Attracting Today's Learners and Offering In-Demand Programs

May 23, 2023

EAB

Education's Trusted Partner to
Help Schools and Students Thrive

Your Imperatives Determine Ours

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Executive guidance rooted in research to support your strategic priorities

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Achieve Your Enrollment and Growth Goals

Tailored partnerships powered by a recruitment ecosystem with unrivaled reach to enroll your future classes

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95%+ of our partners return to us year after year
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Meet Your EAB Presenter

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Senior Director

EAB Strategic Research

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**Connect with me
on LinkedIn!**

1. **The Mindset of Your Prospective Learners**

2. **Alternative Credentials Overview**

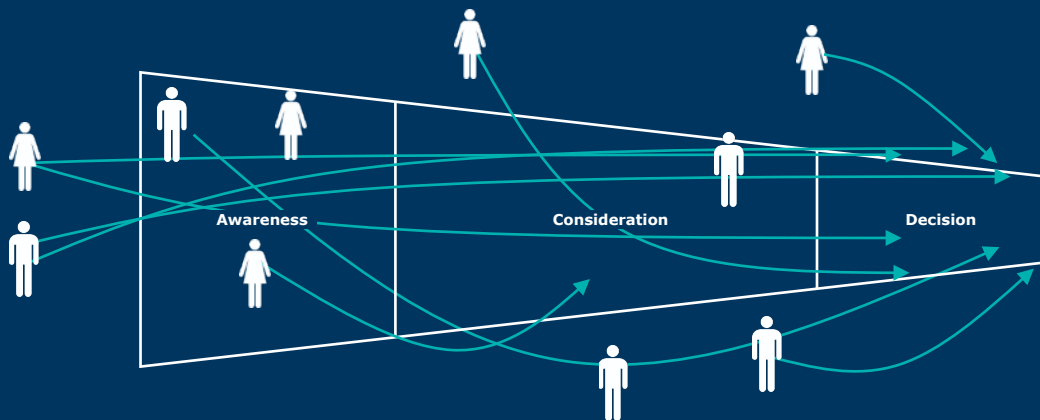3. **Considerations to Attract, Recruit and Enroll Adult Learners**

4. **Wrap Up**

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The Mindset of Your Prospective Learners

Engaging Prospects at Scale When Path to Enrollment Is Rarely Linear

Key Questions Plague Prospects—and the Answers Determine How They Engage with Your Funnel

What options do I have?

9 out of 10
Don't know which school to attend when they initiate their journey

If I enroll, will it be worth it?

7 out of 10
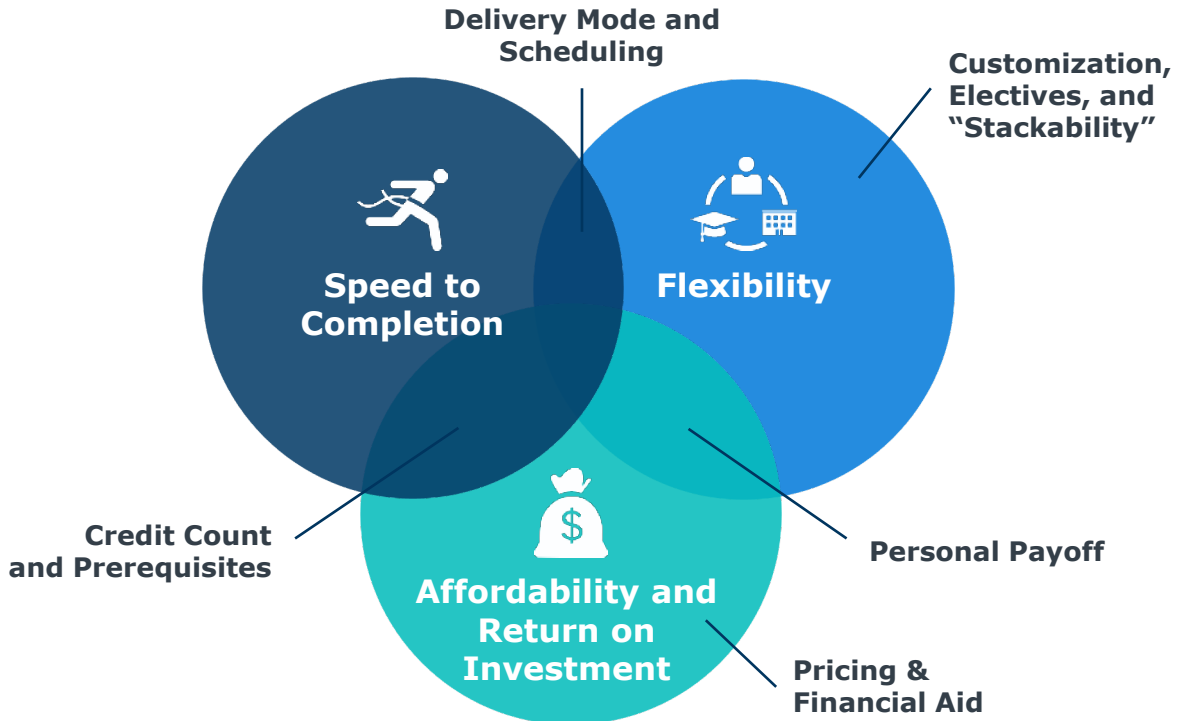Cite **outcomes-driven motivations** for earning their degree

How should I spend my time?

6 out of 10
Applying to fewer schools now than before

Delivery Mode and Scheduling

Customization, Electives, and "Stackability"

Speed to Completion

Flexibility

Credit Count and Prerequisites

Personal Payoff

Affordability and Return on Investment

Pricing & Financial Aid

Getting Beyond "Working Professionals"

Develop Targeted Programs Across a Prospect's Career Lifecycle

	Upskilling in Place	Seeking Promotion	Facing Replacement	Returning to Workforce	Preparing for a Switch	Pursuing a Passion
Audience						
Customer Journey			*"My career doesn't exist anymore."*	*"I haven't worked in a long time."*	*"I want a better job."*	*"I'm looking for a career with meaning."*

Require intervention to recognize educational need.

	Upskilling in Place	Seeking Promotion	Facing Replacement	Returning to Workforce	Preparing for a Switch	Pursuing a Passion
			Inform about job options.	Explain how to refresh skills.	Articulate pathways to better jobs.	Introduce meaningful alternatives.
	"I need new skills to keep up with job expectations."	*"I need to build new skills for my next step."*	*"I need retraining."*	*"I need to develop updated skills."*	*"I need to prepare for a career switch."*	
Value Added by Education	Value is typically from skills learned quickly (not credential's authority).	Skills often outweigh credential, except in industries with prescribed career ladders.	New skills offer greatest benefit, but may require credential to change industry.	Credential communicates readiness for today's job, and updated skills ensure performance.	Credential signals preparation, but fields (e.g., tech) may seek primarily skill growth.	Skills learned for new role matter most, if entry level degree requirements are met.
Goal	Keep up	Advance	Secure a new job			

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Mega-Stealth Shopping Is Here

How Mega-Stealth Shopping Manifests Throughout Recruitment Funnel

Pre-Awareness	Awareness	Application	Decision
Prospective students seek information from websites and platforms like TikTok (where most institutions lack an official presence)	Stealth shoppers often choose not to engage with marketing outreach, admissions counselors, or recruiters	Institutions find they don't encounter many students until they apply, making it hard to predict yield	Even admitted students wait longer to put down a deposit; **nonconsumption** a likely draw

Changing Privacy Behaviors and Preferences

- Consumers eager to protect their identities online as a response to "doxxing" and other threats
- Greater adoption of encrypted messaging apps (e.g., Signal) and private chats (e.g., Discord servers)
- Slow phaseout of third-party cookies; Apple now prompts users to opt into data-sharing with apps

What Qualifies as **Mega**-Stealth Shopping?

