



COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

DIGITAL MARKETING FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

People in our industry need to be aware of messaging, and differentiation and brand, in just the same way that commercial organizations do. We might talk slightly differently, but the same principles are really, really important.

- Michael Stones

Communication Strategist for Colleges & Universities



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Digital Marketing is revolutionizing the way institutions advertise and promote their brands. Institutions now have more tools at their disposal and greater control over who sees their message, when, and how. In addition, digital marketing comes with an improved ability to track results, monitor audience engagement, and increase efficiency.

Traditional marketing techniques, including print, television ads, networking events, and directory listings, still have important roles to play. However, as your target audience spends more time online, the smart marketer will integrate new tactics that reflect this change into their overall strategy.

A recent study found that adults now spend more time per day (5 hours, 9 minutes) using digital devices than they do watching TV (4 hours, 31 minutes).

According to surveys conducted by various companies regarding marketing costs, the 2014 budget for digital marketing (email, social media, search and digital display ads, etc.) was anticipated to increase, while spend on traditional tactics (print, direct mail, and radio/TV) was predicted to remain flat or even decrease.

Ultimately, where you spend your marketing dollars needs to be a decision unique to your college, based on a thorough evaluation of your goals and target audience. But colleges who reject digital marketing strategies risk missing out on a changing marketplace.

When a prospective student conducts a Google search for higher or continuing education, are they finding your institution?

In this book, we'll look at some of the common questions higher education institutions have when deciding what digital marketing strategies will help them achieve their goals.



A RECENT STUDY FOUND THAT ADULTS NOW SPEND MORE TIME PER DAY **(5 HOURS, 9 MINUTES)** USING DIGITAL DEVICES THAN THEY DO WATCHING TV **(4 HOURS, 31 MINUTES)**.

**Source: AdAge.com*

Q1

How Do We Best Develop Our Overall Search Strategy?

SEM & SEO

Consumers conduct hundreds of millions of searches EVERY DAY. Google alone handles more than 315 million searches every 24 hours. Search engines are how modern consumers – particularly Millennials – find the services and products they want. This includes information on everything from restaurants and retail shops to health care, and, yes, education.

The number of prospective students searching education-related topics on Google continues to grow. According to an update this past fall by Google's Director of Education, higher education searches grow 3% year-over-year, with searches involving traditional institutions climbing 7% (searches involving for-profit institutions, which had been driving the market in recent years, has actually fallen by 2%). Of those searches, nursing degree was the most searched term, growing 15% year-over-year.

Evidence shows that it's not just important to be found on the first page of search results, but also to occupy one of the top spaces. The top four positions (generally described as "above the fold" or "above the scroll") on a search page receive 84% of the clicks. Another study found that the number one position on Google gets 33% of clicks.

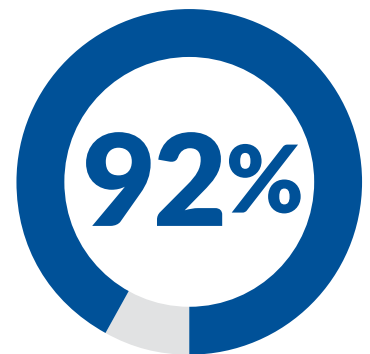
Not being found on page one is like having a billboard behind an overpass – not many people are going to see it. Page one receives 92% of clicks, with traffic falling off 95% for results on the second page.

To be found in search engine results, there are two main strategies: Search Engine Marketing (SEM) and Search Engine Optimization (SEO).

One way to describe the difference between the two is paid results (advertised) vs. earned (organic) results.



GOOGLE HANDLES MORE THAN **315 MILLION** SEARCHES EVERY **24 HOURS**.



PAGE 1 OF GOOGLE SEARCH RESULTS RECEIVE **92%** OF CLICKS.

**Source: Google*

PAID VS ORGANIC SEARCH RESULTS

Nursing degree programs Boston MA

Web Shopping News Maps Images More Search tools

About 34,600,000 results (0.53 seconds)

PAID

Northeastern Nursing Edu - Northeastern.edu
Ad www.northeastern.edu/
 Earn Your 2nd degree In Nursing At Northeastern University In Boston
 360 Huntington Avenue, Boston, MA - (888) 206-6004
 Why Northeastern? Curriculum Requirements FAQs

Nursing Programs - quincycollege.edu
Ad www.quincycollege.edu/Nursing
 ADN Degree - PN Cert - Affordable Tuition. Day or Night Classes!

Nursing Associates Degree - go2baystate.com
Ad www.go2baystate.com/ (877) 571-6152
 Bay State's Associates in Nursing. Sign Up Now to Begin Your Degree!

Online Nursing School
Ads www.phoenix.edu/Nursing
 University of Phoenix®. Accredited. Online or Campus. Enroll Anytime.

Nursing Programs Online
www.wgu.edu/
 CCNE Accredited & Top Rated Degrees with Low Tuition. Self Paced!

