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Digital First Strategy for Admissions

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What's the word dominating the narrative today? Disruption? Indeed! You could feel disruption in the landscape all around you. This disruption fuelled by digital technologies has stirred every domain. So, education and admissions, too, aren't cut off from this disruptive digital wave. Agreed, it is the Covid-19 pandemic that has fast pedaled the journey of digital transformation, especially in admissions as brick and mortar learning has given way to a new pedagogy defined by online tools and blended learning. Strikingly, it's the student onboarding which has gone digital. But with or without the pandemic, digital admissions is what mirrors the need of today and defines the idiom of tomorrow. The generation that has followed 'millennials' is the cohort of 'digital natives'. This demographic is the first generation that has grown up fully digital- to say it succinct- they are the tribe that views, consumes and exhales digital. This gives a compelling reason for academic institutions and other stakeholders to embrace seamless digital solutions for an immersive student experience.

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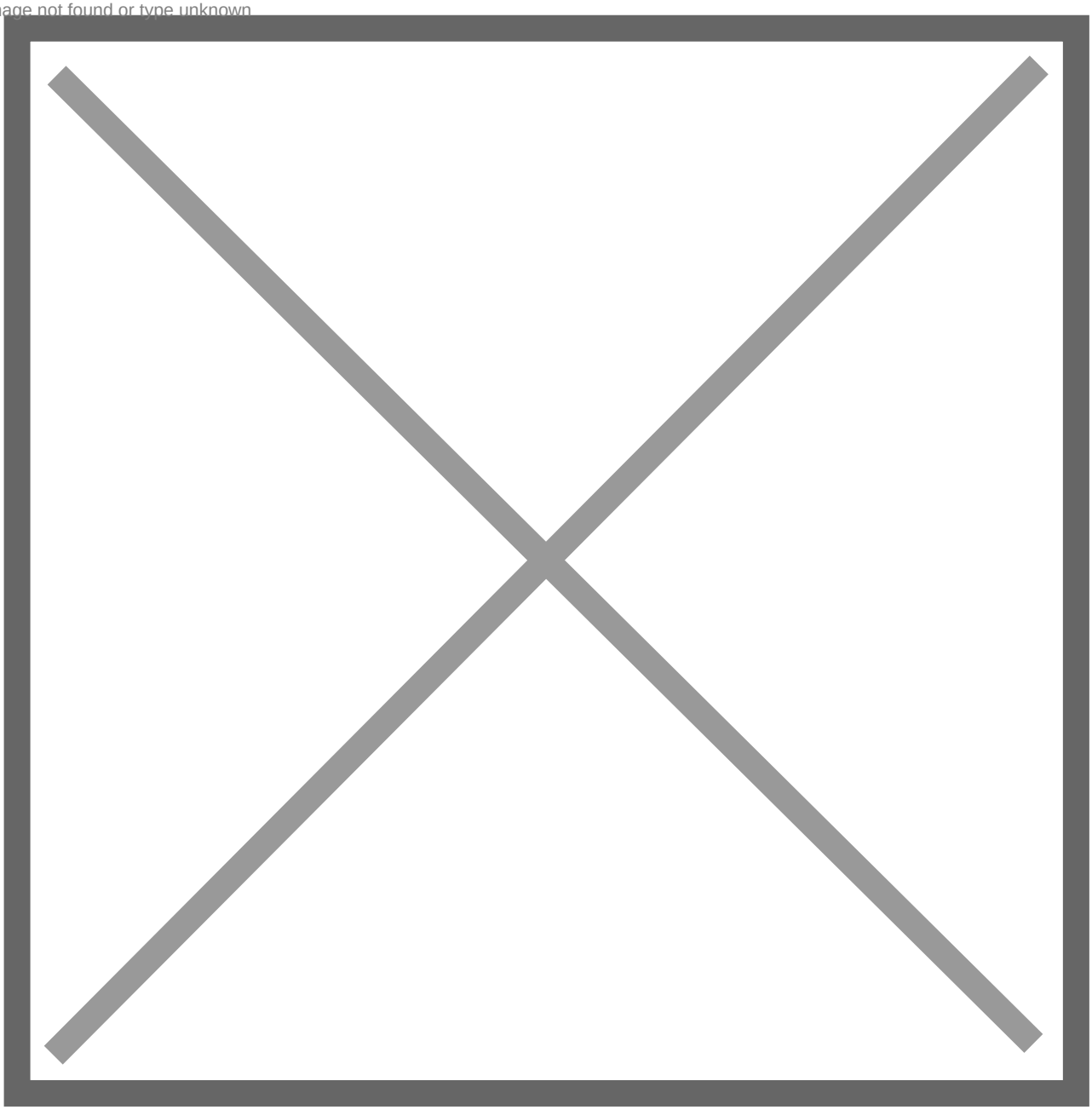

