RNL NC
ALTERING the
LANDSCAPE

Lead to Enrollment & the Importance of Speed to Lead for Graduate & Online Students

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Today's Experts

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Agenda

1. Setting the Scene

2. Why is this so Important?

3. Maximizing Conversion

4. Knowledge is Power

5. Q&A
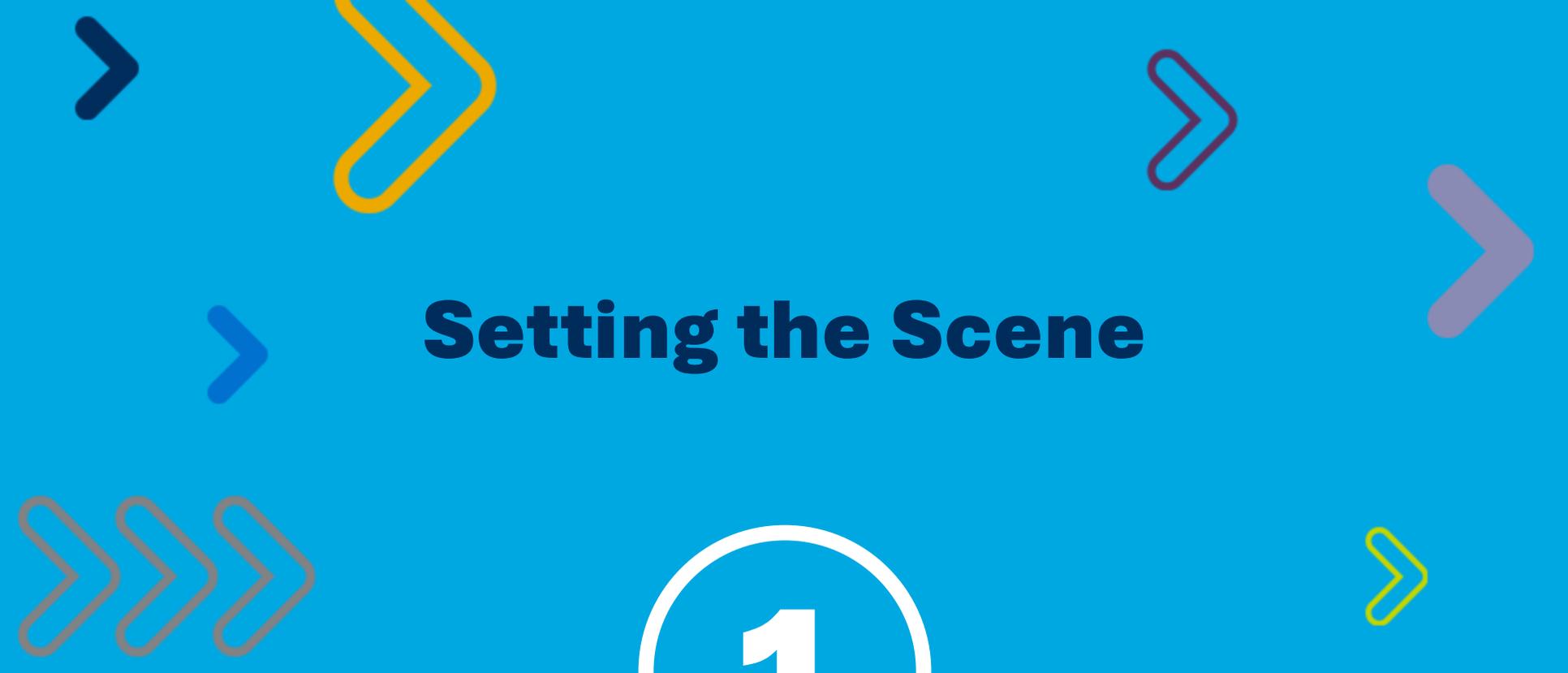
Setting the Scene

1

What's Driving Growth?

Fully online and partially online expansion is driving graduate enrollment

Figure B: Graduate fall enrollment by format, projected to 2026 with and without pandemic

Legend: All online | All online (no pandemic) | Some online | Some online (no pandemic) | All face-to-face | All face-to-face (no pandemic) | Total

Y-axis: 4,000,000 | 3,500,000 | 3,000,000 | 2,500,000 | 2,000,000 | 1,500,000 | 1,000,000 | 500,000