Online RN to BS Nursing
www.umassd.edu/OnlineRNtoBS
 UMass Dartmouth. Customized Programs. 100% Online.

BSN For Registered Nurses
www.chamberlain.edu/
 Are You An RN? Earn Your BSN Online With Chamberlain®. Find Out More!

Second Bachelor's Nursing
www.umass.edu/Nursing
 Accelerated 17-Month Program UMass Amherst College of Nursing

Nursing Programs
www.laboure.edu/
 Earn Your BS in Nursing with Our 3 Step Program. Call for More Info.

ORGANIC

Nursing Degree and Certificate Programs - MGH Institute of ...
www.mghihp.edu/academics/nursing/degree-options/
 We offer several nursing degree options that prepare students to become a nurse or advance their nursing careers, including Accelerated BSN, Master of ...

About the MGH Institute School of Nursing Boston MA
www.mghihp.edu/academics/school-of-nursing
 The MGH Institute School of Nursing in Boston, MA, offers six degree options, ... of Nursing Practice (DNP), and certificate programs in Mind Body Spirit Nursing ...

College of Nursing and Health Sciences - University of ...
www.umb.edu/academics University of Massachusetts Boston
 University of Massachusetts College of Nursing and Health Sciences. ... A leader in combining education innovation with clinical practice, the college is engaged in ... Chancellor J. Keith Motley and Associate Professor Darren Kew at TedX UMass

SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING (SEM)

SEM is also known as “pay-per-click” (PPC) advertising, and is the primary source of revenue for search engines. The more popular the search term (with popularity often driven by how often the term translates into qualified leads), the more expensive the campaign. Advertisers are only charged when someone clicks on their ad. A large percentage of marketing dollars have left traditional mass-media and directories in favor of search engines, particularly Google. Pay-per-click ensures minimized waste for your media investment.

The main difference between SEO and SEM is that SEM provides colleges a faster and easier avenue onto the first page of education-related search engine results. It also allows colleges to expand the number of search terms they are found for beyond where they rank organically.

IN-HOUSE VS. OUTSOURCE

We’ve reviewed some key merits of SEM. Your next question may be: can we do this internally? Or, should we look to outsource it?

Handling SEM in-house may be less appealing in reality, especially when it comes to day-to-day management of the campaign, analyzing results, personnel turnover, lack of customer support from the search engines, and other internal limitations.

PROFESSIONAL ANALYSTS

Good Search Engine Marketers offer experience managing hundreds of successful campaigns, direct communication with real people at Google (if the firm is big enough), and are constantly educated on SEM best and worst practices. These analysts could help optimize your strategy and maximize your budget.

EXPERT MANAGERS

Can you conduct keyword research? Write high-performing ad copy? Set up a strong landing page? Understand PPC terminology? Detect click fraud? Optimize to the most important goals and key performance indicators? Monitor multiple campaigns and ad groups at once? These are all critical factors in determining the success of a campaign. And it’s what SEM teams do every day – maybe even for your competitor.

LESS COST AND MORE VALUE

Paying an experienced SEM team to manage your campaign often costs less than staffing a Search Engine Marketing Analyst position, after salary, benefits and training costs are taken into consideration. A great firm will also provide superior value by generating better results.

CONSISTENCY

If your SEM analyst leaves, your campaign may be interrupted while you find and train a new hire. In addition, that person may take valuable insight and expertise with them. By outsourcing to a professional firm, you can be protected against these types of interruptions and retain all your insights, optimization, and efficiencies. Some firms may not provide this level of transparency so be sure to ask.

EASY ANALYTICS

A good, experienced SEM firm is already going to have a user-friendly dashboard in place that lets their clients easily track leads and see critical campaign metrics. But like hiring a contractor for any project, there are a few risks to outsourcing your SEM campaign.

GOOD FROM THE BAD

How do you know the SEM team you're hiring knows their stuff, or just offers a good sales pitch backed up by a churn-and-burn mentality? Treat them just like any other vendor – do your homework and check their references.

BE WARY OF EXPLICIT PROMISES

"We guarantee you the top spot on page one!" Have you heard promises like this before? If so, beware. SEM campaigns involve a number of sometimes unpredictable factors including consumer behavior, the search engine's own internal algorithms, your website itself, as well as the campaign strategies of your competitors. It's important to have agreed upon metrics and expectations with your SEM team, but guaranteed results can be a red flag.



PAID SEARCH ADS GIVE AN **89%** INCREMENTAL LIFT IN SITE VISITS TO THE TRAFFIC YOU WOULD NORMALLY GET FROM YOUR ORGANIC LISTINGS.

**Source: Google*

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO)

Search engines (such as Google, Bing, and Yahoo) are businesses. Their products are search engine results. When someone uses a search engine, that person evaluates their experience based on two questions:

Did this search engine provide results relevant to my query?