Pivoting to Digital Admissions to Trump Challenges

Today, higher education institutions are facing dynamic and complex challenges on admissions. True, with the adoption of digital solutions, they have got over legacy challenges like manual sale and filling of admission forms, avoiding long queues outside admission windows, time consumed in collecting student data and sheaf of admission forms and multiple physical visits to complete admission formalities. Yet, not many academic institutions have leveraged technologies to create ‘digital oneness’ in admission. Whether you cite the example of India’s Delhi University or an institution of global renown like Harvard, the admission process is convoluted. That’s because you have myriad streams, courses, fees

structure and students pouring in from diverse geographies and academic backgrounds. Unless there is convergence in the admission procedure, the purpose of deploying digital solutions doesn't go afar. Hence, institutions worldwide need to develop omnichannel, digital first, interactive student onboarding funnels to create immersive and engaging student experience.

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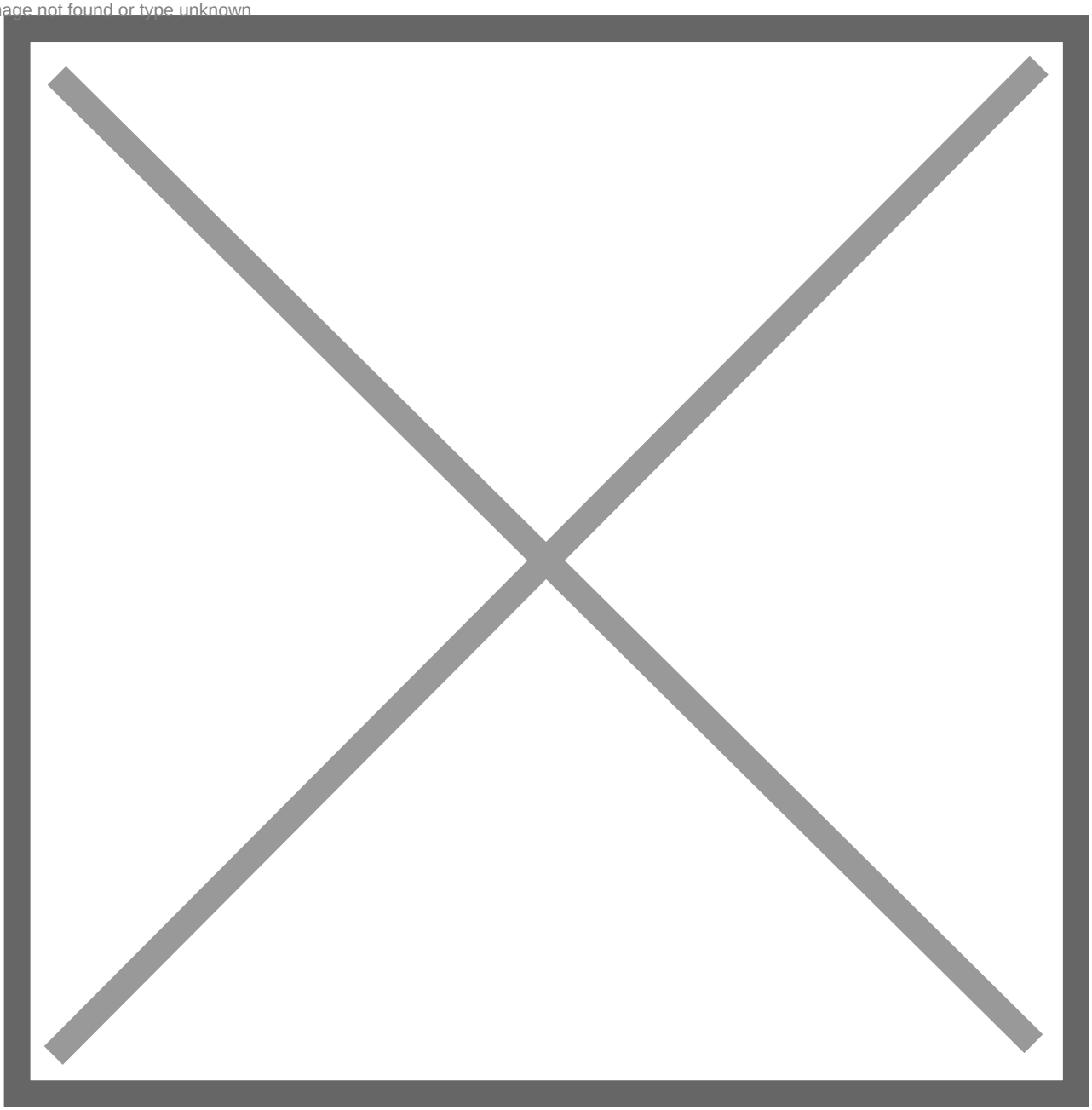

