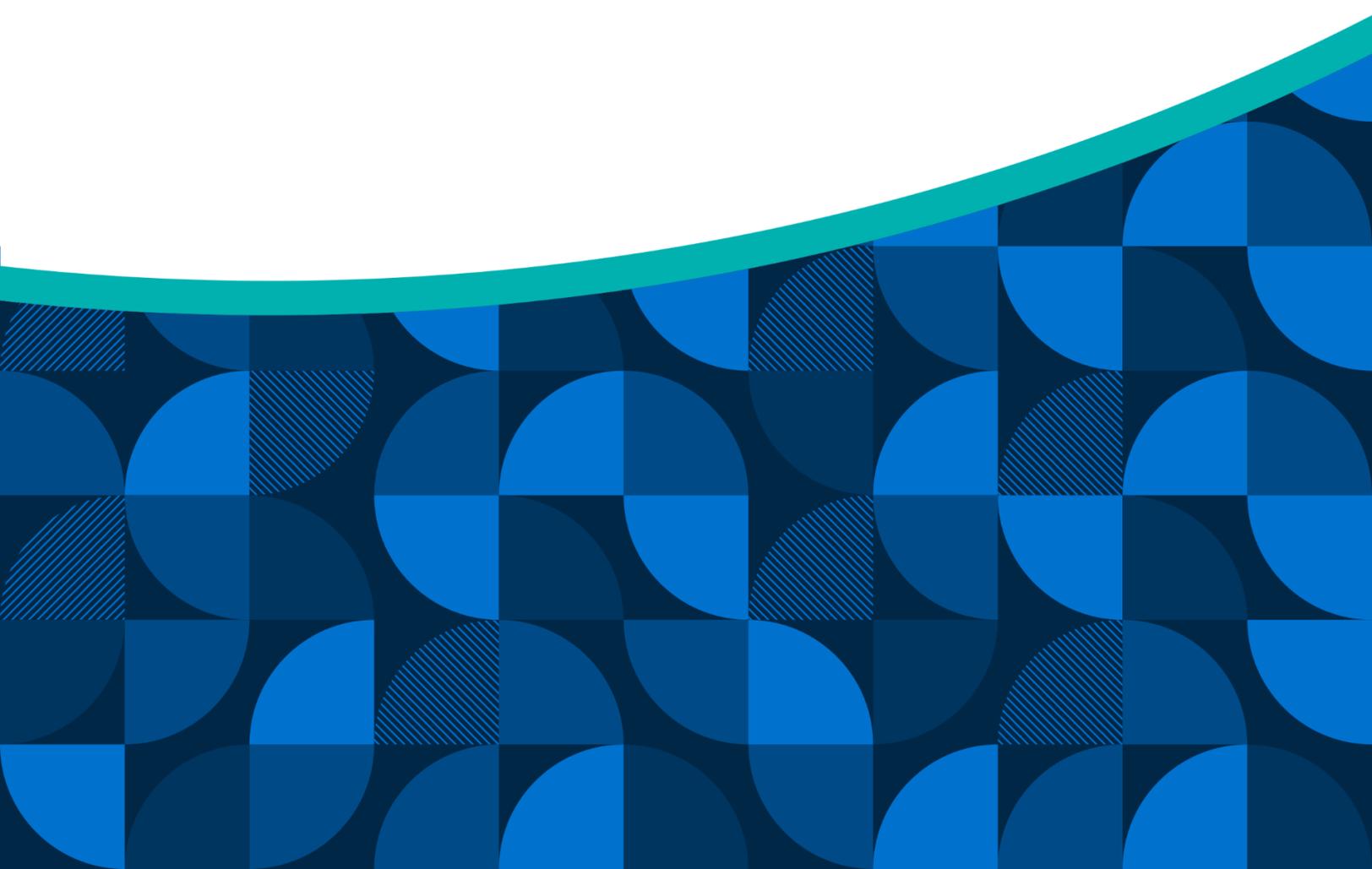




APPLY ADVANCE

# Are You Using Lead Nurture Best Practices?

Self-Test for Graduate and Adult-Serving Programs



# Appily Advance

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Executive guidance rooted in research to support your strategic priorities

## **MARKETING AND ENROLLMENT**

### **Achieve Your Enrollment and Growth Goals**

Tailored partnerships powered by a recruitment ecosystem with unrivaled reach to enroll your future classes

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### **Build a Student-Centric Campus**

Technology trusted by 850 schools to retain, graduate, and empower more students

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### **Advance DEI on Campus and in Your Community**

Technology, research, and bold initiatives to strengthen your DEI strategy and eliminate equity gaps

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Data and analytics solutions built for higher education to guide decisions and accelerate innovation

We partner with **2,500+** institutions to accelerate progress and enable lasting change.

