OCTANE

ACTIONABLE INSIGHTS
REMARKABLE TOPICS

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VOL. 2, ISSUE 1 2018

INSIDE

Letter from the President

You are the genesis of the topics we present in each issue, since *your* needs are *our* needs.

enrollmentFUEL would like to extend our gratitude to **Monmouth College**, an enrollmentFUEL client, for allowing this photo, taken by David Aaron Troy, to be featured on the cover of our magazine. If your institution wants to be highlighted on a future issue of *Octane*, let us know.

Octane the Magazine:
A publication of enrollmentFUEL

A collection of innovative thoughts from a team of people bonded to clients in a way to prevent the knocking that comes with the "one size fits all" search strategies. Adding *Octane* to your thinking fuels creativity and releases positive energy among enrollment professionals.

Almost a year has passed since we launched our first issue of *Octane*. We want to thank you for your valued partnership as our reader. We have heard from many of you across the nation about the articles and their timely contribution to what you are working on regarding planning and training. It is our hope this issue also benefits you and your team.

As we move away from travel season, we are pleased to present articles on the pros and cons of bringing search in-house, tips for writing effective email subject lines, the five enrollment leaders of the future, and some thoughts about rebranding.

We continue to listen to you as we visit campuses, attend conferences, conduct workshops, and guest lecture at enrollment events. You are the genesis of the topics we present in each issue, since your needs are our needs. At FUEL, our goal is to always provide service, be thought leaders in the industry, and partner with you in meaningful ways.

As we begin a new year, all of us at FUEL want to thank you for all the hard work you do day-in and day-out to provide college-level access and equity to our nation's greatest minds, entrepreneurs, leaders and future philanthropists. The work you do does not go unnoticed!

Yours in collaboration,

Jacquelyn D. Elliott, Ed.D.
President

inside OCTANE

5 ENROLLMENT LEADERS OF THE FUTURE

1. The Data Manager Mastermind
2. The Information Systems Genius
3. The Marketing and Sales Wizard
4. The Organizational Guru
5. The Culture Curator Extraordinaire

5 Enrollment Leaders of the Future

and How to Recognize Them

By Jacquelyn D. Elliott, Ed. D.

After years of watching and listening to enrollment leaders across the United States, I have come to notice they usually have a distinct skill set that drives their leadership style. Some are charismatic, some operationally minded, and others are big-picture thinkers. Rarely, do I encounter someone I would say is everything to everyone. That is okay—in fact, this is my point. We should not try to be everything to everyone, and instead, master a few key skill sets that will advance not only our organizations, but us, professionally. The profiles I share in this article are not truly revelatory of enrollment leaders. However, I do believe these profiles will play an even more significant role in the future success of enrollment offices across the country, and are thus, deserving of a more focused review.

Today's enrollment world is shifting. Although the field is approximately 30 years old[1], it has seen major change in response to institutional calls to action and mounting external pressures. As a result, there is not a one-size fits all approach. American higher education boasts one of the most diverse landscapes of educational access[2], and as such, missions, purpose, size and control greatly vary.

1 Hossler, D. (1990). *The strategic management of college enrollments.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series.
2 Thelin, J. R. (2011). A history of American higher education. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

I posit in this article there are five enrollment leaders of the future, all of whom bring highly needed skills to ensure their school's livelihood:

1. The Data Manager Mastermind
2. The Information Systems Genius
3. The Marketing and Sales Wizard
4. The Organizational Guru
5. The Culture Curator Extraordinaire

An assessment of which of these types of leaders is required at an individual's institution would serve executive leaders well. In fact, structuring the interview process to help ascertain which of these five types of enrollment leaders the candidate is (in my opinion) would create a more authentic interview process and better position the division of enrollment management (EM) for success.

With this concept in mind, how would one define each of these types of leaders? Let us begin to dig into that a bit further.

More than ever, the enrollment division must collect, analyze and use data to inform decision-making. The strongest EM divisions heavily utilize data analysis to evaluate the return on investment, to predict student match and success, where to travel for recruitment and to determine which new academic programs to add. Further, financial models dictate financial aid packaging philosophies, discount rates, tuition pricing,

continued on next page

and scholarship leveraging. For these reasons, having someone at the EM helm with a mind for data, how to use it, and what questions to ask to get the required data for decision-making is critical.

Topics you might be asked to explore in the interview to determine your prowess in this area include:

1. **How would you use either data mining or data profiling to make better decisions for your office?**
2. **Give me an example of how you have used data, or data modeling, in the past to help grow enrollment.**
3. **If you had unlimited resources at your disposal, what sorts of reports would you build to help you, and your team, meet your revenue targets?**
4. **In what ways have you used big data in the past, if at all?**
5. **Name a few ways you think we could better use data visualization.**

These are only samples of what a president, or search committee, may ask. In any case, be prepared to think about your role as **Data Manager Mastermind.**

When we think about data management, we cannot step too far from the system that captures and retains the data. Interestingly, some people are really good at the data portion of it, but not so strong in the architecture aspect. The **Information Systems Genius** will have a keen eye toward understanding the Student Information System (SIS), as well as its close cousin, the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software. People who are savvy in these areas can work wonders for an EM division that may be considered behind in best practices, slow to respond to student and family requests, and have weak communication flows. They can also work magic if there is not currently a system in place for effective telecounseling, digital media strategies, or text messaging efforts.

