

# Bucknell University: How a Unified Desktop Portal Drove 174% Growth in Campus Engagement



## CASE STUDY

Bucknell University

## INDUSTRY

Higher Education

### The Challenge

For students arriving at Bucknell University, the start of a new academic year brings an immediate need: find the tools, information, and resources that shape daily campus life. Course registrations, campus news, to-do lists, and administrative systems all matter—and they matter fast. For years, Bucknell served this need through a legacy internal dashboard. But as campus digital expectations grew and the ambitions of the institution evolved, the university saw an opportunity to raise the bar.



The opportunity was clear. A single, unified platform could replace the need for faculty to navigate multiple systems to find campus communications. Students could have one place for new-student to-do lists, academic calendars, and campus tools. Staff could have a consistent, role-appropriate entry point into the daily flow of institutional life.

The result: a chance to eliminate unnecessary navigation at exactly the moments when clarity mattered most, and build the unified campus experience platform Bucknell wanted to deliver.

The university didn't want to patch old infrastructure. It wanted to build something better: a single, authoritative starting point that could serve every member of its community and adapt to who they were.

### The Approach

Bucknell's answer was a MODO-powered student portal and campus app designed from the ground up to fully replace the legacy dashboard. Rather than layering new tools on top of old infrastructure, the university made a deliberate architectural choice: one unified platform with role-aware personalization built in from the start.

The portal was soft-launched in 2025 and fully deployed on January 1, 2026, establishing the new experience as the definitive daily entry point for campus engagement. Like the best higher education mobile apps, it was built to meet users where they are, whether on desktop or on the go, and surface the right information at the right time.

The design brought together a carefully selected set of functional elements to create a unified, actionable experience. A centralized To-Do List ensured that new-student tasks and ongoing action items were visible and actionable in one place.

Modo's no-code Screen Builder organized resources into

structured, scannable sections that improved discoverability without cluttering the interface. Bucknell also extended the Modo platform with custom-built capabilities that integrate campus messaging directly into the portal experience so communications were accessible without requiring users to navigate to a separate system. Role-based personalization allowed the portal to deliver multiple and differentiated experiences for students, faculty, and staff, with each group seeing content and tools relevant to their role while sharing a common institutional structure.

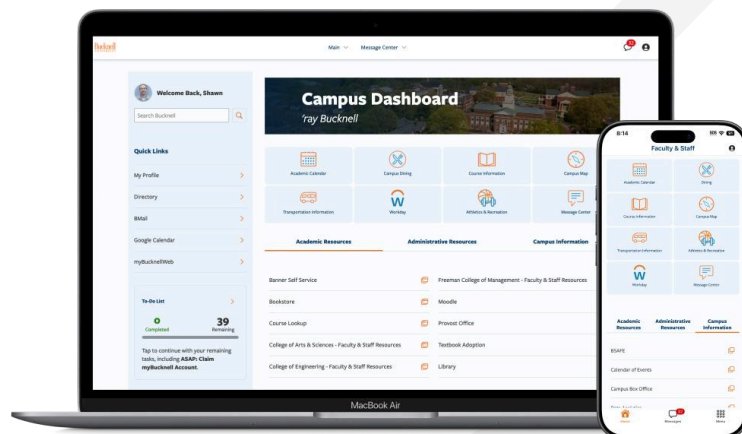
Event and Calendar Data Feeds surfaced timely campus information directly on the desktop, reducing reliance on external or redundant systems. Tabs, Buttons, and Navigation provided intuitive pathways to frequently used tools with minimal cognitive load. Every element was chosen to carry forward the functionality of the previous dashboard while meaningfully improving usability and long-term flexibility.

## The Experience

Open the Bucknell portal today and the difference is immediate. A faculty member logs in and sees their name on a personalized welcome screen, alongside quick links to their most-used tools, including Directory, BMail, and Google Calendar, plus a curated set of campus resources organized by role. A student opens the same platform and finds their academic calendar, a to-do list tracking outstanding onboarding tasks, and Bucknell News stories alongside upcoming campus events. The interface is shared; the experience is personal.

That role-awareness is what makes the portal feel like a genuine campus home. Students managing new-student orientation checklists are not wading through administrative resources meant for staff. Faculty and staff accessing Banner, Workday, or the Message Center are not navigating around student-facing content. Everyone arrives at a platform that reflects who they are and what they need that day.

For new students in particular, the portal serves as a guided onboarding experience, surfacing tasks, flagging what is still outstanding, and connecting them to the tools and information that make the transition to campus life smoother. That early clarity has lasting effects on engagement, confidence, and connection to the institution.



## The Results

The numbers tell a clear story. During the soft-launch period, before the portal's full deployment on January 1, 2026, unique visitors grew from 15,300 in 2024 to 41,900 in 2025, a 174% increase reflecting dramatically expanded reach and engagement across the campus community. Logged-in users grew from 3,290 to 4,090 year over year, a 24% increase that signals the portal's growing role as a trusted daily access point.

These early metrics indicate that thoughtful consolidation combined with role-aware design can meaningfully move the needle on campus engagement, even before a platform is fully live. As a student engagement platform and campus engagement platform, the Modo portal is already delivering measurable results across the community. Bucknell continues to collect performance and engagement data following the complete dashboard replacement, with more results expected as the 2026 academic year unfolds.

### THE RESULT

**174%** Increase in Unique  
Visitors

Bucknell transformed the  
portal into a primary digital  
starting point for campus life.

## The Takeaway

Bucknell University's experience offers a transferable insight for any institution wrestling with digital fragmentation. When a campus consolidates the right tools into a single, role-aware experience, engagement follows. By establishing the portal as the authoritative starting point for campus life, Bucknell reduced navigation friction and created the conditions for sustained, broad participation across students, faculty, and staff.

The scalable foundation now in place positions Bucknell to build on this momentum, adding features, deepening integrations, and expanding personalization as campus needs evolve. For students arriving at Bucknell, the portal is now the first touchpoint the institution offers. Getting that experience right matters, and Bucknell's early results suggest they got it right.

## Request a Demo

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