CSM's Student Academic Management System- The Paperless Disruptor

At CSM Technologies, we have designed the solution to every riddle in the admission apparatus. Our **Student Academic Management System (SAMS)** onboarded successfully

in Bihar and Odisha has delivered delight to every student onboarded. The solution's USP is the digitalized oneness in admission journey- one admission form, one date of admission and one merit list for all colleges across the state. This online solution has been implemented at scale in Odisha and is up and running for over 10 years. The system's penetration and success is so well captured in these metrics for 2020-21- **4020 colleges** participated, **960,578 students applied online (99.79 per cent of total applicants**) and **613,522 students taking admission** through the system. The impact of SAMS is also manifest in other ways- **70 per cent of applicants getting admissions to the colleges where they first opted for, five modes of intimation on selection has palliated anxiety for students and parents and visible cost reduction by shrinking the number of visits to the destination college from three to one.**

SAMS has benefits aplenty for either side of the fence.

Benefits for Students

- Admission through a uniform Common Application Form (CAF) trims costs and saves time
- Students get onboarded in the institution of their choice
- A single portal acts as the repository on all information on institutions
- Students get information on every aspect of admission in the unified portal

Benefits for Institutions

- Admission and administration process is managed online
- Less manpower needed due to efficient online admission process
- Single admission process enables admission of meritorious students statewide
- Automation of processes such as forms, admit card and registration eases workload on institute's staff
- Institutions can access information easily as SAMS maintains year-wise information database of students

Emerging Technologies to Make Admission Interface More Seamless

We hear how automated assistance chat-bots and video-integrated platforms are making their way into the admissions ecosystem. As digital admission evolves, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is slated to make a big dent. AI-enabled digital analytics dashboards can help admission authorities manage student enrolment and optimize strategies for deeper digital engagement. Then, there are immersive technologies like Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) that promise to create an experiential digital admission journey by showcasing campus life and student accommodation facilities. Think digital for admissions and you open up

possibilities challenging the possible.



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