Making the Class: Evaluating Your Funnel and Applying New Engagement Strategies for Future Success

Thursday, May 6, 2021
Reaching Unreachable Students

The Future of Engagement Strategy... Where Are We Headed?

• Circumstances shook up the top-of-the funnel in traditional undergraduate search
• Many students were invisible in traditional search this year
• A wake-up call to rethink engagement strategies
• But so-called “stealth” students have always been present in college search, exacerbated by COVID
• “Stealth” is a natural behavior of students searching for colleges on their own terms
• So how do we engage students on their own terms?
How are Students Engaging in Search?

Have You Done Any of the Following Before Applying to a College or University?

- Explored the school’s website
- Read about the school on a college planning site
- Looked at the school’s social media
- Did a virtual tour of the campus
- Replied to an email from the school
- Talked to an admissions counselor
- Requested info from the school’s website
- Went to a campus officially (tour, open house)
- Visited the campus unofficially
- Talked to a school rep at a college fair
- Replied to a text message from the school
- Clicked on an ad about the school
- Used the chatbot on the school’s website
- Replied to a print mail from a school

Source: Eduventures 2021 Student Sentiment Survey
### What Constitutes an Inquiry?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students’ Search Activity</th>
<th>College Sees as Inquiry</th>
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<tbody>
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Source: Eduventures 2021 Student Sentiment Survey
Students are Active Outside Official Inquiry Channels

But They Do Make Themselves Known as Time Goes On

Inquiry vs. Stealth Activity

Source: Eduventures 2021 Student Sentiment Survey
Reaching Students Who Haven’t Made Themselves Known?

Unduplicated Market Reach Analysis of Key Stealth Activity

Explored the school’s website: 84%
Looked at the school’s social media: 6.28%
Clicked on an ad about the school: 1.85%
Did a virtual tour of the campus: 1.11%
Used the chatbot on the school’s website: 0.05%

Total Reach: 93%

Total Unduplicated Reach
No Easy Answers: Four Interwoven Strategies

- Make your search as strategic as possible
- Make your search count with resonant messaging
- Maximize your digital strategies to engage students
- Recommit to grass-roots work to reach students in their communities
Analysis and Action
Aggregate Inquiry to Enroll Rate by Model Score Fall 2020

91% Cumulative Enrolled in .8+

N = 256 Colleges & Universities
Make Your Communications Count

Utilize Analytics for Segmentations to Target and Research to Engage

**Challenge:** Identify opportunities to increase headcount in regional Out-of-State market

**Defined segmentation:** Significant volume best yield with students in GPA range ‘A’ to ‘B+’
Make Your Communications Count

Utilize Analytics to Identify Segmentations and Research to Engage

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<td>Exploration and Meaning 2.0</td>
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Out-of-State ‘A’ to ‘B+’

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Sample Social Focus Mindset Email

Name/subject that relates to the audience

Imagery that shows social interaction, clubs or student groups, and that the school values social interaction

Stories from current students

Content about clubs or networking opportunities

Texas Students at SSU!
From Sunshine University

Musings from a Sophomore
Find out what it’s really like from a second-year student.

Networking Night!
Wednesday night is Networking Night, and you won’t want to miss it!

Greek Life, Intramural Athletics, Campus Singers and More!
Maximize Strategies to Engage

Omnichannel

Multichannel
Maximize Strategies to Engage

Analyze
• Identify opportunities or challenges
• Build segmentations

Research
• Understand motivators and mindsets
• Develop messaging

Engage
• Omnichannel communication
• Execute
Maximize Strategies to Engage

- Omnichannel engagement
- Don’t throw in the towel on non-responders
- Beyond transactional
- Relationship building
Additional Resources
Eduventures Summit Virtual Research Forum (VRF) brings together higher ed leaders to help navigate the complex issues facing education today. We are thrilled to announce Ken Burns, celebrated documentary filmmaker, and separately, Dr. Laurie Santos, Yale Professor and expert on student well-being as our keynote speakers.

Examining a New Horizon for Higher Education

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Learn Why Students Enroll or Don’t Enroll at Your Institution to Plan for 2021

Deadline to Participate: May 24, 2021

encoura.org/asr

Participating in ASR offers:

• Nationwide benchmarks for yield outcomes
• Changes in the decision-making behaviors of incoming freshmen that impact recruiting
• Gaps between how your institution was perceived and your actual institution identity
• Regional and national competitive shifts in the wake of the post-COVID-19 environment
• Competitiveness of your updated financial aid model

Deadline to Participate: May 24, 2021

Please reach out to us if you are interested in participating but will not have admitted student lists by 5/24
Reva Levin, Vice President of Digital Solutions, will identify practical and effective digital engagement strategies to help you stay connected to your admitted students throughout the summer, new opportunities to reach transfer students and bolster your incoming class, and emerging channels that can boost inquiry generation for future years.
With fewer students in physical schools and taking standardized tests, fewer students are checking the boxes that allow them to be seen in college searches. A sizeable swath of students may simply be invisible to the traditional search marketing machine of higher education — and this poses considerable problems for students and institutions alike.

Read more and subscribe:
encoura.org/wake-up-call
Questions & Answers
Thank you.

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