A Motley Crew: Understanding the Individuals in Gen-Z

Johanna Trovato | Senior Analyst
Do You Know Gen Z?

THEY MIGHT STILL SURPRISE YOU

• Our Student Sentiment Survey data suggests that they’re still changing
• Student respondents tell us some institutions are missing the mark in their outreach
• We need to understand how these students search for colleges
• We need to understand that Gen Z consists of different types of students
Student Sentiment Survey

☑ Prospective Student Survey™
☑ Survey of Admitted Students™
☑ Student Sentiment Survey™
About the Survey

STUDENT SENTIMENT SURVEY 2019

• National sample of 1,112 high school seniors, juniors, and sophomores

• 34% identify as a member of an under-represented student group

• 34% are first-generation students
Different Approaches to College Search
College Search Strategies

- Websites & emails: 37%
- Friends & family: 30%
- Stealth, all channels: 20%
- "The phone is my friend": 13%
College Search Strategies -- Who Does What?

**MOST TRUSTED SOURCE**

- Email: 97%
- Phone call: 69%
- Text: 56%
- Mail: 32%

**PREFERRED COMMUNICATION**

- Email: 97%
- Phone call: 69%
- Text: 56%
- Mail: 32%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phone is my friend</th>
<th>Friends &amp; family</th>
<th>Stealth, all channels</th>
<th>Website &amp; emails</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact with college faculty</td>
<td>Word-of-mouth from family/friends</td>
<td>Emails from schools</td>
<td>School websites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact with current students/alumni</td>
<td>Contact with current college students/alumni</td>
<td>Postcards/brochures from schools</td>
<td>Emails from schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone call with school's adm counselor</td>
<td>Rec from my high school counselor</td>
<td>Rec from my high school counselor</td>
<td>Postcards/brochures from schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School websites</td>
<td>Rankings (e.g., U.S. News &amp; World Report)</td>
<td>Print guides to colleges/universities</td>
<td>Rankings (e.g., U.S. NWR)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
College Search Strategies
FOUR APPROACHES TO COLLEGE SEARCH

Search Strategy by Year in School

- **Sophomore**
  - the phone is my friend: 33%
  - friends & family: 25% (↓)
  - stealth, all channels: 12%
  - websites & emails: 31% (↑)

- **Junior**
  - the phone is my friend: 39%
  - friends & family: 30%
  - stealth, all channels: 11% (↓)
  - websites & emails: 20%

- **Senior**
  - the phone is my friend: 40%
  - friends & family: 34% (↑)
  - stealth, all channels: 15%
  - websites & emails: 11% (↓)
Search Behavior Differs by Academic Interest

EDUVENTURES 2019’ STUDENT SENTIMENT SURVEY FINDS THAT STUDENTS INTERESTED IN...

**Healthcare**
More often research colleges on Instagram (71% vs. 57% of students interested in other majors)

**Biology**
Are less likely than their peers to click on an online ad sponsored by a school (24% vs. 42%)

**Criminal Justice**
Are more likely to find college-sponsored online ads helpful and informative (48% vs. 27%)

**Business**
Browse institutional websites to learn about potential schools of interest (61% vs. 45%)

**Engineering**
Are less interested in receiving text messages from admissions officers (21% vs. 38%)
Demography Matters

WHO INFLUENCED THE APPLICATION OF ENROLLMENT DECISION?

Parents

- **Parents**: 63% to 65%
- **All Students**: 55% to 53%
- **Male**: 34%
- **Underrepresented Minority**: 17%
- **First-generation**: 16%
- **A or A+ Student**: 24%

Guidance Counselors

- **Guidance Counselors**: 34% to 31%
- **All Students**: 38% to 36%
- **Male**: 21%
- **Underrepresented Minority**: 17%
- **First-generation**: 13%
- **A or A+ Student**: 14%

Alumni

- **Alumni**: 22% to 24%
- **Male**: 17%
- **Underrepresented Minority**: 16%
- **A or A+ Student**: 24%

Athletic Coaches

- **Athletic Coaches**: 21% to 14%
- **Male**: 17%
- **Underrepresented Minority**: 13%
- **A or A+ Student**: 14%
What You Need to Get Right.
Three Things Students Want from Recruitment Outreach

1. Be Real
2. Respect Me
3. Don’t be Boring
Be Real.
“They were not too weird about how they communicated with their audience: high school students (some schools seemed like they were trying too hard to be ‘cool’)”

Senior, interested in Engineering at an in-state public institution.
Who Do They Trust?

FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH...

