



The Student College Search Experience: 2020-21



Today's Presenter



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Sources



- > 2021 Survey of Juniors
 - 7,129 responses
 - 441 from your region (WPA)

- > 2021 Senior Enrollment Survey
 - 19,277 responses
 - 1,152 from WPA

niche.bz/research

— Some Key Themes

1. Misinformation about test-optional and test-blind is hurting students
2. Students are starting their search early and casting a wider net now, but less so in your region.
3. Campus visits are declining rapidly
4. The rubber band is snapping - students want to go farther from home
5. High published costs are closing doors to students

Insight #1



Misinformation about test-optional and test-blind is
hurting students.

— What it means

- > More than $\frac{2}{3}$ of colleges are test-optional/blind
- > 78% of students in WPA (75% nationally) believe that not submitting will hurt them
- > 78% took a standardized test
 - > 39% submitted to all colleges
 - > 11% to most colleges
 - > 12% to just a few colleges
- > Survey of IECs - majority still encouraging students to take a test

Insight #2



Students are starting their search early and casting a wider net now than before, but less so in your region.

What it means

Beginning Active Research Timeline

	WPA	US
Before Junior Year	20%	18%
During Junior Year	54%	53%
Fall of Senior Year	21%	22%
Spring of Senior Year	5%	6%

— What it means



Applications Submitted

	WPA	US
1	13%	11%
2	11%	10%
3	12%	11%
4	10%	9%
5+	53%	59%
10+	19%	25%

Insight #3



Campus visits are declining rapidly

What it means

Visits Taken

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
0	28%	15%	7%	6%	5%
1	21%	18%	15%	15%	14%
2	19%	20%	20%	20%	19%
3	13%	16%	19%	20%	20%
4	6%	9%	11%	12%	12%
5+	12%	22%	27%	27%	30%

— What it means

- > (Early Results from our fall senior survey)
- > 84% of WPA seniors say they're comfortable with in-person events and visits
 - > 77% for US
- > 42% of WPA seniors have never visited a campus and 82% say they will visit a campus this year
 - > Half have US have never visited a campus and only 71% say they will visit a campus this year

Insight #4



The rubber band is snapping - students want to go
farther from home

— What it means

- > The desire to enroll within an hour from home has decreased
- > 34% want to enroll 2-4 hours from home, and 21% want to enroll 4+ hours away
- > Can't only own your backyard, back to 2 pronged recruiting

Insight #5



High published costs are closing doors to students

— What it means

- > 75% of WPA students eliminated colleges based on the total published cost
 - 73% of US students did
- > Half of students in WPA would only consider applying to colleges under \$40,000 per year
- > Higher tolerance than the US as a whole
 - 50% consideration is at \$30,000 per year



Communicating With Students

~ Email's influence

- > 47% of WPA students said that their enrollment was influenced by emails from colleges
 - > 51% for the US
- > 99% said that email is the preferred outreach method
 - > 85% find even weekly email acceptable



BUT...

17%



reported that the emails felt very
personalized and relevant.

— What is important to talk about

- > Scholarships (93%)
- > Ranking (63%)
- > Distance from home (50%)
- > Intercultural services (35%)
- > Fine and performing arts (34%)
- > Alumni network (34%)
- > LGBTQ services (31%)
- > Athletics (21%)
- > Religious affiliation (14%)