If your institution is lacking in this area, you need to immediately hire to fill this gap. I say this because the other leadership types cannot be successful without these tools. Interview topics to determine skill sets could include:

1. **Which SIS/CRM programs have you operated in the past?**
2. **Share an example of a problem you were facing with your system and how you solved it, or created a workaround in the system, to get it to do what you wanted.**
3. **Have you ever gone through a CRM conversion or total switch to a new platform? If yes, what were some lessons learned?**
4. **What are some examples of best practices you have implemented within your CRM to track counselor progress/territory management?**

When you read these questions, do the answers flood right to you without even thinking about them? If so, you are probably an Information Systems Genius, and many schools need your skillset!

Now, let's move away from the entire data and information conversation to focus on three additional leaders of the future. I want to start with the **Marketing and Sales Wizard** because this person is every president's genie in a bottle.

Marketing and sales are often two separate divisions. For this article, think past that. Marketing wizards are needed, because marketing directly impacts sales. The marketer in you must focus on a clear and consistent presentation of the brand across the communication touchpoints that you control, such as comm flow materials, telecounseling scripts, campus tour messaging, digital media, direct mail, and more.

Your sales wizard will be focused on the stages of selling and training your staff to understand these phases so they can align the buyer's (prospective family) stage to your processes (as the seller). I often find when I am consulting, this is where it all unravels, because while the VP may be excellent at selling the school, the counseling staff has not been effectively trained.

If you are an executive seeking this type of leader for your institution, here are some lines of inquiry you may wish to pursue during the interview:

1. **Tell me about the stages of selling and how they impact your work in enrollment.**
2. **Can you share with me an example of how you train your staff to build excellent relationships to move students and families through the funnel to ultimately select our school?**
3. **Give an example of a time when marketing and admission have not seen eye-to-eye, and you had to mediate a solution. What was that solution?**
4. **Here is a pen. You have 30 seconds to prepare, and then, I want you to sell me that pen.**

Of all the leaders I am touting in this article, I would surmise this is the area where most of us feel the most comfortable. After all, it is what we do every day for a living. I just want to point out that we cannot take it for granted that we are really *a wizard* in this area. Stop to think about the last time you thought about aligning your communication flow to the stages of selling, for example.

In many ways, the last two leaders of the future complement one another. The Organizational Guru and the Culture Curator Extraordinaire, while distinct, can also play off one another. Let us examine how and why.

The **Organizational Guru** is the leader who can assess things quickly and find the problems. Their true talent is that after they discover a problem, they excel at finding a solution and implementing it. This person has an unusual talent for getting things turned around quickly, without causing office distress, chaos, and disarray. They are generally excellent change leaders. The staff is frequently drawn to this type of leader because they listen to the issue and help make people's jobs easier, and thus, more productive, leading to the necessary outcomes. Some of you reading this article might argue with me and say this leader sounds more like a manager; I can see that. However, I want you to push beyond the obvious here. I think the difference is this person *empowers* others to make the change after they discover the problem and solution. They train people, give them resources, and then, get out of the way and let the systems they create work. That is leadership.

What might one ask to discover this enrollment leader?

1. **Describe a process or procedure you have put in place that allowed your team to work more efficiently, leading to better bottom-line results.**
2. **When you join a new organization as the leader, describe your approach in the first six weeks.**
3. **Share an example of a time when you discovered a problem that was hindering progress and the solution you implemented to get it done.**
4. **What does successful communication between your different divisions/functions mean to you?**

Remember I had mentioned that the **Culture Curator Extraordinaire** and the Organizational Guru were closely linked? There is a reason for that. The Culture Curator Extraordinaire is a leader who is all about preserving tradition, office culture, and the *right people*. Just because change is happening does not mean those things held dear by the organization/office cannot be preserved, cherished, and lifted up. The Culture Curator Extraordinaire is all about finding the right mix, and allowing the staff to feel safe and rewarded for loyalty. Once the right people are in the right positions, this leader experiences little turnover, and focuses on mentorship, advancement, professional development, and challenging work assignments, so employees do not become bored, fatigued, or complacent. They constantly scan the environment—not for structure or operational endeavors—but for *behavioral queues* that keep the division functioning at top output.

