



Enrollment Management Snapshot: Structure, Operations, and Partnerships

Part 3: EM Budgeting and Vendor Relationships—Findings from
the 2016 Enrollment Management Benchmarking Survey

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About the Study

Occasion for the Research

Based on member requests for data on operational performance, the Enrollment Management Forum conducted the Enrollment Management Benchmarking Survey. The survey provides a snapshot of four components of Enrollment Management (EM) operations: organizational structures, staffing and salaries, budgeting, and vendor relationships.

The data presented in the study are based on survey responses from 87 EM leaders.

The study is being published in four components:


- [EM Organizational Structures](#)
 - [EM Staffing and Salaries](#)
 - **EM Budgeting and Vendor Relationships**
 - Aggregate Report on EM Operations (combining above reports)
- 
- Forthcoming**

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Profile of Survey Participants

In early 2016, the Enrollment Management Forum administered the Enrollment Management Benchmarking Survey.

87 Enrollment Managers participated, providing the Forum a set of over 10,000 data points on EM operational performance.

The charts to the right show the distribution of survey participants by segment.

Segment Definitions:

Size is calculated by total enrollment.

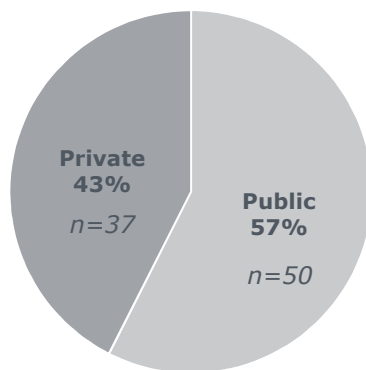
- Large Publics: > 20,000
- Medium Public: > 10,000
- Small Public: < 10,000
- Large Private: > 5,000
- Small Private: < 5,000

Selectivity is based on 75th-percentile test scores.

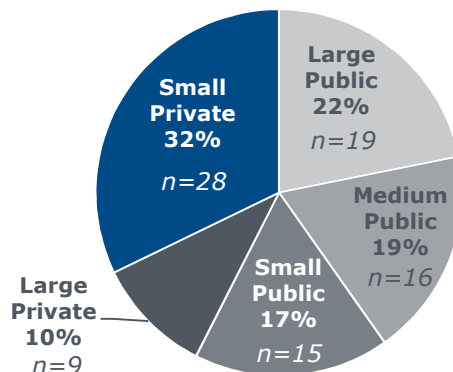
- Selective Public: SAT > 1249 or ACT > 27
- Regional Public: SAT < 1250 or ACT < 28
- Selective Private: SAT > 1299 or ACT > 29
- Regional Private: SAT < 1300 or ACT < 30

Survey Respondent Characteristics

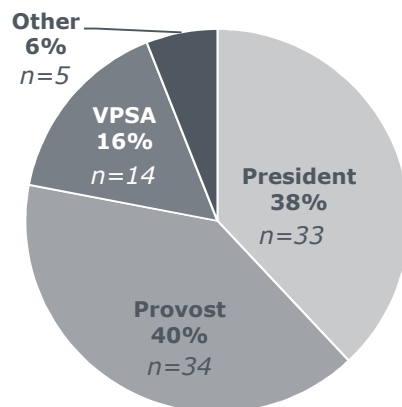
By Sector



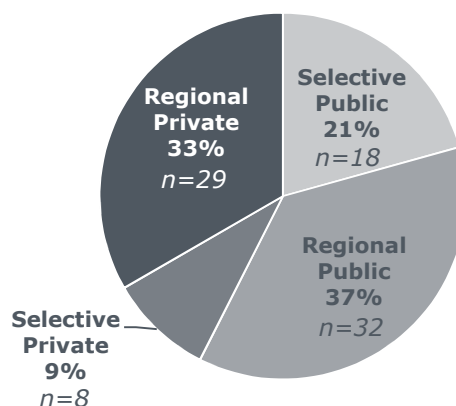
By Sector and Size



By EM Reporting Line



By Sector and Selectivity



An EM Leader Snapshot

6.3 years

Average time in current position

10.6 years

Average time at current institution

62.5% of Enrollment Managers are part of the President's or Chancellor's Cabinet

1) N=87. Titles included: (Senior/Associate/Assistant) Vice President/Provost for Enrollment Management; Chief Enrollment Officer; Executive Director of Enrollment Management; Dean/VP of Admissions and Financial Aid



EM Budgeting and Vendor Relationships



3

Key Findings on Budgeting and Vendor Relationships

Major Differences between Publics and Privates

Public EM Budgets Tend to Be Larger, but Difference Driven by Salary Budgets

- Public EMs oversee larger total budgets, but this is driven nearly entirely by salary expenditures.
- Public and private EMs spend similar amounts on operations and vendors.
- EMs at private universities tend to spend more on admissions marketing.

When Controlled for Enrollment Size, Privates Spend More Across the Board

- Across the expense categories of operations, salary, vendor, and admissions marketing private universities spend significantly more per student than public universities.
- This trend is most pronounced with respect to admissions marketing, to which private universities spend approximately nine times what their public counterparts do.

Privates Embrace Online, Publics Focus on Print for Admissions Marketing

- 33% of private university admissions marketing dollars are spent online, only 14% of public university admissions marketing dollars are spent there.
- Public universities spend considerably more on print (66%) than private universities do (43%).

Privates Are Far More Likely to Outsource Recruiting Activities

- Private universities are more likely to outsource student search (69%) and financial aid optimization (68%) than public universities (39% and 14% respectively).
- Private universities are also likely to pay significantly more for student search (\$300-500K median range) than public universities (\$100-150K median range).

Category	Metric	Public	Private
Total Budgets	Average Total EM Operations Budget	\$2.0M	\$1.8M
	Average Total EM Salary Budget	\$5.5M	\$2.3M
	Average Total EM Vendor Budget	\$0.6M	\$0.6M
	Average Total Admissions Marketing Budget	\$0.2M	\$0.5M
Total Per-Student Budgets	Total EM Operations Budget / Student	\$134	\$507
	Total EM Salary Budget / Student	\$333	\$741
	Total EM Vendor Budget / Student	\$73	\$246
	Total Admissions Marketing Budget / Student	\$18	\$161
Admissions Budget Distribution	% Operations	15%	27%
	% Salary	48%	35%
	% Vendor	30%	23%
	% Admissions Marketing	7%	15%
Outsourcing of Key EM Activities	Student Search - % Outsourcing	39%	69%
	Financial Aid Optimization - % Outsourcing	14%	68%
	Student Search – Median Contract Value	\$100-150K	\$300-500K
	Financial Aid Optimization – Median Contract Value	\$50-75K	\$50K

Budget Analysis: Controlling for Institutional Size

This section of the report focuses on Enrollment Management budgets.

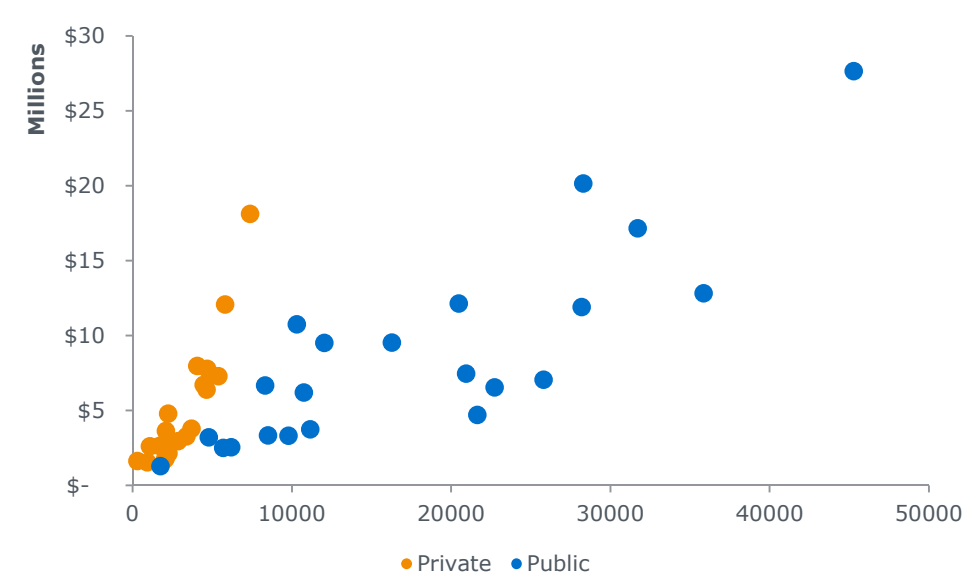
Recognizing that raw budget dollars will be the easiest item for EMs to benchmark, this section reports raw budget dollars collected by the survey.

As the charts to the right show, budgets are strongly correlated with institution size. Thus, for budget benchmarks to be effectively compared, it is necessary to account for enrollment differences.