And if so, was I referred to high-quality websites that loaded quickly and allowed me to find the answers I was looking for?

If the user answers “No” to either of these questions, they may try a different search engine the next time.

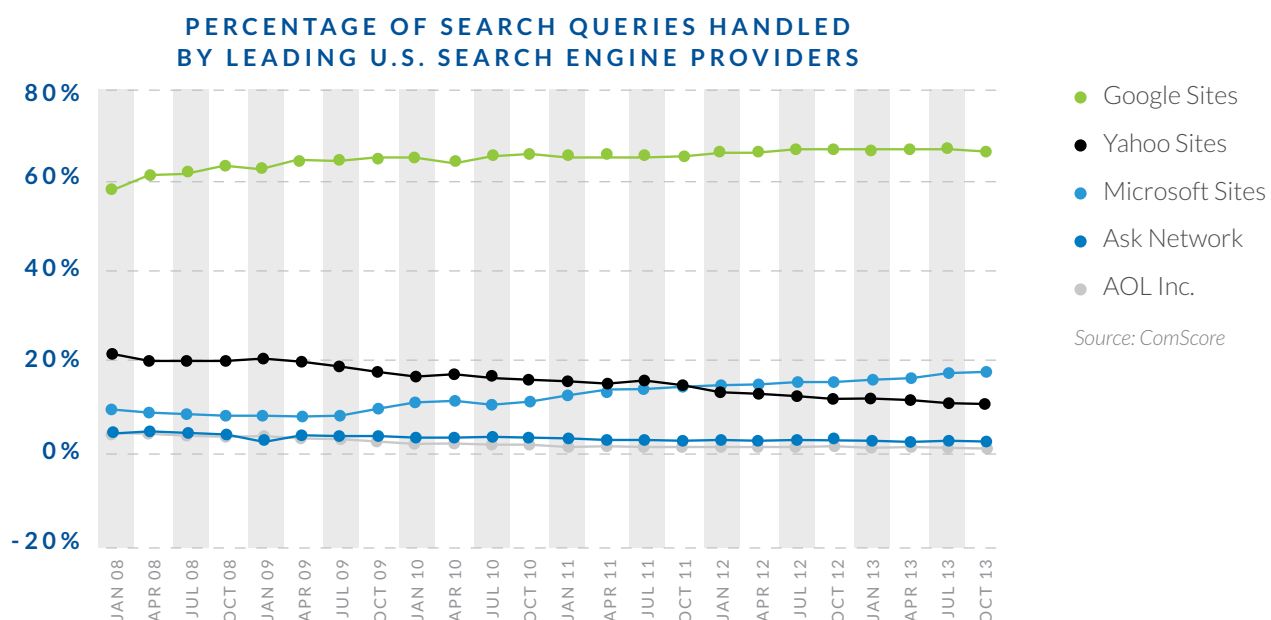
So search engines put a lot of stock into making sure the webpages found at the top of their search results will allow the user to answer “Yes,” making them want to come back and use the search engine again.

There are strategies that can help a website earn its way to a higher ranking. This is called Search Engine Optimization.

Search Engine Optimization is about earning your way to the top of the search engine results. The higher the position, the more the search engine believes that your page is relevant to the searcher.

However, properly executing an SEO review and implementing changes can be challenging. SEO experts review approximately 200 different elements ranging from a website’s copy and images to its html code and other technical features.

The following graph illustrates a constant battle for search engine market share:



SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO)

LONG TERM INVESTMENT

Once SEO changes have been made, it still may take some time for the changes to be indexed and reflected in the search rankings. In addition, there is no guarantee that SEO will get you listed on page one - let alone the top spot - for the search terms you want to target. By comparison, SEM campaigns launch immediately and can quickly start driving quality leads.

LONG TERM RESULTS

Unlike your SEM campaign, SEO results are evergreen. Once you stop spending money on SEM, your presence disappears. However, with SEO, your page will retain its ranking (so long as it remains relevant).

BLACK HAT SEO CAN HURT

SEO strategies that involve best practices are considered “white hat”, while strategies that cut corners and try to game the system are known as “black hat”. Black hat strategies can appear to have impressive short-term results. However, search engines frown upon these strategies because they ultimately don’t provide users with the best results possible. Not only do search engines penalize sites that utilize black hat strategies, and knock them down in the rankings, but some have actually blacklisted sites altogether.

A MIX OF STRATEGIES

SEO is a mix of onsite and offsite practices including claiming and utilizing Google+, building legitimate links to and from other high-quality websites (not link farming), and updating your website with exceptional content marketing pieces.

MULTI-DIMENSIONAL APPROACH

Social media, content marketing, and reputation monitoring are not separate and distinct digital marketing strategies. In fact, the lines between all three have become blurred and can affect your SEO, requiring marketers to become an expert in all of these constantly evolving areas.

