



campuslogic

# How to Make Student Communications Stick

#LetsDoThis

# Today's Agenda



- + The Problem—Noise, Competition
- + The Rule of 7
- + Communication Channels
- + Top 5 Channels To Optimize
- + Group Exercise!

**Your Presenter:**

**Mark McGinnis, Sr. Director Account Development**

**About CampusLogic**

**We Help Schools Change Lives**

- + The only **student financial services** platform
- + **Remove barriers** from the student journey
- + **Boost** enrollment and student satisfaction
- + **Streamline** efficiencies and communications
- + **Improve** financial aid completion rates



# **Problem:**

Communicating Effectively  
with Students  
Is Exceedingly Difficult

# Student Attention—Who's Vying For It?

## MARKETING EXPERIENCES

### Mobile Marketing



### Display & Native Ads



### Video Marketing & Ads



### Search & Social Ads



### Communities & Reviews



## Email Marketing



## Influencer Marketing



## Social Media Marketing



## Events & Webinars



## SEO



## Customer Experience/VoC



## Loyalty/Referral/Gamification



## Personalization & Chat



## Testing & Optimization



## Interactive Content



## Content Marketing



## Creative & Design



## Sales Enablement



# A Lot Happens in Just One Second

7,740  
Tweets

2,619,856  
emails sent  
(a lot are  
spam)