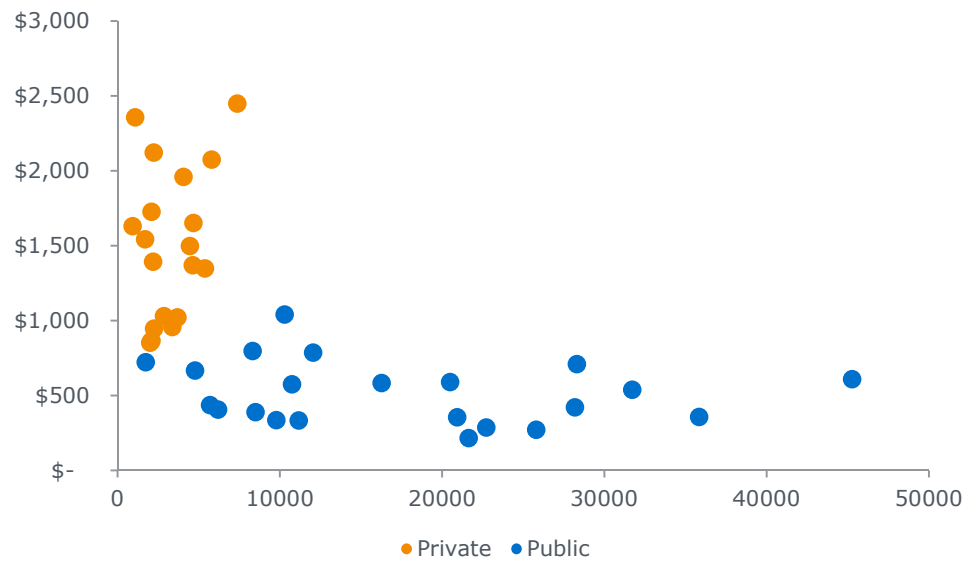
The result is that this section presents two versions of many budget items, one that is the total budget amount, the other that is that amount divided by the relevant measure of enrollment.

Controlling for Enrollment Size Necessary for Creating Meaningful Budget Benchmarks

Total EM Budget¹ vs. Number of Full-Time Undergraduate Students



Total EM Budget per Student vs. Number of Full-Time Undergraduate Students



1) Total EM Budget refers to four component parts summed together: Operations Budget, Salary Budget, Admissions Marketing Budget, and Vendor Budget. Only institutions reporting all four numbers were included.

Total EM Budget Breakdown

The survey asked EMs to report total budgets for the four largest expense categories:

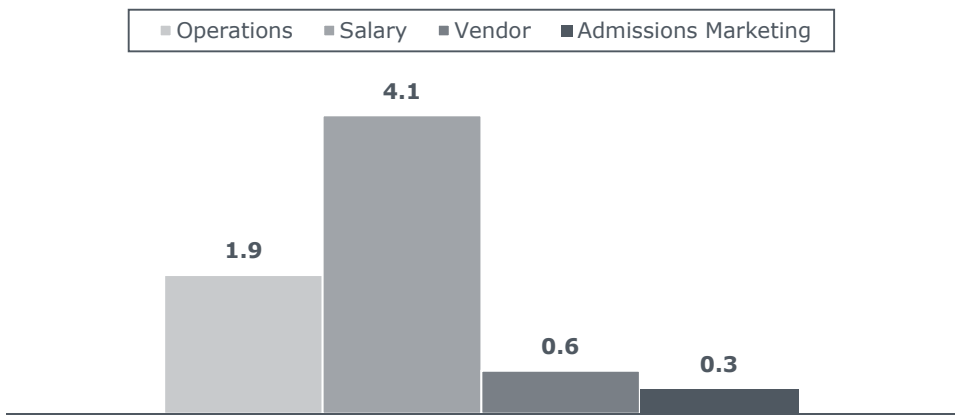
- 1. Operations
- 2. Salary
- 3. Vendors
- 4. Admissions Marketing

The data shown here are the average amounts spent on these four categories.

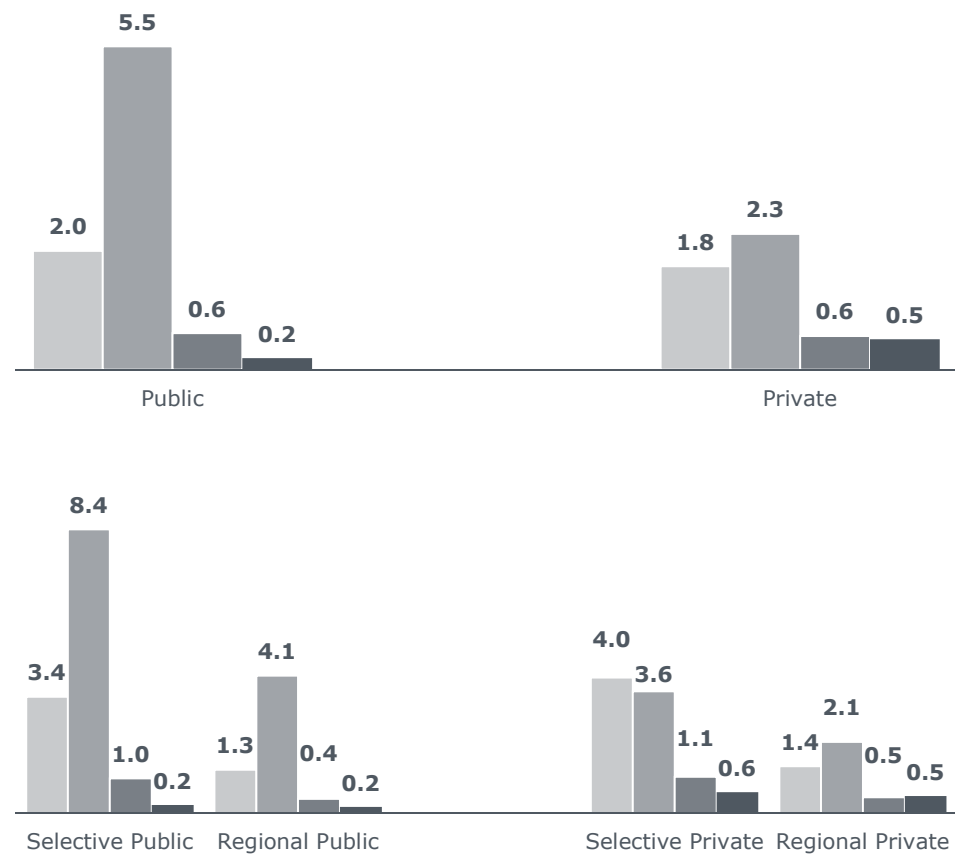
Clearly, salaries constitute the largest portion of the EM budget. At publics, the salary budget is approximately two times the rest of the EM budget combined.

Budget Breakdown by Expense Category

Average Total EM Budgets (in millions of dollars), All Schools



Average Total EM Budgets (in millions of dollars), by Sector and Segment



EM Budget Breakdown per Student

To take institution size into account, the budget data are presented here on a per student¹ basis for each of the four categories:

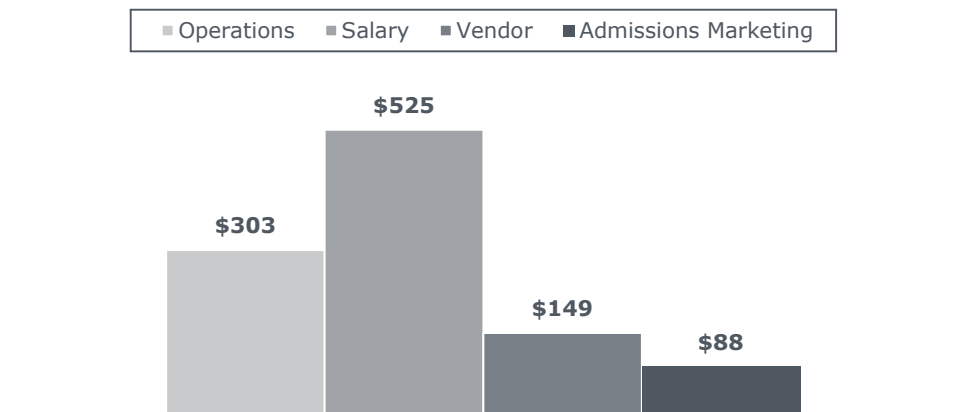
- 1. Operations
- 2. Salary
- 3. Vendors
- 4. Admissions Marketing

The data show a significant difference between public and private universities. Notably, privates spend approximately 9 times what publics spend on admissions marketing per student.

