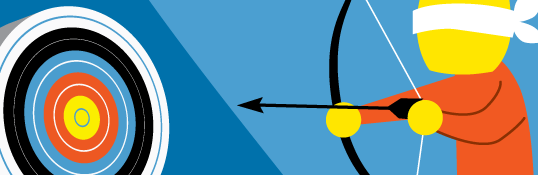
Smarter, not Harder, Higher Education Marketing



Colleges spend a lot of money to reach prospective students, but most of their efforts miss the mark. Why?

**A limited understanding of student data hinders schools’ ability to target effectively.**

To effectively marketing to students, first gather all that you know about your current and former students, and use information and insight to inform your marketing plan for prospective students.

**Step 1: Identify what you know about your target audience**

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Think of your marketing universe as an archery target in which the bulls-eye consists of current and former students. This includes traditional students enrolling directly after high school, but also transfer students, non-traditional students and alumni.

What do you know about these groups? More than you might think.

* Channel of initial contact (website, email, direct mail, ad, social media)
* Age
* Gender
* Family demographics (household income, state of residence, education level)
* School performance/interests (GPA, major/minor, extra-curricular activities/level of engagement, athletics)

**Step 2: Analyze the data you have with your big questions in mind.**



Consider this: If you had all the information you could possible want, what are the 10-15 key questions you would want to be able to answer about current and former students and applicants? For example:

* What do students who complete their undergraduate career look like?
* Is the profile of current students the profile most desired by the college?
* Where are transfer students coming from and why?
* What motivates non-traditional students?
* How do alumni engage with the school?

**Step 3: Apply your learnings to maximize results.**

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Of equal importance, if you had those answers, what would you do differently? Data and the resulting analysis must be both *accessible* and *actionable* to be *valuable*.

* Find look-alikes consistent with key attributes of successful students.
* Analyze communication process and identify opportunities to increase efficiency
* Develop customized communications for each segment
* Test to determine best offer combinations
* Use findings from analysis to support development of marketing strategies
* Evaluate marketing strategy successes and optimize for continuous improvement

College admissions shouldn’t be a game of horseshoes. The stakes are high, and the more precisely you can visualize your target student, the better focused your marketing campaign will be.

**Looking for more education marketing insight? Advance Media New York has created a free** [**downloadable Marketing to Students eBook**](http://resource.nj.com/webApp/advNJEduEbookLP?&sourceURL=NJEdublog)**, filled with tips on how to boost the performance of your enrollment marketing efforts and turn your most loyal students into powerful brand ambassadors.**