

2012 E-Recruiting Practices and Trends at Four-Year and Two-Year Institutions

Includes comparisons to prospective students

What are the most popular practices and tactics for electronic student recruitment at the undergraduate level? To find out, Noel-Levitz conducted a Web-based poll in April of 2012 as part of the firm's continuing series of benchmark polls for higher education. As a special bonus, selected findings from a parallel study of prospective students are included (see below), along with trend data from previous Noel-Levitz polls of institutional practices.

Among the findings:

- E-mail communication topped the list of popular practices for e-recruiting, slightly ahead of Facebook. This matched up closely with prospective students' behaviors, as slightly more prospective students reported that they look at their e-mail each week than check Facebook.
- The majority of poll respondents indicated they use bulk/blast e-mails to connect with prospective students, with many respondents reporting that they also use e-mail to connect with parents of prospective students.
- Nearly two-thirds of four-year institution respondents and more than 90 percent of two-year public institution respondents reported spending less than \$25K to maintain admissions-specific content and services on their institution's Web site.

Some additional comparisons between institutions and prospective students:

- Less than half of the poll respondents reported offering mobile-optimized Web site experiences, while more than half of the students surveyed reported viewing college and university Web sites on mobile devices, including tablets.
- Web sites ranked higher than printed brochures in respondents' rankings of ways to communicate with prospective students about academic programs. However, prospective students disagreed, rating printed brochures and Web sites almost evenly.

SPECIAL FEATURE! Parallel rankings from prospective students

E-Expectations — Watch for this symbol inside for a sampling of parallel rankings and comparative information from our spring 2012 study of 2,000 prospective, college-bound high school students. Download the complete study at www.noellevitz.com/E-ExpectationsSeries.

For many additional findings, don't miss the appendix of this report on pages 10-23, including new findings on "secret shopper" applicants on pages 20-21.



Contents

5 popular practices for e-recruiting by institution type	3
Social media rankings, with rankings from prospective students for comparison	4
Use of Web forms	5
Cell phone usage	6
Bulk/Blast e-mails	7
E-mailing to parents	7
Preferred channels for communicating about academic programs, with preferences of prospective students for comparison	8
Budgeting trends for admissions-related Web site content	9

Appendix/Additional findings..... 10

More rankings of e-recruiting practices, including social media (page 10) • More findings on e-mail, cell/mobile numbers, and parents (page 13) • Institutional Web sites in greater detail (page 15) • More findings on net price calculators (page 18) • "Secret shopper" tracking (page 20)

Responding institutions	22
About Noel-Levitz	24

E-Expectations

Look for this symbol throughout this report for a selection of **parallel student rankings** and closely related findings from a separate, spring 2012 survey of 2,000 prospective, college-bound high school students. Download the complete student study at www.noellellevitz.com/E-ExpectationsSeries.

Compare the findings to your own practices

Readers are encouraged to compare the findings in this report to the practices used at their institution. Additional benchmark reports can be found at www.noellellevitz.com/BenchmarkReports.

Note: Complete information is provided in this report for four-year and two-year, public and private institutions. However, the rankings are ordered by the findings for **four-year private institutions**.

5 popular practices for e-recruiting by institution type

The table below shows five practices the poll respondents from each institution type reported using most frequently from a list of 33 practices, *other than social media*, that were measured in the first section of the poll. **For comparisons with social media and other e-recruiting practices, please see the pages that follow.** For a complete list of the 33 items and their rankings, please see pages 10-11 of the appendix.

Which of the following does your institution use?

Note: The percentages shown indicate the proportion of respondents using the specific practice.

4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
E-mail communication with prospective students (99.4%)	E-mail communication with prospective students (100.0%)	E-mail communication with prospective students (96.6%)
Online net price calculator (89.7%)	Recruiting pages on Web site (96.8%)	Recruiting pages on Web site (79.3%)
Recruiting pages on Web site (88.5%)	Online net price calculator (77.4%)	Online net price calculator (58.6%)
Analytics resources such as Google Analytics to provide data on the effectiveness of the recruitment/admissions portion of the site (74.5%)	Analytics resources such as Google Analytics to provide data on the effectiveness of the recruitment/admissions portion of the site (66.1%)	QR codes (41.4%)
Student searches via e-mail (74.5%)	QR codes (61.3%)	Virtual tours (37.9%)

TM

A very large majority of respondents across sectors—between 97 and 100 percent—reported they used e-mail to communicate with prospective students. Other practices that were popular across sectors were online net price calculators and recruiting pages on Web sites. In addition, analytics resources were widely used among four-year, public and private institutions.

In the parallel study of prospective students, more students indicated they use e-mail than Facebook, though the difference was small. See findings on social media on the next page and more findings from prospective students available at www.noel-levitz.com/E-Expectations Series.

When asked why they hadn't used a cost or scholarship calculator, 74 percent of prospective students indicated they hadn't found one when they were online.

Net price calculators: a prospective student perspective

Have you ever used a cost or scholarship calculator that you found on a college's Web site?

Prospective student respondents:

Yes—23.1%

E-Expectations

Thinking of the last time you used a cost or scholarship calculator on a college Web site, did it provide you with useful information?

Prospective student respondents:

Yes—92.2%

E-Expectations

Social media rankings show Facebook leads the way

Facebook was the most popular social media tool identified by poll respondents across sectors, followed by YouTube and Twitter, among 11 types of social media that were measured.

The rankings by prospective students were generally similar to those of the benchmark poll respondents, though a large gap was evident in the use of Twitter, with only about one-quarter of prospective students reporting they use Twitter vs. half to three-quarters of campus-based poll respondents.

Which of the following social media do you use?