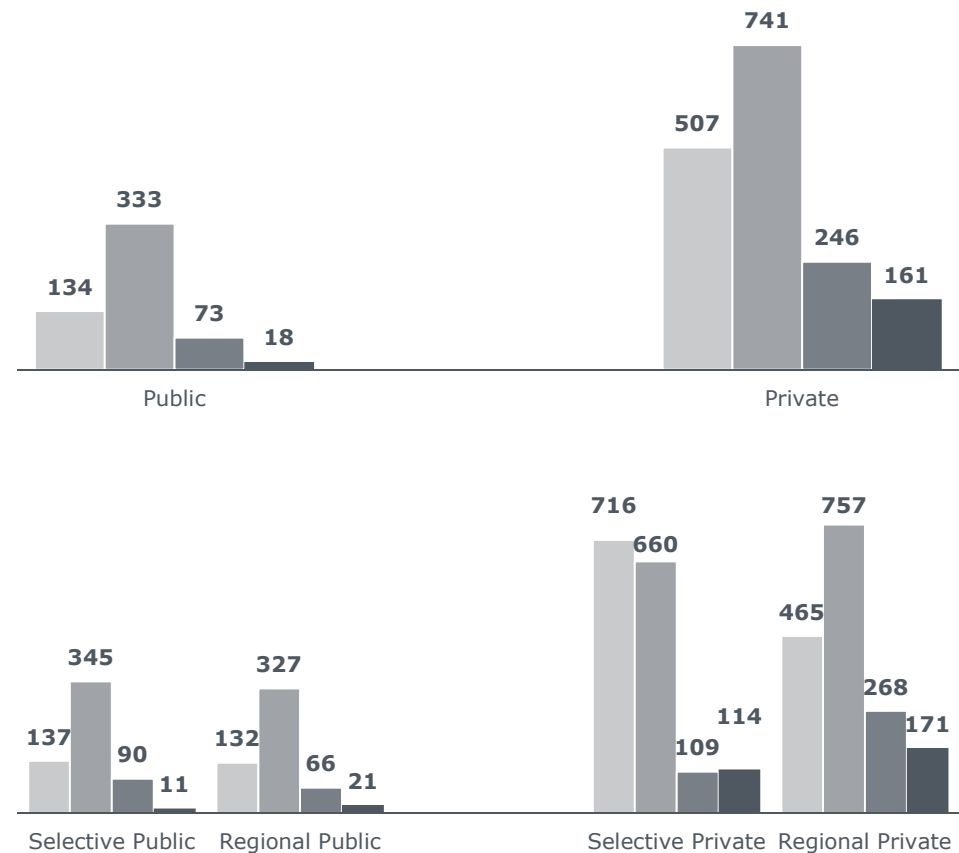
With respect to vendor budgets, regional privates stand out markedly. While the other three segments spend between \$66 and \$109 per student on vendors, regional privates spend \$268, or approximately 150% more than the next highest spending segment.

Privates Spend More per Student than Publics

Average Total EM Budgets per Student, All Schools



Average Total EM Budgets per Student, by Sector and Segment



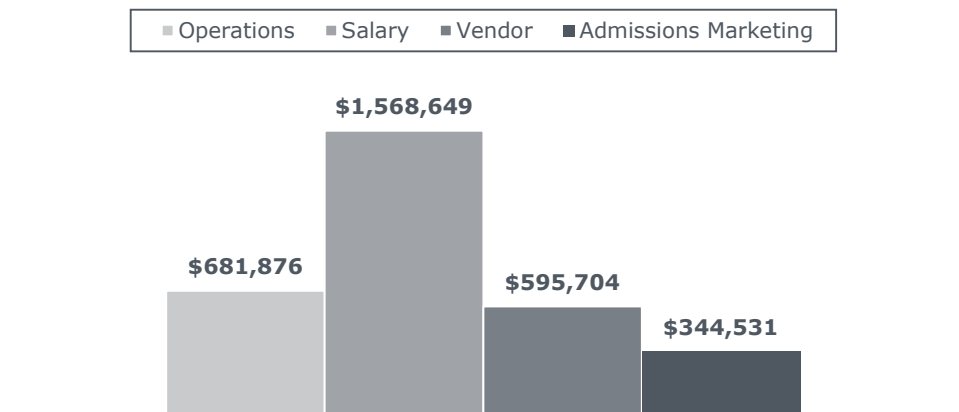
1) This calculation used total full-time undergraduate students..

Breakdown of Admissions Budget

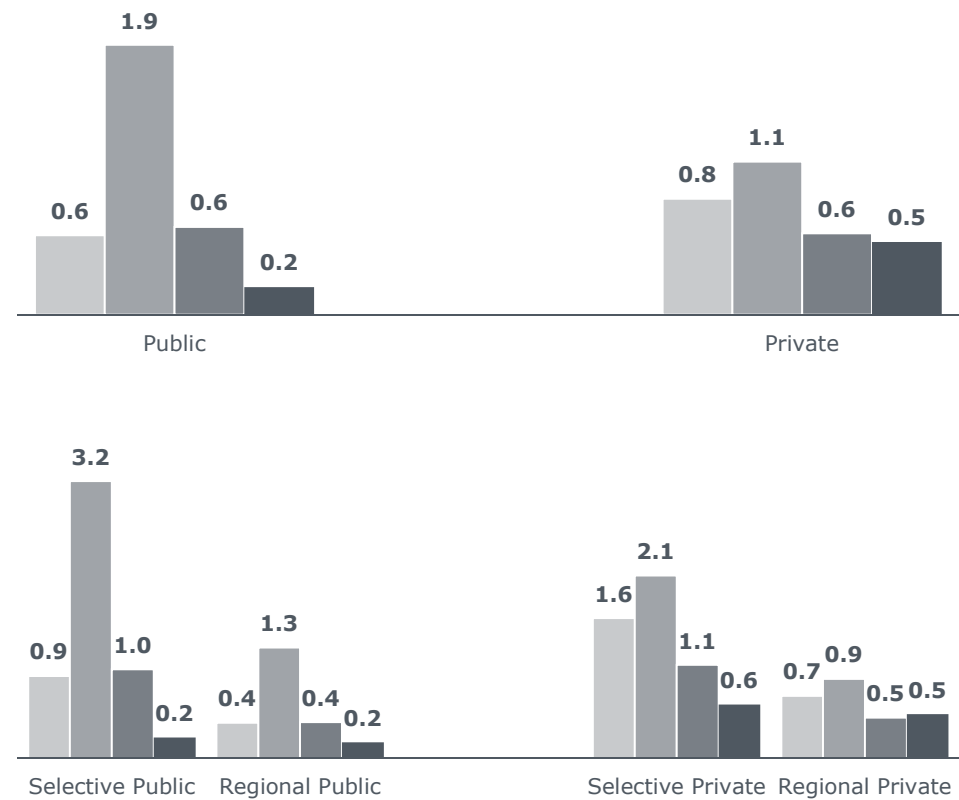
This page shows how the admissions office budget is allocated among the four expense categories¹.

Admissions Office Budget Allocation

Average Total Admissions Budgets, by Expense Category, All Schools



Average Total Admissions Budgets (in millions of dollars), by Sector and Segment



1) The point of comparison for the vendor budget is the total vendor budget, since the vast majority of vendor expenses could be considered to support the recruitment and enrollment of new students.

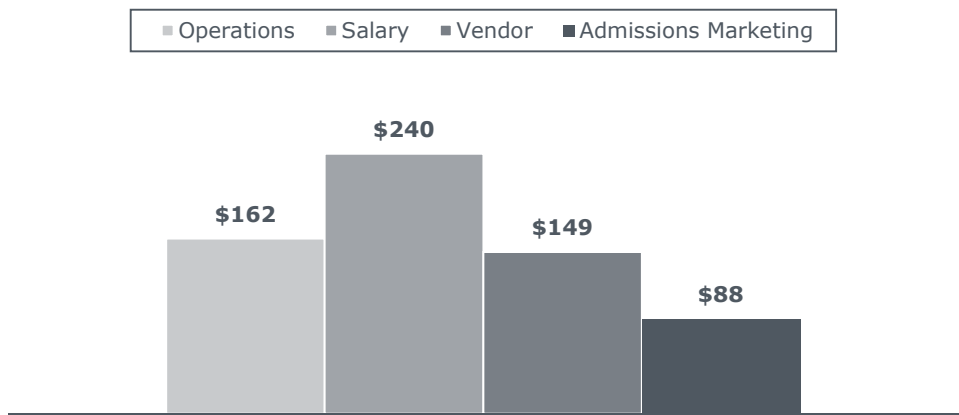
Admissions Budget Breakdown per Student

The admissions budget was divided by the number of students¹ to control for the size of the institution.