FINAL THOUGHTS

SEO and SEM are different avenues for accomplishing similar goals: getting found in a prominent place on search engine result pages. Although they can appear to be competing strategies, they sometimes complement each other, offering both short-term and long-term, paid and organic, results.

The most strategically sound approach is to establish specific goals for both strategies, optimize both strategies towards those goals, and evaluate progress year over year.

View [this](#) blog!



38% OF STUDENTS
CANNOT GO MORE
THAN 10 MINUTES
WITHOUT CHECKING
A LAPTOP, PHONE,
OR E-READER

**Tunheim.com*

Q2

How Do We Best Approach Our Online Display Strategy?

DISPLAY & RETARGETING

With SEM and SEO, you're relying on the consumer to say "I need information about this product or service" and take an active step to seek out that information. Why wait for a customer to search for you? Come to them with display ads.

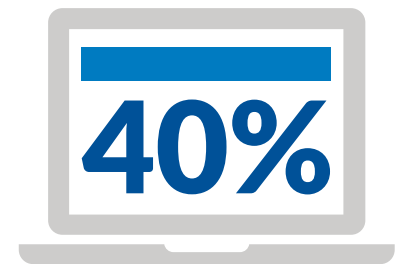
It's theoretically easy and convenient to have a potential lead actively seek out your product, but advertisers know they can't solely rely on this type of consumer activity to survive. Creating awareness for target audiences is a challenge. This is where display advertising and retargeting strategies come in.

Advertising has evolved over the years from window shop signs and billboards to print, radio, and then television ads. According to a 2013 Nielsen study, television advertising remains the most popular form of advertising, eating up 57.6% of the \$243.5 billion global advertising market. However, the continued growth of digital display ads is the real news.

Website ads account for only 4.5% of the marketplace, making it the smallest share. However, it also grew 32% over the first 3 quarters of 2013. By comparison, the only two channels that saw growth – TV and outdoor – grew at 4.3% and 5.1%, respectively.

As consumers continue to spend more time online - whether it's on a desktop, laptop, tablet, or smartphone; digital display ads will continue to consume a growing portion of the market share.

And through retargeting, your ads can follow those who visit your site, reinforcing your message, remaining top-of-mind, and encouraging them to return to your site and seek out more information.



**40% OF ONLINE
USERS IDENTIFIED
DISPLAY ADS AS THEIR
FAVORITE FORMAT
FOR ADVERTISING.**



**DISPLAY ADS
GREW 32% OVER
THE FIRST THREE
QUARTERS OF 2013.**

**Sources: Google, Nielsen*

DISPLAY & RETARGETING

AUDIENCE TARGETING

One of the weaknesses with traditional display advertising is the limited ability to target your audience. Some television shows or magazines may be geared towards younger men or older women, but that's about the extent of the audience segmentation. Using digital display ads, however, audiences can be targeted across a wide range of demographics, as well as geotargeted through 5+ zip codes, cities, and other DMA's.

Advertisers can choose from thousands of different audience segments, such as:

- *In-Market --> Education*
- *Demographic --> Education --> High School Diploma*
- *Demographic --> Education --> Some College*
- *Demographic --> Employment --> Classes --> Blue Collar*
- *Demographic --> Family Composition --> Children in Household --> Yes --> Age of Children --> Tweens/Teenagers (10-19)*
- *Demographic --> Premium Demographic --> Age --> 18-19*
- *Demographic --> Premium Demographic --> Gender*
- *Demographic --> Premium Demographic --> Income*

BRAND PROMOTION

Display advertising is first and foremost a branding medium. Unlike with SEM and SEO, which target consumers further along in the decision-making process, display advertising is primarily used to promote a brand, and generate awareness and need. The goal is for your college to pop into a prospective student's head at the moment that they think maybe I do want to go to college.

IT'S WHERE YOUR AUDIENCE IS

Two key questions for any marketing strategy are who is my target audience, and where can I find them? Are you looking to target 18-25 year olds? If so, where do they spend their time? For example, how many 18-25 year olds read newspapers compared to spending an hour (or five) online per day?

TRUSTED SITES

As the Internet has matured, so has the reliability and trust of websites. Marketers who spent decades enjoying the brand trust that came with advertising through leading newspapers or the major networks, can now count on that same reliability on digital sites. Digital display advertising exchanges include top tier publishers, as well as the nation's leading websites, as scored by ComScore.

RETARGETING

So a prospective student clicked on your display ad or SEM ad or found your site organically then visited your website. They spent a couple minutes browsing and then left. Now what?

With retargeting, you can follow up with that prospective student by placing digital display ads on other websites they visit. These ads can be simple branding ads or have specific messages, such as Open House dates or financial aid information.

Businesses have found that retargeted customers are 70% more likely to complete a purchase. What type of impact could retargeting have on your admissions office?

LOW COST, HIGH RETURN

Retargeting campaigns may cost less than digital display ad campaigns, and potentially have a higher rate of return. By targeting those who have already visited your website, you are able to spend your marketing dollars more efficiently while increasing the likelihood of a return visit to your site, and remaining top of mind. Qualified leads are more likely to convert.

