Targeted Student Engagement: Addressing Macro Problems with Micro Solutions

Thursday, February 24, 2022
Today’s Presenters

Chris Tyburski
Regional Vice President, Enrollment Services

Steve Lazowski
Enrollment Services Consultant

Lyndenise Berdecia
Regional Digital Director
Future-Proofing Your Class

Plan For the Unexpected
The Scenario

Large, Private, Regional University

• 5 years of declining enrollment
• Always relied on strong senior outreach
• After a strong 2019, COVID stopped forward momentum
Plan & Results

Plan For Tomorrow Today

- Identify key markets
- Build brand awareness
- Strengthen inquiry pool

2020 Students as of 2/10/2020
- Applicants: 8,249
- Completed Applicants: 7,073
- Accepts/Admits: 6,631
- Deposits/Confirms: 649

2021 Students as of 2/10/2021
- Applicants: 8,676
- Completed Applicants: 7,762
- Accepts/Admits: 7,571
- Deposits/Confirms: 678

2022 Students as of 2/10/2022
- Applicants: 9,248
- Completed Applicants: 8,300
- Accepts/Admits: 7,884
- Deposits/Confirms: 836
Digital What? Digital Who?

Is Digital Marketing Right for Me?

• Expect the unexpected
• Anyone experiencing the “Great Resignation?”
• Hybrid recruitment is here to stay
• Students are connected, but where are you?
• So many platforms, so little time
• There is no one-size approach
• Know where students are + meet them there

Let us translate digital marketing for YOU!
Enrollment + Encoura

NC State University

- Campaign Examples
  - Custom Audience Targeting
  - YouTube
- Engage Prospective Students
  - Apply
  - Visit
  - Student Life
- Admitted Student + Parents + Guardians
  - Deposit
  - Visit
  - Location
Expanding Enrollment Management
The Scenario

Small, Private, Catholic, Regional College

- Marketing and Admissions were under separate leadership.
- Differing approach to building new markets. Marketing was targeting areas with “potential,” but not necessarily aligned with enrollment goals or historical success.
- Local markets were suffering 10-year lows in first-time, full-time enrollment.
- Better collaboration and resource sharing on goals, data, and target markets needed.
Plan & Results

**Play to Your Strengths**

- Increased inquiries and applications in targeted student populations by zip code.
- Geofencing, retargeting, digital marketing aligned with recruitment and search strategies.
- Efforts supported travel and institutional branding.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2021 Students as of 1/24/2021</th>
<th>2022 Students as of 1/24/2022</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Inquiries</strong></td>
<td><strong>Inquiries</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Applicants</strong></td>
<td><strong>Applicants</strong></td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Conversion Rate</strong></td>
<td><strong>Conversion Rate</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>46.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Completed Applicants</strong></td>
<td><strong>Completed Applicants</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Accepts/Admits</strong></td>
<td><strong>Accepts/Admits</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conversion Rate</strong></td>
<td><strong>Conversion Rate</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>90.0%</td>
<td>96.4%</td>
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Enrollment + Marketing

Who “Owns” Digital Marketing?

- Enrollment AND Marketing
- Content creation vs digital marketing to support enrollment
- Transparency
- Project Management Tool
- Bi-weekly calls with Enrollment + Marketing
- Review analytics and suggestions for improvement
- One cannot exist without the other

Find a partner that will be an extension of your team!
Enrollment + Marketing + Encoura

Sweet Briar College

• Campaign Examples
  • Mobile Geofencing
  • Custom Audience Targeting

• Enrollment
  • Updated inquiry lists
  • Locations
  • Event details

• Marketing
  • Images
  • Branding
  • Website traffic + tracking
You're the Captain Now

Making Data-Informed Decisions at Your New Institution
The Scenario

Small, Private, Non-denominational College in the Northeast

• Identify underperforming sources and determine ROI.
• Research support of each program and process and determine if each was adequately supported through recruitment and marketing.
• Allocate more resources to top sources.
Inquiry - Application
Admit - Deposit
Plan & Results

Don’t Rush to Judgement

- Identified top 4 programs from inquiry to apply to invest more time / effort in, which has improved yields by more than 10% for 2020 to 2021.
- Increased organic inquiries from sources that were under institutional control.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accepts/Admits</th>
<th>346</th>
<th>82.4%</th>
<th>Accepts/Admits</th>
<th>318</th>
<th>74.0%</th>
<th>Accepts/Admits</th>
<th>327</th>
<th>77.9%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deposits/Confirms</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>Deposits/Confirms</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>Deposits/Confirms</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Your Data + Digital Engagement

Better Data, Better Results!