Stealth Shopping Rates for PCO[1] Units[2]

	80%
20%	
2012	2022
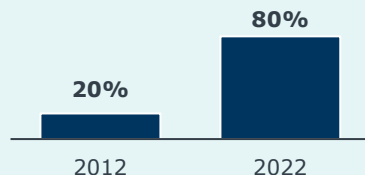
1) Professional, continuing, and online education
2) Based on research interviews conducted by EAB.

Source: Tiffany, K., "The Personal Brand Is Dead," *The Atlantic,* June 2022; EAB interviews and analysis.

Gen Z (10-25 Years Old Today) Have Shifting Opinions on Higher Education

TRAIT	Skeptical of Authority	Financially Conscious	Risk-Averse	Digital Natives
DEFINING EVENTS	Leaders fail to act on climate change	Saw parents live through Great Recession	Came of age in a pandemic	Grew up immersed in technology
	75% Have experienced mental health concerns related to climate change	**35%** Plan to start saving for retirement in their 20s	**69%** Prefer a stable job over a job they're passionate about	**4.1h** Hours spent using apps per day
IMPLICATIONS FOR HIGHER ED	**35%** Of Gen Z does not trust higher education	**64%** Worry how they will pay for higher education	**50%+** Are open to pursuing an alternative credential to reach their goals	**52%** Of students took at least one online course in 2019-2020

Source: Blue Shield of California, "Youth Climate Survey 2022," 2022; Desjardins, J., "Why Generation Z Has a Totally Different Approach to Money," *We Forum*, November 2018; "The Ultimate Guide to Gen Z in The Workplace," *Inside Out Development*, 2019; Skopec, C, "How Gen Z College Students Are Changing Higher Ed", *Collegis Education*, January 2021; Smalley, S., "Half of All College Students Take Online Courses," *Insight Higher Ed,* October 2021;Sakal, V., "Why Gen Z Isn't Interested in Your Statements, Promises, and Commitments—Yet," *Morning Consult,* June 2020; Kott, K., "Gen Z's Distrust in Higher Ed a 'Red Flag'," *Inside Higher Ed,* August 2022; "Gen Z: The Rise of Digital Natives," *CUInsight,* January 2022; EAB interviews and analysis.

Millennials Dominate the Market Today, Gen Z Right Around the Corner
Real and projected composition of adult learners by generation, 2012-2031

Percent of Adult Education Market

Baby Boomers

Gen X

Millennials

58%
In 2022

17%
In 2022

30%
In 2031*

60%
In 2031*

Gen Z

1) * Projected

Source: EAB analysis of the 2000-2021 American Communities Survey; EAB interviews and analysis.
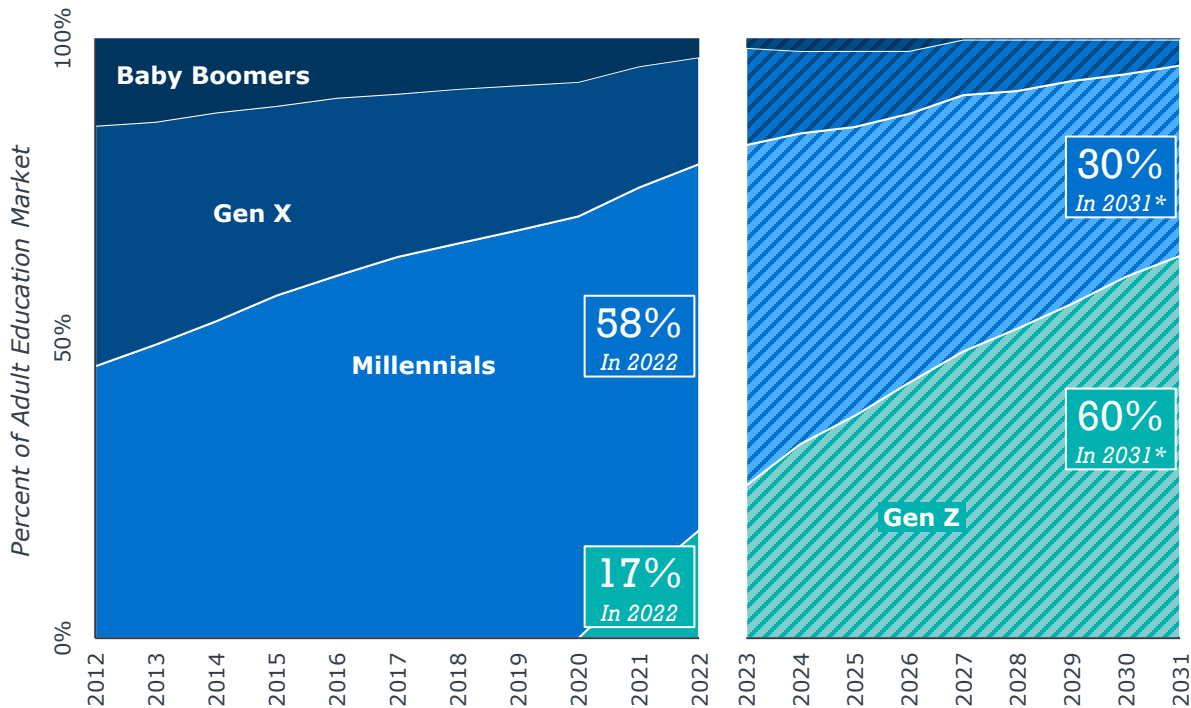
TRADITIONAL APPROACH	TODAY'S PREFERENCES	
Relationships with Brands Are Transactional Beyond standard customer support, consumers do not expect relationship with brands	**Expectation for Brands To Be Relational** Brands must publicly engage directly with consumers	**80%** Of consumers expect brands to interact with them
Highly Curated Marketing materials are meticulously created with high production value	**Minimally Curated** Perfection isn't necessary to be seen as trustworthy, helpful, and authentic	"Gen Z will call you out if you aren't being real." *-CMO, Major Clothing Brand*
Top-Down Advertisements focus on the voice of the company	**Bottom-Up** The best advertisements feature the voice of the consumer	**93%** Of consumers appreciate user-generated content
Strictly Positive Messaging Products are described as the perfect cure to the customer problem, with no side effects	**Authentic Messaging Necessitates Flaws** Consumers view presence of some challenges as more trustworthy	**86%** Of consumers say that brand authenticity is important to them

Source: Gomez, R., "8 Ways Customers Interact and Engage with Your Brand on Social," *Sprout Social*, May 2021; Tiffany, K., "The Personal Brand is Dead," *The Atlantic,* June 2022; "Gen Z Brand Relationships." *IBM*, 2017; Kunsman, T., "36 UGC Stats You Can't Ignore," *Everyone Social*, March 2022; EAB interviews and analysis.