70,603  
YouTube  
Video views

1,281  
Tumblr  
posts

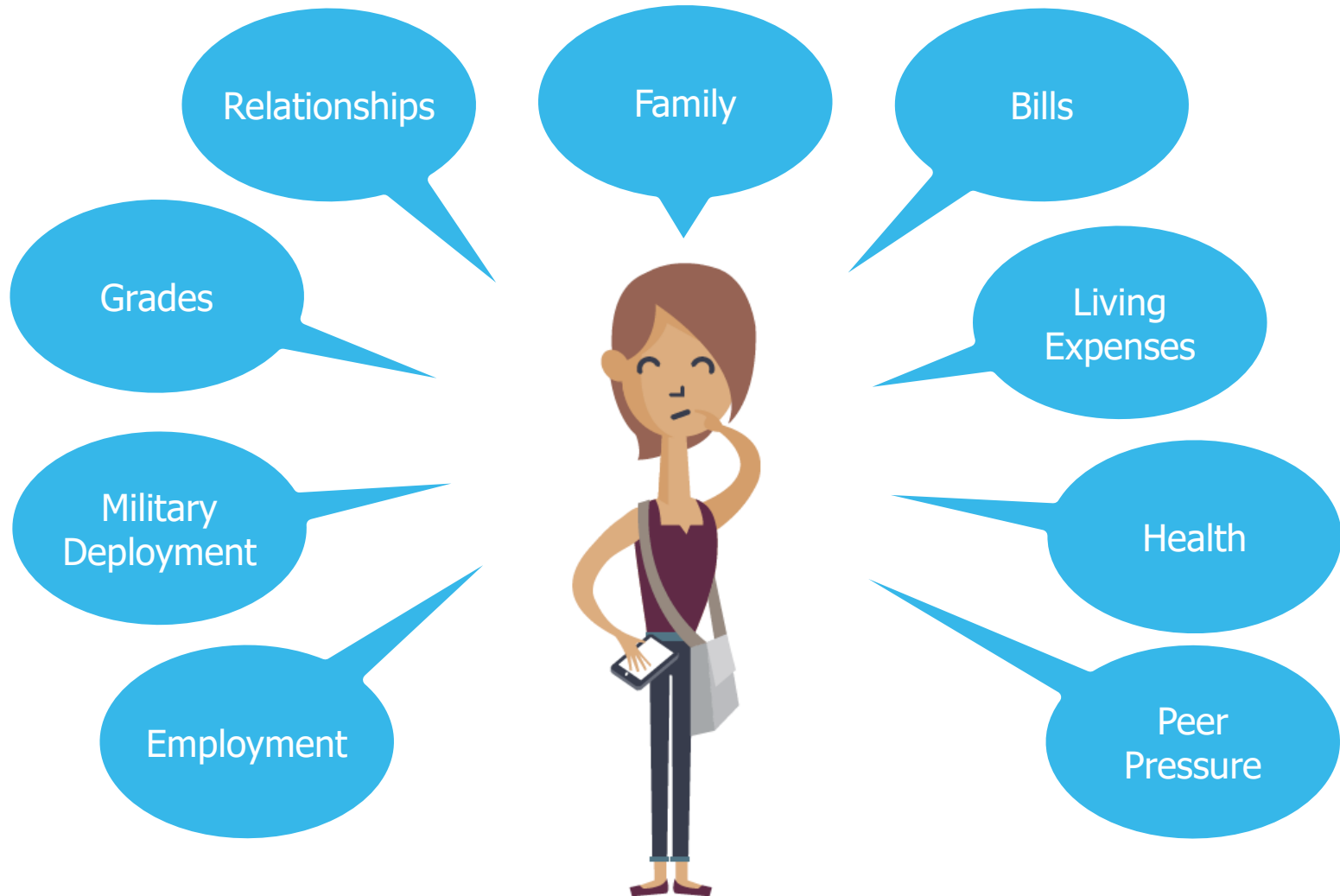
43,642 GB  
of internet  
traffic

880  
Instagram  
photos  
uploaded

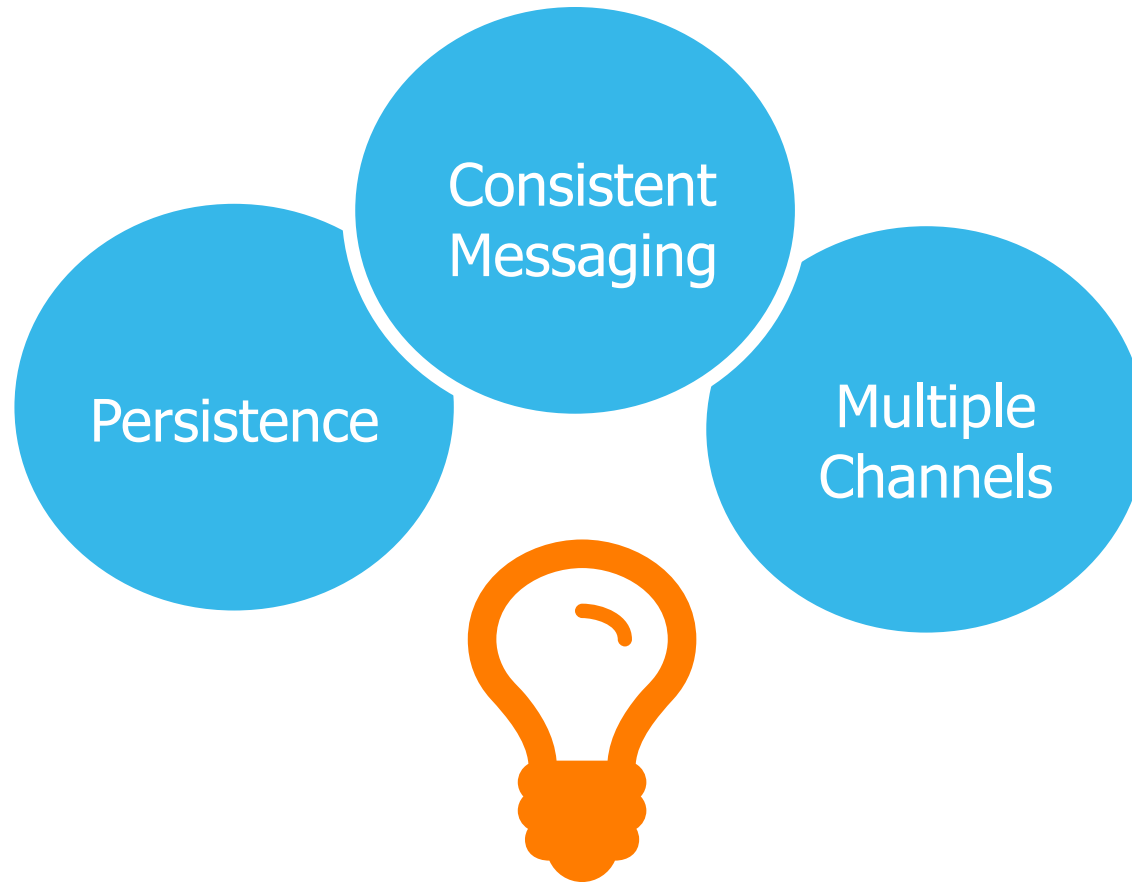
62,263  
Google  
searches



# Students Are Overwhelmed



# How Do You Break Through?





## **The Rule of 7:**

Students Need to See Your  
Message at Least 7 Times to  
Take Action

# Available Communication Channels



# Relevant Financial Aid Channels



# Optimize Mobile & Online Channels



- + The **average college student** brings **7** Internet-connected devices to campus
- + **60% of Gen Zers** (born 1997–2016) won't use an app or website that's **too slow** to load; **62%** will close out of a site that's too hard to navigate
- + **77%** of Gen Zers say they want relevant information from their colleges via text
- + **More than half** of smartphone users used their phone to look up **health information** or do **online banking** within the last year

# 5 Channels to Optimize & Personalize

1. Email
2. Social Media
3. Smartphones: Texting & Phone Calls
4. FinAid Website (External-Facing)
5. Student Portal

# 1. Email

## Email Trends



**45%**  
of all email  
are spam

**14.5**  
million spam  
messages/day

### Pros

- + Unlimited word count, can explain in-depth
- + School branding adds credibility and familiarity can lead to higher open rates
- + Can be customized and automated
- + Analytics available on open/click rates
- + Can test effectiveness of headlines, time for send, and more

### Cons

- + So. Much. Spam.