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# Using This Resource

## ► Nurturing Leads Is Incredibly Important for Adult Prospects

Lead nurture is an area where recruitment efforts for many graduate and adult-serving programs fall short. While enrollment leaders know they need to invest in lead generation strategies, they often don't pair them with adequate lead cultivation tactics, leading to lower than anticipated conversion rates. In addition, they may underestimate the degree to which lead nurturing for adult-serving programs differs from that of traditional undergraduate programs. While traditional undergraduates tend to follow a common timeline, adult learners may decide to pursue a degree at any time and sometimes over a longer period of time, meaning their student journeys vary greatly and they may benefit from extra support as they make a pivotal life decision.

**The following checklist can help enrollment leaders optimize their nurture campaigns and support better conversion throughout the enrollment funnel.**

## ► Seven Questions to Evaluate Your Lead Nurture Strategy



1

Are you engaging early-funnel students effectively?



5

Are you answering adult students' important questions?



2

Are you prepared to nurture students over time?



6

Are you sharing student stories?



3

Do you support multiple modes of contact?



7

Are you prepared to repeat this process year-round?



4

Are your communications sufficiently personalized?

## How Well Are You Nurturing Students from Lead to Applicant?

Use the checklist on the following pages to determine where you can improve your nurture campaigns for graduate and adult-serving programs.



# Communicate With Purchased Names Effectively

## 1 Are you engaging early-funnel students effectively?

Students' degree of familiarity with your institution and level of certainty about their college plans can differ significantly across your lead pool. It's important to make sure that you have campaigns that cater to students who may still be very early in their journey back to school. These early-funnel students can often be challenging to engage through your standard institutional messaging, since they may not be familiar with your programs, their plans may evolve over time, and you may know very little about them.

Some purchased names you receive may not know much about your institution's offerings or even quite what they want to study. Ensure that you have an initial outreach plan that informs students on who you are and what you offer, as well as a concise RFI form that captures necessary student information. In addition, when funneling students into your campaigns, be sure to accommodate students who may not have a program of interest yet or those who change their mind. [EAB data shows](#) that nearly 25% of graduate applicants and over 50% of adult degree completer applicants apply outside of their originally chosen program of interest—meaning your institution may be losing out on prospects if your campaigns can't accommodate changing student interest.

1. We introduce our institution and our programs to students in our first email to them.

Yes  No

2. We direct students to our RFI in our introductory email to capture any additional information we need to place them in the correct communication stream.

Yes  No

3. We have a concise RFI form that asks students only the necessary information to follow-up with personalized, relevant content. This may include preferred name and email, phone number as an optional field (if you have a phone campaign), and program of interest (if you have program-specific outreach campaigns).

Yes  No

4. If we have a post-RFI landing page or thanks message, it directs students to other relevant pages on our site such as a program directory or admissions hub.

Yes  No

5. We effectively communicate to students who don't yet know what they want to study by having a non-program-specific communication stream that highlights general value propositions and encourages exploration of a range of programs.

Yes  No

# Use Multiple Contact Methods Over Time

## 2 Are you prepared to nurture students over time?

Because adult students are balancing life with education, uncontrollable life events often push them to consider or stop considering enrolling in a program. EAB marketing data has shown that this unpredictability can commonly lead to consideration times of 18 months to 2 years. Enrollment leaders must be prepared to market to this audience steadily and consistently throughout their nonlinear student journey.

1. We know approximately how long our average adult prospect's student journey is.

Yes  No

2. We have a nurture plan to ensure continued engagement and re-recruitment of students who planned to enroll then withdrew for personal reasons.

Yes  No

3. We have a marketing plan flexible enough for student journeys of up to two years or longer depending on our institution's past student journey lengths.

Yes  No

## 3 Do you support multiple modes of contact?

To reach students where they are, we recommend conducting tests to find the most effective combination of contact channels for your program audience. In general, it's best to diversify your outreach methods. Are you prepared to call, email, and text contacts? Can you do this in a timely manner to capture interest early? Keep in mind that all of your student communications should include a clear call to action, and all your channels should work together to ensure you aren't bombarding leads with information.

1. We consistently use multiple modes of contact to reach out to prospective students, including email, text, and phone call.

