

ENROLLMENT MANAGER

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COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY LEAD LISTS

April Clark
CAS

There are a number of ways we can help you to find prospective students for your admission department to contact. I have been working with colleges and universities for over 12 years to help them enhance their search for prospective candidates.

First, I will share some general direct marketing information for various channels that may shed light on ways you can expand your enrollment prospect marketing. Second, I will cover some information on the availability of different types of lists that have proven effective in recruiting students for your higher education programs, both for recent high school graduates and adult students.

Most lists are available with name, address and telephone number. It is recommended that a combination of direct mail and telemarketing be used to send information on your programs, and enrollment information. Statistics show that multi-channel contact is the best way to attract attention to the virtues of your institution. That way, your prospects can choose the contact method they appreciate the most. Some social media and email channels require permission from the recipient – so in your direct mail contact you can offer to use those media, and have them provide the permission and addresses.

If you are planning a campaign using a prospecting list, the next point of concern is finding the right list. You will want to identify the audience you want to attract to the

particular program. Whether you are marketing your undergraduate program, your graduate program, specialty programs or accelerated programs will determine the type of list. You want the list that will be tested, and perform the best.

Here are the different types of lists and general descriptions of their uses:

List Type 1 - General prospect lists pulled from your defined geography. These lists can be pulled by many selects such as the number of years in school, age, household income, presence of children, age ranges of children, ethnicity, gender, particular interests/hobbies, and up to 100 other selects. Some of the selects are census information, some are self-reported information, and some are generated from magazine or internet interests. These leads are cost-effective and often test well. Telephone numbers are available for many of these names.

List Type 2 - Specific high school lists that are compiled by specialty school database companies. These are actual student records – available by class year, geographic location of high school, gender, college bound students and many other selects that help target exactly the students you wish to attract to your institution. No one can reach the youth market more effectively than these types of lists. They can pinpoint the right individuals to achieve your target objectives. There are 4.5 million permission-based email addresses available to broadcast your message to teens, young adults and college students.

List Type 3 – Lists that will help you market your adult offerings like your accelerated degree completion programs. These are lists of adults with some college or bachelor degrees. They are effective for

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both undergraduate and graduate programs. You can select by number of years in school, if they have a bachelors degree, age and/or income. The combinations are endless, and it just takes a few questions to determine your goals and figure out the best list of adults for your purposes.

List Type 4 – Lists that can find prospects for specific vertical programs, for certain industries. For example, if you are offering a program for continuing education for accountants, or insurance people, or carpenters, or firemen, or policemen, or any other occupation. These lists come from occupation databases with adults' home addresses by their present occupation... for specific study programs.

List Type 5 – is really a data processing service. It is also helpful to know that if you purchase an ACT, NRCCUA or SAT student list, we can add phone numbers (where available) to your prospect list to make the list usable for multi-channel marketing. The cost is very reasonable and really gives your marketing a boost.

There are innumerable prospecting lists available. This article is focusing on the lists that target college and university student development needs. There are many other lists available. If you do not see the one you are looking for in the descriptions above, please feel free to call me at 800 – 024-0908 X 2049. I will be glad to research the list you need.

WHAT EVERY COLLEGE CAN LEARN FROM UNDERDOG BRANDS

R. Todd Erkel
Higher Education Practice Manager
Elliance

What's the difference between a college with an abundance of applications and one with an unacceptably high acceptance rate?

Sometimes, it's curiosity and nerve.

Adversity — brought on by geographic isolation, shifting demographics, deep-pocketed for-profits and other Goliath competitors — can inspire a college and university to challenge assumptions and try new approaches to gain an unfair competitive advantage.

We call these schools underdog brands — and salute the leaders willing to rethink the potential of a school website and related interactive marketing.

Underdog brands evolve from thinking of a website as a fixed cost — an unwelcome guest knocking at the capital budget's door — to seeing its potential to enlarge the vision and change institutional culture.

Ultimately, it takes a school president to articulate and share a vision that is far-reaching, with its ramifications for accreditation, corporate and foundation relations, bond rating, media, alumni, faculty recruitment and more. And it takes more rational, less gladiatorial budget planning — commensurate with this level of stakeholder engagement.

