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University Relations/Enrollment Management

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## 2017 e-Expectations Infographic\_How to engage high school students and parents online\_Sept.

e-Expectations

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# 8 SURPRISING NEW FACTS

## How to Engage High School Students and Parents Online

**1** High school students use search engines more often than site navigation to find specific information within a college’s website.

HOW DO YOU FIND INFORMATION ON A COLLEGE WEBSITE? (SELECT ONE)



**31%**  
I use a search engine



**22%**  
I look at the links the site offers and figure out which one is the best path



**20%**  
I use the search tool on the site



**16%**  
I use the links from emails



**11%**  
I use the links from college planning sites



**1%**  
Other

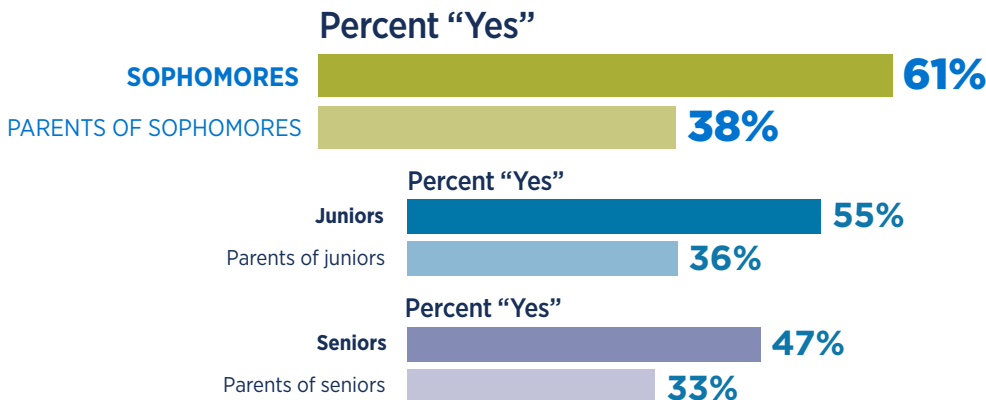
**TAKEAWAY**

SEO is critical. If anyone has any lingering doubts about the importance of search engine optimization, this data should answer it once and for all. Using a search engine is how students and their parents prefer to find information on your website.

**Parents agree.** Search engines were their top choice, too, for finding information on a college website.

**2** High school sophomores, juniors, and seniors often click on paid digital ads, with sophomores leading the way.

HAVE YOU EVER CLICKED ON AN AD FOR A COLLEGE THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE SEEN ONLINE? THIS COULD HAVE BEEN ON A WEBSITE OR ADS IN SEARCH RESULTS, ON SOCIAL MEDIA, OR SOME OTHER WEBSITE. (YES/NO)



**TAKEAWAY**

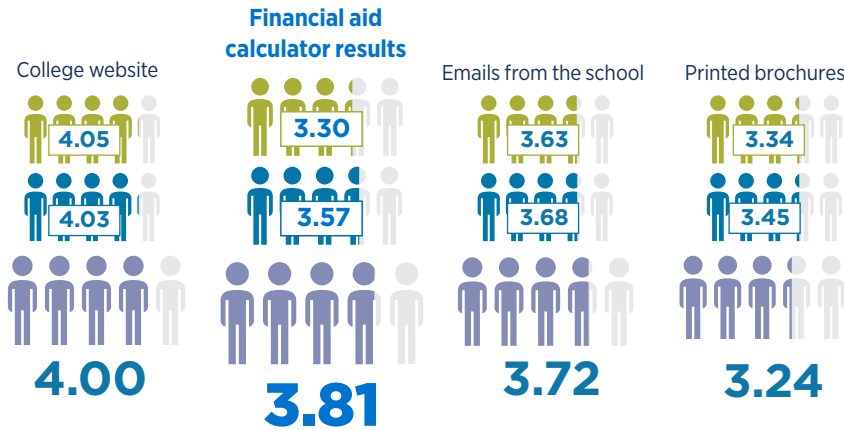
Paid online ads should be an established part of your college marketing mix for all high school grade levels and for parents. To get the most from your ads, experiment with “gated carrots”—resources, privileges, or opportunities on your landing pages that can only be accessed by submitting contact information.

# 3

Online net price calculators are almost as influential as the entire college website, especially for high school seniors.