In the interview, questions that will help you discover this personality and skill set include:

1. **How do you view coaching, mentoring, and sponsorship in the workplace?**
2. **Describe for me how you conduct your annual performance evaluations. What do you see as the benefit of formative evaluations?**
3. **When you interview for an open position, how much weight do you place on the interview, itself? Do you include any other opportunities for the candidate to display their true fit for the position?**
4. **Provide an example of a time when you had a very difficult employee confrontation. How did you handle that situation?**

The Culture Curator Extraordinaire will easily relate and feel a sense of excitement and engagement when answering.

In conclusion, as enrollment management offices continue to burgeon into mega models of business management, these five leadership types will be even more important in the future. The strategic enrollment manager must bring together disparate functions across the institution to include recruitment, marketing, data tracking and analysis, and the retention of students. These functions rely on predictive models, functioning technology, funding models, and state-of-the-art operational systems, all in a nurturing, respectful environment. For institutions seeking those with skills to meet the revenue demands, an assessment of what is lacking in current and/or past leadership may need to take place so that a discovery of skill gaps can be made, and then filled. While not every leader will hold the key to every style of leadership presented in this article, it is important to find the right person with those skills most needed to propel the institution forward and to assist the president in achieving his or her vision.

Dr. Jacquelyn D. Elliott is President of enrollmentFUEL. Her admissions, retention, and financial aid strategies have led multiple institutions to reach record enrollments. She can be reached at jacqui.elliott@enrollmentfuel.com.

STRATEGIES

ADMISSION COUNSELOR ENROLLMENT COUNSELOR

What's In a Name?

By Adam Connolly

I once interviewed a former Director of Admission. We talked about her time as an admission counselor at a moderately selective southeastern private college in the late 1990s and early 2000s. As she reflected on that role, she said, "My job was about contacting students who applied and speaking to them about what steps needed to be taken to be accepted. I worked primarily with applicants and admitted students until they filed their FAFSA, and then, I handed them off to the financial aid office."

In those days, being an admission counselor was more about guiding students through the process for admission, and less about counseling students regarding college expectations, life discovery, and graduation outcomes. Seniors in high school applied to their selected colleges, then, the admission counselor called to ask for missing documents in pursuit of completing application files for review. Conversations were either about a call to action or congratulatory in nature, thanking students for their interest. The relationship encompassed updates and information about registering for national test dates, filing the FAFSA, and encouraging participation in upcoming recruitment events on campus.

Of course, the Admission Director charted office goals and objectives, and counselors had an enrollment number to hit. However, the pressure was different. In the early 2000s, the high school graduate population was a healthy number. Therefore, the majority of admission offices had excellent funnels and high yield rates. Students gained acceptance, visited the campus, filed the FAFSA, and then enrolled at the institution of their choice. Finances were an important factor, but not at the level we have seen recently. The admission counselor played a role in the process, but was not seen as ***the*** vital, driving force that determined a college's enrollment and budget fortunes.

Fast forward to the present day. Almost weekly, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* seems to run an article on the struggles of a private college, or its closing. In fact, *Inside Higher Education and Gallup* recently reported, through their 2017 Admissions Survey, that nearly two-thirds of private schools missed their enrollment targets this past fall.

At the core of struggling institutions, you almost always uncover enrollment challenges. As I see it, the admission counselor has morphed into an **enrollment counselor**. This seems particularly appropriate for those institutions who have moved to a strategic enrollment management model, where the funnel includes stages far beyond matriculation. The prospective student's recruitment cycle is not the same as it was even five years ago. The process is more intrusive, with higher levels of pressure, and more geared toward finances. This is evidenced by the traditional federal financial aid filing date being moved up three months earlier in the cycle.

In order to succeed today, admission counselors must peak the student's interest in the institution and navigate him or her through the admission process, while always "selling" the value of the institution, and the notion of affordability. They must also be more involved with the student's family, fielding calls and emails from parents who are super engaged with their prospective student's decision-making process.

While early conversations of institutional and student "fit" centered on academic merit, finances have now become the dominant topic of conversation between prospective families and the admission counselors. Students and families now shop aid awards to find the best affordable option. With the rising costs of college, and the continued debate about national student debt loads, who can blame them?

Many counselors are young professionals (sometimes right out of college). Consider for a moment the pressure they are under to tackle one of the most daunting and fiercely scrutinized topics in higher education - college costs – in discussions with parents who are old enough to be the admission counselor's own parents. Along with limited experience, they often do not have adequate training for this critical and sensitive topic. Happily handing off a student to the financial aid office, academic advising, or the student life office, once the student has been accepted or deposited, is a distant memory for private college admission staff. The "admission" title has morphed over time. An "enrollment" counselor is a more accurate title reflecting the current nature of the position. Although some schools moved to this concept years ago, very few changed the title of the job to reflect the functions and duties of its employees.

