

Survey: Higher Education Marketers Credit Online Lead Generation for Half of Qualified Inquiries, Yet Most Invest a Fraction of their Budgets in Online Marketing

EducationDynamics Survey Shows Marketers Plan to Allocate More Resources toward Online Marketing Next Year to Boost Student Prospecting, Enrollment and Retention

New York, New York (December 4, 2007)—Higher education marketers, in large part, have been slow to invest in online marketing, however an imminent paradigm shift looms according to a new survey, the *Study of Institutional Goals for Student Recruiting and Retention*.

The survey conducted by EducationDynamics, a leading interactive marketing company focused on helping institutions find, enroll and retain students, shows that 42 percent of respondents credit online lead generation for the majority of their qualified leads. However, 65 percent invest less than 20 percent of their budgets in online marketing. Realizing a need to adopt new technology, half of respondents say they intend to increase their commitment to online marketing in the coming year.

“In an industry that each day becomes more competitive and complex, higher education institutions are looking for proven methods of recruiting students, and are embracing technology as the solution,” says Steve Isaac, EducationDynamics Chairman and CEO. “Emerging technological marketing platforms allow institutions to reach out to prospective students in their space on their terms, in a way that actively engages them, creating a personalized experience.”

Nearly 100 not-for-profit higher education marketers attending the American Marketing Association conference in San Diego November 11-14, 2007 participated in the survey, designed to capture the current trends and practices in prospecting, enrollment and retention. Survey highlights include the following:

Student Prospecting

- Only nine percent of respondents devote more than 40 percent of their budgets on online marketing.
- While most survey respondents (50%) say they plan to increase their online marketing budgets in the coming year, no respondents anticipate decreasing their investment.
- Surprisingly, tools to engage parents throughout the student lifecycle were attractive to this crowd with 55 percent of respondents saying that online parent communication and networking would be helpful in both converting inquiries into students and reducing attrition among students.

Student Enrollment

- While 41 percent of institutions gauge marketing success by the rate of inquiries to enrollment, 9 percent of schools have no way of measuring this success.
- In what is becoming a more metrics-driven industry, only 26 percent of respondents know their student cost per start.
- When asked about technology solutions, 81 percent suggest that customized online academic and social networks would be helpful in enrollment efforts.

Student Retention

- Respondents overwhelmingly (76%) indicate that customized online academic and social networking that commenced before or during orientation would be helpful in retention efforts.
- 82 percent would find an early warning alert system that notifies administrators when current students are struggling or dissatisfied to be helpful.
- Among institutions that offer freshman seminar classes (61%), marketers report that the biggest obstacles are lack of hard data showing the course effectiveness and participant satisfaction(34%), lack of student interest in taking the course (13%), and faculty disinterest in teaching freshman seminars (14%).

About EducationDynamics

EducationDynamics, LLC, a portfolio company of Halyard Capital, is a leading interactive marketing and information services company focused on helping higher education institutions find, enroll and retain students. Home to some of the most visible education websites, including EarnMyDegree.com, eLearners.com, GradSchools.com, and StudyAbroad.com, EducationDynamics is one of the leading providers of qualified leads for colleges and universities. In addition, the company offers a full suite of web-delivered products and services to manage a school's relationship with students across their entire life cycle from inquiry through enrollment to retention. For more information on EducationDynamics, please visit <http://www.educationdynamics.com>.