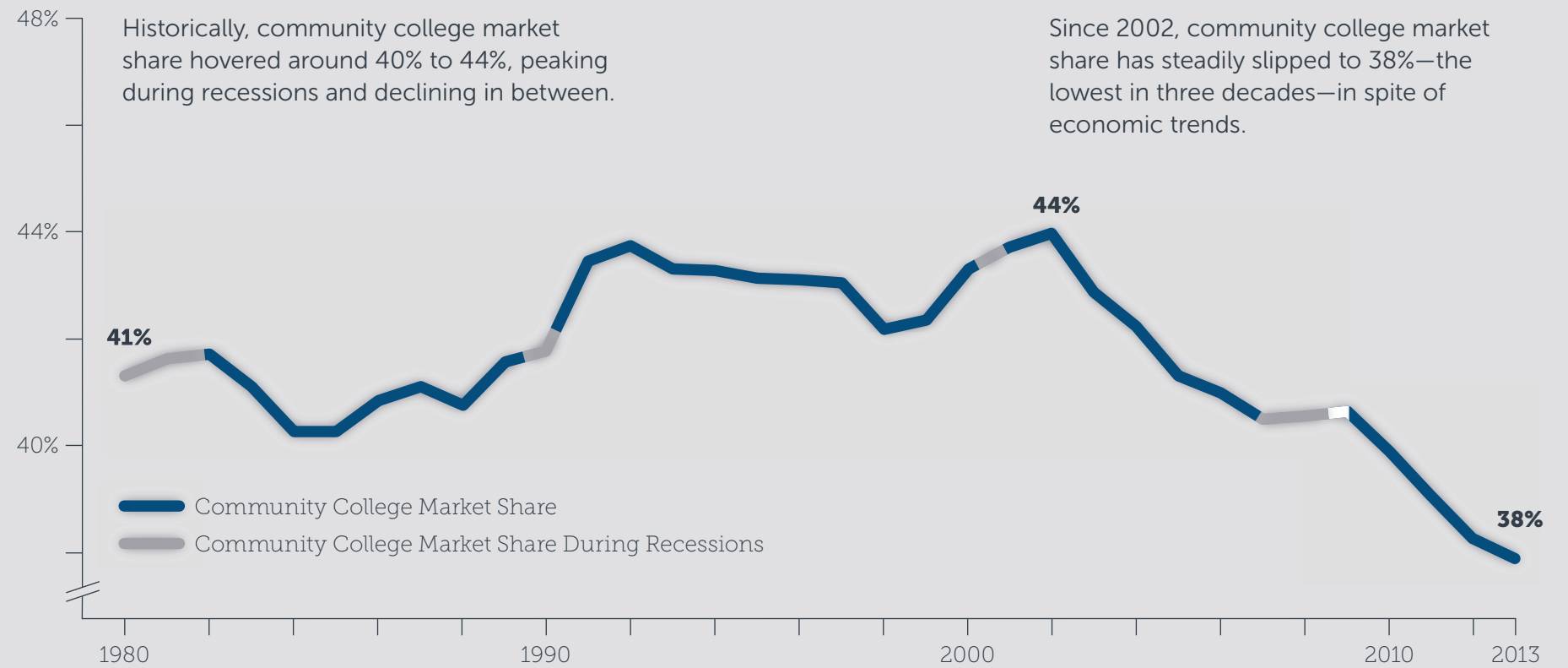


# Increasing Enrollment in Today's Community Colleges

## Share of Total Enrollments in Decline Since 2002

Percentage of U.S. Undergraduates Enrolled in Two-Year Sector, 1980–2013

During every economic recovery, community college enrollments decline as students return to work. However, community colleges today are losing students not only to the job market but also to other higher education institutions. As four-year universities enhance their marketing and recruiting efforts, community college leaders must adopt scalable strategies to reverse enrollment declines and prevent long-term revenue losses.



## Eight Strategies to Reverse Declining Market Share

### Students Who Are New to Higher Education

These first-generation college students are choosing between attending community college and entering the workforce. We need to help them cultivate college navigation skills.

#### Missing-Step Enrollment Prompts

Send brief call-to-action messages that remind applicants to complete steps such as FAFSA, orientation, and registration. Use mail merge to personalize email reminders—or partner with a text messaging platform to reach applicants on their mobile devices.



#### Non-registrant Phone Survey

Ask applicants who have not yet registered for classes to identify any barriers to enrollment they face. Conduct these surveys several weeks before classes start so that staff can connect applicants to relevant resources before registration closes.



#### Pre-enrollment Success Course

Offer applicants a free class in college navigation and success skills to help them overcome common anxieties. Award each class completer a scholarship worth one free three-credit course to incentivize their continued enrollment the next semester.



#### One-Stop Enrollment Caravan

Send teams of student services staff to local high schools to lead a series of mandatory college admissions workshops for seniors. Keep visiting teams consistent across the workshop series so that staff can build trust with participating students.



### Students Who Have Many College Options

These students intend to earn a bachelor's degree, and they're choosing between community college and university. We need to help them understand our distinct value proposition.

#### Mobile Geofencing Campaign

Partner with a marketing vendor to serve ads to mobile devices in high-yield locations. Target high school graduations and athletic events to reach traditional-aged students—or industry conventions and employer sites to reach adult learners.



#### Preliminary Financial Aid Estimates

Send all prospective students who submit their FAFSA forms a personalized letter with their net cost of attendance based on their financial aid eligibility. Mail letters early to reach students before they receive aid offers from more expensive institutions.



#### Customized Electronic Brochure

Invite prospective students to design their own college brochures by submitting an online inquiry form that indicates their academic and extracurricular interests. Use the information from these inquiry forms in follow-up recruitment communications.



#### Standardized Communications Plan

Respond to every inquiry with a series of prescheduled messages that guide prospective students toward application. Implement a customer relationship management (CRM) solution to automate and personalize these messages across multiple channels.