X-axis: 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025 2026
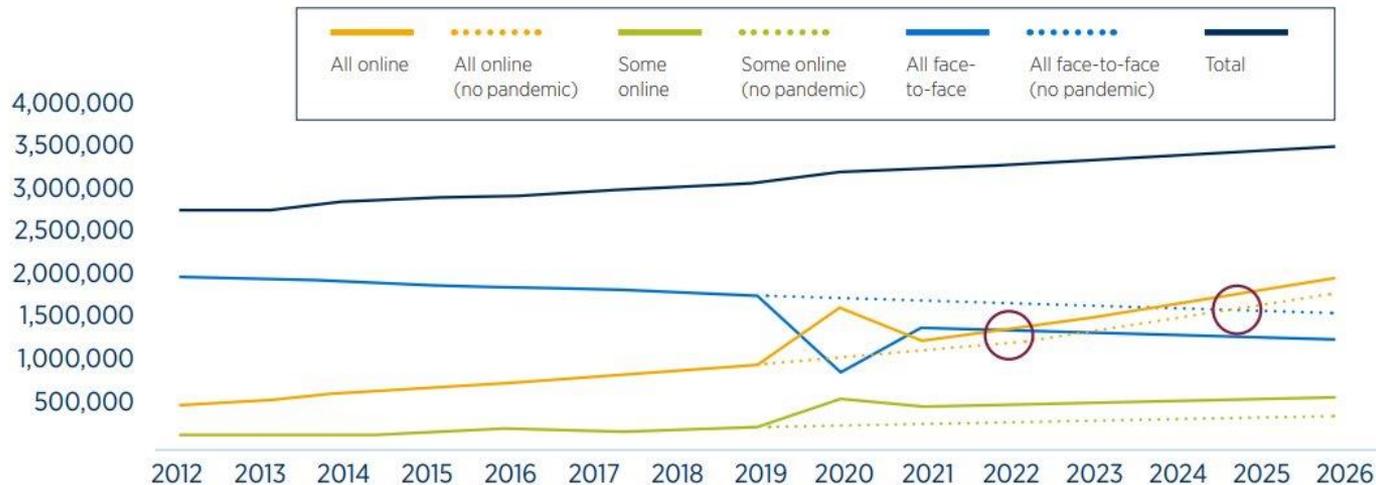
Source: RNL Analysis of IPEDS Fall Enrollment data. Retrieved, May, 2023

Online Dominance?

2025

The number of students choosing to enroll in fully online programs will overtake classroom students no later than 2025.

Who Are We Serving?

Student expectations have shifted

2023 Graduate Students by Generation

65% Millennials

17% Gen X

18% Gen Z

Professionalized, digitized processes

Focus on ROI (of their studies)

Need for speed

Meaningful connections

Source: 2023 Graduate Marketing and Recruitment Practices Report, RNL.

What students and online leaders are saying

Expectations and insights

First inquiry within 24 hours or minutes

Feeling important & valued

Personalized omnichannel communication

Timely reminders with important deadlines

Source: 2024 Online Student Recruitment Report
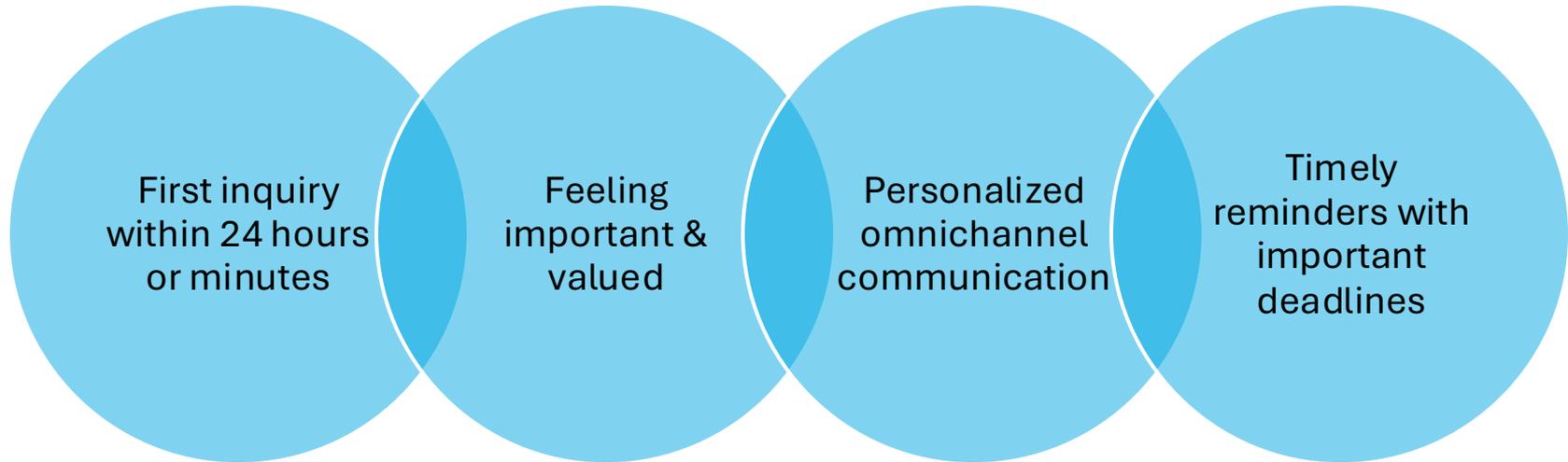
Why is This So Important?

2

Speed to Lead Impacts Enrollment

Five things graduate students tell us

1 You are **actively competing with other programs**—not just inertia.

2 You are **competing with local institutions** even if they are not your identified "peer institutions."

3 Two-thirds of graduate students expect a response to their initial inquiry and other **follow-up questions within 24 hours**.

4 Nearly half of graduate students think a **slower-than-expected response indicates they are unimportant** to the institution/program.

5 More than 60% of graduate students will **likely or definitely enroll in the program that responds to their inquiry first**.

