Transfer Student Engagement Strategies: The Power of Video and Custom Audience Targeting

Thursday, November 18, 2021
Eduventures’ Student Sentiment Research

College-bound high school students tell us about their college search

• Annual survey of college-bound high school students
• National sample
• 2,179 respondents in 2021
• College search behavior and outreach preferences at core of survey
But Why Ask High School Students?

What do they know about searching for a transfer school?

When did you first start considering schools that you might want to transfer to?

Transfer Prospects at 2-Year Schools
- Before starting at my current school: 9%
- Second semester of my first year: 12%
- Second semester of my first year: 7%
- Second semester of my second year: 8%
- Haven't considered particular schools yet: 55%

Transfer Prospects at 4-Year Schools
- First semester of my first year: 12%
- First semester of my second year: 20%
- Second semester of my first year: 7%
- Second semester of my second year: 28%
- Haven't considered particular schools yet: 18%
- Haven't considered particular schools yet: 15%

Source: Eduventures 2021 Transfer Student Research
Video is Key in Gen Z’s College Search

Have you done the following during your college research?

- Watched a video found on a school's website
- Watched a video from a college on YouTube
- Read a student’s posts on social media*
- Watched a video from a current student
- Participated in a live chat
- Responded to a text message from a school*
- Searched for a specific hashtag
- Talked to a chatbot on a school's website*
- Posted a question to a current student on a social...
- Posted a question to a college representative on a...
- Tweeted with a specific hashtag

0% 20% 40% 60% 80%

2020 2021

* Question was not asked in 2021
Source: Eduventures 2021 and 2020 Student Sentiment Research
Students Notice Digital Ads – And Don’t Mind Them

How do transfer students experience their school search?

Impact of Digital Advertising

- Noticed sponsored posts or ads from colleges online
- Found Ads Helpful/Informative
- Clicked on an ad from a college

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Noticed Ads</th>
<th>Helpful Ads</th>
<th>Clicked Ads</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Eduventures 2021 and 2020 Student Sentiment Research
We See Greater Acceptance of Ads

Found Online Ads from Colleges “Helpful/Informative”

Source: Eduventures 2021 and 2020 Student Sentiment Research
And Growing Engagement With Ads

Clicked on an Ad from a College

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sophomore</th>
<th>Junior</th>
<th>Senior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Eduventures 2021 and 2020 Student Sentiment Research
Once they are ready to research transfer schools, many prospects turn to search engines.

**How will or did you start your research for possible schools to transfer to?**

- **Friends/Family**
- **Online search engines**
- **Advisor at my current school**
- **School specific websites**
- **College search sites**
- **Visiting the campus**
- **Advisor at the school I plan to transfer to**
- **College fairs**
- **Email from colleges**
- **Email with college admissions officers**

Source: Eduventures 2021 Transfer Student Research
The State of Transfer Prospects Today
The State of Transfer Today

COVID has forced many to forego their college plans. Blacks, Latinx, Native Americans, all disproportionately affected

Nearly 200,000 fewer students transferred last year compared to the year before — an 8.4% decline.

Overall, enrollment for Black transfer students dropped the most, though white students, Native American students and Latinx students also saw large declines. The decline in transfer enrollment for men was also double that of women.

Source: National Student Clearinghouse Research Center’s Update, August 31, 2021 on Transfer Students.
96% of all Adults 18-24 have a smartphone. The other 4% have a cell phone.

Today’s young adults check their mobile phones an average of 63 times a day.

Today’s young adults spend an average of 5.4 hours per day with their smartphone.

