



Finding and attracting prospective students

Creating a successful outreach strategy

INSIDE:

How to Find Students

Top 5 Things Students and Parents Want

Creating Effective Marketing Collateral



Finding Students

Before promoting your school's brand and message, it's important to first understand your target audience.

Generation Z represents those born from 2000 to the present—you will be targeting the oldest of this group in a few years, if not now.¹ This generation values predictability and structure, but does get easily distracted by evolving technology and online interactions. Students value practical career choices and are leaders in online collaboration.

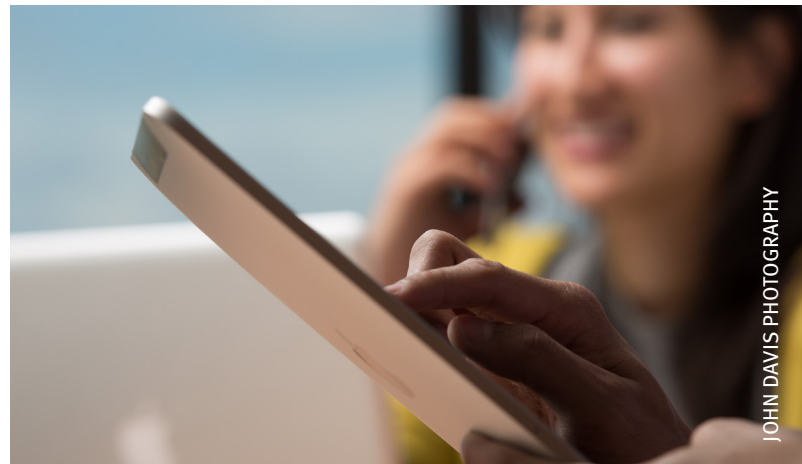
As high school juniors and seniors begin their college search, **almost 90%** are unsure of which school they want to attend. Getting your brand in front of high school students early can have a positive effect on your enrollment numbers. But how do you find—and speak—to this critical audience?

Attract the best prospective student candidates.

As an important first step, you can send a personalized direct mail piece to purchased lists of students who did well on SAT exams, with an invitation to learn more about your degree offerings.

Personalized messaging to these students can greatly affect incoming inquiries about degrees, campus life, and more. Tailor content around relevant programs they may be interested in, geographic messages based on their location, and even application checklists that assist them in their individual enrollment journey. As this “ideal” student visits your website and requests more information, you can create even more personal emails and correspondence based on their interests and goals.

37% OF STUDENTS PREFER CAMPUSES TO FIRST REACH OUT VIA DIRECT MAIL.



JOHN DAVIS PHOTOGRAPHY



Connect with Students Online

67% of students use social media to research colleges and 75% find those accounts influential in their decision.

While they agree it's an important factor for colleges, only 4 in 10 of these students find the information posted on a school's profile relevant.² With unique and effective social media platforms, you can show off your institution in a variety of ways. Use Instagram to show off the community, campus, and student life. Show off alumni on LinkedIn. Use Facebook to promote longer content, like videos and articles.

95% OF COLLEGE ADMISSIONS USE AT LEAST ONE FORM OF SOCIAL MEDIA.

Consider Other Mediums

While almost two-thirds of high school students use social media to research colleges, 40% of high school seniors and 45% of juniors said they were more likely to consider colleges that use brochures and phone calls to communicate.

That means your institution should consider an integrated approach when marketing to your audience. Young millennials rarely receive mail addressed to them, so a brochure or other marketing material from a university is sure to stand out. 70% of students surveyed prefer direct mail over email for unsolicited marketing pitches, and 25% of them thought direct mail was a trusted source of information. 90% of colleges that use direct mail say it generates a more positive outcome than relying on email alone.³ 71% of surveyed students reported that print publications and

letters were an effective way to learn about a school's academic offering.⁴ Including printed content in your marketing strategy can provide students with a sense of adulthood and pride in holding an important, tangible element of your school.

OVER 92% OF COLLEGE STUDENTS SAY THEY PREFER READING IN PRINT OVER ANY FORM OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA.

Other Sources Students Count On

College Comparison Websites
Print Materials
Social Media
Guidance Counselors

College Websites
Parents
College Fairs
Search Engines ►

Q What degree do I need to become a teacher?

What are the best schools for nursing?

What is the best business school in Maryland?



CASE STUDY

Semester Online

Semester Online provided undergraduates with an online education to top-tier colleges and universities, accessible all over the world. Our team designed its identity to attract new students through promotional kits including posters, flyers, and videos. By segmenting three student personas—the world traveler, the double major, and the career-oriented—our strategy was personal and effective. [View the full case study here.](#)

What Students and Parents Want from Schools

TOP FIVE FACTORS

STUDENTS CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A SPECIFIC COLLEGE⁵



93% CONSIDER SCHOOL DEGREE OPTIONS AND PROGRAMS OFFERED VERY IMPORTANT

88% CONSIDER AVAILABILITY OF FINANCIAL AID

81% CONSIDER SCHOOL LOCATION

76% CONSIDER THE NUMBER OF GRADUATES FINDING FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT

74% CONSIDER THE PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHO GRADUATE

CONSIDER HIGHLIGHTING THESE FACTORS IN YOUR MARKETING STRATEGY.

PARENTS ARE A TOP INFLUENCER FOR PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS⁶
Over 50% of college-bound students said their parents are “very involved” in college plans.

Consider speaking to parents directly with personalized marketing materials, addressing their top five concerns:

- Academic programs or majors
- Employment rate after graduation
- Affordability, including information about scholarships and financial aid
- Admissions and fees
- Campus safety

PRO TIP!

CONSIDER A COST CALCULATOR TOOL ON YOUR WEBSITE



HOW TO SPEAK TO PARENTS

- 90% of parents rely on websites to research schools.
- 84% of parents prefer email communications.
- ¾ of parents showed affinity for print communication.
- 76% prefer letters or brochures in the mail.

ENDNOTES

¹ https://www.oho.com/sites/default/files/insights/resources/highered_best_practices.pdf

² <http://blogem.ruffalonl.com/2016/12/02/highlights-from-2016-enrollment-research-7-things-we-learned-this-year-about-college-students-and-higher-education-enrollment-management/>

³ <http://www.sappi.com>, "The Marketing of Higher Education."

⁴ Ruffalo, Noel, Levitz, "2015 E-Expectations Report"

⁵ <http://www.internetmarketinginc.com/blog/marketing-university-student-driven-experience/>

⁶ https://www.ruffalonl.com/documents/shared/Papers_and_Research/2008/EExpCirclingOverEnrollmentto8.pdf

Contact us today.

Orange Element helps companies find new energy, clarity and confidence when presenting their brands. We strive to be a valued and trusted leader in integrated branding and design thinking.

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