TARGETED MESSAGING

Retargeting ads can be message-specific based either on the webpage the prospective student visited, an upcoming event, or another desired action. If a prospective student, for example visits a webpage belonging to a specific degree program, the retargeting ad can contain additional information about that program. Or the ads can feature details about student life, Open Houses, financial aid, or other important info.

FREQUENCY CAP

One concern is how long and how often someone should be retargeted by your ads. Typically, someone being retargeted will see your ads for about a month. Depending on your budget and overall strategy, the frequency the ads appear can be adjusted for maximum effect. If ads appear too infrequent, your program may not remain at the prospective student's top-of-mind. However, the prospective student may be turned off if the ad appears too frequently. Click through metrics and website analytics by source are a way to test, measure, and benchmark what works in retargeting for your college or university.

BURN PIXELS

Burn pixels are snippets of code that let advertising technology know when a prospective student has completed a desired action, such as filling out an online form. This code helps stop retargeting after action is taken. It's another example of how digital marketing strategies are able to help create more efficient campaigns.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Digital display advertising helps establish branding, while promoting awareness and need, and keeping your product or service top-of-mind. Technology allows digital ads to be targeted towards thousands of specific audience segments sorted by demographics, intent and location or contact channels. And retargeting strategies allow you to follow-up with visitors to your website – whether referred by SEM, SEO, organic visits, or display ads – pass along additional information, and encourage them to come back and visit again.

Q3

What is the Best Way to Deliver Targeted Messages?

The rise in digital marketing allows institutions to be less reliant on outside publishers or distributors to get their message out. Marketers are now armed with a number of powerful, effective publishing and distribution tools that give them access to a broad audience – an audience that can be segmented, targeted, and tracked to unprecedented levels.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is where your target audience is spending the lion's share of its time online. It also allows you to engage with your audience almost instantly.

Though use of Facebook by Millennials is slipping, it still remains one of the most widely-used social media sites among teenagers, along with Twitter and Instagram.

Facebook ads are a viable way to promote a brand to a new audience, with in-feed posts having a markedly higher click-through and engagement rate than ads located on the right-hand of the site. Twitter's use of hashtags is what makes that network potentially more effective. Hashtags allow users to categorize their tweets, take part in wider community discussions, or promote a brand. Whereas Facebook's ads are segmented by profile information, Twitter allows you to base your messaging on actual behaviors, such as tweeting about nursing degrees, or graduating high school. The challenge then is to have a strong social media content strategy in place in order to convert those impressions into followers and engagement.

RETARGETING

Even on social sites, retargeting campaigns can deliver degree, program, brand, or information-specific messages to prospective students who have already visited your website, or even a specific page on your site. For example, someone who visits the webpage for your aviation program could see ads promoting your aviation program up to 15 times over the next month. Or someone who visits your homepage can receive ads with information about upcoming Open Houses.

MOST IMPORTANT SOCIAL MEDIA SITES FOR TEENS

FALL 2012

SPRING 2013

FALL 2013

FACEBOOK

42%

33%

23%

TWITTER

27%

30%

26%

INSTAGRAM

12%

17%

23%

GOOGLE+

6%

5%

3%

TUMBLR

3%

4%

4%

PINTEREST

2%

2%

1%

OTHER

2%

4%

17%

0% Least Important | Most Important 45%

Source: Piper Jaffray

SEO

Some prospective students have specific information they are searching for, such as nursing programs in a specific geographic area, or qualifications for financial aid. A professional SEO analyst can identify what search terms or keywords bring in the most traffic, and help improve your rankings for those searches. One benefit of leads generated through SEO is that they tend to be further along in the decision making process, making them overall better leads. And unlike with SEM, the benefits are potentially evergreen, lingering long after campaign spending ends.

SEM

With SEM, you're able to target multiple search terms and multiple geographic locations all at once. And like with SEO, SEM (or pay-per-click) campaigns tend to bring in more qualified leads, as prospective students conducting searches are actively seeking information on a college program. The difference between SEO and SEM is that with SEM you're paying your way into that high-visibility position on the search engines, and any presence disappears once your paid campaign ends. One pro tip: Use long-tail keywords, or niche keywords to improve your rankings and reduce your cost per click.

FINAL THOUGHTS

There are plenty of tools in reach to help you deliver highly targeted messages. For the most effective results, multiple campaigns should be layered on top of each other – such as SEO or SEM with retargeting. One benefit to working with a full-service digital marketing firm is that all your campaigns can be coordinated through one place.

Q4

How Do We Develop Effective Online Outreach Strategies?

The key benefit to digital marketing is that it gives you some control over what products and services you are found for.

Businesses don't always have to compete for the highest volume keywords, or cast the widest net with display advertising campaigns. Instead, they may choose to be found for a specific high-margin product while highlighting a program they want more enrollment for.