Sources: Pew Research Center, April 7, 2021. Tech Jury, November 1, 2021
YouTube & Facebook: Tops with Young Adults

Instagram, Pinterest, LinkedIn and Twitter are Also Important
3 Surefire Ways to Identify, Attract & Enroll Transfer Students
The Transfer Digital Media Pyramid

- YouTube
- Custom Audience Targeting: Matching Transfer Prospects via Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, as well as via Apps on their Smartphone and via Verizon Display on all their at home devices.
- Mobile Geo Fencing
Mobile: Your Best Transfer Companion

- Young adults spend **5.4 hours a day** with their smartphones.
- Geo-fencing community colleges where you want to grow or where you see high yield is a smart addition to any media plan.
- Your brand is inside the walls of that community college whenever the students are there.
### Location Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location Name</th>
<th>Impressions</th>
<th>Clicks</th>
<th>CTR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trident Technical College - Main</td>
<td>5438</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>1.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trident Technical College - Palmer</td>
<td>3957</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midlands Technical College - Baeltline</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>2.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spartanburg CC - Downtown</td>
<td>1756</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>2.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenville Technical College - McKinney Automotive Center</td>
<td>932</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenville Technical College - Brashier Campus</td>
<td>976</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piedmont Technical College - Edgefield County</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3.93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midlands Technical College - Fort Jackson</td>
<td>1160</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trident Technical College - Mount Pleasant</td>
<td>1137</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tri-County Technical College - Anderson Campus</td>
<td>694</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midlands Technical College - Harbison</td>
<td>1246</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenville Technical College - Buck Mickel Center</td>
<td>813</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spartanburg CC - Tyger River</td>
<td>1385</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenville Technical College - Benson Campus</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenville Technical College - Barton Campus</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tri-County Technical College - Senator Billy O'Dell Learning Center</td>
<td>655</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trident Technical College - Berkeley</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Pro Tip:** Find out what community colleges are most engaged with your brand and plan your travel accordingly!
Mobile Geo Fencing Drives Transfer Leads

Result Highlights:

• 0.58% click thru rates vs. the national average which is a 0.10% click thru rate.
• 598 verified actions
• 314 verified actions to the school’s application
• 141 verified actions to the school’s visit registration form
• 455 potential transfer students @ $1.29 cost per lead.
Leverage Custom Audience to Attract, Re-Engage & Convert More Transfer Prospects

- Take your current transfer prospect & inquiries
- Look at all the students who applied UG who you did not accept 1-2 years back
- Look at all the students who your accepted who did not enroll 1-2 years back
- Look at all the students who you enrolled who stopped out 1-2 years back
- Combine them
- Do a custom audience campaign and match them to their most popular platforms
- Dial your frequency up, reach each person at least 10 times / month for optimum ROI
- Track all your transfer pages and forms within Google Analytics
Next Gen Custom Audience Reaches Your Transfer Prospects Everywhere They Are
We Like YouTube for Transfer

- **#2**: YouTube is the 2nd most used search engine in the world.

- **95%**: 95% of Adults 18-29 in the U.S. use YouTube.

- **You can target current college students looking for colleges in a precise geographic area or do a custom audience campaign.**

- **YouTube and Google share values = very rich targeting options.**
YouTube Affinity / Interest Targeting Drives Transfer Leads

**YouTube Target:** Adults 18-24 with currently in college, looking for colleges on Google/YouTube in a specific area. Targeted individuals must skip or watch at least 5 seconds before they can view the content they were searching for.

**Result Highlights:**

- 45.5% view thru rate v. 15.0% YouTube average view thru rates
- 35,921 total views
- 15,517 of the school’s transfer prospects watched 100% of the school’s video
- **120** potential transfer students driven to the application. $16.44 cost per lead.

### Campaign ID

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campaign ID</th>
<th>Campaign Name</th>
<th>Transfer (YouTube)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14786</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Flight Dates:

- 10/08/2021 to 11/15/2021

### Reporting Timeframe:

- 10/08/2021 to 10/26/2021

### Interest/Affinity Targeting Campaign Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impression Goal</th>
<th>250,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Impressions Delivered</td>
<td>78,904</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Complete</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Views</td>
<td>35,921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View Rate</td>
<td>45.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Play - 25%</td>
<td>74.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Play - 50%</td>
<td>57.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Play - 75%</td>
<td>49.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Play - 100%</td>
<td>43.21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Image: Wedding cake chart with Encoura logo]
YouTube Custom Audience Drives Transfer Prospects Down Funnel

**YouTube Target:** Custom Audience. Matched Transfer Prospects are served the school’s pre-roll video. Prospects must skip or watch at least 5 seconds before they can view the content they were searching for.