- + Unlimited word count leads to long emails no one reads
- + Inboxes are crowded
- + Students have multiple email accounts

# Email at Rivier University (NH)

Michael Macias'S Financial Aid Offer Letter and Cost Outline

**– Cost of Attendance**

Direct Costs

Tuition And Fees	\$10,000
------------------	----------

Indirect Costs

Room And Meals	\$5,000
Books And Supplies	\$1,000
Transportation	\$1,000
Loan Fees	\$100
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$0
<b>Total Cost Of Attendance</b>	<b>\$17,100</b>

**–Financial Aid Eligibility**

Total Cost Of Attendance	\$17,100
Parent Contribution (federally determined)	\$0
Student Contribution (federally determined)	\$0
<b>Total Financial Need</b>	<b>\$17,100</b>

**Your Financial Aid Award**

<b>Total</b>	
Rivier University Funding	
Rivier Grant	\$1,000

[Click here for more video answers](#)

- + Use emails sparingly—so students know it's important information
- + Use compelling subject lines
- + Keep messages short and sweet
- + Make your 'Call-to-Action' (**deadlines**, specific instructions) clear; add hyperlinks as needed
- + AwardLetter is a BIG WIN for Rivier...It's the email that gets opened, read—and acted on—the most

# 2. Social Media

## Student Social Habits

 88%

 56%

 59%

 36%

### Pros

- + Students already use these channels
- + 75% of students use social during college search
- + Students will engage w/ schools on social, but they want to initiate
- + Many channels are free and easy to set up
- + In-channel analytics refine strategy

