vcita

Online Tutoring Business Leverages Automation to Spend Less Time on Admin, and More Time with Students

BUddieS

Topaz Ron Zarfaty has been teaching English as a second language in the Israeli school system for the last 12 years. When the opportunity arose to partner with Blake Steinnecker, an American teacher with American connections, to start **Buddies**, an international online English language tutoring service for Israeli children, she grabbed it.

Buddies gave Topaz an afternoon-based paying gig that she now successfully balances with the needs of her 15-month old baby. With her insider knowledge of the Israeli school system and the culture, Topaz is thrilled that she can provide parents with even more value.

When Buddies started three years ago, Topaz relied on Google sheets, manual email reminders for students, and phone calls to organize students' appointments, payments, and feedback. Blake emailed back and forth with recruitment candidates, teachers and parents.

And it worked.

Until it didn't.

CHALLENGE

Topaz and Blake were bogged down by heavy administration.

COVID was a catalyst for Buddies' rapid growth. Parents finally realized that online learning could be as effective and efficient as face-to-face learning, and Buddies' clientele increased significantly as a result.

When Topaz went on maternity leave during COVID, she realized, "we need help!"

All manual reminders, emails, and feedback messages were progressively eating away at her time with her baby. As more students registered, and Blake hired more teachers, it became too difficult to keep track of all the details.

Topaz and Blake realized they needed to go digital.

SOLUTION

vcita's automated platform

Before vcita, Topaz manually logged every student, every class, and every payment on an enormous and unwieldy Google sheet. Blake manually emailed every prospective candidate, all current teachers, and every single parent.

Now, clients book and pay for appointments on the Buddies website. Then, Topaz adds the package to their client card on vcita, which automatically registers the series of appointments into the system according to the client's package.

Appointments recorded with vcita sync with the parents' Google calendars, and they receive a 30 min reminder before every class.

Blake also embraced the new system - he interviews, selects and manages all the teachers and mock classes, so once Blake transitioned to vcita, recruitment became an administrative breeze.

Once on staff, teachers can upload class PDFs into the client portal, eliminating the need to spread communication out across several channels. In addition, the teachers can share feedback and documentation through vcita's messaging platform. Neither Topaz nor Blake have to manually collect that feedback and pass it on to parents, freeing them up to accomplish other tasks!

Topaz also grouped students into three categories on vcita's platform: "active student", "on a break", or "quit because". By tagging clients according to their category, it's easy for her to send custom emails, reminders, and special deals to each group.

She's also targeting new prospects and promoting free trials. Once parents register their child for a free trial, vcita sends automatic follow-up emails which help convert free trial clients into paying clients. The conversion rate from trial classes is almost 90%!

Reduced Admin Time by
20%

Converting prospects into paying customers by
90%

Decreased No-Shows by
25%

RESULTS

Topaz and Blake earned back their time

Topaz and Blake have discarded their Google sheet monstrosity in favor of vcita's automation and scheduling platform.
With 80 students, nine teachers, and multiple classes running simultaneously every day, vcita has turned Buddies' organizational nightmare into a smooth operation.

Topaz happily reports that vcita has reduced her admin time by two hours per day! Additionally, vcita's automated reminders reduced their no-show rate by 25%.
With more time for themselves and their families, Topaz and Blake are wholeheartedly reaping the benefits of going digital with vcita.