In summary, chief enrollment officers are responsible for meeting tuition-driven budget goals. That means developing a team with the skills to support today's realities. Counselors are recruiting from the moment a potential student makes an inquiry, applies, or visits campus. The recruitment cycle doesn't stop until the student is enrolled and sitting in class for their first college course. Therefore, the job of the enrollment counselor doesn't end until this point is reached. That means a heavier focus on training in the areas of value-based sales, finances, and often, how to navigate a student's special needs is required. It is important to remember that an employee's perception of their value often impacts their results.

As you begin to hire your next round of counselors, consider revamping job descriptions and updating titles to align them accurately with your desired outcomes.

Adam Connolly is the Vice President of Enrollment Management at Coker College, SC and Affiliate Coach with enrollmentFUEL. Adam is an expert in many areas including understanding generational shifts and financial aid leveraging, and how they impact the students we recruit. Adam can be reached at aconnolly@coker.edu.

MARKETING

Bringing Student Search In-House

By Mike Wesner

Here' a scenario that I see more and more. An enrollment leader goes to a conference. They meet a colleague who brought their Student Search campaign operations in-house. The colleague boasts about how easy it was, and that every school should do it. The enrollment leader starts to ask, "What if ***we*** brought our Student Search solution in-house?"

Would you save money? Could you get better results? What rock star do you need on your team to make all this happen? As the good steward for your departmental resources, it makes sense to occasionally explore what you are outsourcing, and what you are insourcing. If you're thinking about bringing your Student Search operations in-house, we believe there are five things to consider before taking the plunge.

1 Do You Have the Right Platform Tools?

Student Search is data-driven, so having the right Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software, and the internal skills to operate your platform is very important. If you have recently implemented a new CRM—and feel like you are still struggling to master the tools, it may be prudent to wait two or more years before bringing Student Search in-house.

Why? Because even the best CRM is unlikely to do everything needed for a Student Search campaign. Other marketing software is often required. This means that you need additional skills and often more support from your school's busy IT department. Even if the bearded dude in scruffy jeans who runs IT swears he has time to build the exact system you need to measure and score leads in your campaign, be wary. He might have time to work on your project this month. However, at a future date, you might find your new campaign falling behind, as it waits in line behind ten other IT projects.

Before you get started, do a resource and technology audit to determine what you have. You should then assess what you need. The last step is to identify any gaps, and determine how you will fill them.

The year when you decide to implement a new CRM technology suite is also not the time to also bring your Student Search effort in-house.

2 Are You Equipped With the Right People Talent?

Effective Student Search requires specialized enrollment marketing skills including:

- Data analytics and database management
- Creative copywriters and designers who understand direct response marketing
- Digital media campaign experts
- Programmers who can create multi-channel campaigns, linked to capturing and reporting data

Some skills, like graphic design, can be readily found in the market. Other skills, such as using gamification to build interactive, personalized URLs, may be more challenging to find or afford.

Once more, the audit concept helps you get started. Simply list all of the necessary skills to bring Student Search in-house, and identify what you are missing.

3 Are You Evaluating the Hidden Costs?

One of the biggest motivators for bringing in Student Search is the perceived savings it could bring. After all, Student Search is often the biggest outside expense for many schools.

As with any new business venture, there are hidden costs. Many are soft costs.

Before starting down this path, it's good to recognize that everyone, including you, already has a full-time job. Bringing Student Search in-house is bound to create distractions—and time is a finite resource. When assessing, look at how much time will need to be invested. This is a key part of the total cost of ownership.

Remember the business adage: *Outsource those tasks that aren't your core competency, so you can focus more on the tasks that align with your core competency.*

4 Do You Have All the Partners You Need?

Effective Student Search campaigns are integrated efforts that include data management, digital advertising, email marketing and direct mail. Here are some areas where you may need additional outside partners:

- Data modeling
- Data hygiene and management
- Digital programmatic media purchasing, such as buying Facebook or Instagram ads, IP targeting and re-targeting ads
- Email marketing
- Copywriting and design for direct response (online and offline)
- Mailing and postage rules, regulations and formatting
- Programming, gamification strategies and behavioral scoring
- Marketing campaign management

5 Do You Have a Back-Up Plan?

No matter how good your plan is, you can't predict everything. Therefore, it's smart to have a Plan B ready in the wings. The Plan B could be outside resources – like hiring a Student Search company to manage an application campaign to supplement internal efforts.

One leader who has navigated all five points outlined above is Jason Black, Dean of Admissions at Samford University. Black brought Student Search efforts inside, and now uses enrollmentFUEL's microSEARCH™ solution, as needed.

"I'd recommend anyone considering bringing Student Search inside to plan carefully, and then plan some more," Black said. "The planning has to be extensive, because you don't know everything it will take to be successful. The unknowns may not be known early enough to fix, and you'll need to be prepared with a good backup plan."