Discussion Question

How are you making it easy for adult learners to engage with you and enroll in your programs?

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Alternative Credentials Overview

What Constitutes a Micro Credential?

No Consensus on Program Structure, Course Requirements, Titling

A Snapshot of Certificate Portfolios

Average Number of Courses and Months to Complete

n=240 certificate programs, 10 institutions

Courses Required

Average Months to Completion

Number of times a certificate type appears in sample
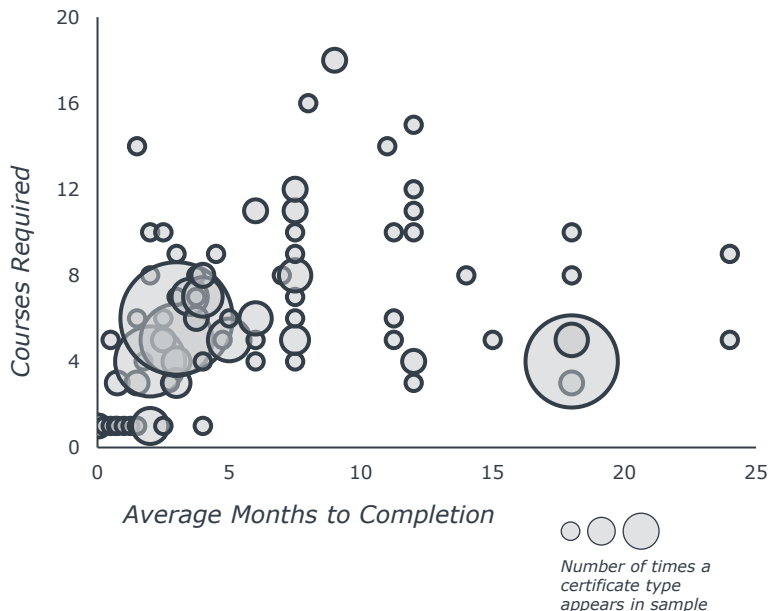
No Shortage of Synonyms

Variations Proliferate in the Market

Badges

Bootcamps

Course Sequences

Diplomas

E-Credentials

MicroBachelors

MicroMasters

Mini Degrees

Nanodegrees

Specializations

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Global, Older, and Growing Fast: Market at a Glance

A Global Marketplace

A supermajority of students on large provider platforms are located outside the US

77%
of Coursera learners are outside N. America

30%
are based in Asia Pacific region

Experienced and Older Learners

The typical alternative credential student is ~10 years older than the traditional Master's student

~80%
of enrolled students have a Bachelor's degree

35%
intend to complete a credential

Small, But Expected to Double in Size

*Alternative credential students estimated at **5-15%** of traditional post-baccalaureate domestic enrollment in 2020-2022*

$9.9B
estimated market value in 2019

$20B+
expected market value in 2025

Source: Fiona Hollands, Benefits and Costs of MOOC-Based Alternative Credentials: 2018 -2019 Results from End-of-Program Surveys (2019); Council of Graduate Schools, Non-Traditional Students in Graduate Education Research Report (2020); Richard Garrett The Deceptive Graduate Enrollment Growth Story 2021), Encoura Coursera Impact Report 2020); NCES; Online Degree and Micro-Credential Market to reach $117B by 2025, HolonIQ; EAB interviews and analysis.

A Fragmented Provider Landscape

Most of the Market Exists Outside Higher Ed's Traditional Realm

Colleges, Universities Just One of Many Providers in the Market

Providers that Issue Nondegree Credentials

n=5,545 25- to 64-year-olds with a nondegree credential
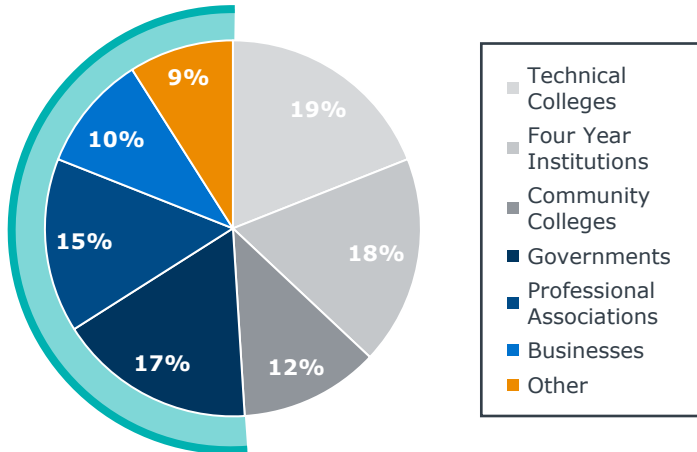
~51%
of nondegree credentials issued outside higher ed

Legend:
- Technical Colleges
- Four Year Institutions
- Community Colleges
- Governments
- Professional Associations
- Businesses
- Other

Pie chart values: 19%, 18%, 12%, 17%, 15%, 10%, 9%

Different-in-Kind Competitive Dynamics

- Diverse business models & missions
- Direct employment pathways
- Looser standards, oversight
- Subsidized or ultra low-cost pricing
- Hyper niche job skilling
- Professional certifications

If You're Not Biz or Tech, You're Out of Luck

Nearly 75% of Alt. Credentials Are in Technology or Business

Microcredential Distribution by Subject[1]

- Humanities
- Social Sciences
- Engineering
- Health & Medicine
- Art & Design
- Science
- Education

- 40.2% Technology
- 33.2% Business
- 26.5% Other Subjects
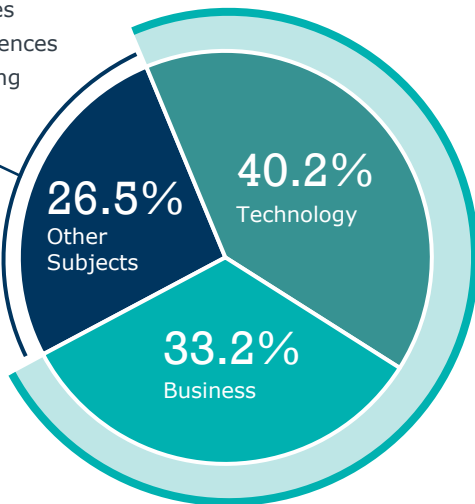
Why Tech and Business, Instead of Other Subjects?

