

In a
Gazette
MINUTE



C.J.
DESANTIS

*Founder & Chief eLearner
eLearners.com*

Tell us about your background.

At Lehigh University I earned a bachelor of science in mechanical engineering. I underwent management training for three years at an equipment manufacturer. That taught me a lot, but it also stimulated my desire to exit manufacturing. During two years as a high school math teacher in New Jersey, I earned a masters degree in education & human development from George Washington University via distance learning. The more I participated in online learning, the more I wanted to become a part of it. In 1999, near the peak of the dot.bomb, I started eLearners.com.

What is your company's line of business, and who are your customers?

We're an online education directory. Our mission is to connect prospective students to educational programs that are the best suited to their goals. In the

process, we want to provide schools with enrollment prospects of unparalleled quality. More than 120 U.S. institutions use our services.

How might a school shorten the path from inquiry to enrollment?

Be seen in the right places. Provide tantalizing information. Qualify the lead, and tailor all resulting messages. Establish a well-defined path to closure.

How might that enrollment technique affect retention?

Refine those four steps really well, and you'll know enough about each student to provide effective retention services. We have abundant anecdotal evidence from successful practitioners on many campuses.

Do you have an example?

At Lehigh University there is a new emphasis on lead-based marketing. It produces more results per dollar and per staff person there. And it fits well with their effort to move more of their educational programs online. We've been glad to help.

Do you have a helpful tip for a school that's looking to hire a third-party source of leads?

Yes. Realize that all vendors are not created equal. So use three or four. Test and compare.