Top 10 Trusted Sources for Information about Colleges

- School websites: 30%
- Contact with current college students/alumni: 29%
- Emails from schools: 26%
- Contact with college faculty: 24%
- Word-of-mouth from family/friends: 24%
- Recommendations from my high school counselor: 23%
- Rankings (e.g., U.S. News & World Report): 23%
- Postcards/brochures from schools: 16%
- Recommendations of high school teacher: 14%
- Print guides to colleges/universities: 13%
“The current students there made sincere and genuine YouTube videos about every aspect they encountered during the admissions process, and they spoke about the college life.”

Senior, about a special focus, for-profit institution that offers her major of interest.
Video is a Powerful Tool

84% HAVE WATCHED A VIDEO FROM A SCHOOL OR STUDENTS

Have you done the following during your college search process?

- Watched a video from a college: 76%
- Watched a video from a current student: 39%
- Read a student blog: 33%
- Searched for a specific hashtag: 15%
- Posted a question to a current student on a social media site: 9%
- Posted a question to a college representative on a social media site: 6%
- Participated in a live chat: 5%
- Tweeted with a specific hashtag: 3%
Should You Meet Them Where They Are?

SNAPCHAT IS POPULAR, BUT NOT FOR COLLEGE SEARCH

Social Media Use 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Media</th>
<th>General Use</th>
<th>Use in College Search</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snapchat</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinterest</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tumblr</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Respect Me.
“They are helpful with any questions I have and quick to send me the info I need. I think I got an email back within a day even though it said it could possibly take 2 days.”

Senior, interested in an out-of-state public institution.
More Than Half of Seniors Expect to Hear Back within a Day

SOPHOMORES GIVE YOU A LITTLE MORE TIME.

After you contact a college representative, how soon do you expect to hear a response?

- **Immediately**: 1% Sophomore, 2% Junior, 3% Senior
- **Within an hour**: 3% Sophomore, 4% Junior, 6% Senior
- **Within 8 hours**: 9% Sophomore, 8% Junior, 15% Senior
- **Within 24 hours**: 32% Sophomore, 34% Junior, 49% Senior
- **Within a week**: 46% Sophomore, 44% Junior, 26% Senior
- **I don't expect to hear back**: 10% Sophomore, 6% Junior, 1% Senior
Alexa, When is the Application Deadline?

91% of respondents have heard of chatbots, 28% believed they have talked to one on a college website.

- **45%** Prefer chatting directly with a person.
- **24%** Don’t mind engaging with chatbots if the information is helpful.
- **17%** Don’t care whether they chat with a chatbot or a person.
- **3%** Prefer chatbots to chatting with an admissions representative.
- **2%** Think they can’t tell the difference between a chatbot and an admissions representative.
Don’t Be Boring.
“They were the only people who sent me texts.”

Sophomore, about a selective, out-of-state private institution.
Sophomores Would Like to Text With You

THEY GENERALLY WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU MORE OFTEN

Outreach Preference vs. Actual Outreach - Sophomores
Seniors Are All Set

GIVE THEM BREATHING ROOM

Outreach Preference vs. Actual Outreach - Seniors

Outreach Preference
- Email: 80%
- Phone call: 40%
- Text: 60%
- Mail: 20%
- Live chat: 0%
- Social media: 0%
- Messaging app: 0%

Actual Outreach
- Email: 0%
- Phone call: 40%
- Text: 60%
- Mail: 80%
- Live chat: 40%
- Social media: 40%
- Messaging app: 40%
“When you've got a 6 inch stack of college mail every week, it really helps a college to stand out from the others if their mail is different somehow.”

Senior, A+ student, high income household, interested in Engineering.
Information Overload

THE MAJORITY OF STUDENTS RECEIVE EMAILS AND PRINT FROM SCHOOLS OUTSIDE THEIR CONSIDERATION SET.

Do you recall receiving any of the following communications from schools you had not previously considered?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Communication</th>
<th>Sophomore</th>
<th>Junior</th>
<th>Senior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emails</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printed materials</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone calls</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text messages</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>20%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
So What Makes a Difference?

MEMORABLE SCHOOLS SENT:

- “brightly colored and positive”
- “Their mail is focused on your interests, and it is specifically for you”
- “postcards all followed a common theme, but were completely entertaining and amusing”
- “contained personal student experiences”
- “They sent me a puzzle in the mail.”
- “confetti and a cute little color coded foldable about their college”
You Don’t Need Confetti

...BUT IT WON’T HURT.

More importantly, your outreach needs the following:

- Good graphic design
- Relevant information
- Personalized content
- Good cadence
Questions?
Thank you.

Johanna Trovato
Senior Analyst
Eduventures Research
johanna.trovato@nrccua.org
ENCOURA.ORG