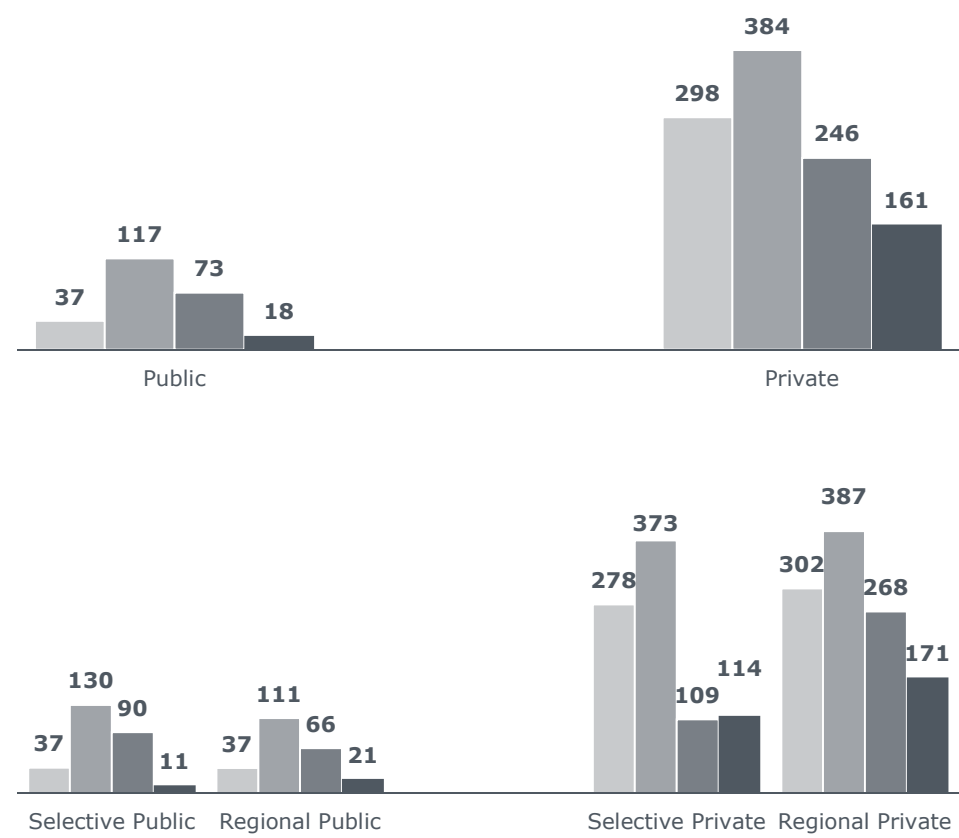
On a per student basis, private universities outspend public universities by at least three times. The difference is most pronounced for operations (eight times) and admissions marketing (nine times).

Salaries Absorb 50% of Publics’ Admissions Budgets

Average Total Admissions Budgets per Student, All Schools



Average Total Admissions Budgets per Student, by Sector and Segment



1) This calculation used total full-time undergraduate students..

Distribution of Admissions Office Budgets

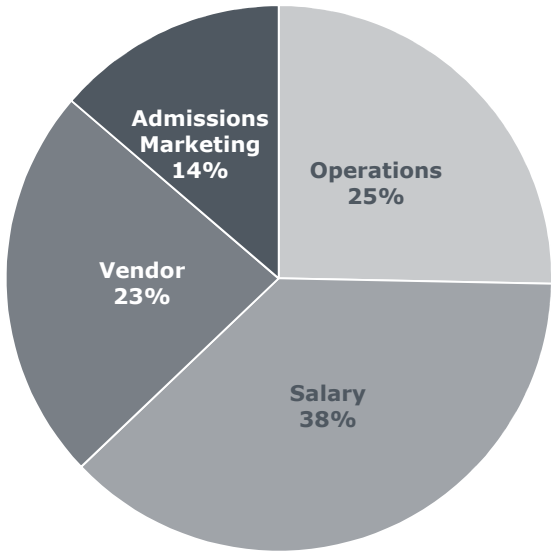
The distribution of spending on different expense categories is also illustrative of trade-offs EMs make with respect to budget allocation.

The pie charts on this page represent the percentage of the admissions budget spent on operations, salary, marketing, and vendors¹.

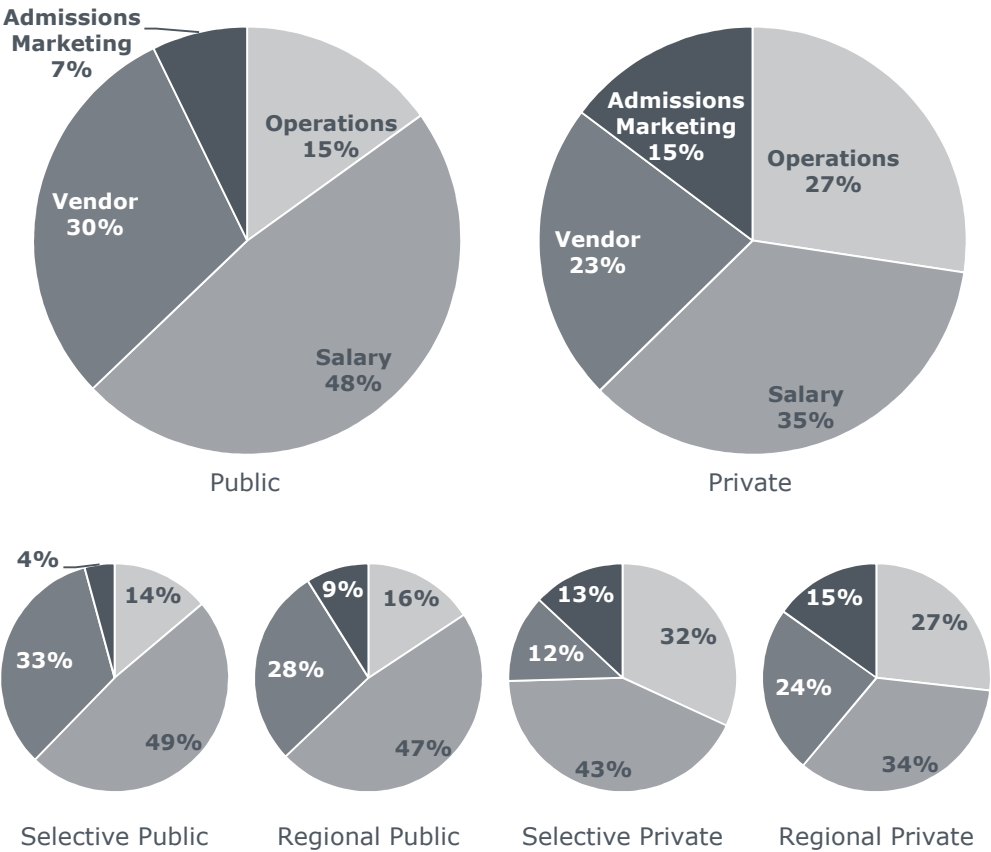
There are some notable differences between public and private universities. Publics spend nearly half of their admissions budget on salary and almost a third on vendors. Private universities' admissions budgets are more evenly distributed across all four categories.

Publics Spend Higher Proportion on Vendor and Salary

Distribution of Admissions Budgets per Student, All Schools



Distribution of Admissions Budgets per Student, by Sector and Segment



1) The distributions are based on the budget per student figures from the previous page.

Admissions Marketing Budget Allocation

The survey asked EMs to break out the admissions marketing budget into three categories:

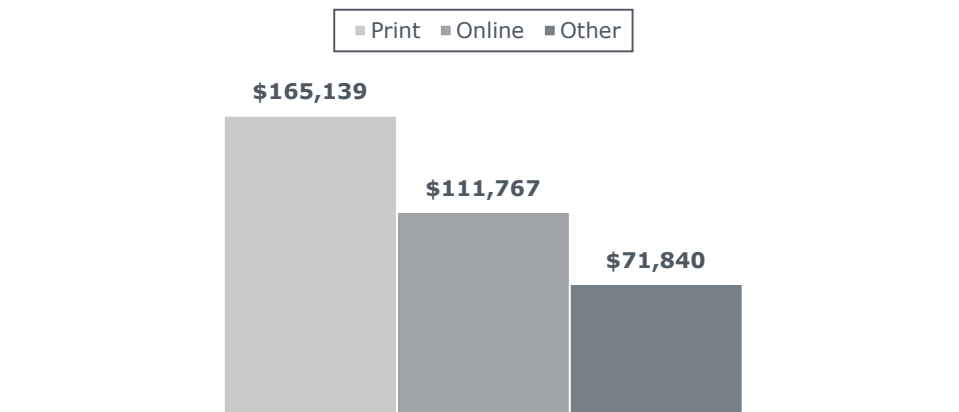
- 1. Print
- 2. Online
- 3. Other

While publics’ spending on print far exceeds spending on other channels, privates invest more in online, significantly outspending publics.

