



## Solution Brief



## **Lifetopia Brings Tulane University's Residential Housing Services Online; Implementing Web-based Roommate Self-Selection and Off Campus Housing for Students**

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### **Institution:**

Tulane University - New Orleans, LA [www.tulane.edu](http://www.tulane.edu)

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### **Business Challenges:**

- Simplify the roommate assignment process
  - Reduce administrative costs
  - Decrease complaints
  - Allow students to select their own roommates within the University's website
  - Enable students to search for off-campus housing
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### **Technology Solution:**

- Tulane RoommateClick  
<http://tulane.roommateclick.com>
  - Tulane ApartmentSource  
<http://tulane.apartmentsource.com>
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Tulane University's Residential Housing Office recognized that its manual roommate matching and housing assignment process was no longer meeting the increasingly sophisticated expectations of today's web-savvy students. With acceptance letters already in progress, determining the most effective process for bringing the Residential Housing office online was also time sensitive.

Lifetopia embraced Tulane University's goals to branch out from tradition, harness the power of the Internet, and foster a greater sense of community.

Working with the established leader in collegiate roommate and housing self-selection, Tulane and its students benefited from a more robust platform of services, and far greater efficiencies than the University could provide through building and managing its own in-house system.

Lifetopia provided registered Tulane students with access to a community-based online environment within the University's branded website which allowed the students to participate in determining with whom they live while attending the University. The new web-based self-selection process encouraged students to take the initiative in finding a roommate and also reinforced accountability for students' own decisions.

RoommateClick and ApartmentSource provided students with the ability to select their own roommates. This exponentially improved the overall collegiate experience and significantly increased students' chances for long-term success.

**Summary: Lifetopia’s solution to Tulane University’s residential housing challenges and objectives.**

<b>University Challenge:</b>	<b>Lifetopia Solution:</b>	<b>Results:</b>
University’s Residential Housing Office concerns about functionality and compatibility with exiting technologies and systems.	Lifetopia’s secure, hosted platform for roommate and housing self-selection - fully integrated with Tulane’s existing technology, systems, and related applications.	Tulane’s RoommateClick service operates 24/7 within the Tulane University website. Lifetopia provides complete hosting, technology, training, customer service and marketing support.
Negative feedback from students and parents (including posts on popular social websites), and general discontent about roommate and housing assignments.	24/7 online access for students to self-select their own roommates and off-campus housing, based on a number of criteria such as sleeping and studying habits.  Students empowered with a familiar platform that they are eager and willing to use.	80% of incoming first-year students used Tulane’s RoommateClick to search for roommates.  Providing students with the ability to select with whom they wish to live reduces stress and has significantly enhanced overall student satisfaction.
Housing applications and roommate questionnaires often completed by parents did not correctly reflect students’ true habits or lifestyle.	System requires valid current student ID number in order to log in, create online profile, browse for and select roommates and housing.	Accurate student profiles have helped students establish compatible rewarding roommate relationships.
As the volume of student requests for roommate/housing changes increased, the University’s manual reassignment process was becoming exceedingly labor intensive for Housing Office staff.	Lifetopia tools enable greater departmental collaboration and facilitate better communication between Tulane Residential Housing staff and students.	Tulane realized an immediate reduction in the number of requests for roommate changes – significantly reducing the administrative burden of reassignment requests.
Out-of-area students disliked having to select their off-campus housing, sight unseen.	Lifetopia’s system enables Tulane to approve all or select private landlords to post off-campus rental listings.	Off-campus listings featuring multiple photos, detailed descriptions, rental policies and more, greatly simplify the students’ selection process and help increase the confidence of out-of-area students’ decisions.  Local landlords use Lifetopia system to post, edit, communicate with potential tenants and deactivate rental ads directly from their own computers.
University Administrators and students desired a greater sense of community created through Residential Housing.	Lifetopia’s secure communication tools enable registered students to meet, chat, and interact online via email and SMS beyond the roommate and housing selection process.	Tulane students may communicate through the new Lifetopia system and meet other members of the Tulane community prior to arriving to campus
Students are exposed to significant risks when using public domain social networking sites to find roommates online.	Lifetopia verifies student identification through secure authentication technology.  University’s Residential Housing Administration determines the search and match criteria for questionnaire content, roommate selection, and on and off-campus housing options.	Tulane’s RoommateClick service provides a controlled and secure online environment for students to self-select roommates and housing within the University’s approved parameters.  Tulane students are now empowered with correct information and the freedom to connect with and select roommates and housing efficiently and safely.

## Solution Summary:

Within the first semester of implementing Lifetopia's systems, Tulane University Residential Housing developed from a manual, random matching process to an automated, criteria-based online system, widely embraced, that enabled more than two thirds of the University's registered users to meet and select their college roommates.

**How it works:** Lifetopia's Tulane RoommateClick and Tulane ApartmentSource systems are designed to provide a wide variety of efficiencies and benefits. Universities and colleges realize a measurable reduction in administrative costs and expenses, and a significant increase in student satisfaction.

*Lifetopia shares Tulane's goal of providing programs and services, such as roommate and housing self-selection, to enable our students to maximize their education and enjoy the best overall collegiate experience. Our housing administration and our students benefit significantly from the Lifetopia system."*

**- Marty Brantley, Director of Housing Services, Tulane University**

### Administrative Benefits:

- Streamlines the administrative housing process and reduces costs.
- Significantly enhances student satisfaction with 24/7 online access to roommate selection and housing services
- Easily integrates with universities' existing housing and management software applications.
- Restores university's control and communication of important student housing policies, procedures.  
Serves as a valuable university offering for student recruiting and retention.

### Student & Parent Benefits:

- Self-selection empowers students; reducing stress and uncertainty.
- Easy to use tools enable students to create and search roommate profiles and available housing.
- Dedicated customer service and technical support; online and by phone.
- Secure internal email system allows students to communicate (including SMS) without exchanging personal data.
- Advanced security technology verifies student ID and authenticates registered students approved for housing.
- Ability to view potential roommates and pre-approved housing options online provides greater peace of mind for interested parents.
- University website system provides safe alternative to unsanctioned, public domain social networking sites for roommate selection.

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### About Lifetopia

Lifetopia is the world's leading provider of web-based roommate and housing services. Its fully-hosted applications serve college and university housing and student roommate needs by enabling registered students to self-select based on criteria that students provide in their online profiles and within university-established parameters. Lifetopia also enables property owners and landlords to advertise rental properties and secure tenants online. Founded in 1995, Lifetopia operates roommateclick.com, the secure site for roommate selection in the US, as well as other roommate and housing websites serving businesses, residents and students in the US, UK, France, Germany, Australia, and China.

For more information about Lifetopia Roommate and Housing solutions, visit [www.lifetopia.com](http://www.lifetopia.com) or call Lifetopia at 646-264-0729