Market Skews Towards Employers Who Pay

In 2020, **six** of the top 10 hard skills on LinkedIn were in tech (e.g., blockchain); **three** were in business (e.g., business analysis)

Tech and Biz Optimized for Fast Online Alt. Credentials

Other subjects not so much—they require hands-on-learning (e.g., healthcare clinicals), which adds costs and limits online scalability

Fewer Regulatory and Certification Barriers

Tech and business credentials don't have to navigate licensure, accreditation, and certification to the degree other fields do (e.g., law)

1) Data from Class Central July 2021.

State in Focus: New Jersey

Most Commonly Sought Job Skills in 2021

n=311,579 job postings

Skill	Count
Finance	37,526
Auditing	30,565
Accounting	28,630
Pharmaceuticals	27,127
Agile Methodology	24,656
Data Analysis	22,474
Computer Science	22,439
Project Management	21,776
Microsoft Mail	20,818
Strategic Planning	19,544
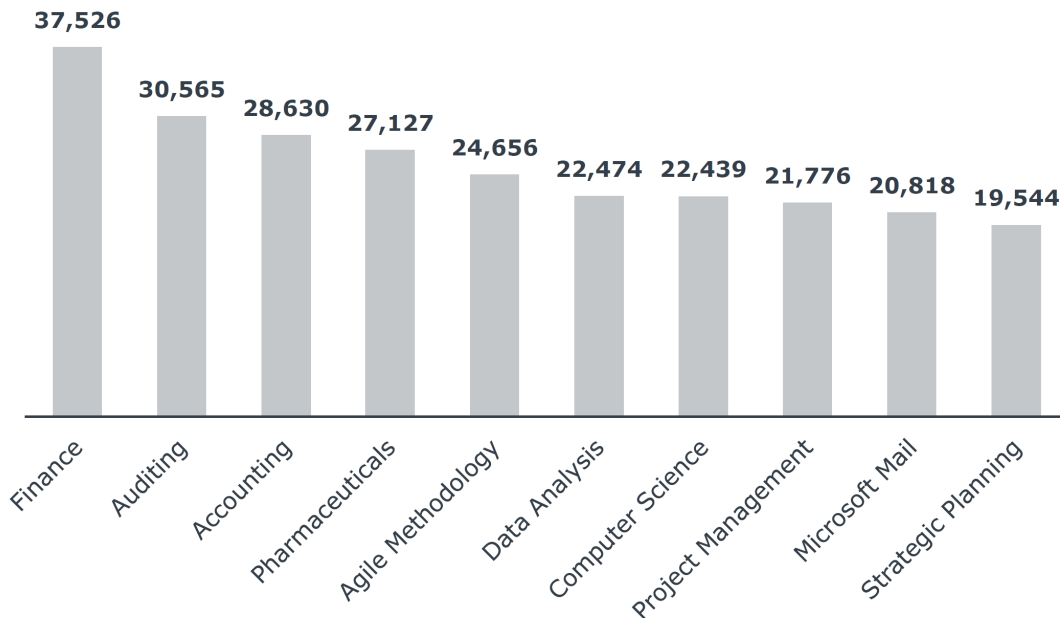
State in Focus: New York

Most Commonly Sought Job Skills in 2021

n=629,671 job postings

Skill	Count
Finance	86,082
Accounting	63,903
Auditing	58,375
Data Analysis	45,038
Workflow Management	41,837
Strategic Planning	39,551
Computer Science	39,491
Microsoft Mail	39,481
Project Management	38,766
Agile Methodology	37,317

Computer and Technology Support

High Demand Occupations:

- Computer and Information Systems Managers (4.13)
- Web and Digital Interface Designers (3.70)
- Audio and Video Technicians (3.50)
- Computer User Support Specialists (3.49)
- Computer Numerically Controlled Tool Programmers (3.48)
- Computer Network Support Specialists (3.42)

Early Childhood Education

High Demand Occupations:

- Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education (4.21)
- Education and Childcare Administrators, Preschool and Daycare (3.96)

Health Care Para-Professional

High Demand Occupations:

- Medical Assistants (4.38)
- Physical Therapist Assistants (4.26)
- Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses (4.06)
- Physical Therapist Aides (3.96)
- Dental Hygienists (3.91)
- Nursing Assistants (3.87)
- Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other (3.85)
- Ophthalmic Medical Technicians (3.85)
- Pharmacy Technicians (3.83)
- Psychiatric Technicians (3.80)
- Respiratory Therapists (3.76)
- Diagnostic Medical Sonographers (3.76)
- Occupational Therapy Assistants (3.73)
- Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants (3.72)
- Veterinary Technologists and Technicians (3.72)

Favorable Non-Degree Options for WPU

K-12 Education and Administration

High Demand Occupations:

- Education Administrators, Postsecondary (4.12)
- Teachers and Instructors, All Other (4.09)
- Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary (3.76)
- Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education (3.69)
- Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education (3.61)
- Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education (3.51)
- Kindergarten Teachers, Except Special Education (3.09)

Operations Management

High Demand Occupations:

- General and Operations Managers (3.90)
- Logisticians (3.87)
- Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers (3.66)

Social Services

High Demand Occupations:

- Social and Community Service Managers (4.10)
- Social and Human Service Assistants (3.86)
- Community Health Workers (3.51)

Few Institutions Post Big Returns—and Most Don't Even Know ROI

Reported Revenue Data from April 2020 UPCEA Member Survey

Type of Alternative Credential
- Undergraduate Certificates[1]
- Graduate Certificates[2]
- Badges[3]
- Professional Certificates[4]

Percent of Institutions

Do Not Know
- 71%
- 68%
- 50%
- 48%

Less than $200K
- 29%
- 16%
- 44%
- 26%

$200K or more
- 0%
- 15%
- 6%
- 27%

Reported Revenue
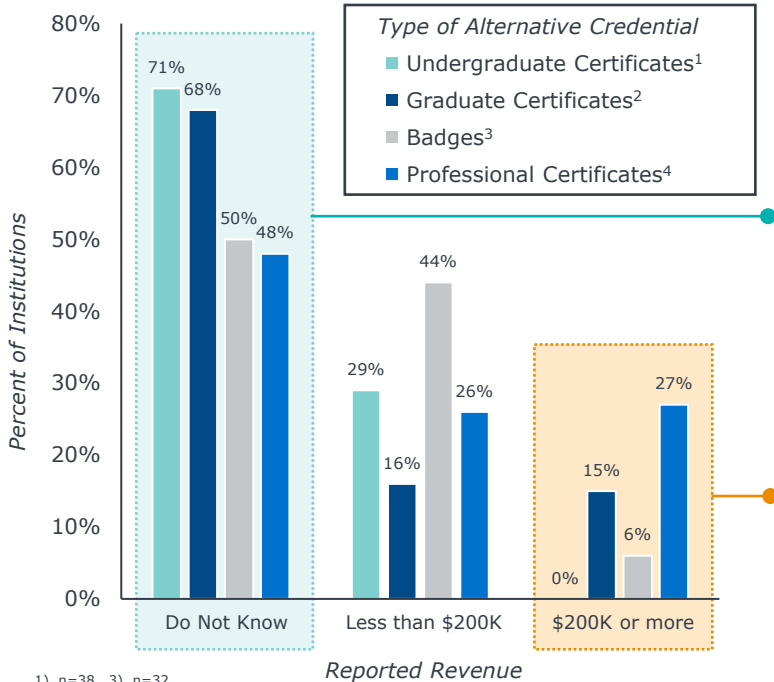
Most Institutions Unclear on Exact Revenue

Roughly **50 percent or more** of all institutions do not know the revenue of their alternative credentials

Professional Certificates Are the Most Lucrative But Not By Much

Few institutions report **an annual revenue of $200K** or more, highest amounts concentrated among even fewer players

1) n=38   3) n=32
2) n=41   4) n=53

Source: UPCEA, The State of the Alternative Credential Market: UPCEA Member Survey Results; EAB interviews and analysis.

