Communicating with Prospective and Newly Admitted Students: 
*What We Know from National Studies*

Noel-Levitz, a national higher education consulting company, conducts several studies to assist institutions in recruitment, financial aid management, retention, marketing, and communications.

- *E-Expectations* is an on-going project that surveys college-bound students to measure their expectations of and attitudes toward electronic communications used during the college recruitment process.
  - According to the study, prospective college students are visiting college websites often, the majority at least once a week: 48% of students visit a few times each week and 8% of students visit a college website every day.
  - Most students (93%) are going online at home and only 23% report using a smart phone for browsing.
  - When searching for colleges, 65% said they ended up on a college’s home page, rather than a more specific departmental page.
  - One in four students will remove a school from their list if they can’t find what they need on their website.
  - However, 89% of students reported learning about schools from what they received in the mail. This compares to 79% from email messages, 61% from college fairs and 35% from advertising.
  - 76% of students are on Facebook, compared with 59% on YouTube, 33% on MySpace and only 8% on Twitter. 76% think schools should create their own private social networks.
  - 67% of students think it is OK for colleges to contact them over a social media site, but only 33% wanted to contact a school over text.
  - Only 10% are watching a college’s videos on YouTube, whereas 42% are watching videos on the school’s site. 47% aren’t watching videos at all. Not surprisingly, most students want to see video produced by students.

STAMATS, a national higher education consulting firm, focuses on strategic marketing plans to help higher education institutions meet their admissions and advancement goals.

- *TeensTALK* is a survey conducted three times a year: in the fall, when seniors typically begin to apply to the schools on their short lists; in the spring, when these students are considering financial aid offers; and in the summer, after final college selections are made.
  - According to the 2009 Summer study, 40% of students identified a personalized letter, delivered through the mail, as their preferred method of communication from schools to which they have been admitted, while 32% preferred a personalized e-mail, and 15% preferred a phone call.
  - 31% identified Facebook, mySpace or other social networks to be an appropriate method communication, but only 1% identified it as their preferred channel.
  - 25% identified instant messaging to be an appropriate method for communication, but less than 1% identified it as their preferred channel.
  - 24% identified text messaging via cell phone to be an appropriate method for communication, but only 3% identified it as their preferred channel.
  - 28% report they would like to receive more information from the colleges and universities to which they have applied, while 10% report receiving too much information.