Likewise, colleges can build digital marketing strategies around specific strategic goals. Perhaps those goals include building up the summer course program, promoting non-credit courses, or attracting enrollment by veterans.

Whatever your end goal, there is a digital marketing strategy that can help deliver measurable results. Here are a few suggestions:

TWITTER

Everyday, millions of 18-24 year olds are posting their thoughts and concerns about school, graduation, college, and more on social media networks. These are real life potential customers giving the public (including colleges) a glimpse into their thinking -- for free. Are your marketing and admissions departments taking advantage of this unprecedented access?

Twitter in particular allows you to directly search based on hashtags (such as #graduation, #college, #scholarships, #nursing, etc.) or even just words and phrases found in Tweets. This sort of behavior-based targeting makes marketing through Twitter particularly promising.

RETARGETING

Retargeting allows you to follow-up with prospective students who have already shown interest in your institution and click on an SEM ad, or visit any strategic page of your website. Your retargeting ad can include additional messaging designed to reinforce the benefits of a specific program, broadcast additional information, encourage the prospective student to return to the website and complete an action, or just remain top-of-mind during the decision process.



51%

51% OF SCHOOLS SAY BEING ACTIVE ON SOCIAL MEDIA HAS INCREASED THEIR ENGAGEMENT WITH TARGET AUDIENCES.

**Source: Huron & CASE Education Study*

SEM

SEM campaigns increase your ability to be found on page one of search engines. These campaigns can target any number of search terms and geographic areas at once, allowing you to control when the spotlight gets shined on your website. Because a prospective student has to actively conduct a search, and then make the decision to click on your ad, SEM is known for producing higher-quality leads.

Here is an example of an SEM campaign targeting various audiences run by Propel Marketing for a 2-year college in Massachusetts:

AD GROUP DETAILS				
AD GROUP	IMPRESSIONS	CLICKS	CTR	
PROPEL MARKETING SEM - NURSING	45,422	1,091	2.40%	
PROPEL MARKETING SEM - INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS	23,443	546	2.33%	
PROPEL MARKETING SEM - BIOTECHNOLOGY	1,516	67	3.76%	
PROPEL MARKETING SEM - AFFORDABLE TUITION	2,175	54	2.48%	
PROPEL MARKETING SEM - MILITARY VETERANS	4,336	49	1.13%	
AD DETAILS				
TITLE	IMPRESSIONS	CLICKS	CTR	AD TYPES
NURSING PROGRAMS	34,751	868	2.50%	TEXT AD
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS	22,078	523	2.37%	TEXT AD
NURSING ASSOCIATE DEGREE	10,654	223	2.09%	TEXT AD
BIOTECHNOLOGY PROGRAM	1,237	51	4.12%	TEXT AD
GI BILL APPROVED SCHOOL	3,850	45	1.17%	TEXT AD
AFFORDABLE COLLEGE DEGREE	1,045	29	2.78%	TEXT AD
AFFORDABLE MA COLLEGE	1,130	25	2.21%	TEXT AD
COLLEGE FOR ESL STUDENTS	1,349	23	1.70%	TEXT AD
BUSINESS MGMT DEGREE	614	16	2.61%	TEXT AD
BUSINESS MGMT ASSOCIATE	72	9	1.91%	TEXT AD

FINAL THOUGHTS

Just because you can target wide audiences through digital marketing doesn't mean you need to. Digital marketing provides you some control over what you're found online for. When creating a digital marketing strategy don't just think about who you want to target, but also consider what programs, services, products that you want to promote. Then choose tactics that will help you accomplish these goals.

Q5

How Do We Maximize Efficient Inbound Marketing Strategies?

How do we maximize efficiency when it comes to our inbound marketing strategies (eg., a better website, better landing pages, better responses, better conversion, better tracking, etc.)? And are there any benefits to outsourcing this vs. keeping it in-house?

So we've convinced you of the benefits of a targeted search campaign using SEM and SEO. You're ready to buy digital display ads and retargeting. And you're developing an integrated digital marketing plan that allows you to achieve strategic goals. Now what?

The next step is to make sure you execute your strategies as efficiently as possible. Every dollar saved either increases your ROI, or is a dollar that can be reinvested back into one of your campaigns.

LANDING PAGES

When prospective clients click on your display ad, or SEM ad, where are you sending them? Are they going to your website homepage? Or are they going to a high-functioning landing page specifically designed to convert leads? A landing page optimized around your campaign goals, presents information simply and effectively, and offers a clear call-to-action, whether it's filling out a form, asking to speak with an admissions officer, or just providing an email address. Landing pages, which are part of your website, are low-cost and easily adjusted depending on your campaign goals.