Four Considerations for Buffing Up Your Alt. Credential Portfolio

More than a Credential: Applied Projects Power ROI

Tangible projects within alternative programs help learners demonstrate competency to employers, proves credential value

Credential Branding Most Important, Not Design

Without agreed-upon standards, credential design and titles can help persuade learners of the value and differentiate in crowded certificate market

Wherever Possible, Go Interdisciplinary

Interdisciplinary skills are the niche that higher ed can best corner and expand reach across industries and learner needs

Healthcare and Education is the Current Frontier

With the market concentrated in tech and business, healthcare and education remain untapped but primed for short-form credentials

Discussion Question

What pathways for building an alternative credential portfolio has William Paterson adopted?

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Considerations to Attract, Recruit and Enroll Adult Learners

Think About Attractive Program Design

New Market Pressures Cause Many Program Launches to Falter

"In today's environment, it's no longer 'if you build it, they will come.' Now, if you build it, and it is in demand, and you do a really good job marketing it, then *maybe* they will come."

Michael Cottam,
AVP for Academic Affairs

Webster University

"Until recently, I would have told you that health sciences and business were 'sure bets' for enrollments, but I'm now seeing failures in those disciplines too. It's concerning to me that these sure bets aren't working out anymore."

Raili Kieley,
AVP, Chief Planning and Budget Officer

Duquesne University

Who is responsible for program development at your institution?

Who drives the program development process?

Who is the skeptic in your program development process?

What do you base the go/no-go decision on?

Do you already have programs ready to launch or re-launch?

The Four Most Damaging Mistakes in New Program Planning

1

Using one-dimensional market data to evaluate demand potential

2

Designing programs around academic norms and preferences

3

Overlooking indirect, incremental, and knock-on costs

4

Committing inflexible, fixed resources before programs demonstrate demand

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

What program design choices will help you **stand out** to prospects?

The Program's Name is Not the Place to Show Off its Uniqueness

Key Questions to Consider When Naming a Program

How will this name perform in online search?

What names are key competitors using?

What names are "mega schools" using?

Which terms resonate with employers?

Do certain names align with certain foci?

Consider These Questions When Analyzing Competitor Programs

Prerequisites
- What is the minimum prior education needed to succeed?

Program Length
- Does your time to completion compare favorably with the competition?
- Is the credit count appropriate?

Electives and "Stackability"
- How can you provide students with curricular flexibility?
- Can you use a modular approach?

Starts
- Can you offer multiple start dates?

Applied Learning
- Can you show students how they can put the material into practice?
- Can students personalize the material through project work?

External Partnerships
- Can you demonstrate employment success and provide applied experiences?

Basic Description

Graduate certificate in health informatics that draws on existing faculty, staff, facilities, and courses from the Colleges of Health/Human Services and Business.

Intended Audience

Designed for early to mid-career professionals working in healthcare who want to strengthen their analytical skills. Strong quant experience desired.

Competitive Edge

Offered in an accelerated 15-month format. Students learn from our world-class faculty and engage with real-world data sets. Competitively priced.

Resource Needs

Course releases to redesign courses for the accelerated 10-week term format. Additional teaching faculty appointments.

External Demand

Job postings stipulating informatics skills more than doubled across the last 5 years. More than 150 health informatics degrees nationally with strong enrollments. Two job postings per degree conferred.

Perceived Risks

Students may not immediately understand what an informaticist is or does. Many competitor programs are offered online, but we want to differentiate on time to completion and price rather than modality.

Mission Alignment

Adheres to the mission and commitment to strategic plan and lifelong learning.

Markers of Success

Provides positive contribution margin and enrolls 30 students within first year.

Strengthen Employer Partnerships

Taking Advantage of External Opportunities

Do You Have a Coordinated Approach?

- Has an institutional imperative been established and clearly communicated?

- Is there a central point of contact for potential partners?

- Do you have a task force or coordinating committee?

- Have you developed a coherent strategy for developing and supporting partnerships?

What Opportunities Exist?

- What aspects of your institutional mission can you emphasize with potential partners?

- What is the labor market condition in your target market—what needs can you help partners address?

- What avenues have been established for outside contact and advice? Alumni links? Advisory boards?

Have the Fight About the Website

Websites Significantly Impact Students' Program Choice...

#1 Your website is the **top resource** prospects use to look for information

94% Of adult learners make a point to visit websites of all schools they're considering

85% Of adult learners say a bad website negatively affects their opinion of your school

63% Of adult learners abandon your website if it's not user-friendly

... And All Have Room for Improvement

- ✖ Burdensome RFIs
- ✖ Stock photos
- ✖ Missing calls to action
- ✖ No course schedule
- ✖ Unclear modality and format
- ✖ Lack of consistentcy across pages
- ✖ Missing application requirements

- ✖ Unclear navigation
- ✖ Lofty, confusing language
- ✖ Written for wrong audience
- ✖ Missing program webpages
- ✖ Hard to find tuition info
- ✖ Unclear program legnth
- ✖ No testimonials

Source: Adult Learner Recruitment, "Understanding Your Future Adult Learner," *EAB,* September 2021; EAB interviews and analysis.

How Does Your Website Stack Up?

90s

Average time prospects spend on a university webpage

Website Scavenger Hunt			
Is there an RFI submission?	Is there a spotlight on faculty expertise/research?	Are there program discounts or scholarships advertised?	Are the application requirements and deadline listed?
Is there contact info for a real person?	Is there information on transfer credit options?	Is the program tuition readily available?	Is program duration quickly accessible?
Is the program start date listed?	Are student outcomes shared?	Are there photos of real students?	Is there an application link or button?
Are there student or alumni testimonials?	Are program differentiators listed?	Does the page show labor market data for the field?	When viewing on a mobile device, can you read all content without the need to zoom?