• Engage your data from all sources
• Use your historical data to match new prospects
• Segment campaigns
• Unique messaging
• Find key platforms where your audience spends the most time
• Use reporting to support your traditional outreach
• Don’t forget the parents + guardians!

It’s a layered approach. There’s no one-size fits all solution.
Enrollment + Encoura

Bryan College (TN)

• Campaign Examples
  • Custom Audience Targeting
  • Mobile Geofencing
  • TikTok

• Application Generation
  • Updated inquiry + prospect lists
  • Target key high schools
  • Use analytics for recruitment

• Inquiry Generation
  • Expanding markets
  • On the most popular social network
  • No need to have a TikTok account
Key Takeaways

Turning Ideas Into Action
Future-Proofing Your Funnel


• Revise approach to search/recruitment.
• Strategically identify core markets to solidify and key secondary/exploratory markets to grow.
  • *Use key messaging for each market (e.g. in-state vs. out-of-state)*
• Identify younger student populations to create a multi-year pipeline and create specific nurture campaigns to support each class.
  • *Engage on the most popular applications + platforms, including TikTok*
• Change cadence to ongoing, from sporadic to ensure consistency and increase likelihood of being first to inbox.
  • *Why not be the first institution they see on their mobile too?*
From Silos to Synergy

Sometimes “Take It From the Top” Isn’t the Best Approach. Understand and Maximize Institutional Strengths.

• Use data to help Marketing identify key markets based on down-funnel performance, instead of top of funnel.

• Start with primary markets that convert, don’t rely on populations with huge numbers of potential students.
  • *Layer on engagement with digital*

• Marketing added geofencing, digital marketing, retargeting, and more to support recruitment directly, instead of focusing on institutional branding.
  • *Engage where students ARE and not just where your brand is*

• Marketing efforts complemented physical recruitment and search strategies.
  • *Use analytics from digital campaigns to support these efforts (e.g. mobile geofencing)*
Kick the Tires and Look Under the Hood

Looking at the Surface Doesn’t Always Tell You the Whole Story. Dive in Deep to Uncover.

• Identify all vendors, programs, and processes.
• Use all tools at your disposal to identify how various sources are performing throughout the funnel, not just on the surface.
  • Engagement is more than just clicks
• Before eliminating sources that appear to perform poorly, evaluate current engagement plans. Is the problem with the source or with how the institution handles the students?
  • It’s a layered approach – what’s your recipe?
• Test potential improvement strategies to make informed, rather than rash decisions.
Additional Resources
Custom Audience Targeting Launches Enrollment Past Pre-Pandemic Benchmarks

by Lyndenise Berdecia, Regional Digital Director, Encoura | Jun 22, 2021

Results

More leads, higher conversion rates, and lower cost per lead.

- +100 Transfer applications compared to 2019
- 46K views by admitted students in first two months of YouTube
- 0.36% click through rate (0.10% = national average)

- +10% First-year deposits compared to 2019
- $0.45 per verified action ($15 = national average)
By participating in the Eduventures Admitted Student Research, your office will gain actionable insights on:

- Nationwide benchmarks for yield outcomes
- Changes in the decision-making behaviors of incoming freshmen that impact recruiting
- Gaps between how your institution was perceived and your actual institution identity
- Regional and national competitive shifts in the wake of the post-COVID-19 environment
- Competitiveness of your updated financial aid model

Sign up today!

coura.org/ASR
Have You Unlocked Your Digital Voice?
Craft a Compelling Story. Leverage the Latest Platforms. Engage Your Best-Fit Students.

► All in 10 days or less!

Backed by a best-in-class digital operations team, Encoura Digital Solutions create customized, turnkey digital enrollment solutions that leverages the most popular platforms and networks among today’s students.

encoura.org/speed-to-market
Thank You

Chris Tyburski  
Regional Vice President, Enrollment Services  
E: chris.tyburski@encoura.org

Steve Lazowski  
Enrollment Services Consultant  
E: steve.lazowski@encoura.org

Lyndenise Berdecia  
Regional Digital Director  
E: lyndeniseb@encoura.org