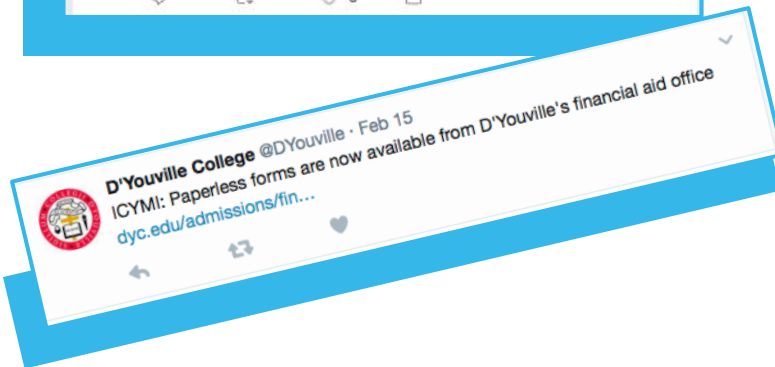
### Cons

- + Many platforms to consider
- + Highly public, channels, must be monitored
- + Students expect immediate answers on social media
- + Responding & monitoring takes staff time



# Social Media

at Grand Valley State (MI) and D'Youville College (NY)



- + Ensure consistent communications across all social channels (Facebook, Twitter)
- + Use strong visuals to create eye-catching posts
- + Make it easy to retweet/share FAFSA and other relevant, outside posts
- + Be prepared to respond, as quickly as possible—or set expectations about the timing of responses

# 3. Text/SMS...and Smartphones

## Student Texting Trends

**99%**  
open rate

**4,000**  
texts a month

### Pros

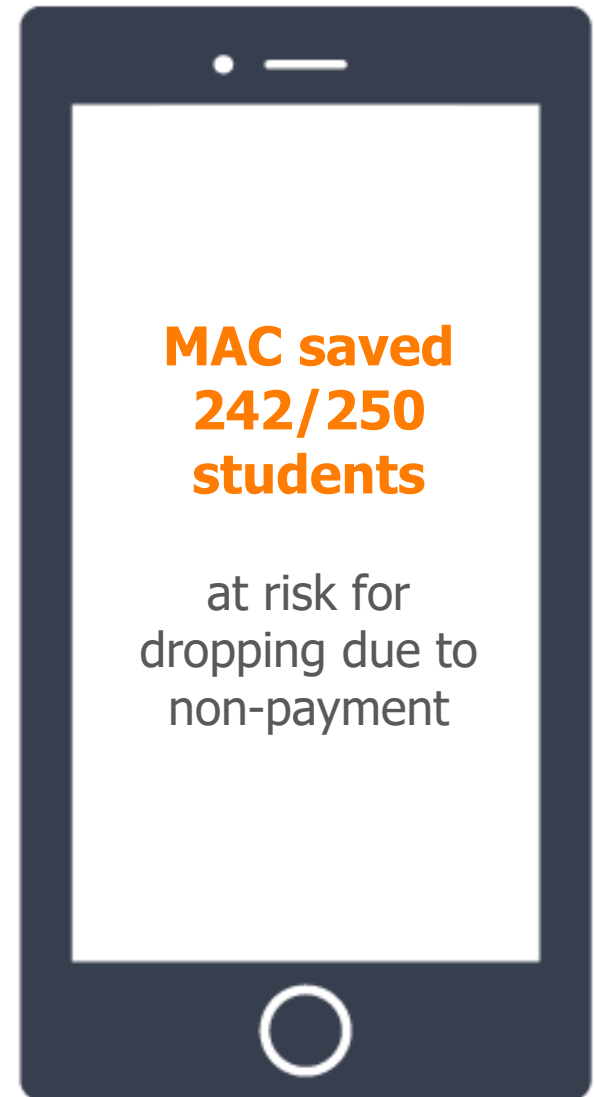
- + Instantly & directly delivered to students
- + Students can communicate with you, anytime, anywhere
- + People tend to read all their texts; they don't read all their emails
- + 77% of Gen Z students say it's ok for schools to contact them via text

### Cons

- + Must keep message short
- + Some students may be wary of receiving unsolicited text messages—get their buy-in
- + Regulations exist around communicating in this format—be informed

