

Qualified Lead Demographics & Online Information Preferences of For-Profit College Leads Official Report

Downloadable Report Available at:

<http://www.edudirectresponse.com/reports/qualified-lead-demographics-for-profit-college.pdf>

For-profit colleges have been under the microscope this year and under heavy criticism by the United States Government Accountability Office (GAO). With the attention focusing on the marketing practices of the for-profit colleges, EduDirectResponse decided to work with Classes2Careers to poll 1000 people who filled out an online form to receive more information from for-profit colleges (referred to as a qualified lead from now on).

Both national online colleges and location based campus schools were presented to the leads who came to a signup form from internet advertisements.

Advertisements shown were straight forward “Take online classes” ads with no deception or incentives provided (ie: no federal grant money wording). We wanted the feedback of people legitimately looking to get degrees at online colleges.

Our results show interesting findings that can help for-profit colleges present their information in an appealing manner to prospective students and help lead aggregators hit on concerns of the visitors and leads signing up to receive more information from the colleges.

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Advertising Methods

Study ads were placed on Google search and other tier 1 search engines; banner placements; and email marketing. All straightforward, “take online classes” and “get an online degree” ads were used in order to get visitors truly interested in taking online classes at either a nationwide online college or a campus school with an online component.

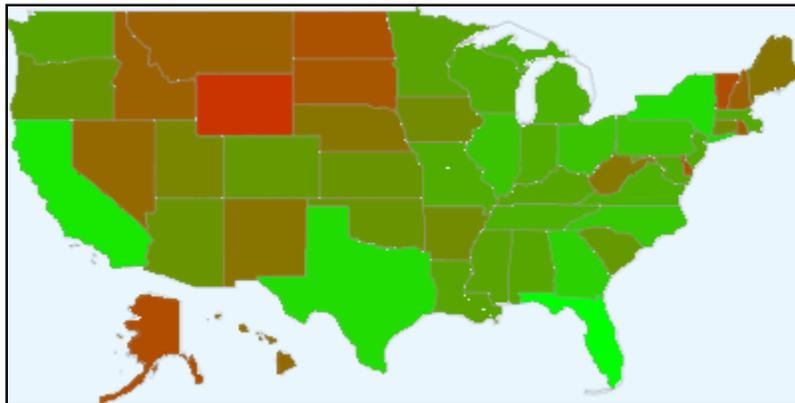
Advertising Coverage

Our ads reached all 50 states.

Lead Demographics

Lead Distribution By State

The corresponding graph represents the lead distribution by state. As you can see our reach was somewhat in line with state populations. The bright green states are those where more leads came from and bright red states accounted for the least amount of leads. Each state had at least 1 lead.

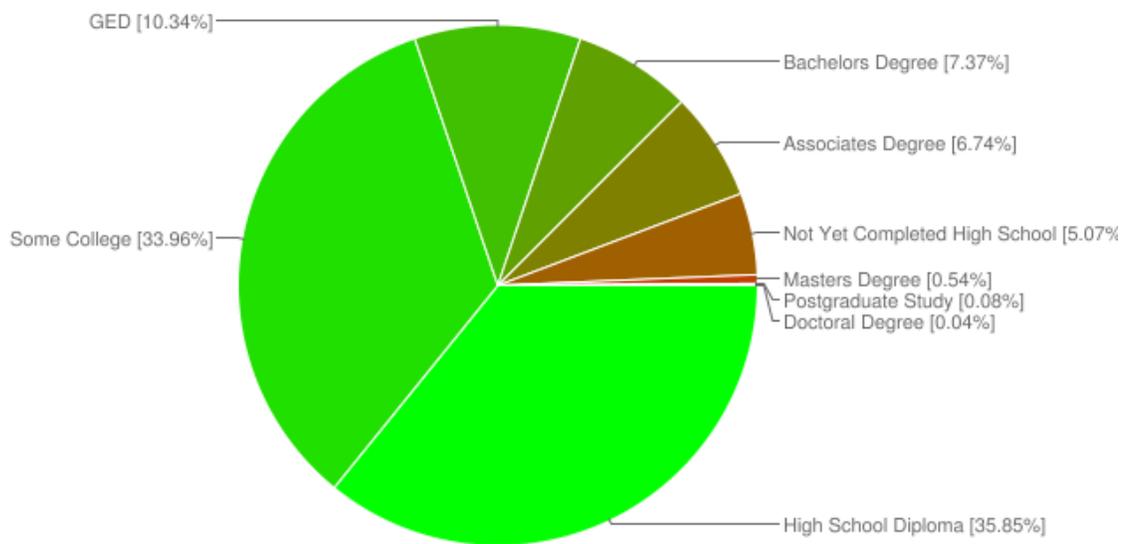


Lead Gender Distribution

Female: 61%
Male: 39%

Education Level Distribution

A lead's current education level is an important question asked during most college signup paths. The majority of leads, 35.85%, had their high school diplomas. 33.96% had some college credits through previous college experience. 10.34% of leads had their GED while 7.37% already had their Bachelors Degree. 6.74% had an Associate's Degree from two-year college and you can see the rest of the statistics in the chart below.