The Four Missteps of PCO Websites

1

Neglecting the Need-to-Know Information

- Misses essential information like program cost, modality, flexibility
- Fails to address outcomes and reassure prospective students of their ROI
- Lacks differentiators from other educational options

2

Creating an Onerous User Experience

- Available information is hard to find or restricted behind RFI
- Calculating cost or applying requires students to hunt
- Similar programs aren't presented cohesively, raising questions about options

3

Failing to Address Your Audience

- Overly academic and institutional language doesn't speak to a prospective adult learner
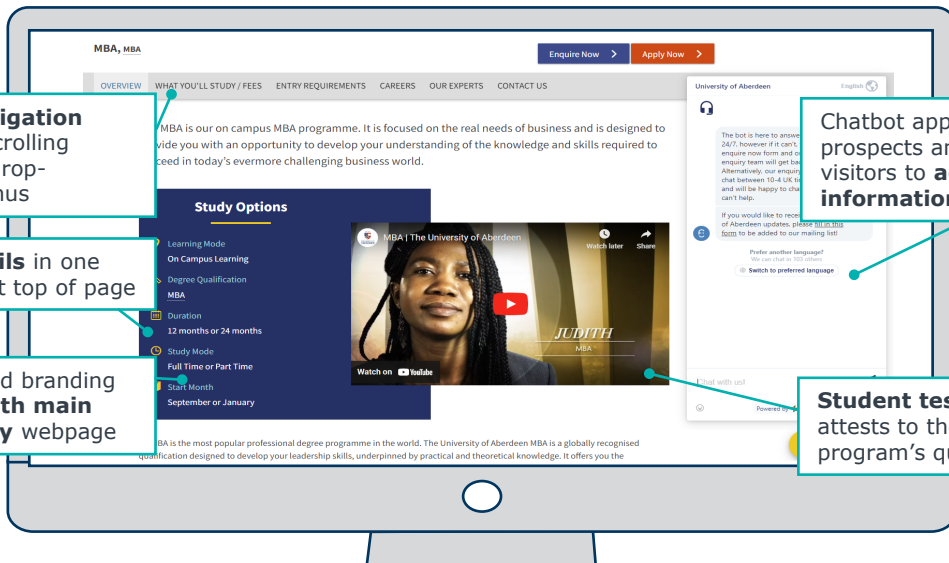- Visuals don't represent actual students (and/or are underleveraged)

4

Lacking a Cohesive, Intentional Brand

- Different program types feel different and disconnected
- PCO offerings appear unrelated to larger institutional branding

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

MBA Program Webpage Centers Key Info and Student Stories

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

Easy navigation without scrolling or using drop-down menus

Key details in one location at top of page

Design and branding **aligns with main university** webpage

Chatbot appeals to prospects and allows visitors to **access key information fast**

Student testimonial attests to the program's quality

Even Beyond the Program Page, Aberdeen's Website is Optimized for Prospect Audiences

Prospects can access adult education in one click from homepage

Visitors can easily browse programs using an extensive range of filters

Clickable contact details on all webpages make asking questions easy

Source: The University of Aberdeen, "MBA, Postgraduate Taught"; EAB interviews and analysis.

UNIVERSITY of GUELPH **OPENED** OPEN LEARNING AND EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

Course Information Charts Prioritize the Key Details All Prospects Need

Sample Course Information Chart

Course Title	Introduction to Plant-Based Diets
Modality	Online
Dates	*February 20, 2023 to March 19, 2023*
Contact Hours	20
Fees	$299 *Plus optional memorial fund and bursary donation*
Potential Discount(s)	Alumni discount available
Textbook(s)	*There are no textbooks required for this course*
Section Notes	*Please review other policies here*

All key course and program information is presented in **one easy-to-find location**

Upfront program **cost answers critical questions** and builds trust

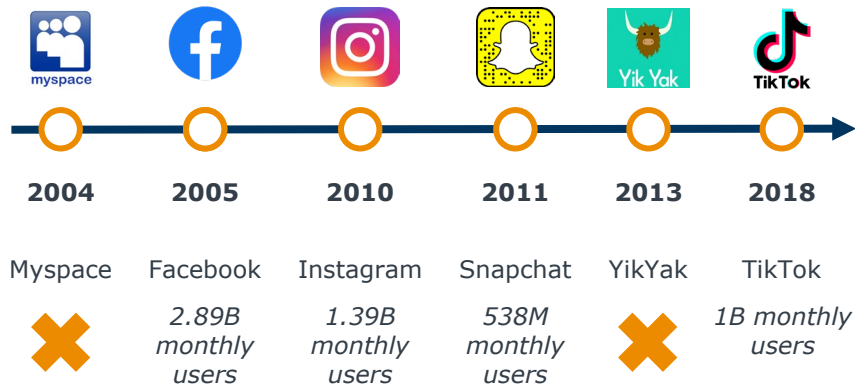Content **updated based on common questions** asked in the chat feature

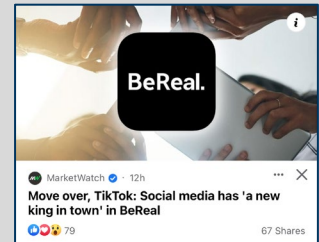# Meet Gen Z on TikTok and Other Social Media Platforms

Social Media Fads Come and Go; Necessity to Stay Nimble Remains

Social Media Landscape Changes Fast…

… And Marketers Need to Be Ready for the Next Big Thing

2004	2005	2010	2011	2013	2018
Myspace	Facebook	Instagram	Snapchat	YikYak	TikTok
✖	*2.89B monthly users*	*1.39B monthly users*	*538M monthly users*	✖	*1B monthly users*

MarketWatch ✓ · 12h
Move over, TikTok: Social media has 'a new king in town' in BeReal
😮😡😢 79   67 Shares

"Move over TikTok: Social Media has 'a New King in Town' in BeReal"

-Marketwatch

40%

Of Gen Z Use TikTok as a search engine
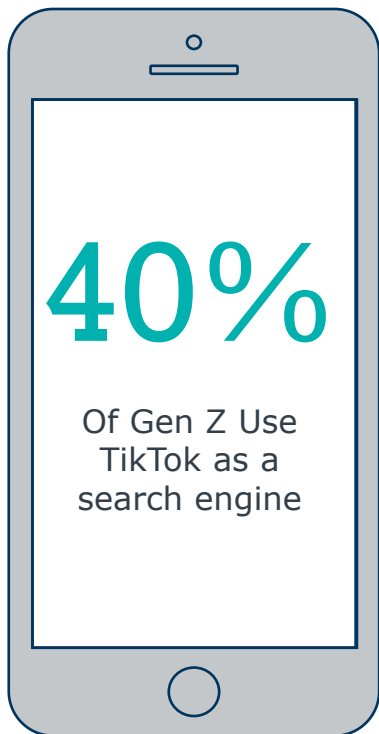
This shift disrupts your...

Typical Student Journey
Social media, not website, will become the first contact with your institution

Search Engine Optimization
Google and other search engines are less relevant to search strategy for Gen Z prospects

Paid Search Efforts
ROI may decrease with lower search engine usage

TikTok User Statistics

63M
Gen Z and Millennial TikTok users

45.8
Minutes per day spent on app by average user

Source: Huang, K., "For Gen Z, TikTok Is the New Search Engine," *The New York Times*, September 2022; Mohsin, M., "10 TikTok Statistics that you Need to Know in 2022," *Oberlo,* July 2022; Sheikh, M.,"30 TikTok Stats Marketers Need to Know," *Sprout Social*, March 2022; EAB interviews and analysis.