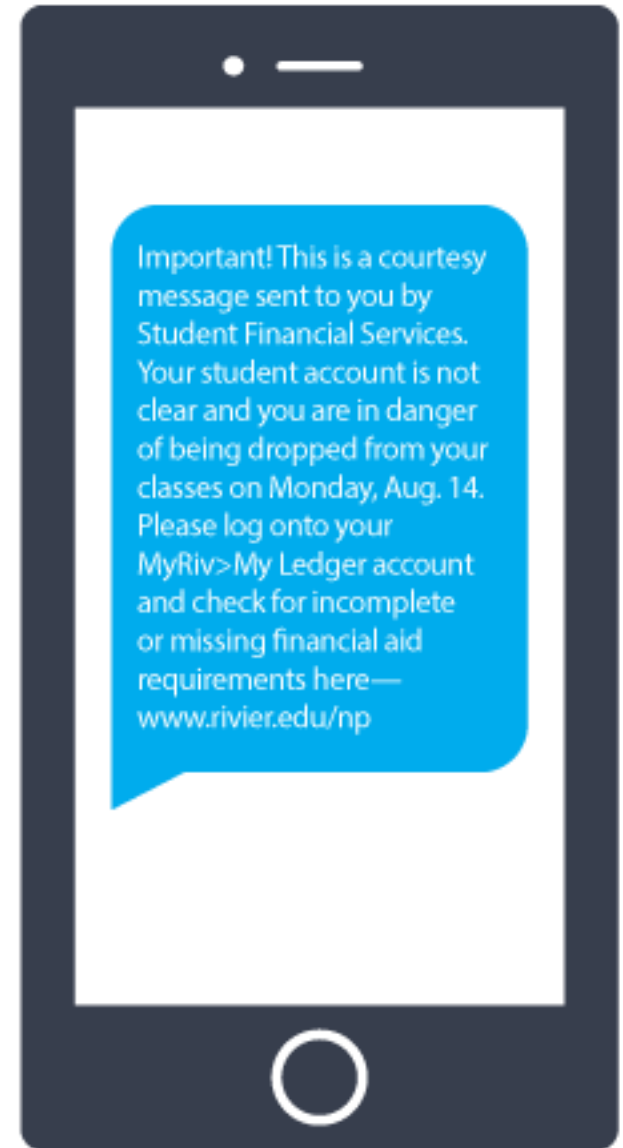
# Texting at Mineral Area College (MO)

- + Texts pushed fast adoption of new financial services processes
- + Text alerts saved all but 8 of the 250 students at risk of getting dropped
- + MAC experienced so much success, it's looking into using this channel for other school initiatives
- + **Warning:** Students expect your immediate response; they don't care about office hours



# Texting at Rivier

- + Always include a Call to Action (CTA)—like this link to the student portal
- + In addition to including a CTA/link, other best practices for texting include:
  - Always ask for, and document, recipients' permission to receive texts
  - Keep it short and sweet—this example may be too long for some users that can only see messages up to 155 characters
  - Be prepared: Students expect immediate responses—and they don't care about your office's 9–5 schedule



# 4. School/FinAid Website

## Website Trends



of mobile users say a mobile-optimized website is important to them, according to Google

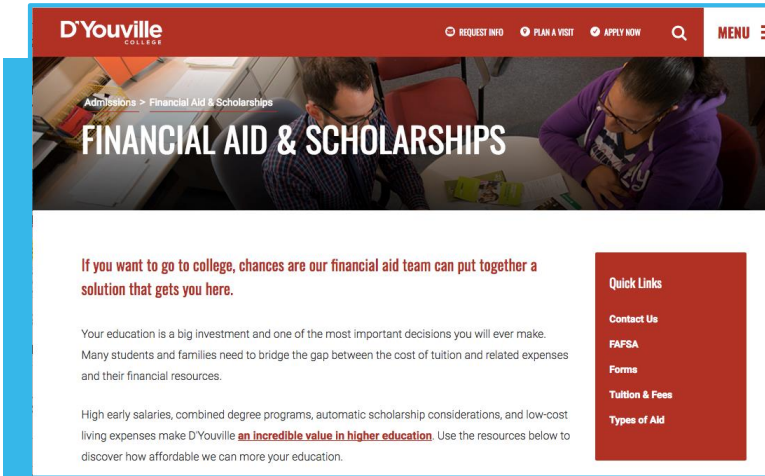
### Pros

- + A well-designed, informative website allows students to find information easily
- + Websites can be branded
- + Websites can house an expansive array of information in multiple formats
- + Robust analytics available