What Does It Take?

When you have a communications kit as powerful as today's interactive media, one temptation is to think that the tools — and not the strategy — determine success or failure. Similar to thinking that great faculty hires can overcome a weak core curriculum.

Underdog brands, faced with entrenched enrollment decline and other warning signs, can't afford such complacency. Their presidents, chief academic officers and vice presidents for marketing have accepted certain realities: they're running a business, championing a brand, and ready or not, must adopt interactive marketing as mission critical. Colleges, in this way, can learn plenty from their counterparts in retail, consumer goods and even B2B.

“This Changes Everything?”

When a college or university executive initially discovers the power of mission-critical interactive marketing (web, search engine marketing, social media and PR 2.0) it typically arrives as an epiphany.

For Lexington College President Susan Mangels, her sudden insight came during a review of a search engine marketing strategy document. As we discussed keyword variations and

UNDERDOG BRANDS CONTINUED:

the implication each held for routine president-level communication, Mangels paused. “Oh,” she said. “I think I’m beginning to understand. This changes everything.”

Lexington College, a four-year Bachelors in Hospitality Management School in Chicago, may be the smallest and least well known of the city’s numerous culinary schools, both degree and non-degree, for-profit and endowed.

Mangels turned any lingering doubt regarding the return-on-investment to enthusiastic curiosity. She immediately wanted to know how to align the rest of the college behind the interactive marketing strategy.

So, what’s the take away from Mangels sudden recognition? Her leadership — and interest — meant that rather than market from a position of inevitable wanting, tiny Lexington College could assert itself and thrive as a “try harder” underdog.

The “Underdog” Archetype

We all know the arc and character traits of the underdog story. Challenger faces formidable odds and obstacles. Challenger breaks from convention. Challenger triumphs.

Marketing underdog colleges and universities requires a nuanced touch. While a consumer brand such as Avis

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can gain notoriety by embracing its “we try harder” identity, most colleges prefer a stealth-like approach.

Two reasons. First, all underdogs appreciate that parents, counselors and prospects prefer college brands that have fully arrived versus those still arriving. So, while you plot strategic marketing as an underdog, it’s important to carry yourself — acting and speaking externally — like a top dog.

A second reason to keep your underdog status unspoken has to do with a secondary market — alumni. Wearing the badge of underdog on your sleeve can turn off alumni who may perceive their alma mater with a mix of insecurity and affection. While alumni typically applaud any move toward admissions selectivity, they also seek to preserve the idea that they made the best college choice possible.

Leading the Underdog

Elliance has been fortunate to work with a number of under-

UNDERDOG BRANDS CONTINUED:

dog colleges and universities. While each circumstance and marketing objective has been different, they share a desire — championed by a President or school-level Dean — that it's time to throw off old chains and assumptions, and pursue an unfair competitive advantage.

Consider the range of schools and situations:

Appalachian Bible College, one of the nation's smallest and more remote (southern West Virginia) Bible colleges, understood the demographic writing on the wall. The number of in-state high school graduates is declining rapidly. Appalachian Bible College needed to extend enrollment beyond West Virginia and adjacent states.

Elliance developed a far-reaching marketing and communications plan designed to align ABC more closely with like-minded independent Baptist Bible churches, especially in growth states such as South Carolina, Florida, California and Texas.

At the top of the communications upgrade was a web redesign — intent on establishing ABC as a serious academic alternative to larger, better known Bible colleges. The inquiry pool reflects a changing diversity — including international students for the first time — thanks to page one, number one positions on Google and other search engines.

In addition to ensuring enrollment for the near-term, the new site provides a launching pad for future online course and degree offerings. Like Lexington College, ABC shifted its mindset and approach.

It's not just size though that makes for a good underdog story.

Pepperdine University's Graziadio School of Business — a small giant — competes in a crowded Los Angeles Metro market, amidst aggressive brands positioned above and below them in terms of academic quality.

Likewise, we helped Duquesne University find a much higher caliber of student and a global list of corporate partners for a new MBA Sustainability program, competing head-to-head with some of the largest endowments in the nation: Yale, Stanford, Columbia and Notre Dame.