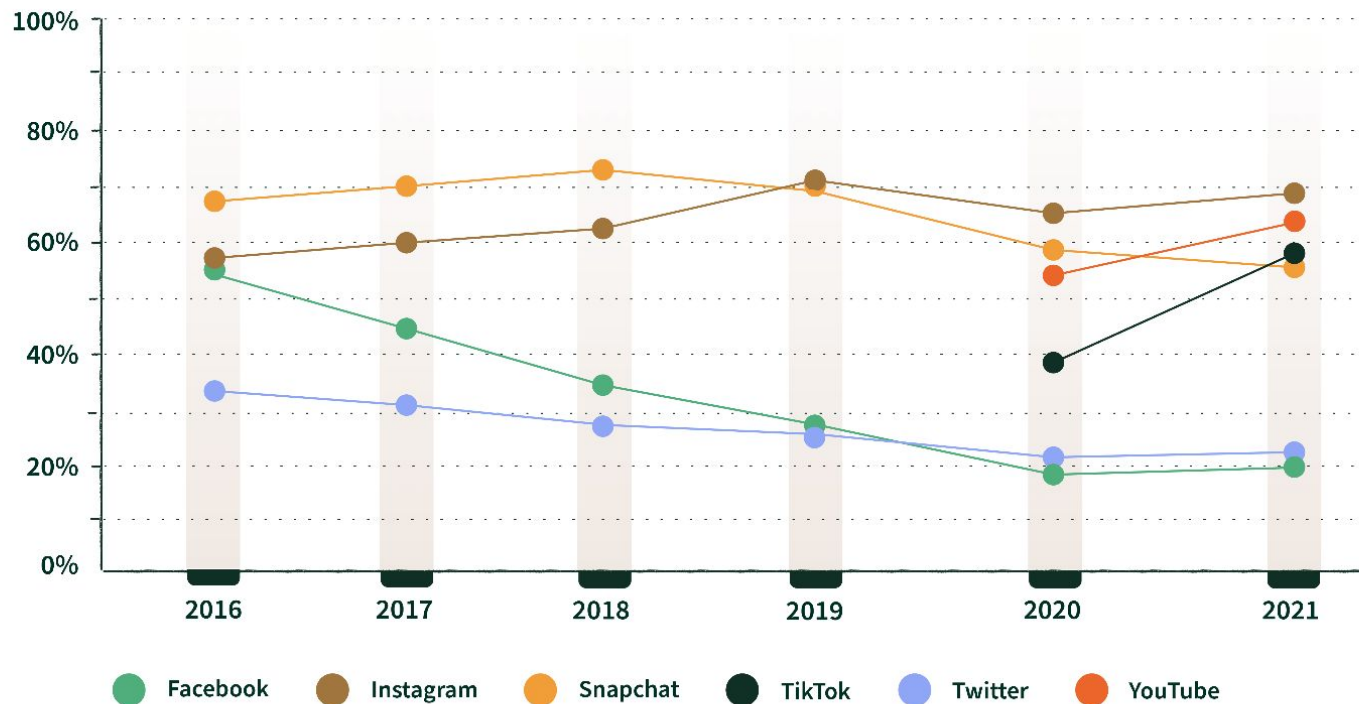


— How influential were other channels?

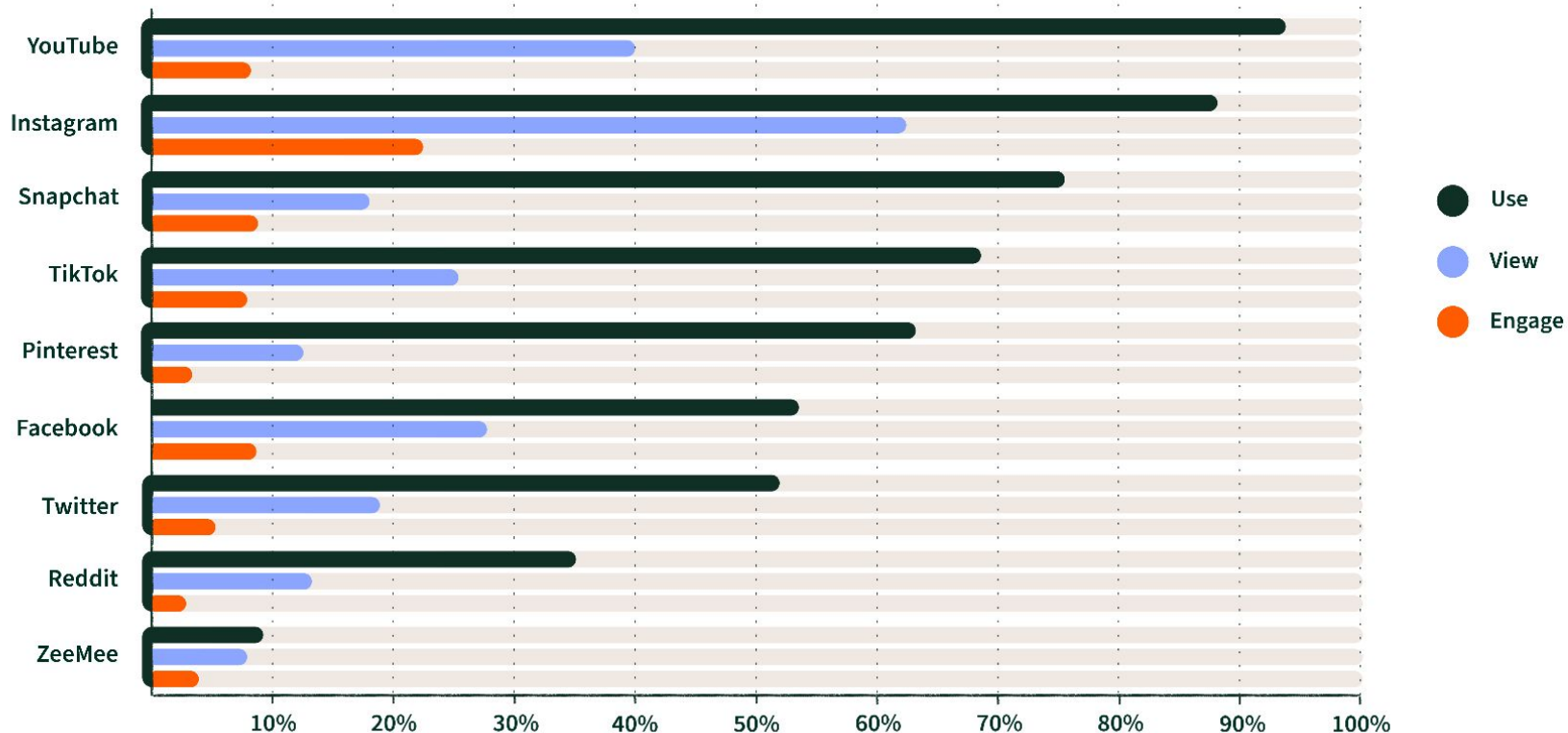
- > Mail - 44% found it influential (43% US)
- > Video chats - 33% (34% US)
- > Texts - 24% (25% US)
- > Phone calls - 23% (23% US)