Social media	E-Expectations Prospective students	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
Facebook	79.0%	98.2%	96.8%	93.1%
YouTube	62.4%	75.8%	82.3%	44.8%
Twitter	26.5%	75.2%	74.2%	55.2%
FourSquare	1.0%	17.6%	11.3%	6.9%
Google+	18.5%	15.8%	14.5%	3.4%
Other social media sites	1.9%	13.3%	17.7%	6.9%
Pinterest	6.3%	10.3%	11.3%	10.3%
Tumblr	9.2%	7.3%	3.2%	0.0%
StumbleUpon	6.9%	3.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Storify	0.7%	1.8%	1.6%	0.0%
SCVNGR (Scavenger)	0.8%	1.8%	4.8%	0.0%
Gowalla	0.4%	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%

TM

After Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, the next-most-popular social media among the 11 types rated by the benchmark poll respondents were FourSquare, Google+, and Pinterest. "Other social media sites" were also used by some of the poll respondents, though a close examination of these showed that these respondents mentioned dozens of individual sites with no consensus.

Going mobile: a student-to-institution comparison

Do you ever look at Web sites for colleges or universities on a mobile phone or tablet?

Prospective student respondents:

Yes—51.6%

E-Expectations

Does your institution offer a Web site that is optimized for mobile browsers?

Benchmark poll respondents:

4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
Yes—34.5%	Yes—38.7%	Yes—6.9%

How often are colleges and universities posting updates on Facebook and Twitter, and how often do prospective students expect these updates? For details, see pages 11-12 of the appendix and the parallel E-Expectations study.

Variety of forms available on higher education Web sites

Across sectors, poll respondents reported posting a wide variety of forms and information related to admissions and enrollment on their institutions' Web sites, including several versions of net price calculators.

Which of the following can prospective students or families submit or view on either your institution's primary Web site or your mobile-optimized Web site?

Types of online forms and information	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
Inquiry forms	87.9%	77.4%	62.1%
Application forms	87.3%	80.6%	79.3%
Campus visit request form	83.0%	77.4%	37.9%
Net price calculator—version for first-year students	82.4%	66.1%	65.5%
RSVP form for admissions events	78.2%	64.5%	34.5%
Catalog	75.8%	71.0%	86.2%
Financial aid application forms	60.0%	58.1%	62.1%
Net price calculator—version for transfer students	55.8%	41.9%	31.0%
Housing application	52.7%	54.8%	31.0%
Deposit forms	51.5%	29.0%	3.4%
Course registration forms	28.5%	35.5%	34.5%
Confirmation of acceptance	24.8%	29.0%	13.8%
Net price calculator—version for veterans	17.6%	19.4%	6.9%
Parent contact forms	15.2%	11.3%	3.4%
Other	3.6%	3.2%	3.4%
None of the above	3.6%	3.2%	3.4%

TM

Across sectors, application forms and inquiry forms were two of the top types of information posted on institutional Web sites among the 14 types of Web-sited-posted information shown above.

Approximately 60 percent of respondents, across sectors, reported posting financial aid application forms on their institutional Web site.

Use of cell phones continues to rise

As shown in the table below, the popularity of cell-phone contact in admissions continues its upward rise. The sector that increased its collection of students' cell phone numbers most dramatically was two-year public institutions, climbing to 97 percent from 73 percent two years earlier.

Do you collect cell/mobile numbers from your prospective students?* Yes or No

Affirmative responses by year	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
Yes—2012	92.1%	74.2%	96.6%
Yes—2010	91.7%	73.6%	73.3%
Yes—2008	84.0%	67.6%	69.0%
Yes—2006	34.4%	50.9%	46.7%

TM

The majority of institutions collect students' cell/mobile phone numbers, with two-year public institutions leading the way in this practice.

* Prior to 2012, this question read: "Do you collect cell/mobile numbers from your applicants?"

Across sectors, sending individual text messages to students' cell phones is more common than sending mass text messages. See details on page 14 and Table 10 of the appendix.

Text messages: a student-to-institution comparison

Would you be willing to allow a college or university admissions representative to send you text messages?

Prospective student respondents:

Yes—60.3%	E-Expectations
-----------	-----------------------

Do you use text messaging?

Benchmark poll respondents:

4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
Yes—41.8%	Yes—30.6%	Yes—24.1%

Frequency of bulk/blast e-mails also increases

Between 2006 and 2012, the frequency with which four-year institutions send out bulk/blast e-mails to prospective students has gradually increased. In addition, two-year public institutions sent more bulk e-mails in 2012 than in 2010.

About how many bulk/blast e-mails does a typical prospective student receive from your institution over the course of a recruitment cycle?

Statistic	4-year private				4-year public				2-year public			
	2012	2010	2008	2006	2012	2010	2008	2006	2012	2010	2008	2006
First quartile of respondents	10	10	5	NA	8	7	4	NA	2	1	0	NA
Median	18	15	10	10	12	12	8	6	4	2	2	8
Third quartile	30	25	17	NA	24	20	20	NA	6	6	4	NA

TM

A typical prospective student now receives 18 bulk/blast e-mails from a four-year private institution, 12 from a four-year public institution, and four from a two-year public institution, based on the median response from each sector, though significant variability was again evident at the first and third quartiles.

Collecting e-mail addresses from parents remains popular among four-year institutions, slowly increases at two-year public institutions

After a steady upward climb between 2006 and 2010, the practice of collecting parents' e-mail addresses fell off slightly for four-year public and private institutions between 2010 and 2012. However, the upward trend continued for two-year public institutions.

Does your admissions office collect e-mail addresses for parents?