Last Thoughts

At enrollmentFUEL, we believe sometimes you must climb to the top of the mountain to get the big picture view. What are you the best in the world at accomplishing? Where do you need outside expertise? From this vantage point, you can assess your areas of strength in Student Search and where you need outside expertise. Even if you decide to continue to outsource this complex solution, this exercise will make you more educated on the topic, and add value to your relationships with outside partners.

Mike Wesner is the principal, founder, and Chief Imagination Officer of enrollmentFUEL. If you'd like to explore this topic further, or have Mike help you architect your own internal solution, he can be reached at mike.wesner@enrollmentFUEL.com.

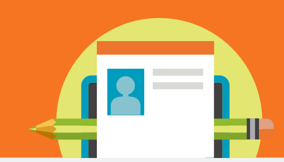
7 Tips for Effective Email Subject Lines

Congratulations, you've just crafted the perfect email. You have poured your heart and soul into this message. Maybe you won't go as far as calling it a work of literary art, but you know that it's a winner.

You now need a compelling subject line to:

- Get noticed
- Get read
- Communicate value to students, so they open the email and continue reading

The enrollmentFUEL team has written thousands of subject lines. To help you choose the right words to prompt action, we wanted to share seven tips to help you with recruiting emails.



1 Make It Personal

You should personalize email subject lines, when possible. Use the person's name, or a customized field on any other knowledge you may have, such as a known interest in a particular degree.

2 Be Descriptive – State What You Will Do for the Reader

Most people will open an email that promises to do something specific for them. For example, Jacquelyn D. Elliott, Ed.D., President of enrollmentFUEL, points out that interested students often respond to an email offering to provide information about scholarship opportunities.

3 Ask a Question

Starting the line with "Do You?", "How Can You?", or "Why Aren't You?" are good choices to get future students thinking. Curiosity motivates students to take action. They open the email and continue reading because they want to know the answer to the question asked in the subject line.

4 The Number of Characters Counts – Be Concise

You need to offer enough information to get that "click to open" action. However, you don't want to waste your subject line space. Find the most concise and least wordy way of conveying your intent. Edit, edit, edit.

5 Use Numbers

Another email best practice is to use numbers in an email. Here are some examples:

- Discover the Top 3 Reasons Why Students Choose this School
- Join 987 Future Alumni Ready to Join the Class of 2022
- Learn 3 Reasons Why a Campus Visit Will Help You Make the Right Choice

By offering a reader a numeric preview of what they can gain from the content, you can increase the perceived value and improve open rates.

6 Don't Be Spammy or Smarmy

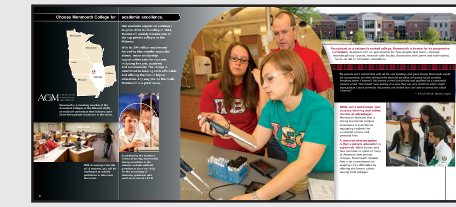
The old marketing techniques just don't work on today's savvy students. They can smell a marketing or recruiting message from a mile away. Spammy or smarmy messages that sound generic or insincere from the start won't work. You must be genuine and show them what you can do for them, authentically and honestly.

7 Create a Sense of Urgency

Get your reader to open your email right away by creating a sense of urgency. If they perceive an implied deadline, they'll be more likely to open upon receipt, instead of waiting. Or worse, they could hit delete without reading the email first. Let them know your message is timely and important without overdoing it.

According to the marketing consulting agency, Convince and Convert, 35% of email recipients decide to open an email based on the subject line alone.[1] The message is clear for enrollment professionals. Email subject lines are important, and continually learning how to improve them pays off.

1. Baer, J. "15 Email Statistics That Are Shaping the Future." ConvinceandConvert.com. Retrieved August 5, 2017 from *http://www.convinceandconvert.com/convince-convert/15-email-statistics-that-are-shaping-the-future/*



Check out these "before" pictures from Monmouth College's viewbook. As you can see, the new branding (to the left) uses more white space to communicate a feeling of being open to future possibilities.

REBRANDING REVIEW

Insights from Two Enrollment Leaders

In a marketplace that is changing rapidly, many schools hear rumblings about the relevance of the brand. Symptoms include complaints about an outdated website, visuals that feel old and tired and enrollment counselors who struggle to tell their story in a compelling way that communicates value and justifies tuition.

While everyone knows brands are not evergreen, a decision to rebrand is never an easy one to make. It is costly and time-intensive. It often takes fresh eyes to see the need. Jay Fedje, Vice President for Enrollment Management, worked on rebranding at Clarke University in Dubuque, Iowa. "From the moment I arrived on campus," he said, "I became aware of lingering questions about 'Who are we as a university?'" At Clarke, Fedje felt they had a clear understanding of their mission, but a foggy understanding of their brand. As he sorted through the "identity confusion," the growing sense of self-awareness organically grew into a re-branding campaign.

Monmouth College rebranded a few years earlier. When asked what prompted the strategic initiative, Trent Gilbert, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Communications, said, "For many years, how we represented ourselves at Monmouth had not changed, even though our institution had evolved and grown. Eventually, we reached the point where we felt the brand had to be refreshed to fit with our institution, market and students."