- > Email was the only outlier for WPA compared to US

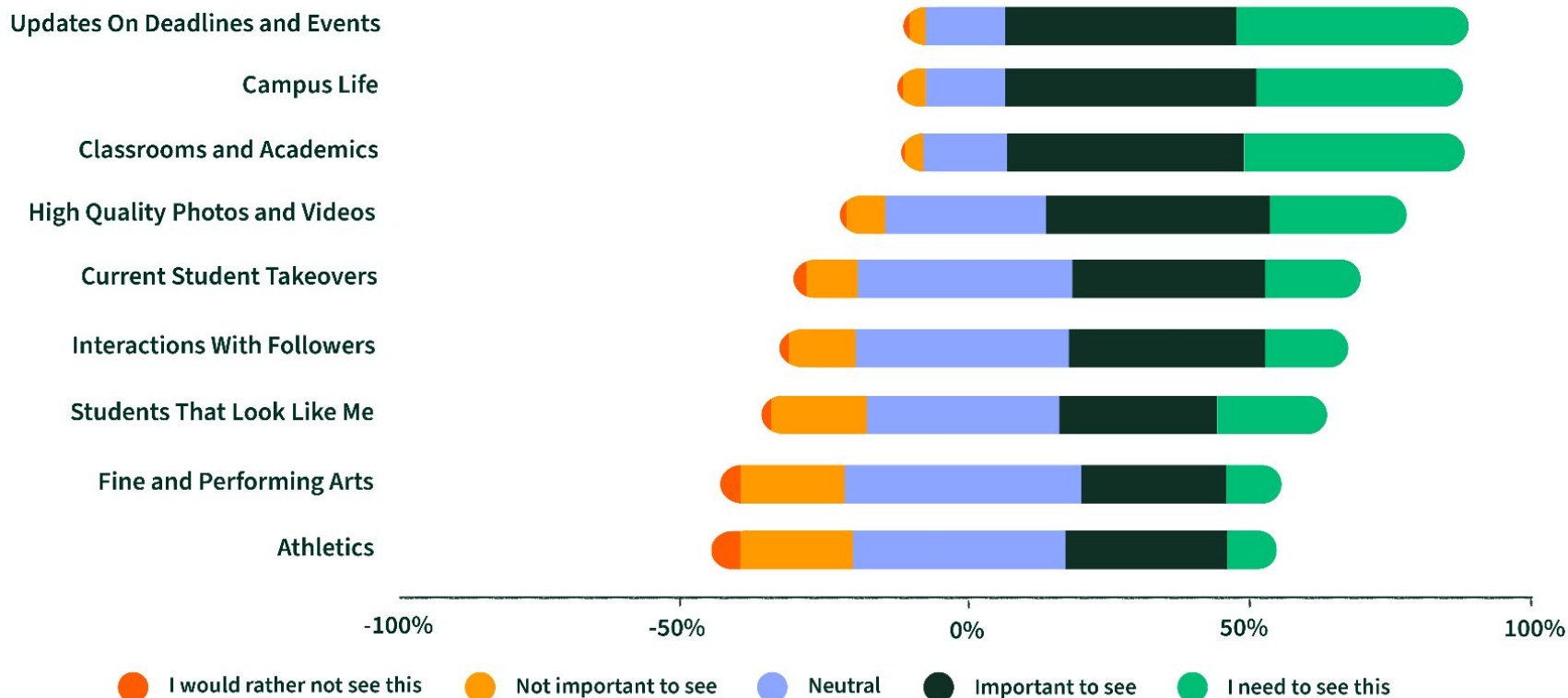
Daily Social Media Usage Over Time



Social Media Usage and Likelihood to View or Engage with College Accounts



What Content Do Students Want to See on Social Media



About Niche...

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- > Highlight what makes your school unique



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- > **Niche Audience Remarketing**
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 - > Drive traffic from your Niche Profile back to your website
- > **Niche Inquiry & Prospect Solutions**
 - > Connect with Niche for an initial analysis of your inquiries & prospects

Additional Resources & Research

Enrollment Insights Blog niche.bz/insights

Q&A

Survey results and more:
niche.bz/insights



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