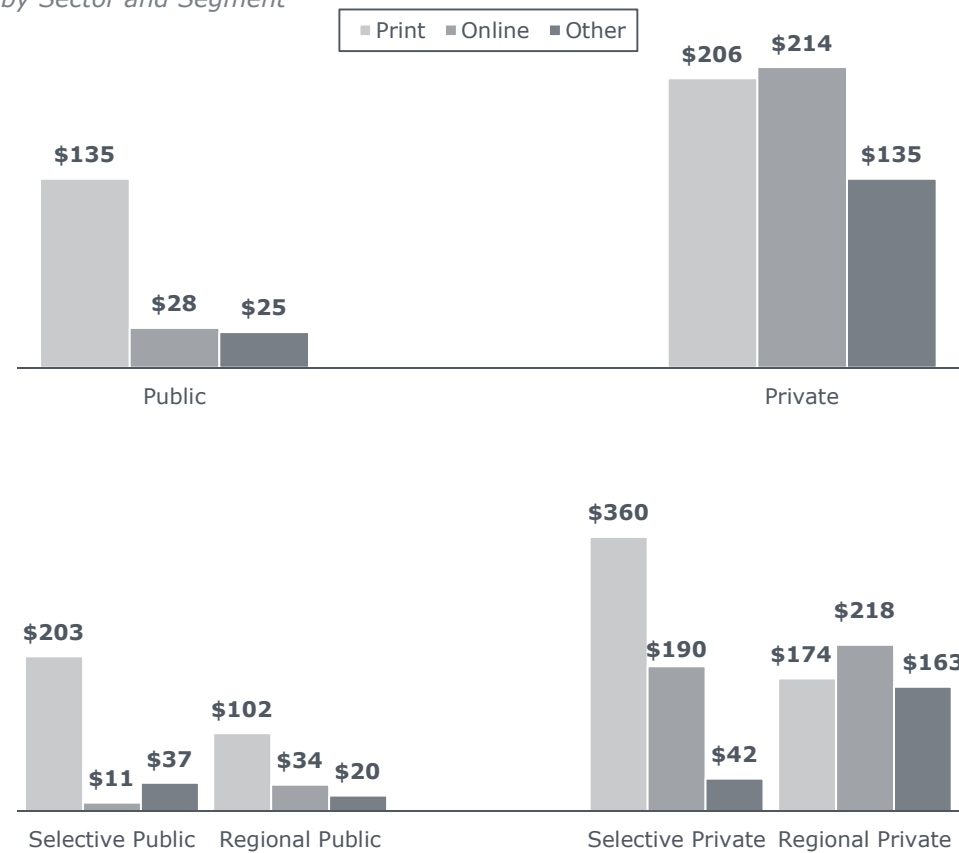
Notably, while regional private universities spend similar amounts across the three categories, selective private universities spend significantly more on print, a similar amount online, and comparatively little through other channels.

Privates Spend More, Especially Online

Average Admissions Marketing Budget Breakdowns, All Schools



Average Admissions Marketing Budget Breakdowns (in thousands), by Sector and Segment



Admissions Marketing Per Student Budget Breakdown

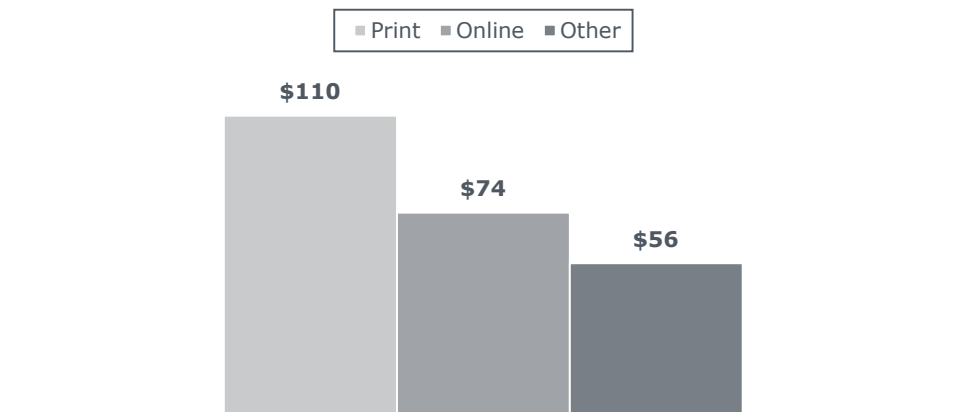
A key measure of admissions marketing effectiveness is the amount spent per new student¹. How many admissions marketing dollars does it take to bring in each new student?

The public-private divide is stark. Privates spend over nine times what publics do on admissions marketing.

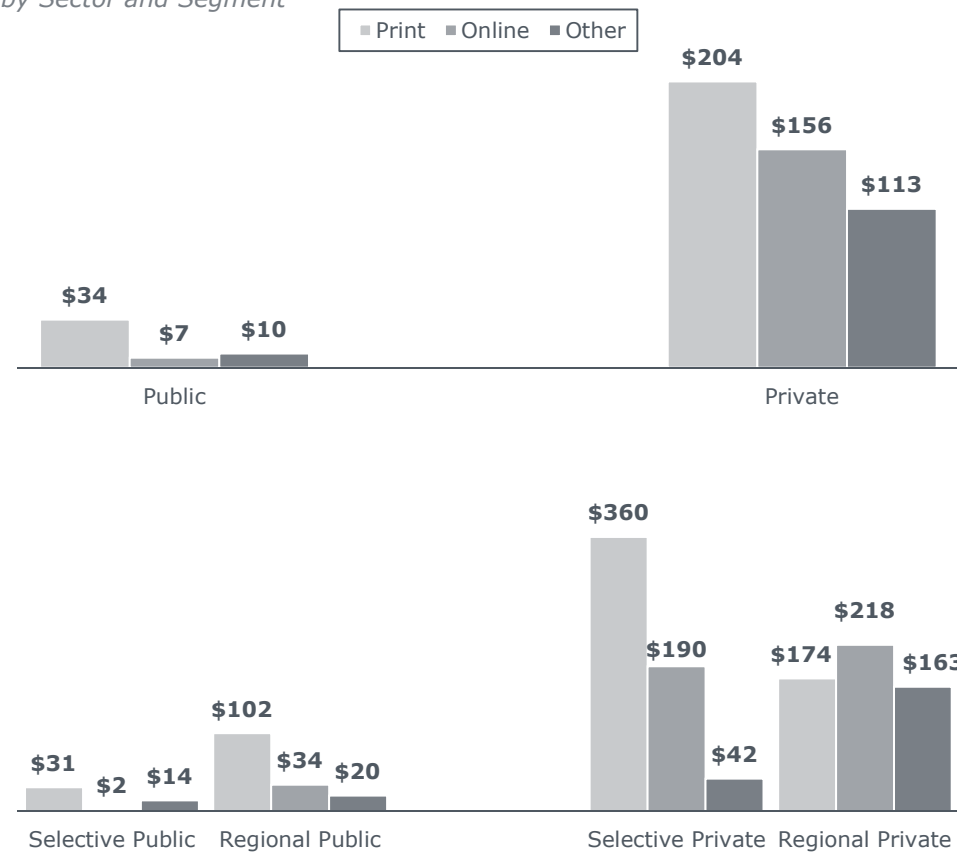
It is also notable that regional publics spend more than selective publics across all three categories of admissions marketing expenditures.

Privates Significantly Outspend Publics

Average Admissions Marketing Budget Breakdowns per Student, All Schools



Average Admissions Marketing Budget Breakdowns per Student, by Sector and Segment



1) The number of first-time, full-time students plus the number of new transfer students.

Admissions Marketing Budget Breakdown

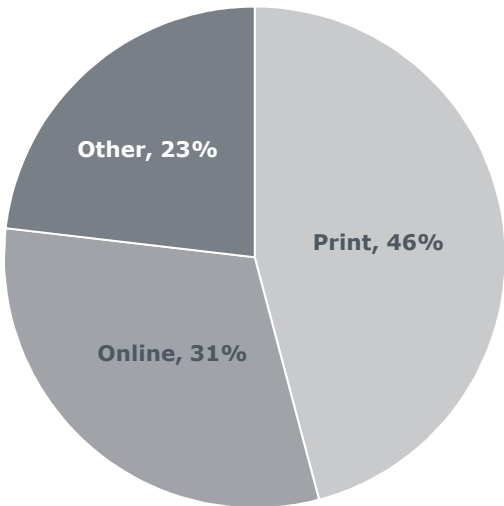
Perhaps more important than the total amount of dollars spent on each channel is the distribution of allocated dollars.

While publics allocate approximately two-thirds of their admissions marketing budget to print, privates more evenly allocate theirs across print, online, and other areas.