The decision to rebrand is only the beginning. Gilbert said, "Buy-in must come from all departments for the rebranding. You need to identify all constituents and need as many advocates as possible."

Fedje also recommends talking to trusted constituents, and listening for themes, threads, and truth. He said, "Listen more than you inform. Ask basic questions. Who do you think we are as a university? Do you believe we're honest in our marketing materials? Do you see truth on our website? What are authentic examples of our real identity? Do you trust our marketing – is what we say we are, actually what you think we are?"

Once the new brand is approved, the enrollment team must jump into action, integrating branding into the enrollment process. Gilbert said, "At Monmouth, we looked at everything in our comm flow and asked, 'Does this still represent who we are?'"

Making the transition is an enormous undertaking. Gilbert offered practical advice on how to tackle the tasks:

- Prioritize tasks based on what has the biggest impact on the enrollment cycle.
- Focus on your three most important tasks. When you check one off, replace it with the next priority.
- You will have to add more to someone's plate on your staff. Who will that be? Can they manage it? How can you help them get these extra tasks done?

Gilbert said, "You can't fix everything all at once. We realized if we stayed half a step ahead of our prospective students, we would be okay."

Both Gilbert and Fedje were glad their schools took the leap. Fedje said, "We discovered new messages that rang with a truth that had not been seen in a long time – we released our 'brand harmonics' if you will, and became less concerned about who we should be and far more confident in who we are as a university."

Gilbert said, "We achieved what we set out to do – develop the right brand for the right fit of student, and create an identity that meshes with our strategy."

Both enrollment leaders also stressed the need for authenticity.

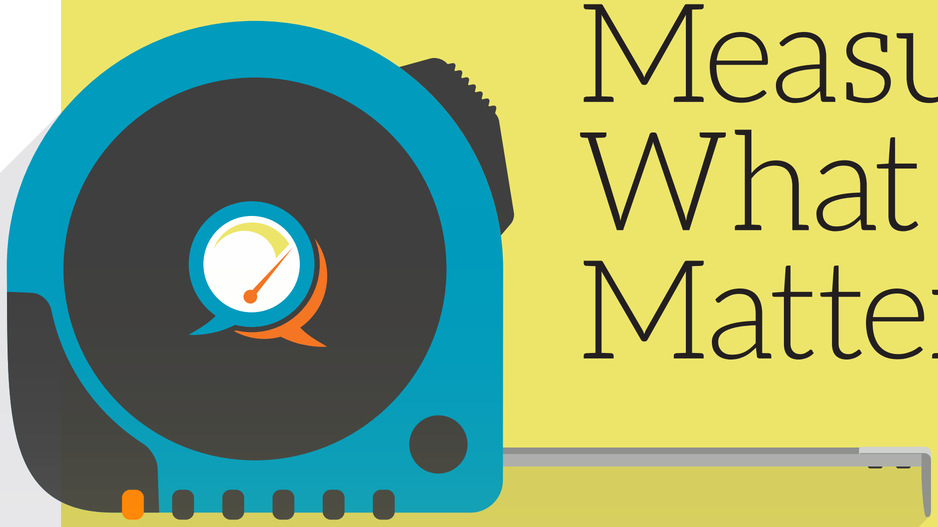
Since we're high-octane coffee lovers at enrollmentFUEL, we thought it would be appropriate to finish with these words from Howard Schulz, the founder of Starbucks, one of America's best-known brands. Schulz said, "Authentic brands don't emerge from marketing cubicles or advertising agencies. They emanate from everything the company does."

Rebranding is not easy, but sometimes, to tell your story in a genuine way that differentiates is necessary. For Clarke University and Monmouth College, the process has paid off in many ways, including recruiting future students.

"Listen more than you inform. Ask basic questions. Who do you think we are as a university? Do you believe we're honest in our marketing materials? Do you see truth on our website? What are authentic examples of our real identity? Do you trust our marketing – is what we say we are, actually what you think we are?"

Jay Fedje, MA is the Vice President for Enrollment Management at Clarke University in Dubuque, Iowa. With over two decades of experience in the enrollment field, he is passionate about building authentic brands, and recognized by the industry for his strategic thinking. Jay can be reached at jay.fedje@clarke.edu.

Trent Gilbert is the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Communications at Monmouth College in Monmouth, Illinois. He has spent more than a decade working in the higher education enrollment field, and is nationally recognized for his expertise in technology and the campus visit experience. Trent can be reached at tgilbert@monmouthcollege.edu.



Measuring What Matters

By Jessica Lanning

An American merchant and pioneer of marketing, John Wanamaker, articulated a challenge in the early 1900s that continues to puzzle contemporary marketers over a hundred years later - "Half the money I spend on advertising is wasted; the trouble is, I don't know which half." The days of simple newspaper and magazine inserts are long gone. Today's marketer not only contends with managing multiple channels of messaging, but also integrating those channels to have the most cohesive and effective return on investment.