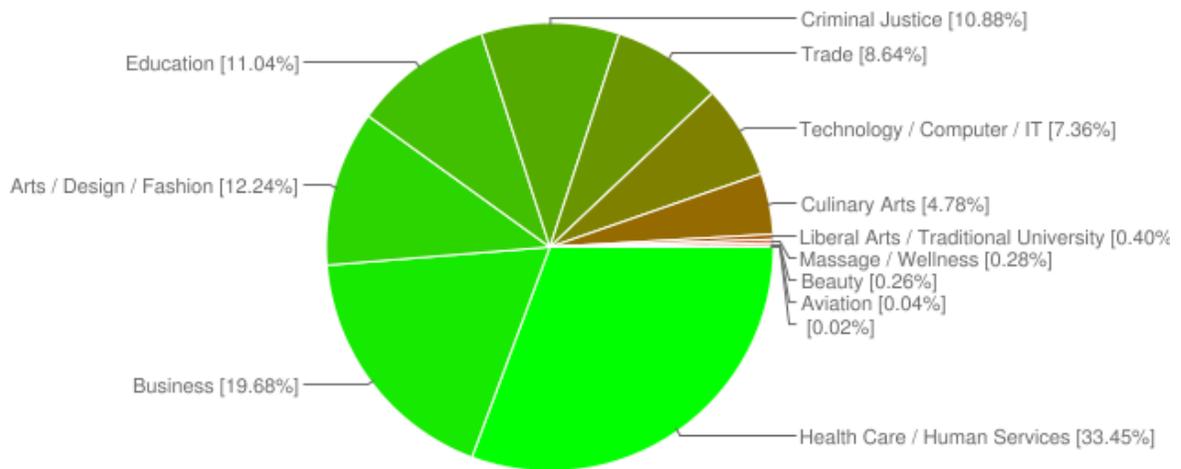


Degree Interest Distribution

Asking a lead what area they are interested in studying is usually one of the first questions asked. Below is a high-level degree interest breakdown of what the leads are interested in studying in college.

- Health Care / Human Services interested 33.45% of leads with nursing being 35% of that.
- Business was second most popular with 19.68% of the leads and Management Administration was 22% of the business pie.
- Arts / Design / Fashion gathered 12.24% interest with Photography and Fashion taking up 56%. Graphic Design was third with 19% interest.
- Education was fourth with 11.04% of the total leads. Education broke down to 47% interested in teaching K-12, 26% interested in General Education, and 12% interested in teaching at the High School level.
- Criminal Justice, a popularly searched for career online, occupied 10.88% of the lead sample.

You can see the rest of the degree details below.



Lead Information Preferences

Now that we have covered the demographics of online college leads in this study we'll discuss a survey related questions we asked each lead. The goal of this information was to figure out what it is that prospective students want to find when they search for schools online and what information they are comfortable giving out.

"What information do you want as it relates to your college search?"

We asked every prospective student who signed up what other information they are interested in receiving from us as it relates to their school search. It was a given that information on colleges that match their desired area of study was their first preference so this question wanted to find out what else leads are interested in knowing.

Naturally, the majority wanted information on scholarships and financial aid available.

What additional information would you be interested in receiving via a free newsletter?

Scholarships & financial aid	90%
Student loans	35%
Job tips	34%
College degrees	33%
Differences between online and offline colleges	31%
Work opportunities while attending college	29%
Reviews on different colleges	10%

**leads could select more than one option.*

"How often would students like to be contacted?"

The majority of prospective students, over 75%, revealed that they don't mind being contacted further after signing up.

The type of contact we stated would be email newsletters relating to college. This tells us two important things

1. when advertising in an honest, non-misleading manner, prospective students want to maintain a relationship with you; and
2. prospective students don't mind being on a mass email newsletter list.

How often do students want to be contacted via newsletter?

Weekly	39%
Monthly	33%
Never	16%
Twice per month	12%

Invalid Information

As with all lead generation marketing campaigns a percentage of users will enter invalid or fake information. We wanted to find out what percentage of users gave invalid data and which data points were found to be invalid more times than others.

We found that 19% of students give invalid information. An invalid record means either a phone number or email address are invalid or fake.

% of leads missing a valid piece of data

Leads that provided valid data	81%
Leads that provided invalid data	19%

Occurrences of invalid data entered by leads

Phone number	69%
Address	21%
Email address	10%

This tells us prospective students feel that a phone number is the most intrusive piece of information when filing out an online form.

Enrollment Rates

Enrollment rates on this data is 5.45%.

Highlights of Study

1. More females than males are interested in online classes.
2. Over 60% of prospective online college students have a High School degree or have at one time in the past attended college.
3. Business and Health Care are the two most popular majors for prospective online college students.
4. 90% of prospective students want additional financial aid information.
5. Over 80% of prospective students want to receive a college related newsletter.
6. Prospective students do not mind entering their email address and other personal information but feel that their phone number is the most intrusive piece of data they give.

Data Sample Used in Report

Number of participants: 1000 (converted leads)

Gender: Females 61%; Males 39%

Enrollment rate: 5.45%

About the Sponsors

EDU Direct Response (EduDirectResponse.com)

EduDirectResponse.com provides research, analysis and insight in online education marketing. As advocates for high quality, truthful advertising, Edu Direct Response tries to base their research toward ways the industry can move toward higher quality leads and advertisements.

In addition, Edu Direct Response covers admissions and enrollment, for profit schools, financial analysis of colleges and current recruitment tactics on their blog EduDirectResponse.com

Classes 2 Careers (Classes2Careers.com)

Classes 2 Careers is an education portal and information site located at Classes2Careers.com that provides qualified leads to for-profit college.

Questions

If you have any questions or comments about this study, please contact research@edudirectresponse.com.

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