RNL **National Conference**

The Expectations of Online Students Matter

## Students expect a speedy response both initially and throughout their experience

GRADUATE ONLINE STUDENTS

How soon after submitting an inquiry do you expect to hear from the program?

- Immediately
- Within 3 hours
- Within 24 hours
- More than 24 hours

- 23%
- 22%
- 25%
- 31%

What does a slower than expected response signify to you?

That I am not a priority/important to that program/school	44%
The program/school is not equipped with adequate support services	42%
That the program is not of high quality	30%

Source: 2024 Online Student Recruitment Report, RNL.
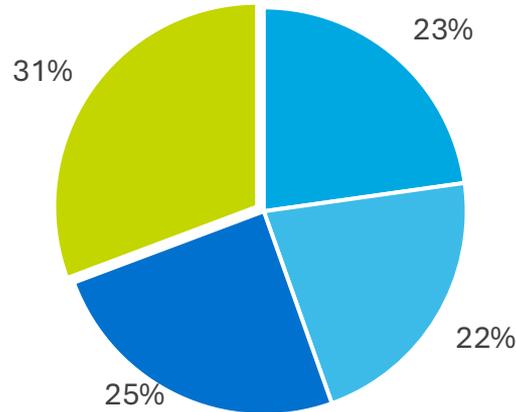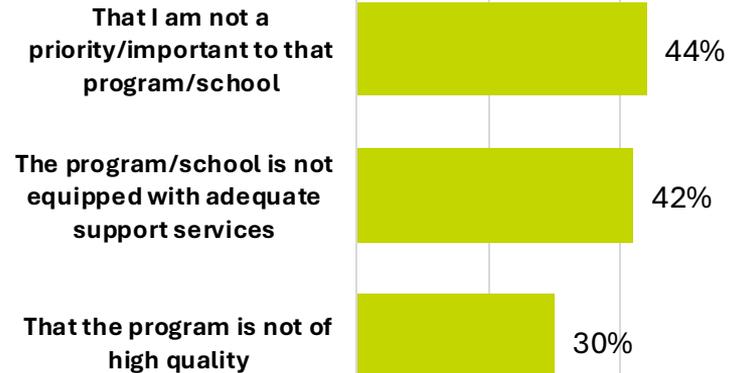
The Expectations of Online Students Matter

## Students expect a speedy response both initially and throughout their experience

UNDERGRADUATE ONLINE STUDENTS

How soon after submitting an inquiry do you expect to hear from the program?

- Immediately
- Within 3 hours
- Within 24 hours
- More than 24 hours

27%
23%
26%
24%

What does a slower than expected response signify to you?

Category	Percentage
That I am not a priority/important to that program/school	45%
The program/school is not equipped with adequate support services	44%
That the program is not of high quality	25%

Source: 2024 Online Student Recruitment Report, RNL.
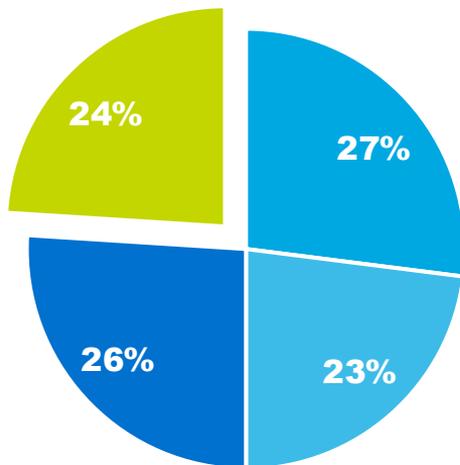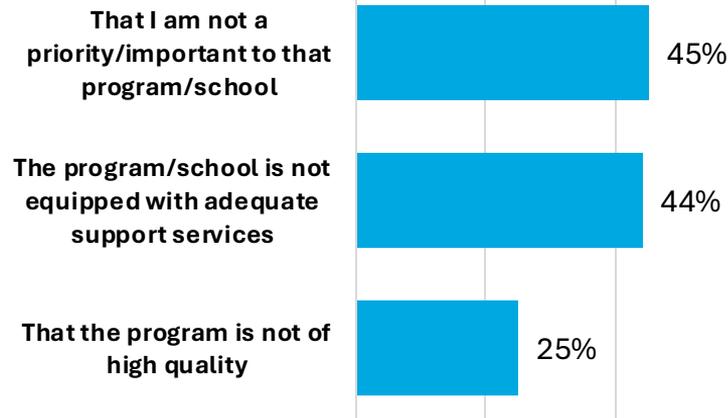
Online Students Expect Speedy Admissions

## They're also applying to multiple programs

How quickly do you expect an admissions decision from your online program of choice?