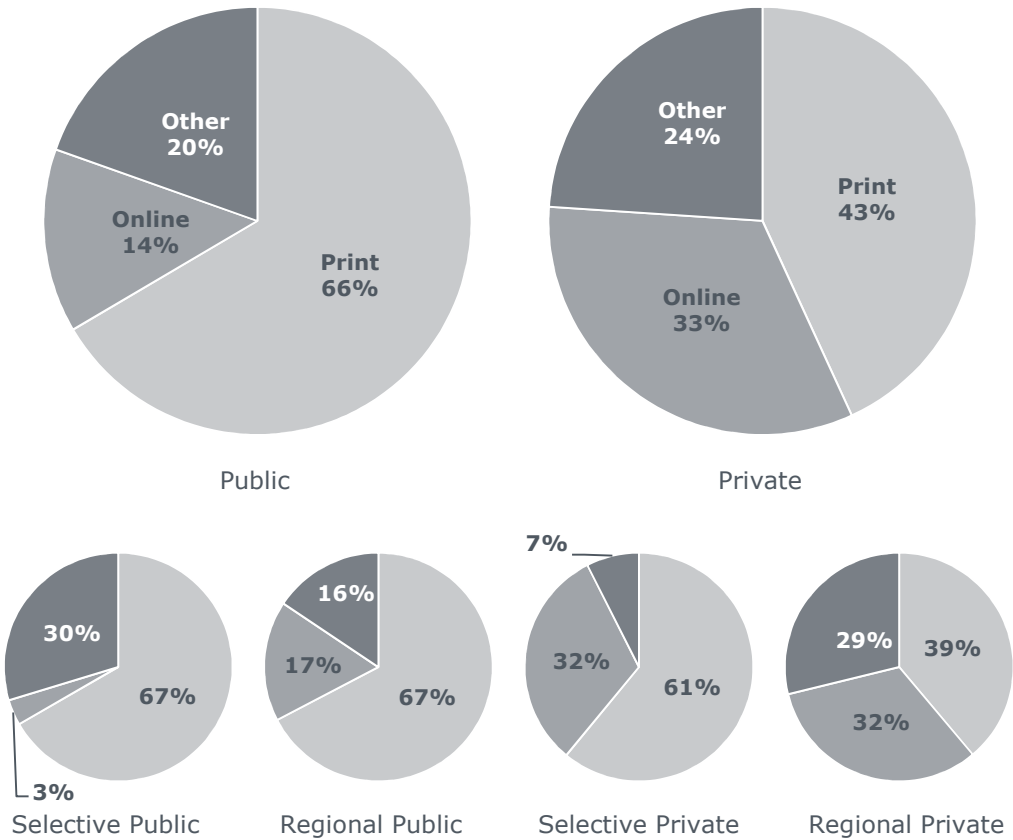
It is also notable that both selective publics and regional privates allocate close to one-third of their admission marketing budgets to the other category.

At Publics, Print Spend Greatly Exceeds Online

Distribution of Admissions Marketing Budget per Student, All Schools



Distribution of per Student Admissions Marketing Budget, by Sector and Segment



1) Given that the best measure of the influence of admissions marketing is the number of new students, this number (new first-time, full-time students plus new transfer students) was used as the denominator for these charts.

Operational Budget Breakdown by Core EM Offices

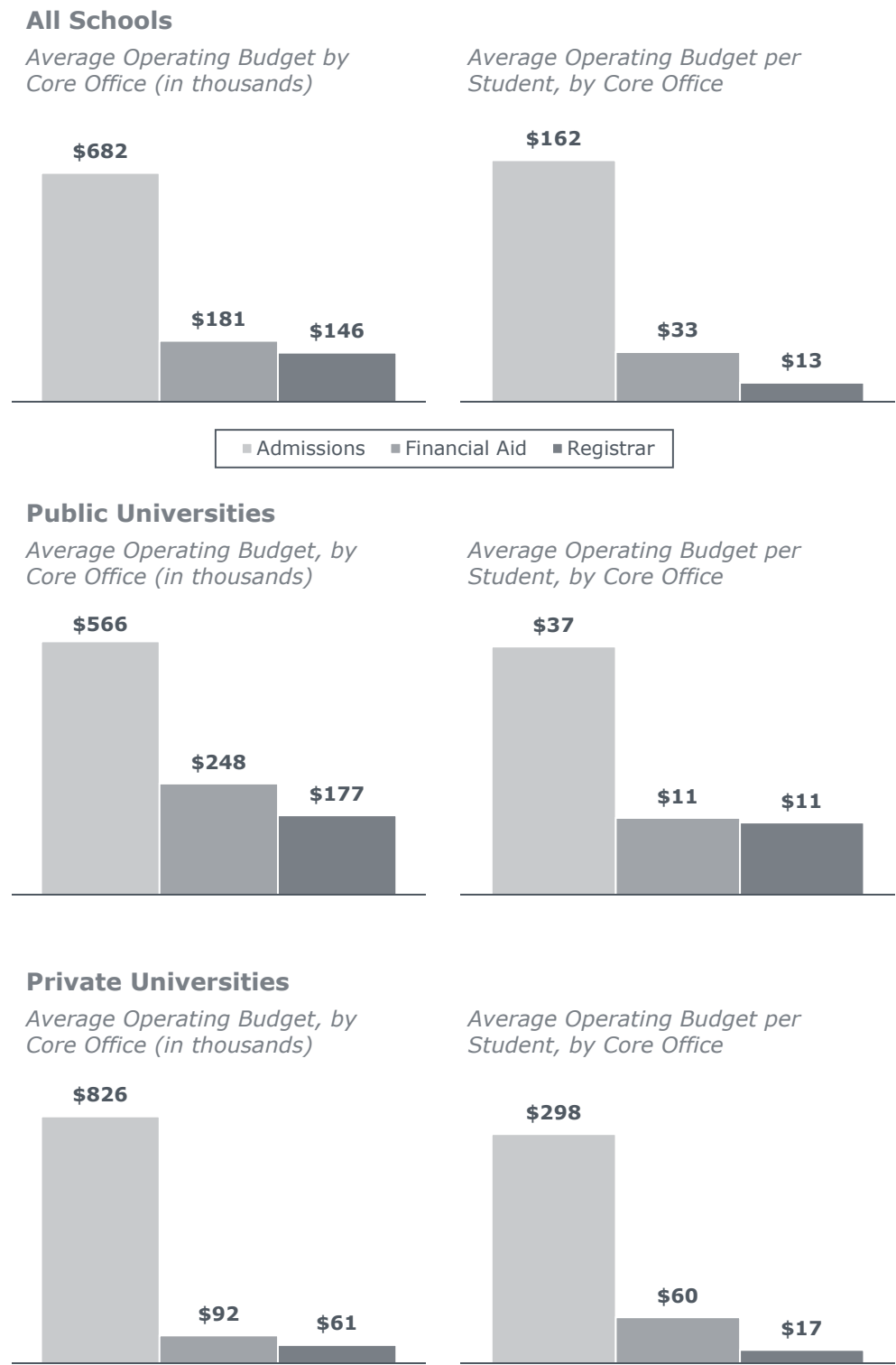
This analysis breaks down the operations budget by the three core offices reporting to EM—Admissions, Financial Aid, and the Registrar.

For these offices, two analyses are shown for all institutions, public institutions, and private institutions:

- 1. Average Total Operational Budget
- 2. Average Total Operational Budget per Student

Notably, public universities spend significantly less on operations per student than do private universities, suggesting that public universities are benefitting from economies of scale.

Total Dollars and Dollars per Student



Budget Allocation to Staff Development

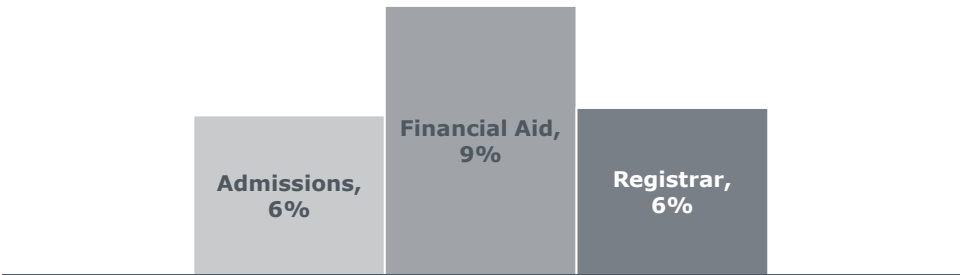
The charts on this page show the percentage of the operational budget allocated to staff development for each of the three core EM offices.

Across segments, the financial aid offices reserves a greater percentage of the operational budget for staff development.

