed into a database. I don't like using it and we are hoping to work with StudioAbroad sometime in the future. Hope this is helpful to you.

Best,
Ella A. Sweigert
Director of Education Abroad
Center for Global Education - CU*Abroad*
The Catholic University of America

Virginia Tech:

I like that we can manage applications online, pull reports about students going abroad, and that it automatically pulls some information from our student information system (Banner), such as GPA. It is also a reasonably secure system. It is good that information can be accessed remotely by those with access. It has a lot of nice features, if we could ever get around to implementing them.

There are some major drawbacks—it is expensive, it requires a lot of set-up and management (I don't think it saves time over a paper-based system and almost demands to have its own dedicated support person), the interface is a bit clunky, and we have had some bugs. Faculty tend not to like it.

At Virginia Tech, some units still require paper-based forms and academic departments that have very different application procedures, so this has prevented us from making full use of the software.

StudioAbroad is probably not worth it unless you can get a strong commitment from the university to require academic and administrative units to support a unified, paperless application system and also dedicate staff to support set-up and management of the system on an ongoing

basis (at least half-time).

I hope this is helpful.

Eric
Eric Miller, Ph.D.
Program Director, Education Abroad
Office of International Research, Education and Development
Virginia Tech

Carnegie Mellon:
Hello Team Global IT –

Thank you for emailing. Actually, our office is not the purchaser, rather our Board of Trustees is. (They have purchased one of the other Terra Dotta products, similar to StudioAbroad.) We *are* considering purchasing StudioAbroad, however, as we use a small home-grown system at the moment.

I apologize we are not able to assist more, though do wish you well in your research.

Best,

-Chris

Christine Menand
Coordinator of Study Abroad and Exchange Programs

Jaycie L. Galbraith
Coordinator of Study Abroad and International Programming

Office of International Education
Carnegie Mellon University
Warner Hall 3rd Floor
5000 Forbes Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
Phone: 412.268.5231
Fax: 412.268.7832
www.cmu.edu/studyabroad

Ohio State University:

In regards to your recent question about our tracking methods, study abroad participants at The Ohio State University apply for, are admitted to, and are tracked via the integrated student information system (PeopleSoft) implemented by the University in 2009. The study abroad pieces of the system were a custom built bolt-on to the larger university student information system. Students interested in participating in study abroad programs complete an online

application via the system and the coordinators assigned to programs set up in the system manage the admittance, denial, withdrawal, etc of those participants each term. The study abroad bolt-on is designed to interact with the larger pieces (Student Records, Student Financials, etc) such that jobs run update the status of the student's application. We can thus manage and monitor a student's enrollment, fee assessment, and fee payment throughout the duration of their program participation.

Georgetown University:

"application works well but are drawbacks
easy to put up questionnaires and forms and track
issues w/ content mgmt and letting people know about program
not happy with what StudioAbroad has for wysiwyg for
creating the webpages (across-the-board issue)
admin tasks not all straightforward at first·
 - log into app, click on addresses tab but not all addresses are there (permanent & campus, but not overseas)"

Duke University:

Overall the staff are satisfied with StudioAbroad. Easy to use, provides them with all the functionalities they need (they could send emails, create reports and spreadsheets). The only complaint is that it was slow at times moving from screen to screen (they are not sure if it is because of the system they are using).