

The Career College Marketing Guide

Leverage New Data Insights
to Boost Student Recruitment



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With increased competition for students, career colleges and trade schools are trying new marketing approaches in order to achieve better results for a smaller investment. The key is to understand your demographic data from top to bottom, and to implement that insight with targeted messaging and segmentation to drive more leads and opportunities into the sales cycle.

Key Industry Challenges

In an October 2013 white paper called “Recommendations for Best Practices in Recruitment and Admissions,” the Association of Private Sector College and Universities (APSCU) states that some institutions “may not have the name recognition of major state institutions, large community college systems, or universities with top-tier football or basketball programs.” How can you make your program stand out?

Another challenge is how to approach new target markets. “Because the vast majority of career college students are adults who may not have attended school for more than a decade, they are likely to receive information from traditional advertising in newspapers and on television as well as on the Internet and through social media.” Which method will provide the best return on your marketing investment (ROI)?

Finally, many options exist in the recruitment process, including offers of limited course loads, trial periods, and penalty-free drop/add periods. Which offers are most likely to lead to conversions?

You likely have a lot of questions, but with today’s technology, you can take the guesswork out of your marketing efforts. It is now possible to see precisely where your prospects live and learn about their preferences before you send anything out.

The days of sending offers based on zip codes are over.

Career Colleges open doors by providing a skills-based education to

13
MILLION
Unemployed
Americans

90
MILLION
Undereducated
Americans

To remain competitive over the next decade, we must identify between

8 – 23
MILLION
new workers with postsecondary skills

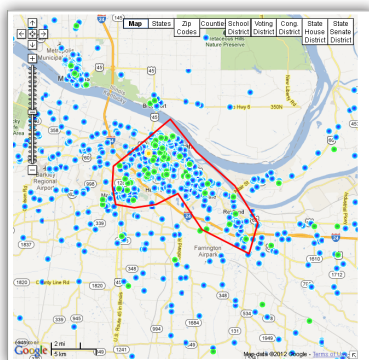
80,000
Jobs Career Colleges
Produced in 2013

Improving Marketing ROI with Data Intelligence

“The admissions funnel is well established as a standard model for viewing the university admissions process,” explains Jim Herries and Professor Duane Marble in a recent research report. “Graphic information systems technology, when properly applied, can lead to increased awareness of the demographic and geographic structure of the institution’s admissions stream. Awareness can then lead to action.”

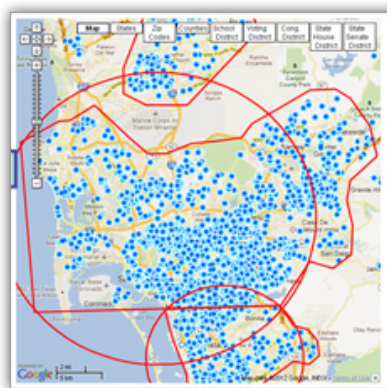
For many institutions, there’s no room in the budget for an on-site marketing analyst. Thankfully, there is now web-based technology you can run yourself in a few minutes’ time, technology that enables you to better understand your prospective students, create targeted segments and execute marketing programs that increase your marketing ROI.

Location-based consumer information can help you with your strategic planning: finding new prospects and turning them into applicants. For example, DirectMail.com has proprietary technology called the Student Insight Engine that is already serving career colleges and trade schools across the country and around the world.



Use Geolnsight and segmentation to improve targeting and ultimately increase ROI

The polygon provided one DirectMail.com client with the boundaries for future, more targeted mailings, thus eliminating unresponsive segments and clusters.



Identify existing students and travel patterns

By plotting demographics and travel patterns of existing students, DirectMail.com optimized one client’s future lead generation and direct marketing by focusing on high-potential pockets of opportunity. Look at the polygon versus the circle/radius.

Data-Driven Marketing for Career Colleges

With commencement season over, now is the perfect time to begin planning a new strategy for student recruitment using new GIS or geo-targeting platforms. Here are five of the questions you ask every day – along with five new answers that you might not have considered.

1. Audience Development & Segmentation

WHO should I contact? WHERE do current students live?

Micro-level segmentation through geo-targeting identifies the best prospective students while eliminating unqualified prospects.

Rather than mailing to a sea of possible prospects, you can use geo-targeting to hone in on those individuals who are most likely to respond to your message and your offer.

Segmentation starts with specific zip codes before moving into the micro-level, including magazine subscriptions, recent donations, and more. Accurate data has never been so easy to access. Find prospective students with similar traits as your current student profiles.

2. Offer Strategy & Targeted Messaging

WHAT should I send?

Using a combination of web-based data analytics and satellite mapping, geo-targeting tells you the best way to approach your prospective students.

With geo-targeting, you can more easily decide on the best balance of direct, email, mobile and social media messages. This integrated approach ensures that your marketing messages and offers are top-of-mind. When each data segment is well-identified and results are being carefully tracked, you can strategize about how to move to the next level.

3. Marketing Contact Strategy

WHEN should I reach out?

Geo-targeting is very effective when marketers have on-the-ground knowledge.

Timely offers get results. Geo-targeting gives you valuable insights into what your customers are doing when, giving your marketing efforts the best chance for success. This data is actionable and has tremendous marketing and business value for your business. The first adopters of geo-technology were retail, consumer goods, franchise, automotive, and media companies. Today, many more industries are seeing results with geo-targeting.

4. Geo-Targeting High-Potential Prospects

WHERE are my new students?

Geo-targeting, in tandem with data visualization, helps marketers identify their most lucrative markets.

When your career college or trade school is ready to expand, geo-targeting offers a perfect solution. You can leverage its information to explore and test new markets, ensuring results in the short- and long-term. Looking at buyer demographics,

WHAT WAS YOUR "Ah Ha" MOMENT?

"One great advantage to *GeoInsight* is that it is a powerful, easily understood visual. We can look at travel routes, see the barriers to traffic that might keep a potential student who lives well within the customary range of our campus, from easily getting here. We can then remove those areas from the custom polygon and not mail to them."
– President of a national for-profit college

you can plan a location-based marketing strategy with offers that are timely and targeted.

5. Multi-Channel Campaign Execution

HOW can I make my offer appealing?

Geo-targeting, data visualization, and satellite views allow for greater insight into data relationships than traditional reports.

Once you have determined the optimum timing, sequencing, and frequency, it is essential that you work with experts to ensure data quality across all channels and sources. You need to know if your offers are not being delivered or opened. It could be that they are getting lost to a spam filter. A series of checks and balances should be used to ensure smooth and integrated execution.

Background research from Herries and Marble is available at <http://proceedings.esri.com/library/userconf/proc97/proc97/to250/pap218/p218.htm>

APSCU document can be found at http://www.apscu.org/knowledge-center/publications/best-practices/upload/APSCU_BP_Recruit_Admissions_final_revised.pdf



For over 40 years, DirectMail.com has been working with clients on the most sophisticated multi-channel marketing challenges. We are a company that is passionate about continuous learning and we are excited to share our expertise and best practices with a broader audience and the industry as a whole. Through *Intelligent Marketer*, we hope to provide practical solutions and tools that marketers can leverage to make their jobs easier in the short term and to generate incremental results in the long term.