Small but Consistent Allocation to Staff Development

All Schools

Average Percent of Operating Budget Toward Staff Development



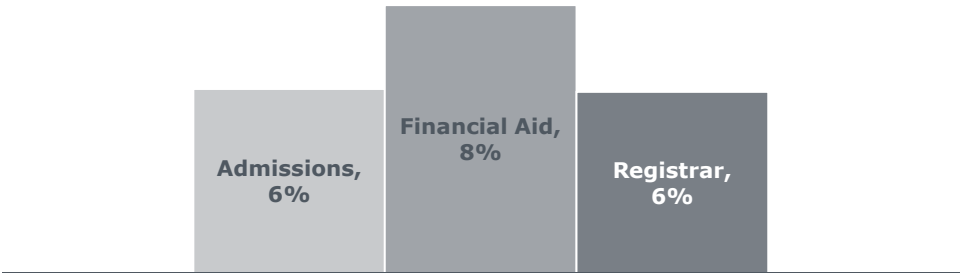
Public Universities

Average Percent of Operating Budget Toward Staff Development



Private Universities

Average Percent of Operating Budget Toward Staff Development



Frequency of Outsourcing of EM Activities

For 11 different activities, the survey asked which of the following descriptions best captured the institution's relationship with vendors. Was the activity...

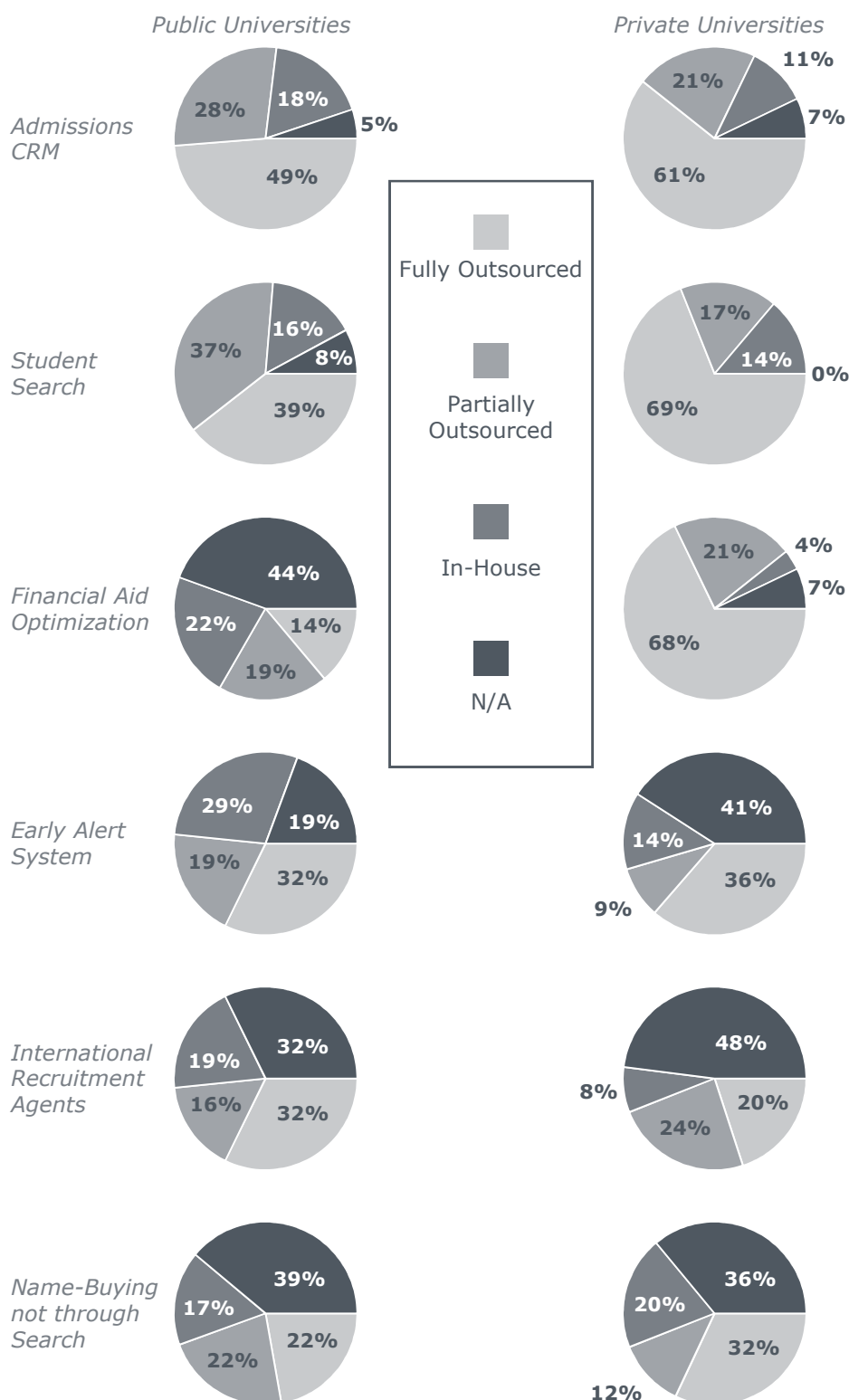
- Outsourced
- Partially Outsourced
- In-House / Not Outsourced
- Not Applicable

The distribution of responses are shown for all activities, broken out by sector.

The largest public-private contrast in outsourcing concerns financial aid optimization. 89% of privates either fully or partially outsource financial aid optimization, while only 31% of publics do. 44% of publics report that their institution doesn't do financial aid optimization at all.

Student search is also more commonly outsourced at privates, with 69% reporting it fully outsourced. This compares to only 39% of public universities fully outsourcing student search.

Distribution of Level of Outsourcing, by EM Activity



Frequency of Outsourcing of EM Activities Cont'd

This page continues the ranking of EM activities based on level of outsourcing.

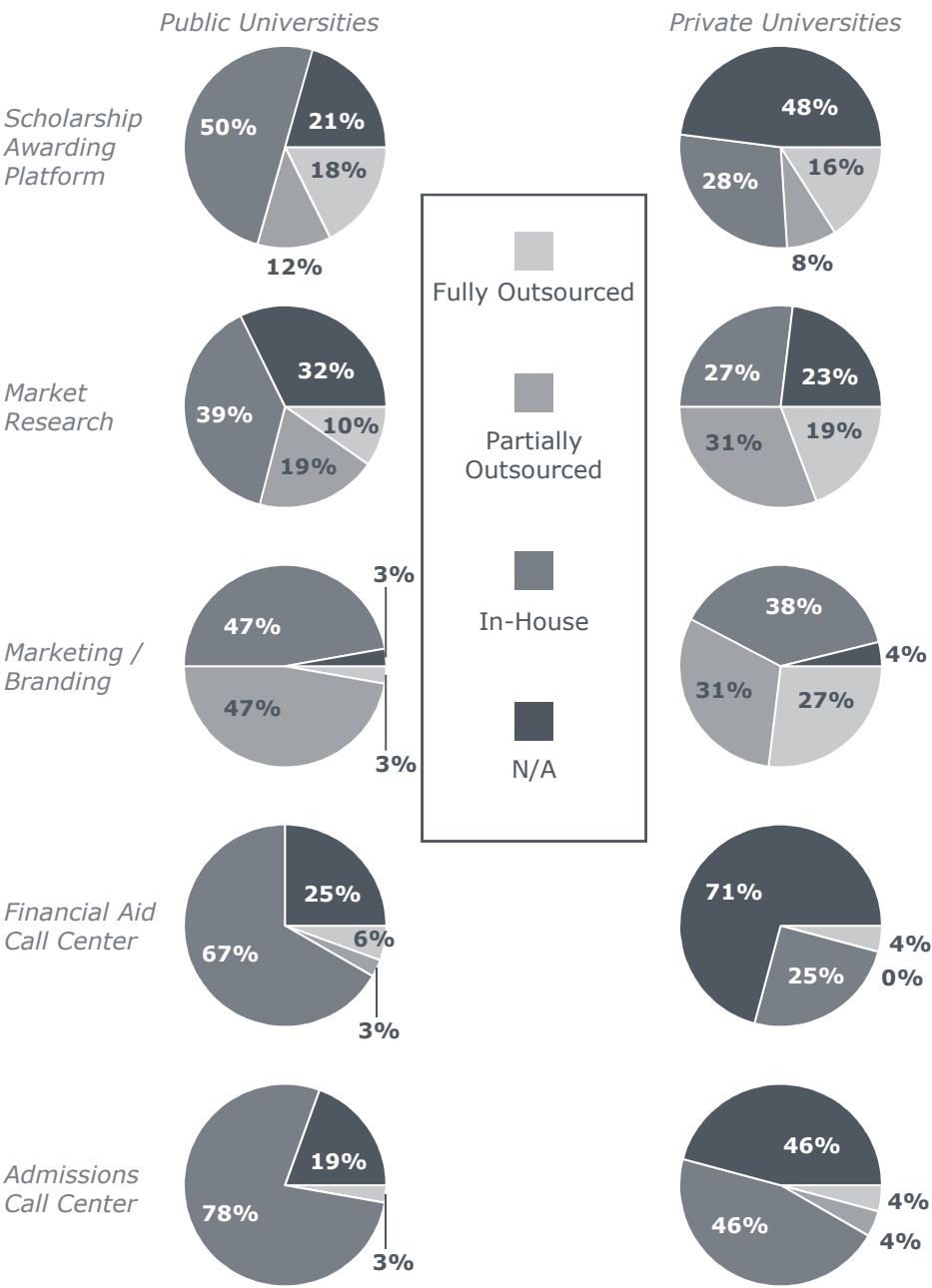
Publics seem more likely to have some type of early alert system, though many of them are in-house systems.

