

# Advancement Office Realizes 700% ROI from Batch Services Phone Append



**Location:**

Long Beach, California

**Industry:**

Higher Education

**Product Summary:**

LexisNexis® Batch Services

Founded in 1949 to serve the post-World War II population in the Southern California region, California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) claims one of the largest enrollment figures in the state. Its 322-acre campus, situated just three miles from the Pacific Ocean, is the third-largest campus in the 23-school California State University System. Ranked the eighth-most diverse university in the West by *U.S. News & World Report*, Cal State Long Beach was also recognized as the most affordable public university in the Western United States. The university is home to 63 academic departments and programs, 24 centers, four institutes and four clinics.

### Challenge

Anyone familiar with the higher education industry recognizes the critical role played by university advancement officers. In building relationships with alumni, friends and donors, advancement officers attain the necessary support to secure a university's legacy and longevity.

Advancement officers—who oversee everything from prospect research to annual fund management to major gift stewardship—cannot do their jobs without one essential resource: a robust database. “One error, even among 1,000 healthy contacts, just isn’t good enough,” said Brian Lawver, executive director of annual giving and advancement services at CSULB. “We needed a standardized mechanism to ensure that our data was up-to-date.”

The need for accurate contact information was particularly evident with CSULB's annual phonathon, a large-scale, high-volume effort to support the university's Beach Fund. Given that the campus now produces close to 10,000 graduates every year, manual data entry through phonathon conversations was no longer an option. “It really becomes a question of efficiency,” said Lawver. “No one wants to see wasted investment on a costly direct mail piece because we didn't have the right address.”

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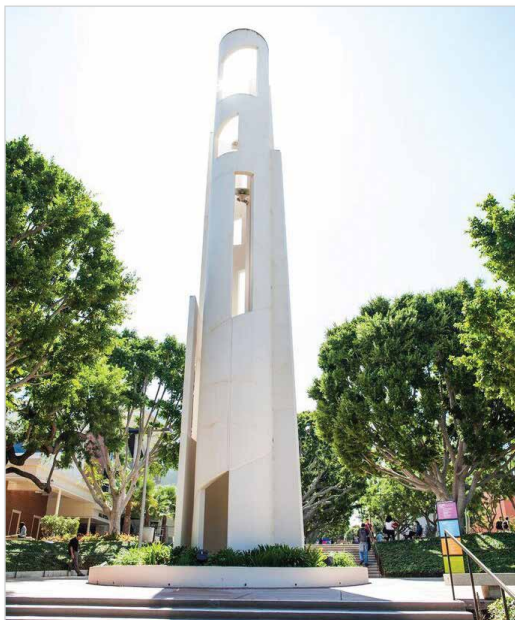
**Brian Lawver**

Executive Director, Annual Giving and Advancement Services, CSULB

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*Pictured: Carlson Bloc Bell Tower on CSULB campus.*

## Solution

As its alumni community matured and expanded, so too did CSULB’s need for a trusted source of high-volume data checks. “LexisNexis’s reputation as an authoritative information source is second-to-none. If I didn’t believe in the soundness of its data—offered at competitively priced level—I wouldn’t have moved forward with Batch Services,” said Lawver. “We trusted LexisNexis to gather extensive, timely and validated intelligence for our donor database.”

Batch Services increased efficiency across CSULB’s advancement efforts, whether by direct mail, crowd funding, e-giving or the annual phonathon. Thanks in particular to its extensive access to deceased status sources, the service also prevented CSULB from initiating unwanted or inappropriate contact. “Those features were key in avoiding awkward situations dreaded by those of us in the advancement services profession,” said Lawver.

## Result

The first time CSULB enlisted Batch Services for a phone append ahead of its annual phonathon, it was only a matter of weeks before their investment had paid for itself. In fact, the new phone numbers generated nearly \$80,000 in pledges—roughly seven times the amount CSULB paid for the batch run.

“Talk about an easy sell to university administrators to try this again,” said Lawver. “Not to mention that some of these new donors pledged again in coming years, so our ROI was more than the initial count that first year.”

“Bottom line: Batch Services is the only means by which we could reach our 300,000 graduates and their parents, friends and other donors,” continued Lawver. “Without it, our annual phonathon would have generated only a sliver of the return.”

Lawver advises those with database needs to conduct an honest assessment that compares existing information to industry percentages. For instance, a university that’s new to fundraising may need an ongoing append, whereas a more seasoned institution may fare better with targeted appends on an as-needed basis.

## About LexisNexis®

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