In the tech-savvy world of higher education, enrollment professionals must juggle traditional print, direct mail, and personal selling mediums, while simultaneously impacting the digital space, including social media, email, pay per click, search engine optimization, content marketing, and others. Given the often-chaotic path that a prospect may take on their journey to enrolling, the age-old questions remain even more prevalent now: What is effective, how do I know, and where do I spend?

The discipline of marketing attribution attempts to identify a set of student touchpoints that contribute to conversion. It then assigns a value to each of those touchpoints in an effort to put greater emphasis - and resources - toward channels that provide the most return.

The first step toward effective marketing attribution is to understand the imperative relationship between inbound and outbound touchpoints. In summary, outbound touchpoints consist of one-way communication (such as advertising, classroom pitches, and paid email lists). Inbound touchpoints are two-way conversations (lead nurturing, SEO, content marketing, etc.).

The measurement of these touchpoints, and how they interact, is vital and must be cross-functional. How does an email nurture campaign support a private high school visit? How do social media management and community-building enhance social media advertising? Understanding the necessary integration of these pieces allows marketers to capture missed opportunities and to skip redundant efforts across channels.

After identifying each of the prospective student touchpoints, the most daunting task is determining how to accurately measure the impact of each touchpoint in relationship to conversion. There are several common ways that institutions choose to assign weight to these channels. Some offer full credit to the last point of contact in conversion, such as an email campaign that returned an enrollment deposit. Others measure based on the initial lead source – the prospect eventually matriculated from a particular search campaign. Therefore, that campaign is responsible for the quality of the lead that was conducive to conversion. Yet, instead of evaluating the full breadth of touchpoints for a particular individual's conversion, some institutions still determine spends based on the proportional success of a given campaign. For example, a generally higher ratio of impressions to conversions merits a similar future spend within the same channel.

Each commonly-practiced model of attribution provides a level of actionable data. However, in an ideal world, every inbound and outbound touchpoint would be comprehensively tracked and proportionally credited. Outside of the ideal, the next best thing is to track conversions on a micro-level. The macro of all conversions is enrollment, but the journey from prospect to enrollment is a lengthy one. Micro conversions close the gaps in time and create concrete milestones, demonstrating improved message traction in the moments that matter.

One possible application of micro conversions in the context of macro return, is through identifying the most pertinent set of micro-conversion opportunities for a set of prospects, and correlating those trends within a sample size of those that macro converted (enrolled). For example, if the micro-conversion milestones include actions like registering for a campus visit, submitting a net price calculator inquiry, or downloading a mobile app for accepted students, then each of these conversion destinations would be sourced based on the channel that led to their successful conversion. Did the enrolled student's visit registration convert from a display ad, a counselor call, or an email campaign? With each micro conversion sourced, any trends within the successful macro audience can be evaluated to optimize future spends.

The micro-conversion approach is also exceptionally effective at the campaign level. Although real-time attribution is not always an option in more traditional channels such as print or radio, digital channels can be optimized almost immediately through tracking these micro opportunities. When display ads, nurture emails, and print URL aliases all lead to a university website, tracking the behavior of a particular prospect within that site provides invaluable insight into the likelihood of macro conversion. As prospects do program research, return to the website on multiple occasions, and delve into financial-aid specifics, every decision in their web behavior can be assigned a value that, in turn, affects how institutions choose to allocate their resources through retargeting, segmented communication flows, or several other optimized approaches.

Marketing attribution isn't just about assigning macro or micro-conversion credit to any particular campaign. It is an intentional effort toward optimizing every integrated channel activity to provide the highest return on investment. Enrollment marketing professionals assume incredible responsibility in supporting institutional growth. They are subject to even greater scrutiny to demonstrate accountability for every dollar spent. By applying the idea of micro conversions from the campaign level forward, higher-education marketers can more effectively manage multiple channels of messaging, more accurately measure return on each of those channels, and most importantly, positively tip that age-old scale of wasted spends.

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The Backstory on Instagram Stories

In 2017, Instagram, owned by Facebook, experienced tremendous growth in its platform. A great deal of the growth resulted from the addition of the Instagram "stories feature" on the app. This feature ties into the growth we have seen in ephemeral marking, where content or messages are visible for a short period and then disappear.

What's the buzz about these "stories?" An *Instagram Story* allows people (and brands) to tell an ongoing story through photos and videos, without interfering with normal postings. Stories expire after 24 hours, so they attract viewers who are looking for new and novel content.

According to TechCrunch[1], "Instagram Stories has blossomed from a Snapchat clone into an integral part of the world's largest dedicated visual communication app in the first year after its launch. Half of the businesses on Instagram produced a story in the last month. It has boosted the app's average usage to 32 minutes per day for those under 25, and 24 minutes per day for those 25 and up."