Affirmative responses by year	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
Yes—2012	69.7%	46.8%	13.8%
Yes—2010	73.4%	50.0%	10.0%
Yes—2008	50.6%	36.8%	5.2%
Yes—2006	38.0%	30.9%	6.7%

TM

The practice of collecting parents' e-mail addresses continues to be especially common among four-year private institutions, but remains uncommon among two-year public institutions.

Rankings of preferred channels for communicating about academic programs show print is still important

From the perspective of the poll respondents, posting information to the institutional Web site ranked at the top across all three sectors as a way to provide information about academic programs, as shown in the table below. However, prospective students rated printed brochures and Web sites almost evenly.

Further contrasts were evident as well. For example, more than half of students rated the poll item, “Web landing page (focused on academic programs) shows up after a Google, Bing, or Yahoo search,” as an effective practice vs. fewer than one-quarter of poll respondents. In addition, more than one-quarter of prospective students rated live chat events as an effective way to learn about a college’s academic program options, though most colleges do not offer live chats.

How does your institution provide its prospective students with information about its academic programs? (Note: Students answered the question, “What is the most effective way for you to learn about a school’s academic program options?”)

Information channels and types	E-Expectations Prospective students	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
Program descriptions on a Web site	69.2%	97.0%	98.4%	93.1%
Printed brochures sent by mail or distributed at college fairs	70.8%	83.0%	87.1%	79.3%
Presentations from faculty or students during campus visits	59.6%	64.2%	51.6%	51.7%
Information provided to independent, online sites like MyCollegeOptions, Peterson’s, or the College Board	49.3%	52.1%	33.9%	27.6%
E-mail messages from program faculty	55.7%	50.3%	50.0%	27.6%
Videos of faculty or current students	43.3%	41.2%	30.6%	31.0%
Social media pages like Facebook or Google+ or Twitter feeds	37.8%	40.0%	37.1%	37.9%
Blog posts from current students or faculty	30.6%	33.3%	22.6%	6.9%
Web landing page (focused on academic programs) shows up after a Google, Bing, or Yahoo search	51.6%	20.0%	24.2%	13.8%
Live chat events or webcasts about the program	26.5%	10.9%	4.8%	0.0%
Other	NA	7.9%	1.6%	3.4%

TM

In contrast to benchmark poll respondents, prospective students rated printed brochures and Web sites almost evenly. In addition, more prospective students than benchmark poll respondents favored live chats and Web landing pages for accessing/sharing information about academic program options.

More than one-quarter of prospective students rated live chat events as an effective way to learn about a college’s academic program options, but most colleges do not offer live chats.

Budgeting trends: More institutions spending less than \$25K for admissions-related Web content

Respondents who reported spending at the lowest budget levels (<\$25,000) increased across all three sectors compared to 2010. For example, the proportion of four-year private institution respondents that reported spending at the lowest budget levels rose 6.2 percent, rising from 56.5 percent of respondents in 2010 to 62.7 percent of respondents in 2012.

In addition, respondents who reported spending at the mid-range spending levels (between \$25K and \$75K) declined across all three sectors compared to 2010.

In round figures, what is the approximate cost for your admissions office to maintain admissions-specific content and services on the institution's Web site (staffing, vendor costs, other direct costs)?

Budget level	4-year private			4-year public			2-year public		
	2012	2010	2008	2012	2010	2008	2012	2010	2008
\$0-\$4,999	33.8%	27.7%	38.7%	32.2%	24.6%	17.2%	65.2%	50.0%	55.1%
\$5,000-\$24,999	28.9%	28.8%	28.4%	32.2%	27.7%	29.7%	26.1%	16.7%	20.4%
\$25,000-\$49,999	15.5%	18.8%	16.1%	13.6%	15.4%	15.6%	8.7%	12.5%	6.1%
\$50,000-\$74,999	9.2%	12.6%	11.0%	6.8%	15.4%	18.8%	0.0%	8.3%	4.1%
\$75,000-\$99,999	4.2%	3.7%	2.6%	3.4%	7.7%	9.4%	0.0%	8.3%	2.0%
\$100,000 and higher	8.5%	8.4%	3.2%	11.9%	9.2%	9.4%	0.0%	4.2%	12.2%

TM

Nearly two-thirds of four-year private and public institutions and more than 90 percent of two-year public institutions are now spending less than \$25K to maintain admissions-specific content and services on their institution's Web site.

Don't miss the findings on Web site and social media staffing included on pages 12 and 17 in the appendix.

Appendix/Additional findings

Additional findings are provided in this section for each of the three sectors examined. The rankings are again ordered by the findings for four-year private institutions. Although the majority of the findings below are for all three sectors, findings in some cases are unavailable for the two-year and/or four-year public sectors when the number of respondents from these sectors was too few to ensure statistical significance.

SECTION I: More rankings of e-recruiting practices, including social media

Rankings of 33 e-recruiting practices • Specific uses of personalized home page URLs/portals • Additional findings on social media, including staffing

Table 1: Which of the following 33 practices does your institution use?