With respect to marketing and branding, over a quarter (27%) of private universities report fully outsourcing the activity while only 3% of public universities do.

Similarly, 50% of privates universities report fully or partially outsourcing market research, while only 29% of public universities do.

Most publics report having in-house admissions and financial aid call centers whereas most privates do not have a financial aid call center of any variety.

Distribution of Level of Outsourcing, by EM Activity



Benchmarking Key Vendor Relationships

For each of the 11 activities, the survey asked EMs to select the appropriate spending range for their vendors. The ranges were:

- <\$10K
- \$10K-\$25K
- \$25K-\$50K
- \$50K-\$75K
- \$75K-\$100K
- \$100K-\$150K
- \$150K-\$200K
- \$200K-\$300K
- \$300K-\$500K
- >\$500K

The top table shows the median range reported by all schools, public, and private.

The subsequent tables report the use of vendors for three activities: admissions CRM, financial aid optimization, search partners.

Median Pricing and Most Common Service Providers

Median Spending Ranges for Outsourced Activities

Function	All Schools	Public	Private
Admissions CRM	\$75-100K	\$75-100K	\$50-75K
Financial Aid Optimization	\$50-75K	\$50-75K	\$50K
Student Search	\$100-150K	\$100-150K	\$300-500K
Marketing / Branding	\$75-100K	\$50-75K	\$100K
Name-Buying Independent of Search	\$25-50K	\$25K	\$25-50K
Scholarship Awarding Platform	\$10-25K	\$10-25K	<\$10K
International Recruitment Agents	\$25-50K	\$50-75K	\$50K
Admissions Call Center	\$10-25K	<\$10K	\$50K
Financial Aid Call Center	\$10-25K	\$10-25K	<\$10K
Market Research	\$25-50K	\$25K	\$25-50K
Early Alert System	\$50-75K	\$75-100K	\$25-50K

Commonly Used Admissions CRMs

Admissions CRM	Percent Using
Hobsons	32%
Ellucian	22%
Slate	10%
Talisma	7%
Salesforce1	7%

Commonly Used Financial Aid Optimization Firms

Financial Aid Optimization	Percent Using
Noel-Levitz / Scannell & Kurz	26%
Hardwick Day	11%
Maguire	3%
Human Capital Research Corporation	1%
SH Brooks	1%

Commonly Used Name Sources and Search Consultants

Search	Percent Using
College Board	61%
ACT	51%
Royall	29%
Chegg	21%
Ruffalo Noel-Levitz	17%

Key Data Points for All Segments

Measure	Category	All Schools	Public	Private	Selective Public	Regional Public	Selective Private	Regional Private
Total EM Budget	Operations	\$1.9M	\$2.0M	\$1.8M	\$3.4M	\$1.3M	\$4.0M	\$1.4
	Salary	\$4.1M	\$5.5M	\$2.3M	\$8.4M	\$4.1M	\$3.6M	\$2.1M
	Vendor	\$0.6M	\$0.6M	\$0.6M	\$1.0M	\$0.4M	\$1.1M	\$0.5M
	Admissions Marketing	\$0.3M	\$0.2M	\$0.5M	\$0.2M	\$0.2M	\$0.6M	\$0.5M
Total EM Budget per Student	Operations	\$303	\$134	\$507	\$137	\$132	\$716	\$465
	Salary	\$525	\$333	\$741	\$345	\$327	\$660	\$757
	Vendor	\$149	\$73	\$246	\$90	\$66	\$109	\$268
	Admissions Marketing	\$88	\$18	\$161	\$11	\$21	\$114	\$171
Total Admissions Budget	Operations	\$0.7M	\$0.6M	\$0.8M	\$0.9M	\$0.4M	\$1.6M	\$0.7M
	Salary	\$1.6M	\$1.9M	\$1.1M	\$3.2M	\$1.3M	\$2.1M	\$0.9M
Total Admissions Budget per Student	Operations	\$162	\$37	\$298	\$37	\$37	\$278	\$302
	Salary	\$240	\$117	\$384	\$130	\$111	\$373	\$387
Percent of Admissions Budget Allocated To:	Operations	25%	15%	27%	14%	16%	32%	27%
	Salary	38%	48%	35%	49%	47%	43%	34%
	Vendor	23%	30%	23%	33%	28%	12%	24%
	Admissions Marketing	14%	7%	15%	4%	9%	13%	15%
Total Admissions Marketing Budget	Print	\$165K	\$135K	\$206K	\$203K	\$102K	\$360K	\$174K
	Online	\$112K	\$28K	\$214K	\$11K	\$34K	\$190K	\$218K
	Other	\$72K	\$25K	\$135K	\$37K	\$20K	\$42K	\$163K
Total Admissions Marketing Budget per Student	Print	\$110	\$34	\$204	\$31	\$102	\$360	\$174
	Online	\$74	\$7	\$156	\$2	\$34	\$190	\$218
	Other	\$56	\$10	\$113	\$14	\$20	\$42	\$163
Percent of Admissions Marketing Budget Allocated To:	Print	46%	66%	43%	67%	67%	61%	39%
	Online	31%	14%	33%	3%	17%	32%	32%
	Other	23%	20%	24%	30%	16%	7%	29%
Total Operations Budget	Admissions	\$682K	\$566K	\$826K	\$942K	\$405K	\$1,607K	\$715K
	Financial Aid	\$181k	\$248K	\$92K	\$320K	\$216K	\$137K	\$85K
	Registrar	\$146K	\$177K	\$61K	\$267K	\$135K	N/A	\$61K
Total Operations Budget per Student	Admissions	\$162	\$37	\$298	\$37	\$37	\$278	\$302
	Financial Aid	\$33	\$11	\$60	\$12	\$11	\$25	\$66
	Registrar	\$13	\$11	\$17	\$10	\$11	N/A	\$17
Percent of Operations Budget Allocated to Staff Development	Admissions	6%	5%	6%	4%	6%	6%	6%
	Financial Aid	9%	10%	8%	6%	12%	10%	8%
	Registrar	6%	6%	6%	6%	6%	N/A	6%

Key Data Points for All Segments

Measure	Category	All Schools	Public	Private	Selective Public	Regional Public	Selective Private	Regional Private
Frequency of Fully Outsourcing Given EM Activity	Admissions CRM	54%	49%	61%	36%	56%	33%	68%
	Student Search	52%	39%	69%	43%	38%	50%	74%
	FA Optimization	38%	14%	68%	14%	14%	50%	73%
	Early Alert System	34%	32%	36%	17%	42%	20%	41%
	Int'l Recruitment	27%	32%	20%	31%	33%	0%	26%
	Name Buying	26%	22%	32%	14%	27%	50%	26%
	Scholarship Awarding	17%	18%	16%	8%	24%	17%	16%
	Market Research	14%	10%	19%	7%	12%	0%	25%
	Marketing/Branding	13%	3%	27%	7%	0%	20%	29%
	FA Call Center	5%	6%	4%	8%	4%	0%	6%
	Admissions Call Center	3%	3%	4%	8%	0%	0%	6%
Median Contract Value of Outsourced Activities	Admissions CRM	\$75-100K	\$75-100K	\$50-75K	\$100-150K	\$50-75K	\$75-100K	\$50-75K
	Financial Aid Opt	\$50-75K	\$50-75K	\$50K	\$50-75K	\$25-50K	\$75K	\$25-50K
	Student Search	\$100-150K	\$100-150K	\$300-500K	\$100-150K	\$50-75K	\$500K	\$100-150K
	Marketing/Branding	\$75-100K	\$50-75K	\$100K	\$75K	\$50-75K	\$200-300K	\$75-100K
	Name Buying	\$25-50K	\$25K	\$25-50K	\$50-75K	\$10-25K	\$25-50K	\$25-50K
	Scholarship Awarding	\$10-25K	\$10-25K	<\$10K	\$25K	\$10-25K	<\$10K	\$10-25K
	Int'l Recruitment Ag.	\$25-50K	\$50-75K	\$50K	\$200K	\$10-25K	\$25-50K	\$50-75K
	Market Research	\$25-50K	\$25K	\$25-50K	\$150K	\$10K	\$10-25K	\$25-50K
	Early Alert System	\$50-75K	\$75-100K	\$25-50K	\$75-100K	\$75K	\$50-75K	\$25-50K

The best
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