Students Own the Narrative When PCO Units Lack Social Media Presence
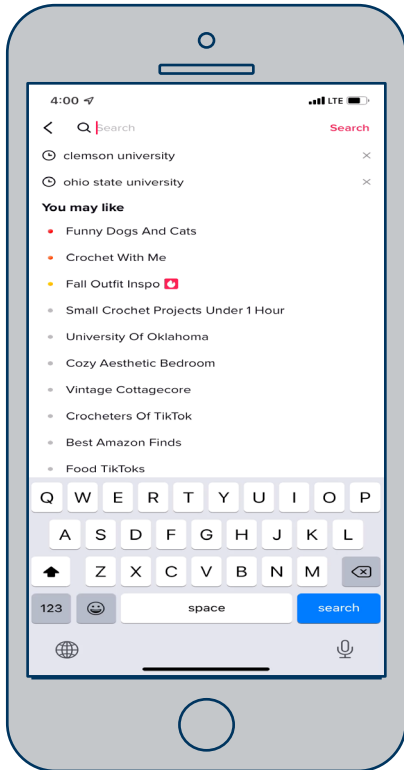
UW Madison's TikTok Presence

0
Official university accounts

268M
Views of #UWMadison

Results of EAB's TikTok Audit

3
EAB partners with PCO-specific TikTok accounts

4
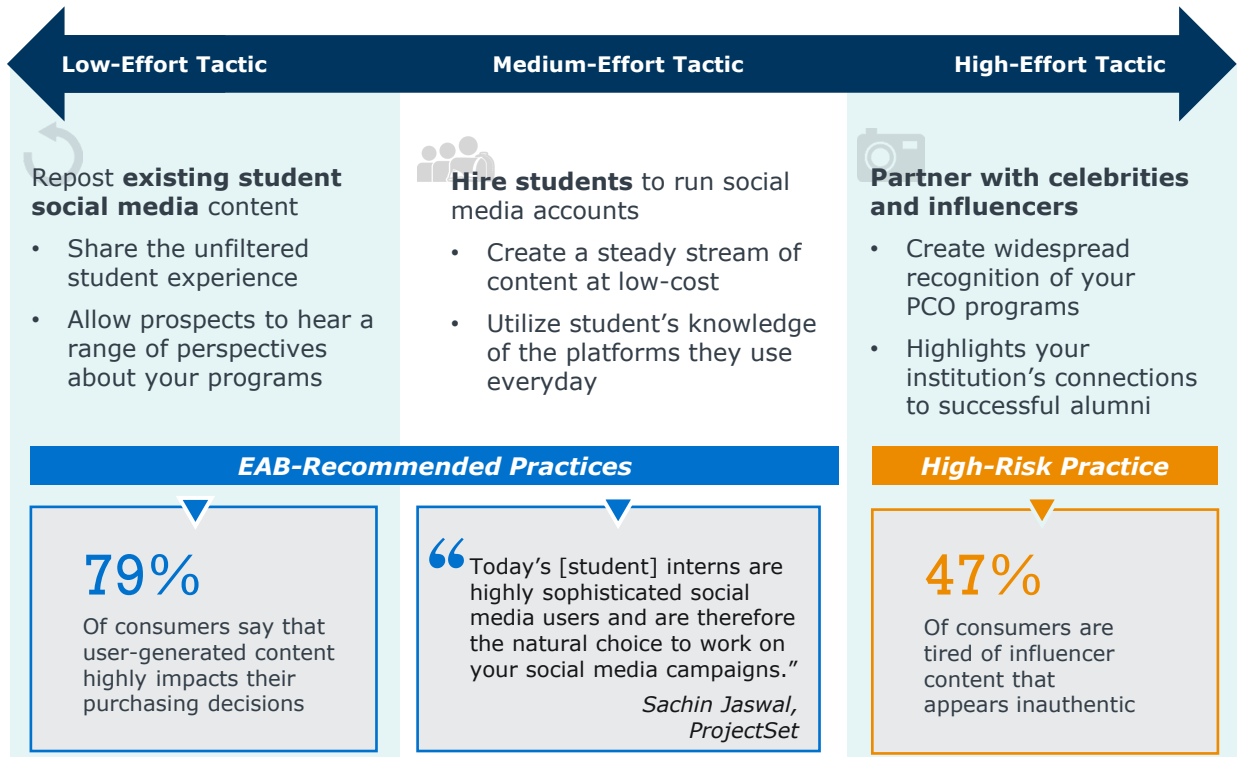Partners occasionally profiled on main campus account

How The Tables Have Turned

A brand is no longer what we tell consumers it is. It is what **consumers tell each other** it is.

- Scott Cook
Cofounder, Intuit

Phone mockup text:
4:00
Search
clemson university
ohio state university
You may like
Funny Dogs And Cats
Crochet With Me
Fall Outfit Inspo
Small Crochet Projects Under 1 Hour
University Of Oklahoma
Cozy Aesthetic Bedroom
Vintage Cottagecore
Crocheters Of TikTok
Best Amazon Finds
Food TikToks

Source: Search of @uwmadison, *TikTok,* September 27, 2022; Savitz, E., "Listening to Social Media Cues Doesn't Mean Ceding Control," *Forbes,* 2012; EAB interviews and analysis.

Low-Effort Tactics Provide Lower Risk, Higher Reward

Low-Effort Tactic	Medium-Effort Tactic	High-Effort Tactic

Repost **existing student social media** content

- Share the unfiltered student experience
- Allow prospects to hear a range of perspectives about your programs

Hire students to run social media accounts

- Create a steady stream of content at low-cost
- Utilize student's knowledge of the platforms they use everyday

Partner with celebrities and influencers

- Create widespread recognition of your PCO programs
- Highlights your institution's connections to successful alumni

EAB-Recommended Practices

High-Risk Practice

79%

Of consumers say that user-generated content highly impacts their purchasing decisions

" Today's [student] interns are highly sophisticated social media users and are therefore the natural choice to work on your social media campaigns."

Sachin Jaswal, ProjectSet

47%

Of consumers are tired of influencer content that appears inauthentic

Source: Kunsman, T., "36 UGC Stats You Can't Ignore," *Everyone Social*, March 2022; Jaswal, S., "5 Reasons You Should Hire an Intern for Your Social Media Campaigns," *ProjectSet*, 2020; "6 Dangers of Influencer Marketing," *Social Media Today,* 2019; EAB interviews and analysis.