Rankings of e-recruiting practices	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
E-mail communication with prospective students	99.4%	100.0%	96.6%
Online net price calculator	89.7%	77.4%	58.6%
Recruiting pages on Web site	88.5%	96.8%	79.3%
Analytics resources such as Google Analytics to provide data on the effectiveness of the recruitment/admissions portion of the site	74.5%	66.1%	24.1%
Student searches via e-mail	74.5%	58.1%	20.7%
QR codes	67.3%	61.3%	41.4%
Flash/Media player videos embedded in our campus Web site	61.8%	48.4%	24.1%
Analytics resources such as Google Analytics to provide data for search engine optimization	55.2%	40.3%	20.7%
Content management system (CMS) to update or edit Web site content	54.5%	58.1%	24.1%
Student blog	53.9%	43.5%	6.9%
Search engine optimization process to improve organic search results	42.4%	33.9%	20.7%
Text messaging	41.8%	30.6%	24.1%
Personalized home page URL/portal for prospective students	41.2%	38.7%	6.9%
Virtual tours	40.0%	51.6%	37.9%
Pay-per-click ads on Facebook	36.4%	29.0%	17.2%
Skype	35.2%	19.4%	6.9%
Interactive campus map	34.5%	43.5%	10.3%
Web site optimized for mobile browsers	34.5%	38.7%	6.9%
Live chats	33.9%	38.7%	6.9%
Pay-per-click ads on search sites like Google, Bing, or Yahoo	32.7%	21.0%	6.9%
Online display advertising	32.1%	30.6%	24.1%
Online college fairs	27.3%	30.6%	6.9%
RSS/XML syndicated feeds for sharing information	25.5%	29.0%	10.3%
Admissions/Recruitment representative blog	24.8%	19.4%	3.4%
Mobile apps	23.6%	33.9%	10.3%

TM

Rankings of 33 e-recruiting practices, continued...

Rankings of e-recruiting practices	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
Faculty blog	20.6%	9.7%	3.4%
Instant messaging	15.8%	21.0%	10.3%
Webcam	10.9%	9.7%	0.0%
Webcasts	10.3%	16.1%	6.9%
Tailor information for students based on their public profile (on Facebook, Google+, etc.)	7.3%	11.3%	3.4%
Message boards	6.1%	9.7%	13.8%
FaceTime	4.2%	4.8%	3.4%
Online career interest survey	2.4%	6.5%	6.9%

TM

Table 2: If you indicated that you use personalized home page URLs/portals for prospective students, which students do you provide this for?

Specific uses of personalized home page URLs/portals	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
Prospects/Search List (i.e., prospective students who have not yet inquired or applied)	52.9%	54.2%	NA
Inquiries	55.9%	75.0%	NA
Applicants	54.4%	66.7%	NA
Accepted students	61.8%	66.7%	NA
Deposits/Confirmed admits	58.8%	37.5%	NA
Other	0.0%	12.5%	NA

TM

Table 3: Do you have a Facebook page specifically for prospective students or their families? And, if yes, how often do you post new items on this page?

Facebook page use (yes/no) and frequency of postings to page	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
Yes	70.3%	74.2%	20.7%
Frequency of postings:			
More than once a day	22.0%	60.0%	NA
Once a day	42.4%	20.0%	NA
Every other day	32.2%	50.0%	NA
Twice a week	55.9%	25.0%	NA
Once a week	30.5%	55.0%	NA
Twice a month	6.8%	10.0%	NA
Once a month or less	0.0%	5.0%	NA
Never	0.0%	0.0%	NA
Other	6.8%	5.0%	NA

TM

Table 4: Do you have a Twitter account specifically for prospective students or their families? And, if yes, how often do you tweet on this account?

Twitter account use (yes/no) and frequency of tweets	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
Yes	37.0%	43.5%	13.8%
Frequency of tweets:			
More than once a day	27.9%	22.2%	NA
Once a day	23.0%	18.5%	NA
Every other day	9.8%	11.1%	NA
Twice a week	16.4%	18.5%	NA
Once a week	8.2%	22.2%	NA
Twice a month	3.3%	7.4%	NA
Once a month or less	3.3%	0.0%	NA
Never	1.6%	0.0%	NA
Other	6.6%	0.0%	NA

TM

Table 5: How much staff time is allocated for updating social media for your institution?

Social media staff time allocations	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
This is a part-time responsibility for one person	44.3%	48.3%	64.0%
This is a part-time responsibility for two or more people	43.0%	45.0%	28.0%
This is a dedicated role that receives one person's full-time attention	9.5%	5.0%	8.0%
This is a dedicated role that receives two or more people's full-time attention	3.2%	1.7%	0.0%

TM

SECTION II: More findings on e-mail, cell/mobile numbers, and parents

How bulk/mass e-mail is delivered to prospective students • Types of prospective students and markets receiving bulk/blast e-mail • Use of dedicated landing pages • Specific uses of cell/mobile numbers of prospective students • Collection of parent e-mail addresses and cell/mobile numbers • Frequency of parent bulk/mass e-mail

Table 6: How do you deliver bulk/blast e-mails to prospective students?

How bulk/mass e-mail is delivered	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
We use a third-party vendor to send mass e-mails	61.2%	46.8%	17.2%
We use a campus-based CRM (Customer Relationship Management) System to send mass e-mails	41.2%	43.5%	13.8%
We use a campus-based system such as Outlook to send mass e-mails	23.0%	25.8%	51.7%
We use another approach to deliver mass e-mails to prospective students	4.2%	3.2%	10.3%

TM

Table 7: Which types of prospective students receive bulk/blast e-mails from your institution?

Types of prospective students receiving bulk e-mail	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
Prospects/Search List (i.e., prospective students who have not yet inquired or applied)	86.7%	80.6%	41.4%
Inquiries	95.8%	90.3%	62.1%
Applicants	95.2%	95.2%	65.5%
Accepted students	90.9%	91.9%	65.5%
Deposits/Confirmed admits	81.2%	59.7%	10.3%
Other	3.6%	1.6%	3.4%

TM

Table 8: Which markets receive bulk/blast e-mails from your institution?

Markets receiving bulk e-mail	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
First-time-in-college students	91.5%	98.4%	82.8%
Transfer students	80.6%	85.5%	69.0%
Adult learners	33.9%	24.2%	65.5%
International students	53.9%	32.3%	34.5%
Continuing education/non-credit students	12.1%	11.3%	20.7%
Other	3.0%	3.2%	0.0%

TM

Table 9: Do you use dedicated landing pages for individual e-mail campaigns?