Yes  No

2. We know which mode of contact is most appropriate for each stage of the enrollment funnel.

Yes  No

3. All our communications include a clear call to action.

Yes  Mostly  No

4. We have created a testing schedule to ensure we know which combinations of contact methods and frequencies are most effective.

Yes  No

5. Our channels work together to ensure students are not getting overloaded with information.

Yes  No

# Create Personalized Messaging That Resonates

## 4 Are your communications sufficiently personalized?

Each of your leads holds a unique perspective—they're intending to study their subject of choice, starting at their time of choice, and they bring their specific professional background and experiences. Your communications should reflect this diversity through personalized outreach to each student. Try setting up different campaigns based on students' preferred start dates or level of experience. When students display interest in your program, respond to their "digital body language" by increasing the amount of communications they receive.

1. We have specific messaging for students with near-term intent as well as students with no plans to enroll yet.

Yes  No

2. We have specific messaging for students who are early in their career, as well as those with experience who need little introduction to the field.

Yes  No

3. We have specific messaging for students who are looking to switch careers.

Yes  No

4. When students display interest, we have automated processes for responding quickly with tailored messaging.

Yes  No

## 5 Are you answering adult students' important questions?

Adult students are typically more focused on learning about your program's flexibility, affordability, and ROI than your clubs or gym facilities. How much will their degree cost, and when do they have to pay? Do you offer academic advising and career support? Can they start during multiple terms throughout the academic year? Addressing these topics early and often will ensure that leads' most top-of-mind questions are being answered.

1. We promote our academic and career support services using multi-email cadences.

Yes  No

2. Our communications include persistent, multichannel messaging conveying the ROI our program can provide for students.

Yes  No

3. Our messaging explains career prospects students can expect after earning a degree with us.

Yes  No

4. We provide information about the specific skills students will learn in our programs.

Yes  No

5. Our messaging emphasizes the flexibility of our programs.

Yes  No

6. Our information on tuition cost, scholarships, aid, and other financial matters is easy to find.

Yes  No

# Share Success Stories and Create a Year-Round Strategy

## 6 Are you sharing student success stories?

It's important for students to have confidence that they can succeed in your program, despite how hectic their lives might be. Make sure you are featuring your successful alumni who also had to balance other responsibilities on top of their education. Let them tell their stories in their own words, but make sure the content they create includes specific information about what they've accomplished thanks to their degree from your program.

1. We have student and alumni stories for all our most popular programs and program types featured in our marketing.

Yes       Mostly       No

2. Our featured students reflect the identities of our prospective applicants.

Yes       Mostly       No

3. Our student success stories state clearly the skills the student gained and the opportunities they had access to post-degree.

Yes       Mostly       No

## 7 Are you prepared to repeat this process year-round?

Many adult-serving programs offer multiple start terms to accommodate students who are researching and enrolling in programs year-round. Your lead nurturing process must mimic this year-round process. Setting up trigger campaigns to react to students' moment of intent regardless of when that may be allows you to capture interest early and often. Invest time in creating evergreen content that is easily accessible year-round, such as FAQ pages and on-demand videos, to help searching students learn more about your program, no matter how long their journey is.

1. We prioritize speed to lead with trigger campaigns that reach students at their moment of intent.

Yes       No

2. We have a process to review our campaign performance and make necessary changes.

Yes       No

3. We create evergreen content for our website that can be viewed year-round, such as FAQ pages or on-demand videos.

Yes       No

# Interpreting Your Results

Calculate your section totals below to identify where your institution has the most room for improvement.

Section	"No" Responses	"Mostly" Responses	"Yes" Responses
1. Effective Early-Funnel Communication			
2. Nurturing Students Over Time			
3. Supporting Multiple Modes of Student Contact			
4. Sufficiently Personalized Communication			
5. Answering Adult Students' Questions			
6. Sharing Student Success Stories			
7. Year-Round Repetition			

If your results include many "No" responses, you may want to incorporate more best practices into your lead nurturing strategy.