Enrollment more than doubled between year one and year three. Student quality soared: average GMATS climbed almost 40 points in less than two years. Top students came

with GMATS above 600 — a new threshold. Inquires came from every continent. Acceptance rates dropped. The percentage of applicants with relevant and significant work experience rose from 25 percent to 88 percent.

A program built to inspire lasting change now attracts and admits a caliber of student fit for a global challenge — a happy ending to this underdog story.

After a decade of indifference, higher education leaders are now awakening to the potential sitting dormant in their interactive assets — and human resources. More and more, presidents are recruiting corporate tested marketing talent and committing real money to realize the full impact of their brand. The good news is that performance on these interactive investments can be measured more reliably today than a decade ago. Underdog or not, now is not the time for small plans and modest investment or ambitions.

FINDING THE BEST JOB, EVER!

Tracey Dysart-Ford
Director of Guidance and College Counseling
Immaculate Conception High School

I have spent the last 22 years in college admissions. As an admissions counselor at the beginning of my career, I used to dream of the day when I could finally be the boss. Life appeared so much easier at the top. After all, the Dean of Admissions where I worked never had a recruitment territory, rarely visited high schools, did not work evenings, made few telephone calls and seemed to attend a lot of meetings on campus which sounded like fun! I love chatting and I love coffee, so it seemed ideal. I never noticed the long hours, the difficult board meeting preparations, the often tedious committee work and constant stress that such a position involved until I became a Director.

During my time as a Dean/Director of Admissions at four different schools, I found myself hosting groups of guidance counselors and college advisors at various events and it seemed like a great career. I was jealous. In my mind, it looked like a sweet job! The workday lasted from 7:30 to 3:30 and you got the same holidays off as the students plus you did not work at all during the summer. What could be easier?

FINDING THE BEST JOB, EVER! CONTINUED:

Colleges and universities were happy to treat you to free lunches and snacks when you visited their campuses or travelled on state-wide tours. Did I mention the part about not having to work in the summer? Part of the job was to build relationships with college admission counselors and who doesn't want more friends? Forget that foolish goal about being the boss, this seemed like a dream job compared to the twelve hour days, the pressure to produce enrollments and vacations spent watching and responding to my blackberry. So, through a series of events, I made a career change to the "dream job."

Let me start by saying I feel blessed to have my current job. I work for an amazing school that delivers on the promise of putting the needs of the students first. We have talented faculty members who care so much about our students and believe in the mission of the school. I have a Principal who wears a million hats with elegance, confidence and a sense of humor. So it is no wonder why I jumped at the chance when offered the position of Director of Guidance and College Counseling. I was headed for a life of virtually no stress, fewer hours and most importantly, lots of delicious, free meals at colleges!

As reality has set in, however, I have come to realize how much guidance counselors and college advisors really do. It is with great respect that I list the following:

- Scheduling College Visits - This one was expected and makes perfect sense. What a challenge to schedule everyone the week of a national college fair! How do counselors juggle so much?
- Creating Student Academic Schedules - This is a big challenge. Counselors not only need to find the ideal schedule to suit multiple student needs, but many are tasked with making sure that students have the correct credits to graduate.
- Coordinating Testing - While it varies from school to school, counselors must schedule PSAT, PLAN, ACT and SAT tests. They also coordinate and administer such exams.
- Writing Letters of Recommendation - Many nights are spent writing letters to accurately demonstrate for colleges what makes each student unique. This is one responsibility that is ongoing and time-consuming.