	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
Yes	48.5%	38.7%	10.3%

TM

Table 10: Do you collect cell/mobile numbers from your prospective students? And, if yes, how do you use these cell/mobile numbers?

Collection of cell phone numbers (yes/no) and ways they are being used	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
Yes	92.1%	74.2%	96.6%
How numbers are used:			
Calls simply to build a relationship between the caller and the student	86.2%	60.9%	35.7%
Notifications of impending deadlines, events, acceptance, etc.	40.1%	23.9%	57.1%
Calls from telecounseling call centers	37.5%	47.8%	21.4%
Individual text messages	34.9%	21.7%	21.4%
Mass text messages	15.8%	8.7%	17.9%
Other	3.9%	15.2%	10.7%

TM

Table 11: Does your admissions office collect e-mail addresses for parents? And, if yes, when in the recruitment process do you collect the e-mail addresses for parents?

Collection of parent e-mail addresses (yes/no) and timing	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
Yes	69.7%	46.8%	13.8%
Timing:			
When students apply	87.8%	65.5%	NA
When students inquire	29.6%	41.4%	NA
When parents inquire	27.8%	37.9%	NA
When students confirm their intent to enroll or send in a deposit	19.1%	17.2%	NA
When students enroll	15.7%	13.8%	NA
On the Web year-round, 24/7	8.7%	24.1%	NA
Other	7.8%	17.2%	NA

TM

Table 12: Does your admissions office collect cell phone numbers for parents? And, if yes, when in the recruitment process do you collect the cell phone number for parents?

Collection of parent cell phone numbers (yes/no) and timing	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
Yes	44.2%	19.4%	17.2%
Timing:			
When students apply	87.7%	NA	NA
When students inquire	19.2%	NA	NA
When students enroll	19.2%	NA	NA
When parents inquire	16.4%	NA	NA
When students confirm their intent to enroll or send in a deposit	16.4%	NA	NA
On the Web year-round, 24/7	8.2%	NA	NA
Other	6.8%	NA	NA

TM

Table 13: About how many bulk e-mails does a typical parent of a prospective student receive from your institution prior to the beginning of classes?

Statistics	4-year private	4-year public
First quartile	2	2
Median	5	5
Third quartile	10	7

TM

SECTION III: Your institution's Web presence in greater detail

Timing of most recent Web site launch • Expected timing of mobile Web site launch, if not yet in place • Types of information provided on Web site's primary page for prospective students • Types of information provided on mobile Web site's primary page for prospective students • Staff time allocated to Web

Table 14: When did you launch your institution's current Web site?

Timing of most recent Web site launch	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
Within the last year	23.9%	27.4%	20.7%
Within the last 1-2 years	30.7%	38.7%	20.7%
Three or more years ago	45.4%	33.9%	58.6%
No response	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%

TM

Table 15: If your institution does not yet have a mobile-optimized Web site, when do you expect to have one?

Expected timing of mobile Web site launch	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
Within one year	50.0%	67.6%	19.0%
Within two years	27.6%	14.7%	42.9%
Three or more years from now	3.1%	2.9%	4.8%
We have no current plans for a mobile-optimized Web site	19.4%	14.7%	33.3%

TM

Table 16: Which of the following types of information are provided on your Web site's primary page for prospective students or are directly linked from that page?

Types of information provided/linked	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
Enrollment/Admissions information	95.2%	93.5%	86.2%
Academic program listing/majors	90.9%	93.5%	86.2%
Financial aid	89.7%	87.1%	79.3%
Applications	88.5%	82.3%	72.4%
Campus visit details	84.2%	83.9%	48.3%
Links to social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.)	81.8%	82.3%	72.4%
Scholarships	77.0%	79.0%	62.1%
Admissions event RSVP opportunities	76.4%	69.4%	27.6%
Cost	74.5%	82.3%	79.3%
Student life information	71.5%	64.5%	51.7%
Academic program/majors details	68.5%	64.5%	62.1%
Directions to the school location	62.4%	64.5%	55.2%
Athletic program	60.6%	40.3%	31.0%
Calculators	60.6%	46.8%	37.9%
Campus map	59.4%	66.1%	44.8%
Watch videos	55.2%	58.1%	34.5%
Housing details	50.9%	58.1%	34.5%
Student testimonials	46.1%	35.5%	20.7%
School calendar	44.2%	38.7%	62.1%
Messages about outcomes/value of earning a degree	38.8%	24.2%	17.2%
Live online chat or ask questions of admissions representatives	14.5%	17.7%	6.9%
Recruitment-oriented Webinars	9.1%	14.5%	6.9%
None of the above	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%

TM

Table 17: Which of the following types of information are provided on your institution's mobile Web site's primary page for prospective students or are linked directly from that page?

Types of information provided/linked	4-year private	4-year public
Academic program listing/majors	26.1%	33.9%
Enrollment/Admissions information	24.8%	30.6%
Financial aid	23.0%	24.2%
Athletic program	20.6%	16.1%
Campus map	19.4%	22.6%
Directions to the school location	18.8%	17.7%
Cost	17.6%	22.6%
Campus visit details	17.6%	19.4%
Links to social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.)	17.0%	17.7%
Academic program/majors details	16.4%	17.7%
Applications	16.4%	19.4%
Scholarships	14.5%	21.0%
Admissions event RSVP opportunities	13.9%	11.3%
Watch videos	13.3%	17.7%
School calendar	12.7%	11.3%
Student life information	12.1%	21.0%
Housing details	9.1%	16.1%
Calculators	9.1%	8.1%
Live online chat or ask Tables of admissions representatives	4.2%	0.0%
Recruitment-oriented Webinars	2.4%	4.8%
None of the above	11.5%	14.5%

TM

Table 18: How much staff time is allocated for maintaining admissions-specific content and services on the institution's Web site and, if applicable, its mobile-optimized Web site?