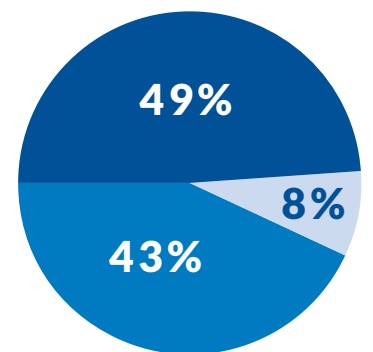
LIVE CHAT SERVICES

It's a Saturday night, a prospective student is on your website, and she has questions. If you have her wait until Monday morning to speak with someone, you may lose that lead. Most colleges don't have the ability to monitor email or chat windows 24/7, which is why some choose to outsource this function. Live chat services are able to engage your prospective student, and at least take in some basic information, providing your college a high-value lead at a reduced cost.



ONLINE ADVERTISING THAT USES LANDING PAGES TYPICALLY SEES A CONVERSION RATE IMPROVEMENT OF AT LEAST **25%**.

EFFECTIVENESS OF USING DEDICATED LANDING PAGES



- SOMEWHAT EFFECTIVE
- VERY EFFECTIVE
- NOT EFFECTIVE

**Sources: Omniture, MarketingSherpa*

INTERNAL METRICS

What percentage of emails that you send to prospective students are even opened? What is the best time and frequency to post on your social media accounts to drive engagement? Do you know which admissions officers are the best at converting leads into enrolled students? These are all questions that can help you develop more efficient marketing and lead conversion strategies. You don't need to turn your marketing and admissions offices into Wall Street boiler rooms, but measuring what you're doing and whether you're doing it well can have its benefits.

TRACKING SYSTEM

Are you using any sort of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system? If so, is your admissions team using it faithfully? CRMs allow you to track prospective students through the entire decision-making process. Along with monitoring team benchmarks, a CRM can also let you know whether the time it takes to turn prospective students into enrolled students is expanding or shrinking – a key indicator of efficiency.

FINAL THOUGHTS

It's one thing to invest in a digital marketing campaign, it's another to make sure you're spending your dollars efficiently. Tools such as landing pages and outsourced live chat services ensure that money spent on qualified leads isn't lost due to low-conversion rates or missed opportunities. And using a CRM with developed metrics help identify any bottlenecks or needs for additional training. Most marketing budgets are tight - by increasing efficiency, you can do more with less.



63% OF COLLEGES
& UNIVERSITIES USE
TWITTER TO REACH
STUDENTS

**Huron & CASE education study*

Q6

What Can We Do to Get in Front of Our Typical Students?

We discussed earlier the need to identify your target audience, and then figure out where they spend their free time. If your target audience is between 18-24 years old, chances are they're online.

Social media and digital display advertising are two effective strategies to place your message in front of your target audience.

SOCIAL MEDIA

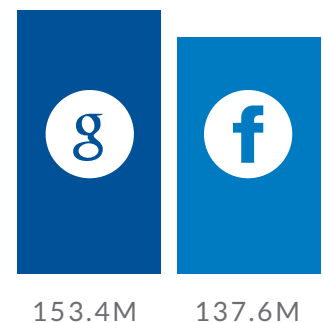
Social media remains the center of the online world. Although Google is the most visited online property with 153.4 million unique visits per month, Facebook is second with 137.6 million unique visits. More importantly, Facebook users spent 7 hours, 45 minutes a month on the site, compared to 1 hour, 47 minutes on Google.

Millennials also spend more time on social sites than other age groups (8 hours per week, compared to 6 for Gen X'ers), and use mobile devices more. One study found that 18-24 year olds spent up to 50% of their time online on a smartphone (compared to 39% for the entire population) and only 41% on a PC.

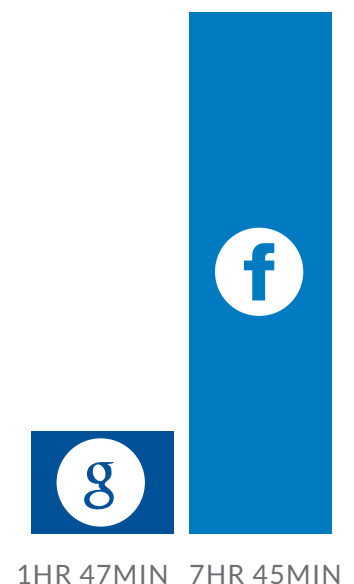
More importantly, there is demand for colleges to use social media to market to prospective students. In one study, 76% of students surveyed said conversations with current students through social media was helpful in their decision.

Despite this evidence, only 43% of colleges say they use social media to engage prospective students. This disconnect is also reflected in who manages a college's social media accounts. One study found that 72% of college communications/PR departments manage their institution's social media accounts, whereas only 40% of marketing departments include social media account management among their responsibilities.