As enrollment professionals, there are numerous ways to use Instagram Stories in your social marketing strategy. Here are some examples:

- Event coverage (such as visit days and trending athletic events)
- Topic close-ups (like stories about honors programs or free tutoring services)
- Limited time offers (such as a free application period)
- Sharing news (Have a winning debate or athletic team? Did you recently hire a well-known name for your teaching staff?)
- Telling brand stories (*U.S. News* rankings, as an example)
- A look behind-the-scenes (a day in the life of an artist, athlete, or environmental science major)
- Tips and information from experts (like your financial aid director or academic advisors)
- Webinar follow-ups (great for FAFSA filing tips and demos on how to register for classes online)
- Buzz creation for a new product or service (such as a new nursing or gaming major)
- Enticing viewers to visit your website or to view longer-form content (think of that great story in last month's alumni magazine)
- Countdowns to events, product introductions, and promotions (all application and deposit deadlines)

On their blog, Buffer (a social media management technology platform) reported more than 400 million people use Instagram daily.[2] Competition in the field of technology moves at the speed of light. While Snapchat was early out of the gate with "stories," Instagram has now surpassed them. In just nine months of existence, Instagram Stories has reached over 200 million daily active users, which outpaces its closest Snapchat competitor by almost a quarter[3]. With this following, why wouldn't we take advantage of opportunities to reach students and parents with our own ephemeral messaging?

For those discerning enrollment leaders who use data in the decision-making process, you may find this of interest – The Pew Research Center shared the following Instagram audience demographics[4].

- 28% of all adults online use Instagram (this is a great avenue to reach parents and returning adult students)
- 51% of the total audience uses Instagram every day (half of our population is showing up here)
- The two biggest groups of users are 18 to 29-year-olds (59%) followed by 30 to 49-year-olds (31%) (the best two markets for traditional and adult student recruitment)
- More women (32%) than men (23%) use this platform (women's colleges—this might work)
- 67% of users either have some college or have received a degree
- 34% live in urban settings, 24% live in suburban locations, and 25% live in rural areas

With Instagram Stories, you have all the convenience you need and want from a social network. It allows you to easily edit, upload videos, and send direct messages that disappear within 24 hours. If you're already on Instagram, but haven't added the *Stories* feature to your social strategy, maybe this is the year to give it a try.

1. Retrieved from: https://techcrunch.com/2017/08/02/instagram-stories-anniversary/
2. Retrieved from: https://blog.bufferapp.com/instagram-marketing-tips-studies
3. Retrieved from: http://aha.elliance.com/2017/05/15/instagram-stories-higher-education-marketing/
4. Retrieved from: http://www.pewinternet.org/fact-sheet/social-media/

Our Annual Holiday Giving Campaign Shines Brightly

To see the wide variety of participants' locations, check out the map at: jacquielliott.payforward.enrollmentfuel.com

We are happy to report great participation in enrollmentFUEL's annual "Pay It Forward" holiday giving campaign. Members of the FUEL team selected five charities. This year's charities were:

- American Cancer Society
- Children's Home Society of North Carolina
- Habitat for Humanity
- Heifer International
- USO

When a participant clicked on a given charity, they donated $18 to that charity, and then, hung a light on the giving tree reflecting their location and choice of charity.

We are pleased to announce that enrollmentFUEL distributed a total of $20,867 in charitable giving this year.

Thanks to all who participated and helped make FUEL's annual giving campaign shine brightly in 2017!

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About enrollmentFUEL

Stretch your enrollment goals with **enrollmentFUEL**. We're on a mission to create a better Student Search experience—one that is more efficient and more effective. Using tools and creative thinking, we provide results and actionable insight to the **people who recruit people.**

enrollmentFUEL has extensive expertise in geodemographic research, predictive modeling and web analytics. We combine these techniques with creative design and messaging to tell your story to your target audience. Our approach amplifies your targeted message through intelligent integration of all communication channels, including email, direct mail, online advertising, IP targeting, remarketing strategies and social media.

If you're looking for innovative thinking, and new options to achieve success, **enrollmentFUEL** can help.

microSEARCH™

A smaller, focused Student Search campaign that is created to test new ideas or attack a very limited challenge, such as promoting a new program or fixing a deficiency that the school may be experiencing.

clickCAPTURING™

Learn which inquiries consistently return to your website with clickCAPTURING™ technology. By leveraging behavioral data with triggered communications, we can motivate prospective students to take the next step.

bannerDIRECT™

Research shows banner ads directly reach suspects and prospects at the top of the funnel. We can help you use this "billboard" strategy to create interest at the top of your funnel before and after sending mail and email.

meritBADGING™

Discover and identify the most active inquiries in your pool and provide them with the information they need to convert these super inquiries into student enrollment.

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