Staff time allocation	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
This is a part-time responsibility for one person	46.9%	47.5%	65.4%
This is a part-time responsibility for two or more people	36.9%	40.7%	30.8%
This is a dedicated role that receives one person's full-time attention	10.6%	8.5%	0.0%
This is a dedicated role that receives two or more people's full-time attention	5.6%	3.4%	3.8%

TM

SECTION IV: More findings on net price calculators and other ways to share information about costs

Specific uses of net price calculators • Accuracy of net price calculators • Percentage of students completing net price calculators • Ways of sharing information about costs beyond a net price calculator

Table 19: How is your institution using its federally-required net price calculator on the Web site?

Specific uses of net price calculators	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
Provide early estimates of financial aid	91.5%	87.1%	75.9%
Provide early estimates of scholarships	69.7%	38.7%	6.9%
Motivate prospective students who have not yet inquired or applied to complete the calculator so that you can capture their name and contact information	36.4%	8.1%	3.4%
Motivate applicants whose applications are incomplete to finish applying	20.0%	8.1%	10.3%
Other	4.2%	1.6%	13.8%

TM

Table 20: How accurate are the estimates provided by your institution's net price calculator?

Accuracy of net price calculators	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
Highly accurate for most students	51.6%	33.3%	12.0%
Somewhat accurate for most students	38.9%	57.9%	72.0%
Somewhat inaccurate for most students	8.3%	8.8%	4.0%
Highly inaccurate for most students	1.3%	0.0%	12.0%

TM

Table 21: What percentage of students who begin to complete your institution's online net price calculator actually end up completing it?

Statistics	4-year private
First quartile	25.0%
Median	35.0%
Third quartile	67.0%

TM

Table 22: Beyond a net price calculator, how does your institution provide its prospective students with information about costs, financial aid, and scholarships?

Information channels and types	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
Details on a Web site	93.3%	100.0%	96.6%
Printed brochures sent to students	79.4%	83.9%	58.6%
E-mail messages from the financial aid staff	63.6%	58.1%	51.7%
Information provided to independent, online sites like MyCollegeOptions, Peterson's, or the College Board	39.4%	21.0%	17.2%
Videos explaining how to apply for aid and scholarships	16.4%	16.1%	17.2%
Social media pages like Facebook or Google+ or Twitter feeds	15.2%	14.5%	20.7%
Web landing page (focused on costs or aid) shows up after a Google, Bing, or Yahoo search	13.9%	17.7%	6.9%
Blog posts from current students or faculty	9.1%	8.1%	3.4%
Other	8.5%	1.6%	6.9%

TM

SECTION V: “Secret shopper” tracking (watch for more complete findings in our forthcoming 2012 Admissions Funnel Report, to be released in fall 2012)

Percent of applications submitted electronically • Percent of institutions tracking first known point of contact with prospective students • Percent of applicants submitting applications as first-known point of contact with institution • Ways of motivating prospective students to share their names and contact information

Table 23: Does your campus track its first known point of contact with all applicants, electronic and otherwise?

	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
Yes	92.1%	79.0%	41.4%

TM

Table 24: Approximately what percent of your applicants are currently submitting an application (electronic or otherwise), as their first-known point of contact with your institution?

Statistics	4-year private	4-year public
First quartile	20.0%	25.0%
Median	30.0%	30.0%
Third quartile	40.0%	45.0%

TM

Table 25: Approximately what percent of applications came to you in electronic format during your last completed recruiting cycle?

Statistics	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
First quartile	75.0%	75.0%	47.5%
Median	90.0%	90.0%	72.5%
Third quartile	96.0%	98.0%	95.0%

TM

Table 26: In what ways do you seek to motivate prospective students who have not yet inquired or applied to share their name and contact information with your institution?

Ways of encouraging students to share their contact information	4-year private	4-year public	2-year public
Encourage students to fill out an inquiry form	92.7%	91.9%	79.3%
Encourage students to contact an admissions representative (using any method)	88.5%	75.8%	65.5%
Encourage students to register for an event	87.3%	85.5%	48.3%
Encourage students to fill out a visit form	86.1%	82.3%	37.9%
Encourage students to request more information about the institution in general	83.0%	79.0%	58.6%
Encourage students to e-mail an admissions representative	73.9%	54.8%	51.7%
Waived application fee	63.6%	17.7%	20.7%
Encourage students to request more information about academic programs/majors	63.0%	66.1%	62.1%
Encourage students to make a phone call to an admissions representative	61.8%	45.2%	48.3%
Encourage students to request an application	58.2%	58.1%	48.3%
Encourage students to request more information about financial aid	57.0%	45.2%	41.4%
Encourage students to request enrollment information/admissions requirements	50.9%	50.0%	48.3%
Encourage students to “like” a social media page such as Facebook or Google+	49.7%	48.4%	37.9%
Encourage students to complete our online net price calculator	46.7%	16.1%	6.9%
Encourage students to contact an admissions rep using social media (Twitter, Facebook, etc.)	44.8%	35.5%	13.8%
Offer students the opportunity to connect with other prospective students	32.7%	12.9%	6.9%
Free t-shirt	23.0%	22.6%	20.7%
Encourage students to participate in a poll or survey	14.5%	4.8%	10.3%
Encourage students to contact an admissions representative using another method	13.9%	1.6%	3.4%
Other motivational methods	5.5%	9.7%	3.4%
Discounted application fee	4.2%	6.5%	3.4%
Free gift certificate	3.0%	0.0%	6.9%
Free newsfeeds	2.4%	4.8%	3.4%
None of the above	0.6%	0.0%	6.9%

TM

Responding institutions

Representatives from 256 colleges and universities participated in Noel-Levitz's 2012 national electronic poll of e-recruitment practices. The poll was e-mailed to enrollment and admissions officers at all accredited, two-year and four-year, degree-granting U.S. institutions. Respondents included 165 four-year private institutions, 62 four-year public institutions, and 29 two-year public institutions. The poll was completed between March 21 and April 20, 2012. Below is a list of institutions that participated.