UNIQUE VISITS PER MONTH



TIME SPENT ON SITE PER MONTH



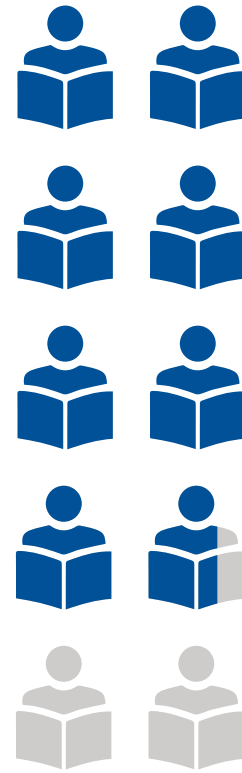
*Source: Nielsen

FACEBOOK & TWITTER

Facebook and Twitter remain the two largest social media networks among Millennials, although apps such as Instagram, Vine, and Snapchat are increasingly popular. Colleges should resist the temptation to be everywhere at once – instead they should focus on developing strong integrated marketing strategies using just a few channels.

Facebook ads are a quick way to place your messaging before targeted audiences, driving both traffic to your website, as well as engagement to your page.

The use of hashtags on Twitter help identify conversation topics and communities. In addition, Twitter ads differ from Facebook ads in that the audience is based on behavior rather than the audience – what the user is actively posting about instead of what's on their profile.



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DISPLAY ADVERTISING

Digital display advertising networks allow you to present your brand to highly-specific audience segments. These segments can range from age group and location to economic status and online interests. Here's an example of 35 different customer segments available to digital advertisers:

NAME	FULL PATH
20-29	DEMOGRAPHIC --> AGE --> 20-24
20-24	DEMOGRAPHIC --> AGE --> 20-29 --> 20-24
25-29	DEMOGRAPHIC --> AGE --> 20-29 --> 25-29
30-39	DEMOGRAPHIC --> AGE --> 30-39
30-34	DEMOGRAPHIC --> AGE --> 30-39 --> 30-34
35-39	DEMOGRAPHIC --> AGE --> 30-39 --> 35-39
40-49	DEMOGRAPHIC --> AGE --> 40-49
40-44	DEMOGRAPHIC --> AGE --> 40-49 --> 40-44
45-49	DEMOGRAPHIC --> AGE --> 40-49 --> 45-49
50-59	DEMOGRAPHIC --> AGE --> 50-59
50-54	DEMOGRAPHIC --> AGE --> 50-59 --> 50-54
55-59	DEMOGRAPHIC --> AGE --> 50-59 --> 55-59
60-64	DEMOGRAPHIC --> AGE --> 60-64
65 & OLDER	DEMOGRAPHIC --> AGE --> 65 & OLDER
65-69	DEMOGRAPHIC --> AGE --> 65 & OLDER --> 65-69
70-75	DEMOGRAPHIC --> AGE --> 65 & OLDER --> 70-75
76 & OLDER	DEMOGRAPHIC --> AGE --> 65 & OLDER --> 76 & OLDER
LIFESTAGES	DEMOGRAPHIC --> AGE --> LIFESTAGES
GEN Y / MILLENIALS (18-26)	DEMOGRAPHIC --> AGE --> LIFESTAGES --> GEN Y / MILLENIALS (18-26)
GEN X (27-42)	DEMOGRAPHIC --> AGE --> LIFESTAGES --> GEN X (27-42)
JONESERS (43-54)	DEMOGRAPHIC --> AGE --> LIFESTAGES --> JONESERS (43-54)
BABY BOOMERS (55-63)	DEMOGRAPHIC --> AGE --> LIFESTAGES --> BABY BOOMERS (55-63)
SILENT GENERATION (64-79)	DEMOGRAPHIC --> AGE --> LIFESTAGES --> SILENT GENERATION (64-79)
ELDERS (80+)	DEMOGRAPHIC --> AGE --> LIFESTAGES --> ELDERS (80+)
GENDER	DEMOGRAPHIC --> GENDER
FEMALE	DEMOGRAPHIC --> GENDER --> FEMALE
MALE	DEMOGRAPHIC --> GENDER --> MALE
MARITAL STATUS	DEMOGRAPHIC --> MARITAL STATUS
MARRIED	DEMOGRAPHIC --> MARITAL STATUS --> MARRIED
NOT MARRIED	DEMOGRAPHIC --> MARITAL STATUS --> NOT MARRIED
SEPARATED	DEMOGRAPHIC --> MARITAL STATUS --> SEPARATED
SINGLE	DEMOGRAPHIC --> MARITAL STATUS --> SINGLE
EDUCATION	DEMOGRAPHIC --> EDUCATION
CURRENT STUDENT	DEMOGRAPHIC --> EDUCATION --> CURRENT STUDENT

Ad exchanges often work with sites rated by ComScore 1000 based on traffic, reliability, and trust, allowing advertisers to place their brand and message on some of the nation's most-read, well-respected websites.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Digital marketing gives marketers unprecedented ability to target highly-specific audiences. Whether using social media or digital display advertising, colleges have an assortment of tools at hand to get their message in front of their ideal profile.

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