

Major Gaps in Tracking of Higher Ed Marketing Metrics: New Report

July 30, 2024

NEW ORLEANS, LA - July 30, 2024 -
Search Influence and UPCEA Establish Higher Ed Marketing Cost Benchmarks in Joint Industry Report

Search Influence, a leading higher education digital marketing agency, and UPCEA, the Online and Professional Education Association, announced their co-authored Higher Ed Marketing Metrics Research Report. The study establishes industry-first benchmarks for marketing cost metrics at professional, continuing, and online (PCO) education schools and reveals major gaps in metric tracking among institutions.

The study found that less than half (of marketers at these institutions track cost per inquiry 46%) and cost per enrolled student (43%). A worrying 17% do not key track metrics. Furthermore, less than half (47%) are satisfied with their campaign performance, while only 38% are satisfied with their current cost expenditure. As the findings suggest, marketers risk poor campaign performance, wasted budget, and reduced lead quality by not tracking these metrics.

Among institutions tracking cost per inquiry (CPI), the average CPI is $140, with a range of $29.03 to $450. For those tracking cost per enrolled student, the average cost is $2,849 per student. This breaks down to an average of $1,505 for undergraduate and $3,804 for graduate enrollment, and $599 for non-credit programs. As the industry?s first report into metric tracking among PCO schools, these higher education marketing benchmarks provide an important starting point for marketers to assess the performance of their campaigns against industry peers.

The report showed a positive correlation between tracking cost per inquiry and cost per enrolled student and satisfaction with campaign performance. 92% of those who track these metrics are satisfied with campaign performance.

?We know from our experience working with higher education institutions that when you track metrics like CPI and evaluate them against historical performance or industry standards, you can confidently make strategic campaign adjustments,? said Search Influence Director Paula French. ?What?s more, we?ve seen higher ed marketers use these metrics to increase ROI by reducing CPI and cost per enrolled student over time.?

As the online and professional education sector grows, the study highlighted the urgent need for institutions to adapt their digital engagement strategies to remain competitive. UPCEA Chief Research Officer Jim Fong added, ?As new generations of students favor non-traditional higher education pathways and the demographics of the ?adult learner? evolve, institutions must adapt the programs they offer accordingly. In response to consumers? changing online behaviors and preferences, institutions must reassess their online targeting strategies to reach prospective students effectively.?

96 UPCEA members participated in the Higher Education Marketing Metrics Research Study, and 44 members completed the survey, conducted between October 18, 2023, and January 12, 2024.

Search Influence has been a UPCEA Platinum Partner since September 2022. Through this partnership, Search Influence and UPCEA produce resources, including research studies and webinars, to help higher education marketers better understand their campaign performance and drive inquiries efficiently.

To learn more about Search Influence?s work in higher education digital marketing, visit https://www.searchinfluence.com/ or call (504) 208-3900.

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About Search Influence:

Search Influence is a woman-owned, ROI-focused digital advertising agency that helps institutions drive prospects into and through the recruitment funnel with analytics-backed strategies, including search engine optimization and paid digital advertising. Founded in 2006, Search Influence?s core purpose is to optimize potential. The higher education marketing agency collaborates with well-regarded institutions both nationally and locally in New Orleans. Clients include the Tulane School of Professional Advancement, Tufts University, and NC State. In 2023, the 2023 US Search Awards recognized Search Influence and Tulane SoPA with a finalist nomination in the ?Best Use of Search?B2C (PPC)? category.

About UPCEA:

UPCEA is the online and professional education association. Their members continuously reinvent higher education, positively impacting millions of lives. They proudly lead and support them through cutting edge research, professional development, networking and mentorship, conferences and seminars, and stakeholder advocacy. Their collaborative, entrepreneurial community brings together decision makers and influencers in education, industry, research, and policy interested in improving educational access and outcomes.

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Search Influence

Search Influence, a national SEO and digital advertising agency since 2006, delivers demonstrable ROI for clients. Specialties include SEO, Paid Advertising, and Analytics. In-house experts collaborate with clients for results. Also an informative blog.

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