Thank you to those who participated. Sign up to receive additional reports and information updates by e-mail at www.noel-levitz.com/ [Subscribe](#).

Four-year private institutions

Allegheny College (PA)
American Jewish University (CA)
Asbury University (KY)
Ashland University (OH)
Augustana College (IL)
Bay Path College (MA)
Belhaven University (MS)
Bentley University (MA)
Biola University (CA)
Bluefield College (VA)
Brevard College (NC)
Bryan College (TN)
Bryant University (RI)
Bucknell University (PA)
Buena Vista University (IA)
Butler University (IN)
California Baptist University (CA)
Calvin College (MI)
Campbell University RTP (NC)
Capital University (OH)
Carroll University (WI)
Central College (IA)
Clarke University (IA)
Cleveland Chiropractic College-Kansas City (KS)
Coe College (IA)
College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University (MN)
Columbia College (MO)
Columbia College (SC)
Concordia University Chicago (IL)
Converse College (SC)
Corcoran College of Art and Design (DC)
Cornerstone University (MI)
Creighton University (NE)
Culinary Institute of America (NY)
Dakota Wesleyan University (SD)
Davidson College (NC)
Dillard University (LA)
Dowling College (NY)
Drew University (NJ)
Edgewood College (WI)
Felician College (NJ)
Franciscan University of Steubenville (OH)
Franklin & Marshall College (PA)
Franklin Pierce University (NH)
Georgetown College (KY)
God's Bible School and College (OH)
Good Samaritan College of Nursing and Health Science (OH)
Goodwin College (CT)
Grace Bible College (MI)

Greenville College (IL)
Heidelberg University (OH)
Hesston College (KS)
Hofstra University (NY)
Hollins University (VA)
Holy Family University (PA)
Houston Baptist University (TX)
Illinois College (IL)
Immaculata University (PA)
Indiana Wesleyan University (IN)
Iowa Wesleyan College (IA)
Jacksonville University (FL)
Jamestown College (ND)
Johnson College (PA)
Judson University (IL)
Keystone College (PA)
Kuyper College (MI)
La Salle University (PA)
Lake Erie College (OH)
Lancaster Bible College (PA)
Latter-Day Saints Business College (UT)
Lawrence Technological University (MI)
Lawrence University (WI)
Lenoir-Rhyne University (NC)
Lesley University (MA)
LeTourneau University (TX)
Loyola Marymount University (CA)
Lynchburg College (VA)
Lynn University (FL)
Maryhurst University (OR)
Maryville University of Saint Louis (MO)
Messiah College (PA)
Methodist University (NC)
Mid-Atlantic Christian University (NC)
Mid-Continent University (KY)
Milligan College (TN)
Milwaukee School of Engineering (WI)
Mississippi College (MS)
Missouri Baptist University (MO)
Montana Bible College (MT)
Mount St. Mary's University (MD)
Mount Vernon Nazarene University (OH)
National University (CA)
New Hope Christian College (OR)
Niagara University (NY)
North Central University (MN)
North Park University (IL)
Northland College (WI)
Northwest University (WA)
Northwestern College (MN)
Notre Dame de Namur University (CA)

Nyack College (NY)
O'More College of Design (TN)
Oral Roberts University (OK)
Pace University (NY)
Philadelphia University (PA)
Point Loma Nazarene University (CA)
Point University (GA)
Post University (CT)
Prairie Bible Institute (AB)
Regent University (VA)
Regis University (CO)
Saint Joseph College (CT)
Saint Peter's College (NJ)
Saint Xavier University (IL)
Salve Regina University (RI)
Savannah College of Art and Design (GA)
School of Urban Missions Bible College and Theological Seminary (CA)
Seattle University (WA)
Sewanee: The University of the South (TN)
Shenandoah University (VA)
Siena Heights University (MI)
Simpson University (CA)
Southern Nazarene University (OK)
Southern Vermont College (VT)
Southwestern Adventist University (TX)
St. Ambrose University (IA)
St. Catharine College (KY)
St. John's University (NY)
St. Mary's University (TX)
St. Thomas Aquinas College (NY)
Sterling College (KS)
Suffolk University (MA)
Susquehanna University (PA)
Texas Lutheran University (TX)
Texas Wesleyan University (TX)
The New School (NY)
The University of the Arts (PA)
Transylvania University (KY)
Trevecca Nazarene University (TN)
Union College (NY)
Unity College (ME)
University of Dallas (TX)
University of Dayton (OH)
University of Denver (CO)
University of Mobile (AL)
University of Saint Francis (IN)
University of Saint Mary (KS)
University of St. Thomas (TX)
University of Tampa (FL)
Upper Iowa University (IA)
Vanderbilt University (TN)

Walsh University (OH)
Washington & Jefferson College (PA)
Watkins College of Art, Design & Film (TN)
Westminster College (UT)
Westmont College (CA)
Whitworth University (WA)
William Jewell College (MO)
Williams Baptist College (AR)
Wilmington University (DE)
Wilson College (PA)
Wisconsin Lutheran College (WI)
Wofford College (SC)
Xavier University (OH)
Young Harris College (GA)