Undergrad.
- Within 24 hours: 11%
- 1-3 days: 34%
- 4-7 days: 30%
- 7-14 days: 18%
- Longer than 21 days: 5%

Graduate
- Within 24 hours: 15%
- 1-3 days: 29%
- 4-7 days: 27%
- 7-14 days: 19%
- 14-21 days: 7%

One Week

Legend: ■ Within 24 hours ■ 1-3 days ■ 4-7 days ■ 7-14 days ■ 14-21 days ■ Longer than 21 days

Source: 2024 Online Student Recruitment Report, RNL.
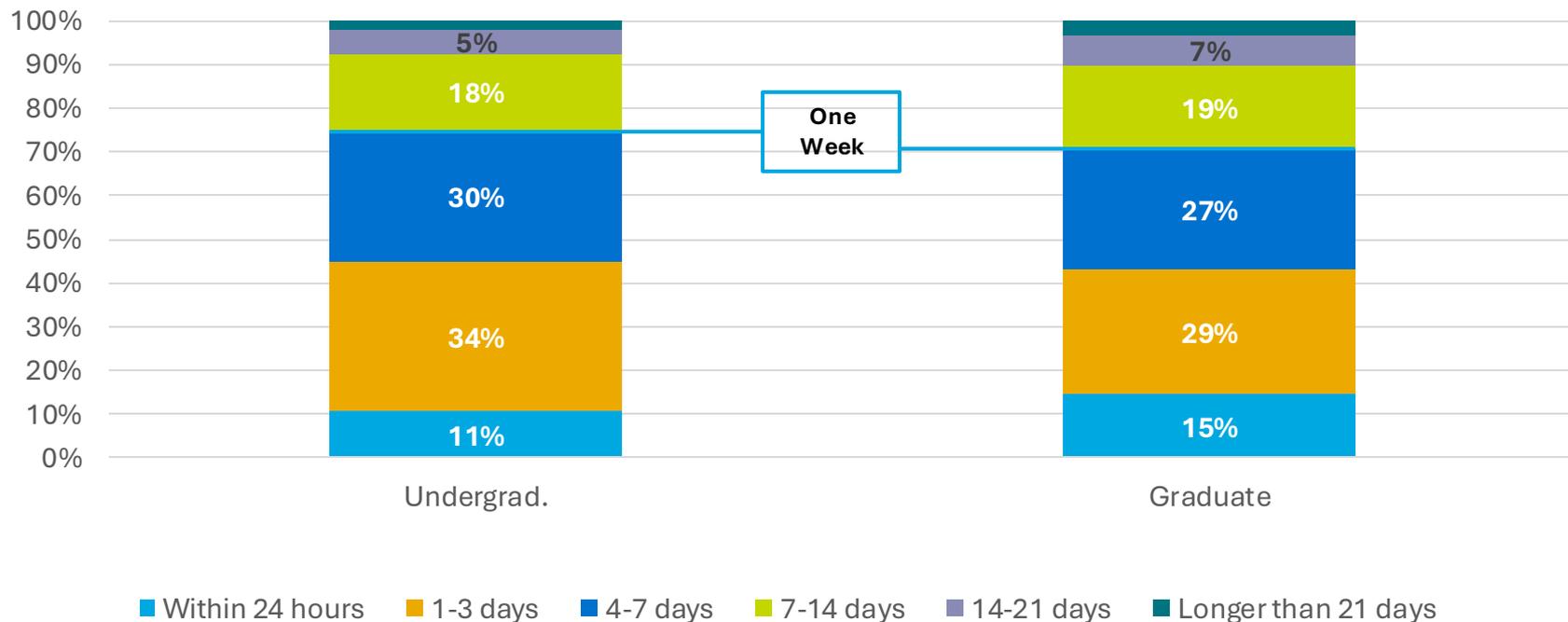
Why is this SO important?

Likelihood of Enrolling:
First Program to Respond

- Definitely — 17%
- Very likely — 32%
- Likely — 27%
- Not likely — 9%
- No — 15%