### Cons

- + Poor user experience causes visitors to disengage
- + You have to actively drive students to visit the website

# FinAid Website at D'Youville

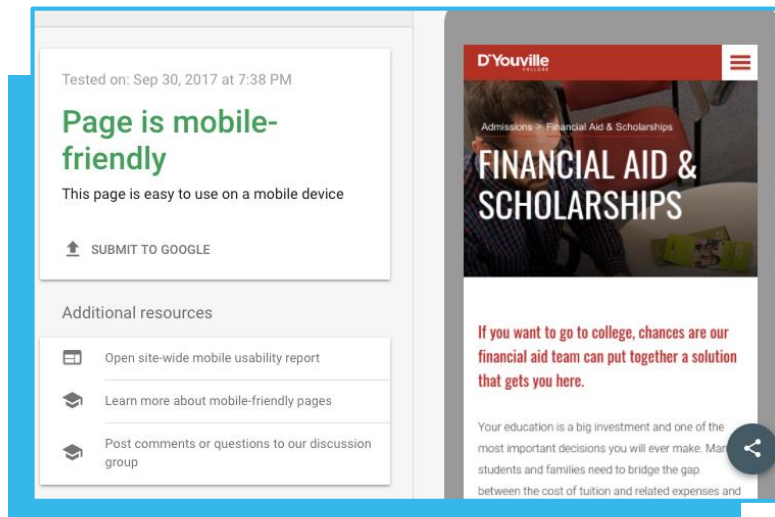


+ Website is mobile-optimized—use this analyzer site to make sure yours is: <https://search.google.com/test/mobile-friendly>

+ It's the single source of truth—especially for recruitment and FinAid

+ Use callout boxes, menu, and links to make relevant information easy to find

+ Videos, especially those from FaTV, are highly valued—engaging, easy to follow, and a great step toward FinLit



# 5. Student Portal

## Design Matters



**75%** of users judge your credibility on design and user experience.

### Pros

- + Primary point of contact between students & school; secure, personalized
- + Often can target unique messaging by student ID
- + Visitors are already in “school mode” when they log into the student portal
- + Secure; single-sign-on (SSO)
- + Analytics available, sometimes

### Cons

- + Portals aren’t viewed as the most engaging channel by students
- + Portals can offer a disjointed, clunky experience if not maintained
- + Controlled by IT

# Student Portal at Glenville State College

**Glenville State College (GSC)**  
 Chemistry, Design, Physics, 0000 1434  
 04/03/2018

**Costs in the 2018-19 year**

**Estimated Cost of Attendance** **\$23,704/yr**

Tuition and fees	\$	7,196
Housing and meals		10,511
Books and supplies		1,000
Transportation		4,899
Other education costs		98

**Grants and scholarships to pay for college**

**Total Grants and Scholarships** ("Gift" Aid; no repayment needed) **\$9,620/yr**

Grants and scholarships from your school	\$	0
Federal Pell Grant		5,920
Grants from your state		2,700
Other scholarships you can use		1,000

**What will you pay for college**

**Net Costs** **\$14,084/yr**  
 (Cost of attendance minus total grants and sch...)

**Options to pay net co**

**Work options**

**Graduation Rate**  
 Percentage of full-time students who graduate within 6 years  
 28.9%  
 LOW MEDIUM HIGH

**Repayment Rate**  
 Percentage of borrowers entering into repayment within 3 years of leaving school  
 36.1%  
 43.8% National Average  
 This institution

**Student Requirements** Holds Academic Progress

**Unsatisfied Requirements**

Requirement	Status	As of Date	Fund	Term
Subsequent Entrance Counseling for Direct Loan Requirement established Feb 16, 2018 Direct Loan-Unsubsidized				
Subsequent Entrance Counseling for Direct Loan Requirement established Feb 16, 2018 Direct Loan-Subsidized				

The Requirements link enables you to download the form necessary to complete the specific requirement or transfers you to another page to satisfy the requirement.