Four-year public institutions

Arizona State University (AZ)
Arkansas State University (AR)
Boise State University (ID)
Bowie State University (MD)
Bowling Green State University (OH)
City University of New York Medgar Evers College (NY)
Clarion University of Pennsylvania (PA)
College at Brockport, State University of New York (NY)
Eastern Connecticut State University (CT)
Eastern Kentucky University (KY)
Eastern Michigan University (MI)
Henderson State University (AR)
Illinois State University (IL)
Indiana University South Bend (IN)
Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne (IN)
Jackson State University (MS)
James Madison University (VA)
Longwood University (VA)
Mayville State University (ND)
Metropolitan State University (MN)
Michigan Technological University (MI)
Minnesota State University, Mankato (MN)
Missouri University of Science & Technology (MO)
Missouri Western State University (MO)
Montana State University-Billings (MT)
New College of Florida (FL)
North Georgia College & State University (GA)
Northern New Mexico College (NM)
Oklahoma State University-Oklahoma City (OK)
Rhode Island College (RI)
Shepherd University (WV)
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (IL)

Southern Oregon University (OR)
St. Petersburg College (FL)
State University of New York at Fredonia (NY)
State University of New York College at Cortland (NY)
State University of New York College at Oswego (NY)
State University of New York College of Technology at Delhi (NY)
Tennessee Technological University (TN)
Texas Tech University (TX)
Texas Woman's University (TX)
The University of Memphis (TN)
University at Buffalo, State University of New York (NY)
University of Alabama at Birmingham (AL)
University of Alabama in Huntsville (AL)
University of Alaska Southeast (AK)
University of Central Missouri (MO)
University of Connecticut (CT)
University of Kansas Main Campus (KS)
University of Kentucky (KY)
University of Louisiana at Lafayette (LA)
University of Louisville (KY)
University of Michigan-Dearborn (MI)
University of Northern Colorado (CO)
University of South Carolina Aiken (SC)
University of Southern Mississippi (MS)
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire (WI)
West Texas A&M University (TX)
West Virginia University (WV)
Western Illinois University (IL)
Western Oregon University (OR)
Wichita State University (KS)

Two-year public institutions

Central Lakes College (MN)
Century College (MN)
Colorado Northwestern Community College (CO)
Galveston College (TX)
H Lavity Stoutt Community College (VI)
Hawkeye Community College (IA)
Highland Community College (IL)
Iowa Lakes Community College (IA)
Jackson Community College (MI)
Jefferson College (MO)
Lewis and Clark Community College (IL)
Mount Wachusett Community College (MA)
Mountain View College (TX)
Navarro College (TX)
New River Community and Technical College (WV)
Northeast Community College (NE)

Northwest Technical College (MN)
Onondaga Community College (NY)
Ozarka College (AR)
Piedmont Technical College (SC)
Pulaski Technical College (AR)
Reading Area Community College (PA)
Southwest Wisconsin Technical College (WI)
St. Clair County Community College (MI)
Stanly Community College (NC)
Texarkana College (TX)
Texas State Technical College West Texas (TX)
Wake Technical Community College (NC)
Yavapai College (AZ)

Fine-tune your e-recruiting strategies with a complimentary telephone consultation

Readers are invited to contact Noel-Levitz to schedule a complimentary telephone consultation with an experienced enrollment and marketing consultant. Ask us any question—we'll listen carefully to your particular situation and share insights with you based on our research and our work with campuses nationwide. To schedule an appointment or to ask a question right now, contact us at 1-800-876-1117 or ContactUs@noellevitz.com.

Questions about this report?

We hope you found this report to be helpful and informative. If you have questions or would like additional information about the findings, please contact Noel-Levitz at 1-800-876-1117 or ContactUs@noellevitz.com.

Watch for Noel-Levitz's next survey of e-recruitment practices in spring 2014.

About Noel-Levitz and our higher education research

A trusted partner to higher education, Noel-Levitz focuses on strategic planning for enrollment and student success. Our consultants work side by side with campus executive teams to facilitate planning and to help implement the resulting plans.

For more than 20 years, we have conducted national surveys to assist campuses with benchmarking their performance. This includes benchmarking marketing/recruitment and student success practices and outcomes, monitoring student and campus usage of the Web and electronic communications, and comparing institutional budgets and policies. There is no charge or obligation for participating, and responses to all survey items are strictly confidential. Participants have the advantage of receiving the findings first, as soon as they become available.

For more information, visit www.noellevitz.com.

Higher Ed Benchmarks

Related reports from Noel-Levitz

Benchmark Poll Report Series

www.noellevitz.com/BenchmarkReports

National Student Satisfaction-Priorities Reports

www.noellevitz.com/SatisfactionBenchmarks

E-Expectations Report Series

www.noellevitz.com/E-ExpectationsSeries

National Freshman Attitudes Reports

www.noellevitz.com/FreshmanAttitudes

Latest Discounting Report

www.noellevitz.com/DiscountingReport

Except where cited otherwise, all material in this paper is copyright © by Noel-Levitz, Inc. Permission is required to redistribute information from Noel-Levitz, Inc., either in print or electronically. Please contact us at ContactUs@noellevitz.com about reusing material from this paper.

How to cite this report

Noel-Levitz. (2012). 2012 e-recruiting practices and trends at four-year and two-year institutions. Coralville, Iowa: Author. Retrieved from: www.noellevitz.com/BenchmarkReports.

Find it online.

This report is posted online at www.noellevitz.com/BenchmarkReports.

Sign up to receive additional reports or our e-newsletter.

Visit our Web page: www.noellevitz.com/Subscribe