Likelihood of Enrolling:
First Program to Admit

- Definitely — 21%
- Very likely — 33%
- Likely — 31%
- Not likely — 11%
- No — 5%
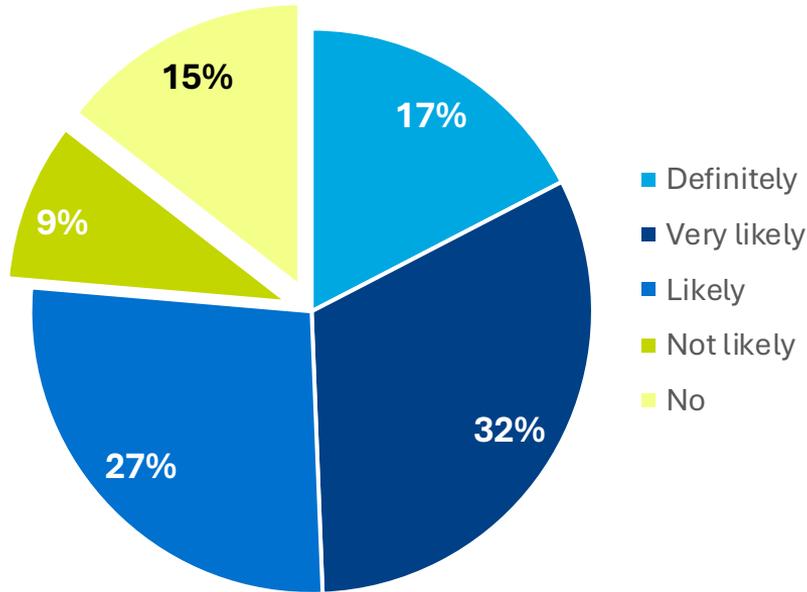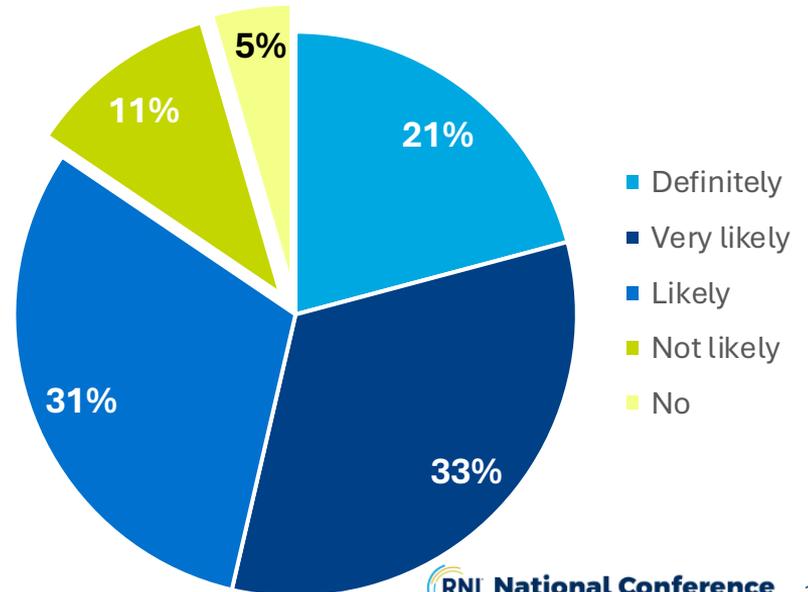
Maximizing Conversion

3

Strategy to Speed to Lead

Driving Quality Leads

- **Omnichannel engagement strategy** to ensure hyper-personalization using text, phone, email, and digital retargeting, with the call to action of applying and completing the application.

- **Enrollment coaching:** Strategies that focus on nurturing leads, guiding students from first contact through the enrollment funnel to ensure success.

- **Student success coaching:** Teach, train, and transfer knowledge to ensure students are active participants in their enrollment journey.

Source: 2024 Online Student Recruitment Report, RNL.

85%

of online students would likely enroll in a program that admits them first.

Comprehensive Recruitment & Retention Approach

Maintain and grow enrollment

Enrollment-focused, rather than being driven by lead generation

Aligned, omnichannel approach to marketing

Higher education enrollment coaches

Focused on personalization, authenticity, and speed

Qualifying Inquiries

Prospective students are
contacted and qualified

95%
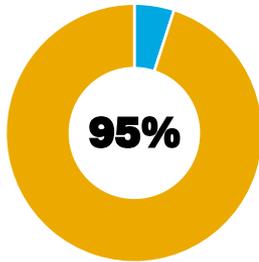
Attempted contact
within 60 minutes

60%
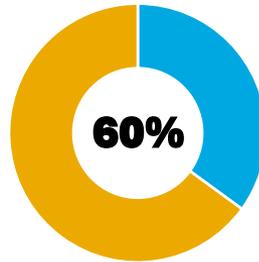
Contact rate

- **Upon inquiry, RNL deploys an omnichannel strategy** to drive contact and qualification using text, phone, email, and voicemail to ensure speed to inquiry.

- **Qualification is defined as a two-way conversation** with a prospective student that meets the institutional criteria - program of interest or program perquisites. RNL then progresses the qualified inquiry to the next stage in the enrollment funnel.

Multi-Channel Approach

Qualification helps institutions prioritize high-propensity inquiries

Send a **text** followed by an **email** to warm the lead and let them know to expect the call.

Shortly thereafter, **call** the student.

If they were not reached on the first call attempt, the student will receive a second **call** later that day. From there, follow a 7-day outreach cadence that includes calling, texting, and emailing until a disposition is reached.

Submitted Application Support

How it is applied

Prospective students are coached to submit the application

45%
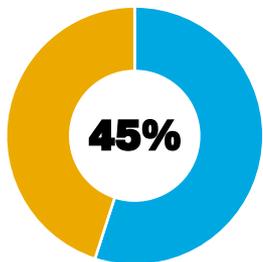
Qualified inquiries to submitted applicant

30

Days from qualified inquiry to submitted applicant

- **RNL manages an omnichannel engagement strategy** to ensure hyper-personalization using text, phone, email, personalized video, and digital retargeting with the call to action of applying.

- **RNL's enrollment coaches coach the prospective student to the application stage**. The enrollment coach shares the benefits and value while capturing the prospective student's motivations and obstacles. In addition, the enrollment coach provides support and guidance as a student completes the online application.

