FIND, FOSTER, FLOURISH:
Growth Strategies for Student Enrollment and Retention

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ABOUT THE PRESENTERS

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OBJECTIVES

• Comprehensive data on demands and preferences of online college students
• Actionable enrollment and retention strategies for maximizing program growth (Find, Foster, and Flourish)
• Real-world examples of success after strategies are implemented
## TYPICAL ONLINE COLLEGE STUDENT PROFILE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>AVERAGE INCOME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>• Under 25,000 (29% undergrads, 23% of graduate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 25,000-39,999 (23% UG, 18% grad)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 40,000-54,999 (15% UG, 15% grad)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMPLOYMENT STATUS</td>
<td>EMPLOYER TUITION REIMBURSEMENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed full-time</td>
<td>Receive employee tuition reimbursement (54% undergrad, 49% grad)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHAT MATTERS TO TODAY’S ONLINE COLLEGE STUDENT

• Being mobile-friendly for search AND coursework is critical
• Online students need career services
• Online learning is providing a positive return on student’s investment
• Online students looking for diverse programs
WHAT MATTERS TO TODAY’S ONLINE COLLEGE STUDENT

• Online students support innovations that decrease the cost and time to complete a degree.
  – Students are on board with:

Competency-based education 49% would consider
Stackable certificates 43% very interested
Textbook-free courses 61% would consider
WHAT MATTERS TO TODAY’S ONLINE COLLEGE STUDENT

• Interactions and relationships with peers are key to online students’ success.
FINANCIAL AID DECISION TIMELINES

- Before I submitted my application: 20% (2018), 38% (2016)
- Less than one week after submitting my application: 17% (2018), 23% (2016)
- 1-2 weeks after submitting my application: 29% (2018), 23% (2016)
- 3-4 weeks after submitting my application: 17% (2018), 7% (2016)
- 5 or more weeks after submitting my application: 6% (2018), 2% (2016)
- I was not eligible for or did not apply for financial aid: 11% (2018), 7% (2016)
MARKETING & CONTENT STRATEGIES

FIND
MULTICHANNEL APPROACHES TO ADVERTISING AND MARKETING

• Promote online degrees and make information available through multiple formats
• Digital channels resonate with online students
  • Search engine listings / email / website / Facebook ads
• Less predictable was the apparent impact of traditional marketing efforts
  • 30% influenced by television commercials
  • 23% attended college fairs
  • nearly one-quarter of prospects called schools
  • 16% attended open houses in person
  • 13% attended virtual events
• Prospective students are most likely to visit a college’s website (41%)
FIND: ESTABLISH AND MONITOR CONTACT STRATEGIES

• Call, text, and email within minutes of request
  – Personalize emails
  – Minimal graphics

• Stalking versus Supporting
  ✓ 15 in 10

• Monitor contact rates
  ✓ 3 day, 10 day, 30 day, 90 day
MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

Identifying the core motivation for learning opens the door for connections between the learner’s goals and the curriculum design.

Focus is on the connection between the curriculum and the learner’s goals.
Key Attributes of Motivational Interviewing:

- Collaborating versus Information Giving
- Identifying reasons to change
- Focus on strengths

Ask questions to uncover student’s motivation

- Surface motivation
- Core motivation
MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

• Identify potential barriers to success
• Discuss strategies to overcome possible challenges
• Use concepts from appreciative inquiry
  – Discovery: How have you overcome obstacles in your past academic experiences?
  – Dream: How will completing this degree improve your life?
  – Design: What is the next step to make sure you are prepared to succeed?
  – Destiny: When will you complete that next step? How can I help you make sure it happens?
WEEKLY RETENTION
TRAIT CHECKS

FLOURISH
## RETENTION TRAITS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication with Success Coach</td>
<td>-25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Attendance (Low - not logging in for 1 week or more, Medium - inconsistent login activity, High - consistent and routine login activity)</td>
<td>-25</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Performance (Low - failing, missing assignments or below course average, Medium - at course average, High - Above course average)</td>
<td>-20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education History (Low - low cumulative GPA or probation, Medium - GPA is in good standing, High - Strong cumulative GPA)</td>
<td>-30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals (Low - unclear of educational/personal goals, Medium - has goals but struggles with planning, High - clear, attainable goals)</td>
<td>-15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Personal (Low - Struggles with Work/Life balance, Health problems, financial problems, Medium - no reported concerns, High - Student demonstrates good time management skills, strong network of support)</td>
<td>-25</td>
<td>-5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Technical (Low - Lack of technical skills, Medium - occasionally struggles with technology, High - exhibits strong technical skills)</td>
<td>-10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Satisfaction (Low - Reports signification dissatisfaction with institution, faculty or processes, Medium - no reported concerns, High - expresses satisfaction with institution, faculty or processes)</td>
<td>-25</td>
<td>-10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree Completion (Low - 1st two terms of degree program, Medium - student has completed 1st two terms, High - Last two terms of program)</td>
<td>-15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE ALVERNIA STORY

REAL WORLD EXAMPLES OF SUCCES
ALVERNIA EXPERIENCE

FIND

• The "clean" and strategic messaging and formats help to find and quadruple student enrollment.

• Messaging was "tested" to determine the right formula to find qualified online students interested in the Alvernia experience.
ALVERnia EXPERIENCE

• Inquiries became highly engaged through strategic discussions. NOT by throwing curriculum and process information at them.

• Talk with v. talk to approach.

• Difficult conversations about overcoming "fear" result in enrolled students.
ALVERNIA EXPERIENCE

• New for Alvernia was scoring an enrolled student risk factor
• Helps both student and Institution succeed
• Still testing new and different – still succeeding
Find, Foster, Flourish:
Growth Strategies for Student Enrollment and Retention

Learning House research link: www.learninghouse.com/knowledge-center

Find: Contact Strategies
Foster: Motivational Interviewing
Flourish: Weekly Retention Trait Checks

For more information, contact Julie Delich at jdelich@learninghouse.com