Learn from the Online Giants

Adopt the Messages and Strategies that Online Giants Use to Win Enrollments
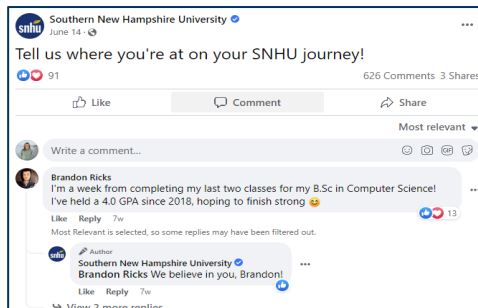
Encouragement

Entertaining Content

Two-Way Engagement

Foster Digital Community with Prospects, Students, and Alumni

▶ Ask for and respond to **student feedback on social media,** responding to questions or concerns when possible

▶ **Solicit student and prospect photos** and videos that generate excitement, like pets, graduation, and study locations

▶ Reshare posts and stories of user-generated content to provide **authentic glimpses into student life**

Best Practices for Prospect Engagement

It Takes a Village of Faculty, Admissions, Alumni and more to Woo Prospects

Admissions & Recruitment Outreach

Consistent, personalized outreach at scale

Awareness

Consideration

Decision

Enrolment

Additional Outreach by Faculty, Alumni, Current Students

High-touch, incremental contact that enables deeper relationship-building

Email Follow-Ups Phone Calls Ongoing Personal Outreach High-Touch Interactions
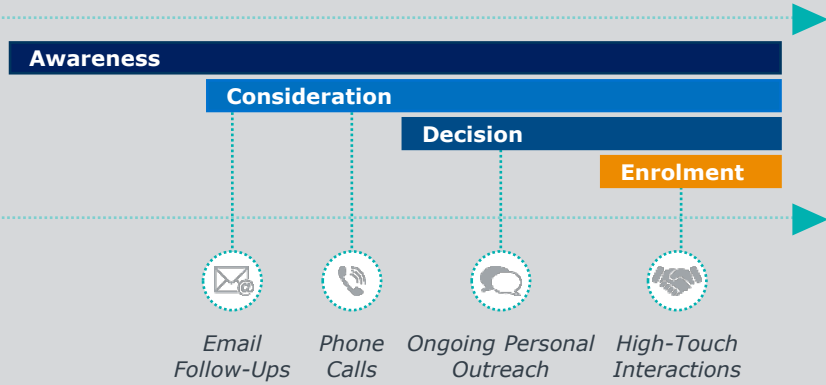
Each Communication Serves A Unique Purpose And Is Critical To A Successful Plan

1 "Branded" Communications

- Ear-marked in inboxes for future reference
- Specific themes with links directing back to .edu for further exploration
- Information-rich content

2 "Personal" Communications

- 1-1 email between prospect and counselor/recruiter
- "I'm here to help," "checking in on…" "if you'd like to talk further…"
- Brief, casual, and personable

3 "Engagement" Communications

- Nudges prospective students towards the next step in their journey
- Uses intent marketing to get them to take an action and engage
- Teases information, leverages direct marketing tactics, CTA-focused

Intent Marketing

Requires a deep understanding of your prospective student—anticipating their intent based on a combination of psychographic, demographic, and real-time data.

Consumers Demand Intent Marketing

51% of consumers **expect companies to anticipate needs and make suggestions** on products and services before they make contact

52% Of consumers are **likely to switch brands if a company doesn't customize** communications to them

Applications to Adult Learners Critical

1 Know Where Your Potential Students are in Their Journey

2 Understand Their Motivations and Concerns

3 Provide Timely and Relevant Information

Extend Internal Inquiry Communication Plan To 1 to 3 years

Frequency and Duration

- Build out a minimum of 16 emails
- Spread out across 365 Days
- Incorporate ad-hoc emails for:
  - event invites
  - programme/curriculum updates
  - changes in modality
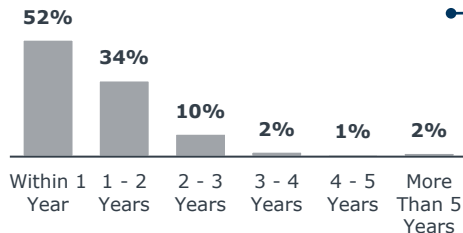 - new campus initiatives
  - addition of service

Sample Schedule:

Days						
1	2	**3**	4	5	6	**7**
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	**21**
22	23	24	25	**26**	27	**28**
29	30	31	32	33	34	**35**
36	37	38	39	**40**	41	42
43	44	45	46	47	48	49

Days 0, 3, 7, 15, 21, 26, 35, 40, 60, 75, 90, 120, 150, 180, 220, 360

Inquiry Pool Applicants By Age Of Inquiry

EAB Campaigns

52% — Within 1 Year
34% — 1 - 2 Years
10% — 2 - 3 Years
2% — 3 - 4 Years
1% — 4 - 5 Years
2% — More Than 5 Years

48%
of inquiries apply *after* one year of inquiring

1 **Singular Theme:**
- Stick with one theme per email
- e.g. campus visit and social could be split up

2 **Link to Relative Content:**
- Drive all links to relative content
- Don't take people to see programmes if message is about affordability

3 **Use Hyperlinks Strategically:**
- Hyperlink the relative language
- e.g. scholarships should be hyperlinked v.s. graduate programmes in affordability email

4 **Always Include:**
- Option to Apply
- Option to Speak to a counselor

5 **Diversify Calls to Action:**
- Tie back the CTA to the theme of the email
- e.g. undecided? "Shop Our Programmes"

6 **Leverage multiple voices:**
- Personalize the emails by having a single signer
- e.g. Dean sends welcome email when inquiry indicates interest in a specific programme

Various Email Themes

Voice	Affordability	Programme Information	Student & Career Services	Student Success Stories	Alumni Network	Customized Education Plans	Prestige / Welcome	Career Outcomes / ROE	Research / Internship
Dean or President							●		●
Faculty		●						●	●
Advisor / Counselor	●		●			●	●		
Alumni or Student			●	●	●			●	●
Career Services			●					●	

- ✓ **Affordability (Cost and Financing Education)**
- ✓ **Outcomes/Return on Education/Student Stories**
- ✓ **Programme flexibility & support**
- ✓ Rankings & Research
- ✓ Faculty Experience & Support
- ✓ Connecting on Social Media
- ✓ **What sets Your University apart**
- ✓ Diversity & Inclusion
- ✓ Advantages of location and community
- ✓ Alumni Community and Connections
- ✓ **Real-world Experience & Learning Opportunities**
- ✓ Visit Campus / Virtual Tour / Attend a Class
- ✓ Schedule Admissions Call
- ✓ Student services, Online services, mental health

Content for Programme-Specific Emails

- ✓ Cost
- ✓ Format / Flexibility
- ✓ Time to completion
- ✓ Value Proposition
- ✓ Outcomes
- ✓ Accreditations/Rankings
- ✓ Admissions Criteria

EAB

Wrap Up

1

Partnerships
- Employers
- Other universities or orgs

2

Value Proposition
- Promotes affordability, flexibility, speed to completion and return on investment

3

Marketing and Recruitment
- Diversified approach
- Budget

4

Prospect Experience
- Seamless inquiry and application experience with digital-first approach

5

Program Portfolio
- Builds desired skills
- Meets labor demands

6

Online Expertise
- Online courses
- Online student support