## Find High-Quality Leads Cost-Effectively

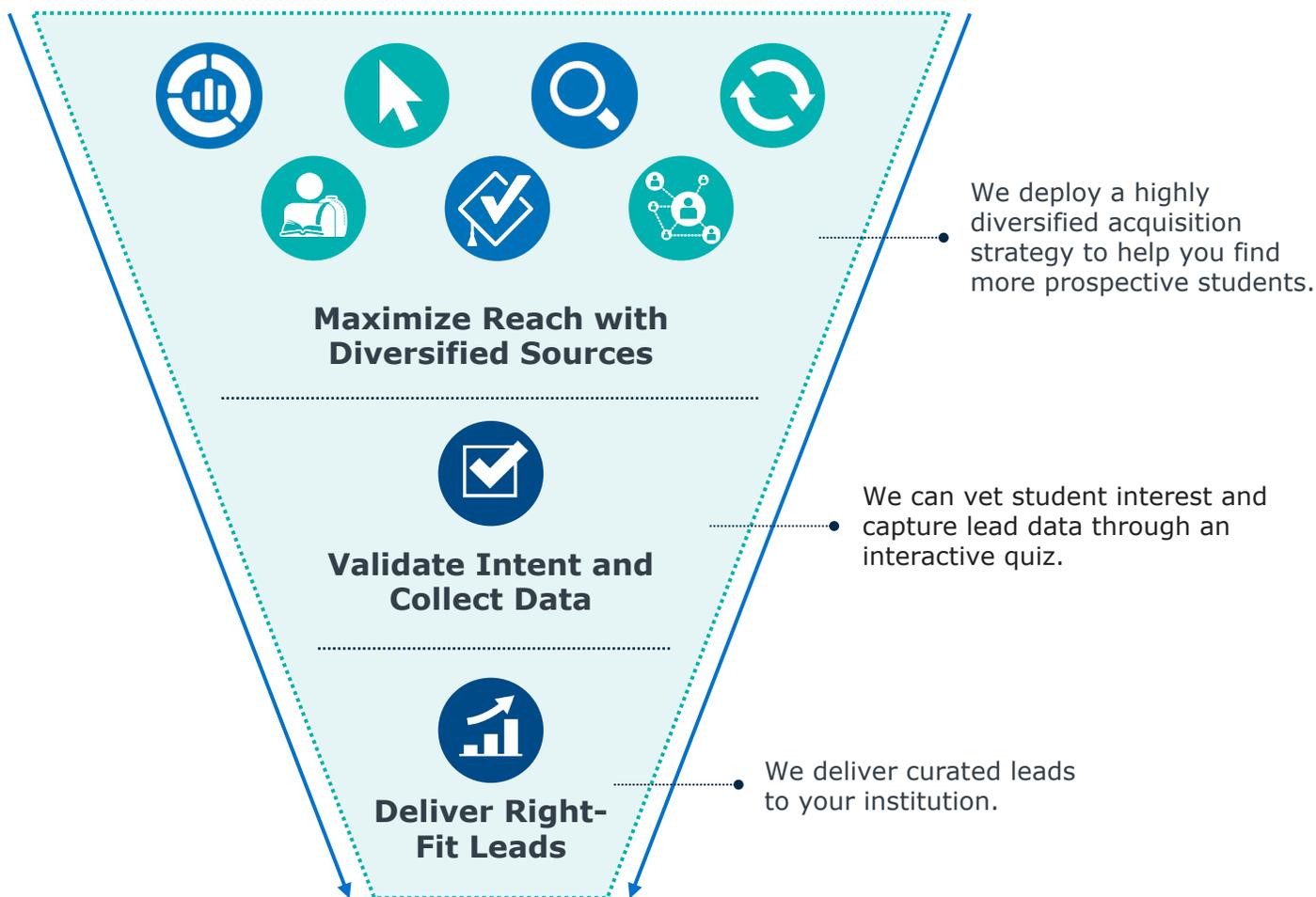
Lead nurturing is an important and tricky skill to master, but finding quality leads to nurture can be equally challenging. **Appily Advance** helps institutions find prospective business graduate, health care, nursing, education, and adult degree completion students in a cost-effective manner.

▶ To learn more, visit <http://eab.com/appily-advance>.

# Overview of Apply Advance

## An Innovative Lead Generation Platform

Apply sources right-fit students for your graduate and adult-serving programs. We deliver high-intent leads to your team based on your desired selection criteria.



## Integrating Apply Can Support a Strong Lead Generation Strategy

Apply Advance has wide reach and strong engagement rates that can help you and your team fill in potential gaps in your lead generation strategy, without straining your lead budget.

### Engage Your Audience

**36%** Higher lead form submission rate than paid search

### Make the Most of Your Budget

**70%+** Lower cost per lead compared to Meta, LinkedIn, and paid search direct acquisition

### Find High-Intent Prospects

**33%** Apply leads respond to marketing **33% faster** than leads from a school's inquiry pool

To discuss how Apply can help you find right-fit candidates, email [sian.blake@eab.com](mailto:sian.blake@eab.com). Learn more at [eab.com/apply-advance](https://eab.com/apply-advance).



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