**Result Highlights:**

- 38.8% view thru rate v. 15.0% YouTube average view thru rates
- 155,613 total views
- 62,245 of the school’s transfer prospects watched 100% of the school’s video
- **252** potential transfer students driven to the application. $39.68 cost per lead.
A large university in Florida combined the power of mobile geo fencing, our Next Gen Custom Audience and YouTube Affinity/Interest Targeting.

Results Over 3 Weeks
241 New Transfer Applications
Summing It Up

- Mobile is fast, efficient.
- Geo fence community colleges and start as early as September/October and run thru May.
- Pause over holidays.
- This is your least expensive media option.
Summing It Up

- Custom audience drives leads down funnel.
- Combine new inquiries and prospects with student names from 1-2 years ago.
- Build that pipeline.
- Use an omni-channel approach.
- Must haves: Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.
- Best time to run is as early as October through August.
- Do not pause during holidays as this is peak season for these social, mobile and digital platforms.
- This is also a low-cost media option.
Summing It Up

• YouTube has both a Custom Audience and an Affinity/Interest Based Targeting capability.
• Leverage Custom Audience on YouTube to drive conversions through your funnel.
• Use Affinity/Interest Based Targeting to drive new transfer leads to your EDU site.
• Expect to pay a higher CPM.
• Definitely use YouTube over the holidays, during TV sweep months and over the summer if budget allows.
Let Us Customize an Approach for You

Next-Gen Custom Audience
Takes students you know and reaches them with high frequency over their most used platforms (Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram) and devices (smartphones, laptops and tablets).

Programmatic Audio Advertising
Leverages Pandora, Spotify, iHeartRadio, etc. more. Ability to target by age, geography and genre of music.

Mobile Geo-Fencing
Our 100% mobile app network reaches 2 out of 3 smart devices in the US today. We have 100,000 brand-friendly apps in our network. Changes to Apple IOS v.14.5 have had negligible effect so far.

YouTube Pre-Roll Advertising
Ability to target teens looking for colleges or transfer schools. Puts your video message in front of tens of thousands of cohorts efficiently.

TikTok Audience Based Advertising
Reaches a predominantly teen audience in your target market.

EDU Site Retargeting
Research shows students will visit your EDU site without applying or inquiring. Remarketing to them drives enrollment and reduces stealth.

Search Engine Marketing
Most efficient means of getting your message in front of people who are actively 'shopping' for education by searching on Google. A cost per click strategy.

Connected TV (OTT) Advertising
Leverages OTT platforms including Hulu, Sling, Vudu and Xbox. Ability to target by age, geography and an interest in education. Reaches students and parents at home.

Search Keyword Remarketing
Our SEM knowledge base enables us to plan and execute extremely effective keyword remarketing.
Additional Resources
Senior Analyst Johanna Trovato breaks down the latest findings of Eduventures Transfer Student Research into practical insights you can immediately apply to your transfer student marketing strategy.

- Who are the six Transfer Student Types?
- What motivates them?
- When does each Type consider transferring schools?
- What are each Type’s top college search sources?

Use these findings to make more informed decisions about your transfer student marketing strategies.
Principal Analyst James Wiley will reveal 5 key insights from the Eduventures 2021 Transfer Student Survey that will equip receiving institutions with actionable data for improving transfer student pathways, including:

- The top concerns of prospective transfer students
- Areas where retrospective transfer students could have used more help
- How prospective and retrospective student subgroups vary in their concerns
- How to retain transfer students after they enroll