



HIGHER EDUCATION CHEAT SHEET

4 Proven Strategies to Increase Enrollment this Fall



4 Proven Strategies to Increase Enrollment this Fall

The fight for students is well and truly on.

Post-secondary enrollment decreased by 4.1% in spring 2022 compared to spring 2021 in the US. Across the past two years, the picture is even more bleak – enrollment declined by 7.4% from spring 2020 to spring 2022. These figures are intensifying what was already an incredibly competitive market.

To grab the attention and engagement of today's student population, universities and colleges must adopt new strategies that put students front and center. They must cater to their behaviors, expectations, and needs as closely as possible, providing them with a customer experience (CX) that mirrors the experience that students enjoy from B2C brands.

Here are **4 key strategies** that any university or college can adopt to help them reverse enrollment decline and increase intake this fall.



-7.4%

Spring '20 to Spring '22

Decline in U.S. post-secondary enrollment



-22.7%

2019-20 to 2020-21

Drop in international student enrollment at U.S. universities

1. Make **live chat** your number one support channel

Every university and college know that intake figures rely heavily on student engagement.

If a school can connect with a prospective student and better still, build a relationship with them, they have a far higher chance of becoming their chosen school.

Live chat is the perfect strategy to support this goal because it is the preferred channel for students to engage with schools. Many support teams still rely on telephone and email to answer prospective students' queries, but these channels can't deliver on the expectations of today's students.



Grown up surrounded by technology and spending much of their waking day online, students want to connect digitally. 52% of Millennials say they feel anxious about taking a phone call and 60% of Gen Z say they 'hate calling people'. In contrast, live chat caters to students' behaviors and digital expectations. Support via live chat is convenient, fast, and personalized – everything a student wants from any organization they interact with.



79% prefer live chat over any other channel.

72% of Gen Z expect to interact with someone immediately when they reach out for support.



***“The traditional way of communicating over just phone and email has become antiquated, especially within higher education.*”**

If you’re only offering phone and email support, you aren’t providing your students with the experience they need and expect, and this could damage everything from enrollment to drop-out rates.”



Lachlan Todd
Communications and Systems Coordinator
Thompson Rivers University

2. Offer 24/7 chatbot support

Live chat is the best channel to connect with prospective students, but few colleges can afford to provide this support 24/7. However, the problem is, students now expect this level of support. Students expect to be able to get answers to their questions when it suits them, not when it suits the school's working hours.

A chatbot is the perfect answer to this expectation. When a team is offline, universities can provide support to prospective students no matter the time. As well as increasing the opportunity to engage, it also shows a willingness and commitment from the school to support its students, no matter what.

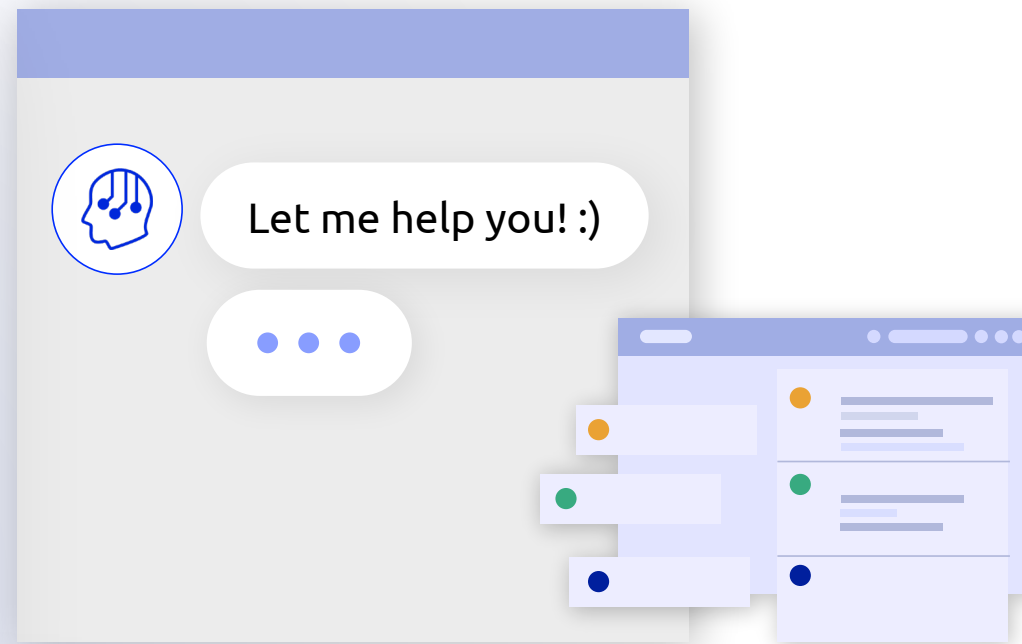
88.3%

Customer satisfaction (CSAT) score for higher education live chat teams in 2021



70%

Customers currently use or are interested in using chatbots for simple customer service