Completed Application Support

How it is applied

Prospective students are coached to complete their application

70%
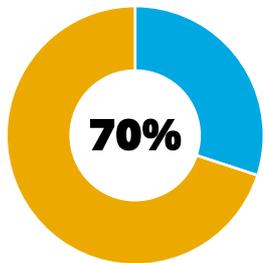
Submitted applicant to completed applicant

85%
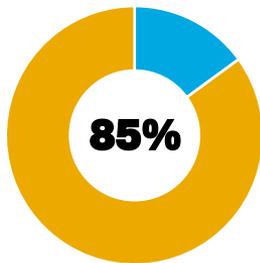
Applications are completed within 21 days from submitted applicant

- **RNL manages an omnichannel engagement strategy** to ensure hyper-personalization using text, phone, email, personalized video, and digital retargeting with the call to action of completing the application.

- **The Enrollment Operations team offers the prospective student Enrollment Coaching and Application Documentation.** This includes **transcript management** as well as assisting with other document collection needs required by the institution. RNL delivers completed applicants electronically to the institution for admission decisions.

Speed Blocks in the Admission Process

Reducing barriers for prospective students

- Conduct a student experience audit on your application process.

    - Identify the needed supplemental items and confirm their need/ use in the admissions decision.

- What is the timeline being communicated to a completed applicant.

- Secret shop competitors and compare.

- Provide any additional support to students as available.

- Evaluate application process on an annual basis.

Knowledge is Power

4

Full-Funnel Performance Reporting

Envision Dashboard

- Monthly performance reporting and strategy discussions.

- Real-time dashboard for full transparency to aggregated campaign performance data.

- Full-funnel data from raw inquiry to enrolled to optimize paid campaigns based on mid-funnel and down-funnel data.

- Ability to segment data by program and advertising channel.

- Actionable insights to assess opportunities for ongoing improvement in ROI.

- Transparency of your cost per enrollment by program.

Leveraging the Data to Maximize ROI

Qualified inquiry KPIs

Raw Inquiry	Prospective Inquiry	Contacted Inquiry	Qualified Inquiry	Hot Transfer Rate	Total Transfer Rate	Prospective Inq to Contacted Inq Rate	Contact Rate
1,166	1,127	744	573	29%	51%	66%	71%

Contact Rate + Transfer Rate by Inquiry Received Month _____

Month & Year	Raw Inquiry	Prospective Inquiry	Contacted Inquiry	Qualified Inquiry	Prospective Inquiry to Contacted Inquiry Rate	Appointment Scheduled	Appointment Scheduled Rate	Follow Up Call Scheduled	Follow Up Call Scheduled Rate	Transfer to School	Transfer to School Rate	Total Transfer Rate	Contact Rate	Not Qualified	Not Qualified Rate	Finalized
Jul 2024	78	74	50	41	67.57%	22	44.00%			24	36.36%	57.14%	74.24%	13	19.12%	68
Jun 2024	147	136	110	89	80.88%	46	41.82%	6	4.84%	47	37.90%	67.95%	74.19%	42	28.57%	147
May 2024	212	202	161	134	79.70%	71	44.10%			73	39.04%	58.40%	68.98%	62	29.25%	212
Apr 2024	399	388	252	182	64.95%	82	32.54%			85	27.69%	45.45%	70.03%	120	30.08%	399
Mar 2024	307	304	157	114	51.64%	20	12.74%	20	10.31%	29	14.95%	39.20%	71.65%	68	22.15%	307
Feb 2024	23	23	14	13	60.87%			5	29.41%	1	5.88%	40.00%	82.35%	2	8.70%	23
Total	**1,166**	**1,127**	**744**	**573**	**66.02%**	**241**	**32.39%**	**31**	**3.46%**	**259**	**28.94%**	**50.70%**	**71.28%**	**307**	**26.56%**	**1,156**

Leveraging the Data to Maximize ROI

Full-funnel KPIs

AP Start Date ▲	Raw Inquiry	Prospective Inquiry	Contacted Inquiry	Qualified Inquiry	Submitted Applicant	Completed Applicant	Admitted Student	Registered Student
	521	162	137	34	0	0	0	0
1/16/2024	4	4	4	4	2	0	0	0
3/12/2024	11	11	10	10	7	1	1	0
5/7/2024	126	126	115	114	89	50	36	7
7/2/2024	170	170	145	134	86	52	41	7
8/27/2024	227	227	176	167	89	43	35	11
10/22/2024	630	630	132	123	26	6	5	1
1/14/2025	82	82	17	17	4	0	0	0
3/11/2025	5	5	5	5	5	0	0	0
5/6/2025	7	7	7	7	1	0	0	0
8/26/2025	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0
1/13/2026	4	4	4	4	0	0	0	0
8/25/2026	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0
	1,790	**1,431**	**754**	**621**	**310**	**152**	**118**	**26**