- Planning Parent/Student Information Nights -This was one I expected, but it is a challenge to find an evening that does not interfere with scheduled athletic events, club and organization meetings, youth group get-togethers, etc.
- Serving as Class Advisors - Many counselors and college advisors serve as advisors to classes, clubs and organizations. Often this will include fund raising requirements and long hours organizing projects.
- Approving Dual Enrollment -In my current role I coordinate all paperwork related to this wonderful program. Educating families and collecting documents to send to schools takes time.
- Registrar/Transcript Generation -The college advisor serves as the person who generates and sends official transcripts, tracks release forms and collects fees.
- Attending Parent Meetings -These are not just for teachers anymore! Parents want to meet with counselors individually to discuss college plans. These meetings are important but usually take place late in the afternoon and into the early evening. From admission requirements for hundreds of institutions to scholarships, state grants and all forms of financial aid, the high school counselor has to know it all!
- Generating Statistics -Everyone likes to know the data on the class, where the students went to college, the average ACT and how many dollars were offered in scholarships. Gathering the information is a tall order, particularly for larger schools.

It must be said that in no way is this list comprehensive or the same for every guidance counselor and college advisor. I have always had tremendous respect for guidance/college advisors but never realized how much work was actually required.

I now know that this job asks so much of one person but the impact of a job well done can be life-changing. I have no idea how my colleagues balance so much and still greet college representatives with a smile and willingness to learn about each school. I believe we all care so much about our students. After all, that is the reason we got into college counseling.

To my friends in college admissions and my new friends in college counseling and guidance, I say thank you. From both sides of the desk, we all want to help students in their college choice. This is a profession that asks so much, but there are

FINDING THE BEST JOB, EVER! CONTINUED:

no words that can describe the great feeling that happens when we do our job well. Thank you for giving so much to so many.

FOR MANY COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, NOW IS THE RIGHT TIME FOR CHANGE

John W. Dysart
President
The Dysart Group, Inc.

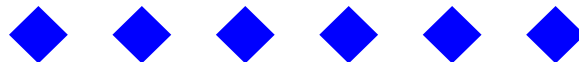
Another recruitment cycle has been completed and as always, there are winners and losers. Many institutions have been struggling for years to meet enrollment targets and have fallen short. Board Members, cabinet members and Presidents often know that real change is needed to secure different outcomes, but hesitate pull the trigger. Change is difficult, risky, often unpopular and can require new investments. The enrollment management landscape has changed the old days are never coming back. Here are a few reasons why now is the perfect time to implement a new enrollment model if campus leaders are dissatisfied with current recruitment and realities.

- Demographics have shifted significantly and will continue to change in the coming years in ways that will make achievement of enrollment goals even more challenging. Population declines will persist in many parts of the country. Ethnic diversity will be the norm and schools ill-equipped to handle the demographic evolution are in peril.
- At least in the short term, and perhaps for a longer period, poor economic conditions are going to lessen the general attractiveness of private colleges and universities. Stress on institutional financial aid budgets will increase. Additional cutbacks in financial aid available from states is likely. We can expect expansion in the ever-growing gap between real financial need and the ability of schools to meet it.
- Endowments will remain under pressure as giving declines and endowment value stagnates or diminishes

just at the time when such resources are needed more than ever.

- Technology is advancing at a brisk pace. Just as those in the higher education community begin to master the web and email—social media, text messaging and blogging explode. Quick Response bar codes and new technological advances are becoming more popular.
- We are entering into an arms race with regard to campus amenities.
- Recruitment strategies and tactics have evolved considerably in even the last few years. Reliance on traditional mechanisms such as view books, high school visits, picture-laden brochures, building relationships with guidance counselors and scholarship competitions has given way to personalized marketing, sophisticated electronic communication, systematic outreach to parents, measurable relationship building with prospective students and individualized financial aid packaging
- Long-standing and slow moving “retention committees” are being replaced by rapid response student advocates.
- Market needs and new employment opportunities in a transforming economy change constantly and the traditional approach to curricular reform and adaptation is simply no longer sufficient.
- The competition for students is fierce. Higher education is an over-built commodity given current demographic realities, making recruitment and retention a zero-sum game. The colleges and universities most likely to survive are those willing to adapt, and to adapt first.

Making real change is hard. It requires expenditure of political and economic capital and there are, unfortunately, no guarantees. Change rocks the institutional boat and is scary and intimidating and controversial and uncomfortable. But there is something much worse than change. Continuing along a strategic path that for years has proven to be ineffective is worse. For at-risk colleges and universities, staying the course with an enrollment management model that is not working will likely prove to be much worse than change.



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