83%

Thompson Rivers University live chats handled by Comm100 AI Chatbot

By utilizing NLP, AI chatbots can understand the user's intentions and so answer more questions in more natural conversation. AI chatbots can handle over 80% of chats when built well. Chatbots are most commonly used within admissions to:

- Answer prospective students' common FAQs
- Capture visitor details for lead generation
- Reassure students through the admissions process so they complete sign-up
- Provide 24/7 support to international students in different time zones.

Gen Z are most open to chatbots than any other demographic and are most likely to agree that bots make it quicker for their issues to be resolved.

[Read the full story here!](#)



“I don’t have a computer science or programming background so finding a chatbot that was **simple to build and code-free was crucial - and Comm100 chatbot delivered on this.**

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CUSTOMER STORY

Cambrian College Improves Recruitment with Comm100 Live Chat & Chatbot

In 2020, Cambrian College's recruitment department offered only email and phone support to prospective students. The unpopularity of these channels was causing a significant barrier to engagement and damaging intake to their college.

Live chat was identified as a cost-effective and secure solution to this challenge, so they set up Comm100 Live Chat. Owing to the popularity of live chat with students, Cambrian College has increased engagement with prospective students and begun increasing admissions.

After great success with Comm100 Live Chat, Cambrian College added Comm100 Chatbot to boost engagement even further with 24/7 support. They recognized that many of their students wanted to connect during out of office hours, particularly international students in other time zones. With a chatbot in place, Cambrian now delivers around-the-clock support to every prospective student, helping their recruitment efforts.



4.5/5

Live chat CSAT

70%

Chats handled by AI chatbot



[Read the full story here!](#)

“Neither me nor our digital recruiter had any programming or bot development experience.”

However, Daniela and Elia at Comm100 gave us all the support we needed...They always listened to us, understanding our expectations and how we wanted our bot to perform, and quickly making improvements based on these suggestions. We still meet regularly to make improvements.”



Alison Caruso
Manager of Student Recruitment
Cambrian College

3. Connect with students where they hang out

Today's students expect colleges to be available to them wherever and whenever they need support – on their terms, not the school's.

In day-to-day life, this means that students want the choice to connect with schools on the channels that they prefer, whether this be live chat, email, social media or phone.

To provide this choice while keeping organized, efficient and cost-effective, colleges must adopt omnichannel student engagement. These platforms connect every digital channel together within one console, together with the conversations and information within them across every department and team. With this information at hand, agents have a clear image of the student, empowering them to provide faster, more helpful and more personalized support.



63%

Expect all agents to have the same information about them

[Read the full story here!](#)

77%

Expect consistent interactions across departments

“Everybody has their preferred way of communicating.”

Some people want to reach out via live chat, some social media, and others via email. The beauty of Comm100 is that every channel can be connected into one platform so we can connect with and support more students, more efficiently.”

Omnichannel student engagement is not just about making sure you’re on the latest channel. Instead, omnichannel represents a big-picture shift in how higher education works and what students want in today’s digital-first world. It’s about how seamless experiences, not channels, are changing the entire student support experience, from the front desk to the backend.



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Communications and Systems Coordinator
Thompson Rivers University

4. Look to social media as a **key engagement** channel

Almost every university and college in the US has at least one social media account which they predominantly use to advertise their school, keep students informed, and promote their values. However, far fewer schools are using these same social media platforms as support channels to answer prospective student queries – despite the fact that it's a highly effective channel for this and can help to increase intake.

While live chat is the most popular channel for prospective students to get support, they also want to reach out via social media too. By offering social media as a support channel, institutions can connect with students on the channels that they use most – be that Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WeChat, or WhatsApp.

97%

Students use
social media

60%

Gen Z & Millennials use
private social media
messaging for
customer support



Supporting students across the various social platforms can spread resources thin and risk incoming requests falling through the cracks.

To resolve this, adopt an omnichannel student engagement platform that connects every social media account (and every other channel) into one agent console.





Respond to students on their terms!

Be more responsive to inquiries by connecting all your digital channels.

Institutions need to work harder to attract students, making digital engagement platforms like Comm100 more necessary than ever before. Find out how you can adopt Comm100's engagement platform – live chat, chatbot, social media, and knowledge base - to increase enrollment.

[Learn More](#)