Leveraging the Data to Maximize ROI

Qualified inquiry KPIs by program

Prospective, Contacted + Qualified Inquiries by Program of Interest _____
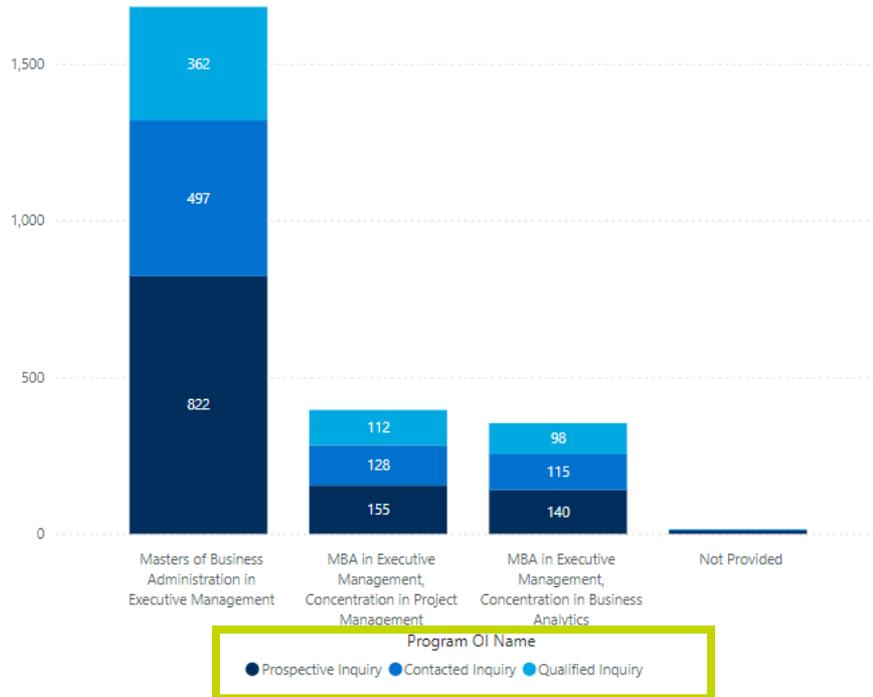
Prospective Inquiries by Program of Interest _____

Program OI Name
- Masters of Business Administr...
- MBA in Executive Managemen...
- MBA in Executive Managemen...
- Not Provided
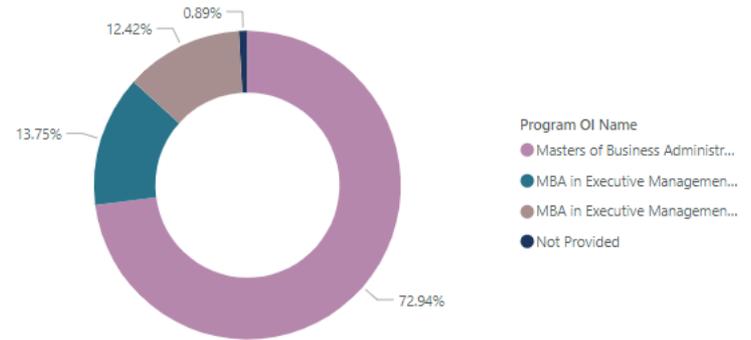
Leveraging the Data to Maximize ROI

Qualified inquiry KPIs by channel

Prospective, Contacted + Qualified Inquiries by Channel_____

Leveraging Data to Maximize ROI

Qualified lead dispositions

RNL Enrollment Funnel Benchmarks

For graduate enrollment

Inquiries

RAW INQUIRY
Any valid inquiry that has made it into an RNL system

80%
Raw to Scrubbed Inquiry

SCRUBBED INQUIRY
Inquiry that has cleared the automated scrubbing in Find and moved to the Contact Center

85%
Scrubbed to Prospective

PROSPECTIVE INQUIRY
Unique individual intended to be contacted [enrollment record created in Enroll]

60%
Contact Rate

CONTACTED INQUIRY
Successful 2-way communication with a Prospective Inquiry

40%
Hot Transfer Rate

QUALIFIED INQUIRY
Contacted inquiry that has not been NQ'd or NFA'd

50%
Qualification Rate

Enrollment

SUBMITTED APPLICANT
Application filled out and submitted

45%
Qualified Inquiry to Submitted Applicant

COMPLETED APPLICANT
Application and all supporting documents submitted; ready for evaluation by institution

70%
Submitted to Completed Applicant

ADMITTED STUDENT
Admission decision made by institution and admitted

80-85%
Admit Rate

REGISTERED STUDENT
Student is registered for course

80%
Admit to Register Rate

FIRST DAY OF CLASS
Student has not dropped and is enrolled in at least 1 course on the first day of class [no attendance activity]

90%+
Registered to FDOC

Retention

START
Student is enrolled in at least 1 course and has not dropped at the census date of their first term

90%
FDOC to Start Rate

ENROLLED TERM 2
Student is enrolled in at least 1 course at the census date in the term immediately after their initial term

85%
UG to T2 Persistence

92%
G T2 Persistence

RETAINED
Student is enrolled in at least 1 course at the census date YoY

75%
UG YOY Retained Rate

80%
G YOY Retained Rate

GRADUATE
Student completes all requirements for a degree program and is conferred a degree

70%
Start to Graduate Rate

Use of AI in daily life

How often do you use an AI platform (ChatGPT, Gemini, etc.)?