**Satisfied Requirements**

Requirement	Status	As of Date	Fund	Term
Admitted to college - info provided by Admissions	Requirement recd and satisfied	Jan 22, 2018		
Data Sheet	Requirement cancelled	Mar 06, 2018		
Electronic SAR loaded through EDE	Requirement recd and satisfied	Jan 18, 2018		
Entrance Interview for Direct Loan	Requirement recd and satisfied	Feb 16, 2018 Direct Loan-Unsubsidized		
Entrance Interview for Direct Loan	Requirement recd and satisfied	Feb 16, 2018 Direct Loan-Subsidized		
Independent Verification Worksheet - Form Enclosed	Requirement recd and satisfied	Mar 06, 2018		
Proof of being homeless	Requirement recd and satisfied	Jan 19, 2018		
Return notarized Identity/Stmt of Ed Purpose & photo ID	Requirement recd and satisfied	Feb 16, 2018		
Return proof of high school completion	Requirement recd and satisfied	Feb 16, 2018		
Student 2016 IRS data - if required to file - see worksheet IRS data exchange		Jan 22, 2018		

Select Another Aid Year  
 RELEASE: 8.21.1  
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Banner Self-Service portal is helpful for...

- + Timely announcements
- + Relevant documents/forms
- + Personalized account information

...but not a great student experience for personalized messaging





**Thank you!**

# APPENDIX – MORE TIPS!

# Social Media Tips

## Facebook

- ✓ Tell a story, show faces, people, outcomes
- ✓ Be conversational
- ✓ Focus on providing info, not on generating likes or shares
- ✓ Link back to relevant FinAid resources
- ✓ Provide your social media team with talking points and guidelines on who to direct questions to

## Twitter

- ✓ Say something worth listening to in 140 characters
- ✓ Visuals help you stand out
- ✓ GIFs are eye-catching and give your feed variety
- ✓ Use for immediate information dissemination: systems down, office closures, deadlines approaching
- ✓ Include relevant hashtags #FinancialAid #FinLitMonth #FinAidFail

# Texting Tips



- Keep things short and sweet
- Identify yourself and your reason for texting clearly
- Include a CTA (call to action), a reason for the text
- Provide an opt-out process
- Text during hours your students will consider 'normal' but know they'll likely respond at all hours
- If you need to use shorthand, start with most obvious words

# Email Tips

- **Content Counts**
  - Keep things short and sweet
  - Use subheads to guide readers
  - Avoid embedding forms-link to them instead
  - Don't overdo it on fonts, styles, colors
- **Optimize your email for mobile devices**
- **Use Analytics**
  - A/B test where possible (subject line, time of day)
  - Monitor analytics and refine
- **Avoid spam filters**
  - Use recognizable sender name
  - Keep email send list clean
  - Stay up to date with ISP practices and anti-spam laws
- **Subject Lines Matter**
  - Try to stay around 30–45 characters max
  - Questions get higher open rates
  - Avoid all caps, exclamation marks in headlines

# Website Tips

- In the USA, [94% of people with smartphones search for local information on their phones.](#)
- Make sure your site is mobile optimized here: <https://search.google.com/test/mobile-friendly>
- Use channels to drive traffic to your website: email, social
- Website visitors will usually stick around for 59 seconds max—but the first 10 seconds matter most. Make info easy to find, scan, navigate.
- Meet ADA Standards for Accessibility design

# Student Portal Tips

- Target messaging by student ID, driving engagement
- Request high-visibility portal spaces to pass along timely information: Landing pages, right rails, banner ads
- Mobile optimize your portal <https://search.google.com/test/mobile-friendly>
- Request analytics on student usage: High traffic times, most visited pages, most clicked links
- Pay attention to least-visited pages, links that are not clicked on, high bounce pages, and rethink their use / strategy
- Many portals include community-building initiatives, monitor FinAid streams and groups, and provide information