



Assessing the Impact of Scaller™ on First-to-
Second Semester Retention in Selected Ontario
Colleges

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

In August 2013, several Ontario colleges were invited to participate in a research project to assess the impact of Scaller™ by Vocantas on first semester student retention. Five colleges agreed to do so. The goal was to recruit both large and small colleges as well as institutions from diverse geographic locations. The location and number of first-semester students participating in each college were:

Table 1: Participating Colleges

College	Location	Number of Students Participating
1	Northern Ontario	2312
2	Northern Ontario	1242
3	Central	2002
4	Eastern Ontario	1723
5	Central-West	3342

METHODS

Following random assignment to either a Treatment or Control Group, Treatment Group members were called via Scaller™, using a college –specific script, to document student self-identified needs for support in various areas. On average, 70% of students were contacted and the individual student needs were communicated to each college for follow-up regarding available services. College outreach to students appeared to be difficult and many were not contacted.

DATA ANALYSIS

An SPSS dataset was created for each college containing the winter-term registration status for all students and the results of the Vocantas and college calling campaigns for Treatment Group students. Cross tabulations were then conducted comparing the rates of winter-term registration for Treatment and Control Groups. The Treatment Group was further divided into those contacted by Vocantas and those who were not reached with Scaller™. One college was excluded due to technical difficulties.

Summary of Results

A comparison of retention rates for the Control and two Treatment Groups produced varied results in the individual college analyses. One college exhibited little difference across the three groups while in three colleges Treatment Group members who were contacted with Scaller™ exhibited increased retention rates of 5%, 5% and 9.7% compared to Treatment Group members who were not contacted. Two colleges also exhibited an increase in retention rate of 0.5% and 4.2%, respectively, for Treatment Group members contacted via Scaller™ compared to their Control Group.

Analyses of data for all colleges taken together showed an overall increase in second semester retention of 4.4% for Treatment Group members who were contacted with Scaller™ compared to those who were not. When compared to the Control Group, Treatment Group members who were contacted with Scaller™ exhibited a 0.4% increase in second semester retention.