	Graduate	Undergraduate
Daily	12%	14%
One or more times per week	34%	33%
One or more times per month	19%	19%
Less than once a month	35%	35%

■ Graduate   ■ Undergraduate
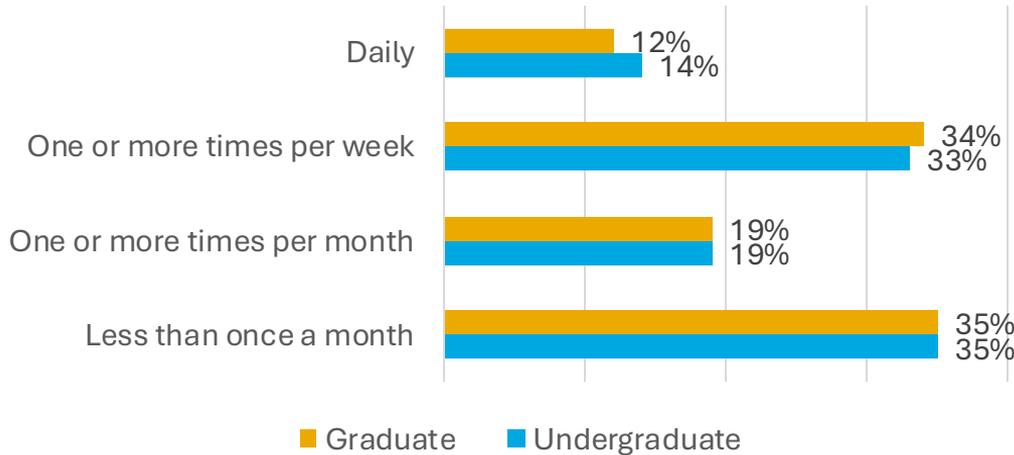
Frequency of Use of an AI Platform by Generation	GenZ	Millennial	GenX+
Daily	16%	14%	10%
One or more times per week	39%	34%	25%
One or more times per month	19%	20%	14%
Less than once a month	27%	32%	52%

Online students use AI chat for most basic questions

Which of the following would you want to be able to find on an AI-driven chatbot?

Legend: Graduate (light green), Undergraduate (teal)

Categories (top to bottom):
- Tuition costs
- Information about courses
- Financial aid information
- Admissions requirements
- Admissions deadlines
- Program/graduation requirements
- Student services/Student resources
- Course schedules/Academic calendar
- How to pay for school

X-axis: 0% to 70%
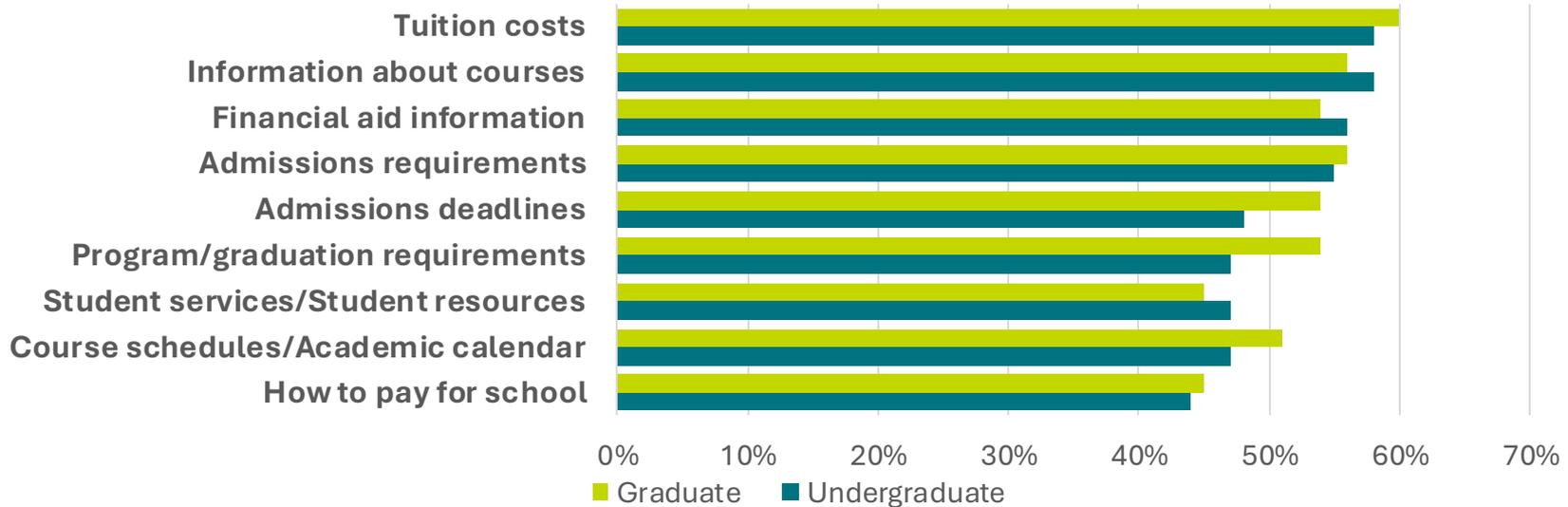
Speed to Lead Checklist

✓ Understand your market, their needs, wants, and expectations.

✓ Review your outreach efforts and procedures by program.

✓ Analyze your CRM outreach – strategy, channel, automation, personalization.

✓ Gather your conversion data by funnel stage and analyze.

✓ Evaluate your data reporting.

✓ Identify what you can improve internally.

Q&A

5

Thank You

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