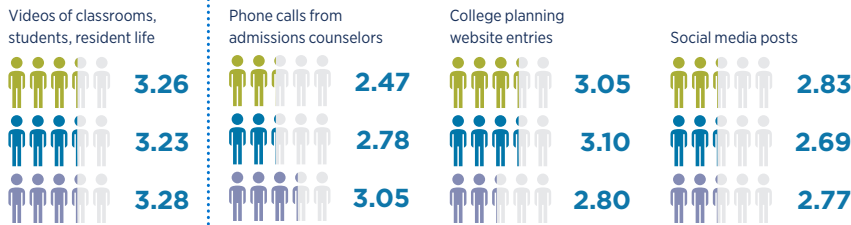
HOW MUCH DOES EACH RESOURCE INFLUENCE YOUR INTEREST IN A SCHOOL?  
RANK FROM 1-5 WITH 5 = MOST INFLUENCE (Ranked by SENIORS' RESPONSES)

Sophomores Juniors Seniors



## TAKEAWAY

Provide a net price calculator on your website that is easy to complete within just a few minutes. The calculator should be a primary call to action on your site at the same level as “request information,” “apply for admission,” and “schedule a campus visit.”

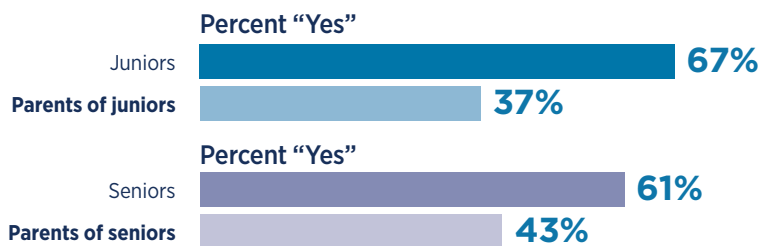


Parents agree. Calculators were second only to websites in their rankings, too.

# 4

60% of students use college planning websites, as do about 40% of parents.

HAVE YOU EVER USED A WEBSITE TO HELP YOU WITH YOUR COLLEGE PLANNING (THAT ISN'T FOR ONE SPECIFIC SCHOOL)? (SELECT ONE)



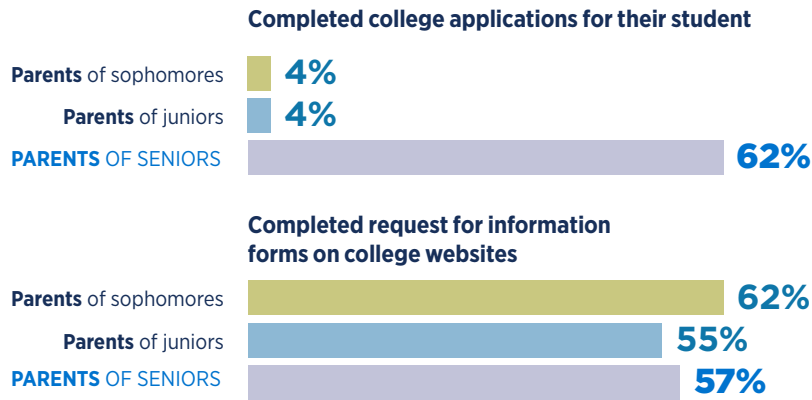
## TAKEAWAY

Building a strong presence on college planning sites is important. Choose credible sites and make sure they maintain accurate, up-to-date information that appropriately portrays your brand. Also, be sure to consistently track referral traffic from these sites.

Note: Sophomore data was not available for this item.

# 5

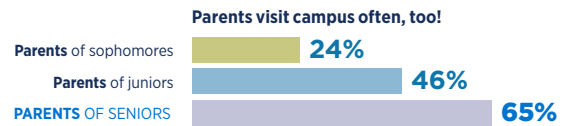
1/2 of parents take action on behalf of their students, especially parents of seniors.



## TAKEAWAY

Expanded parent communication and programming are more essential than ever before in college marketing and enrollment management. Realize that when you communicate with students, parents are also reading the materials. The days of only engaging students are long past.

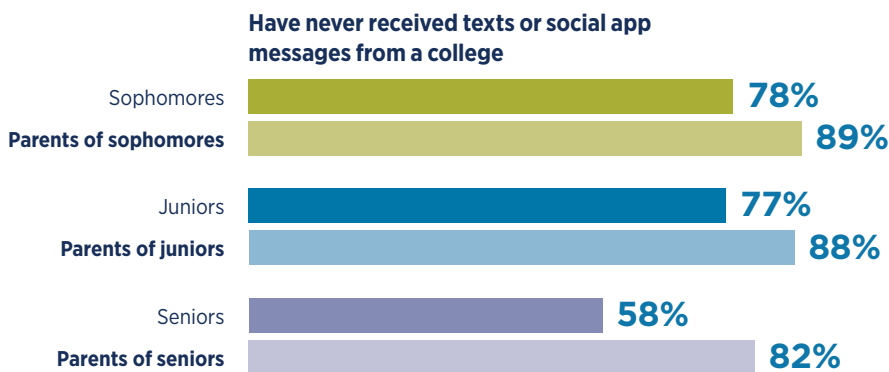
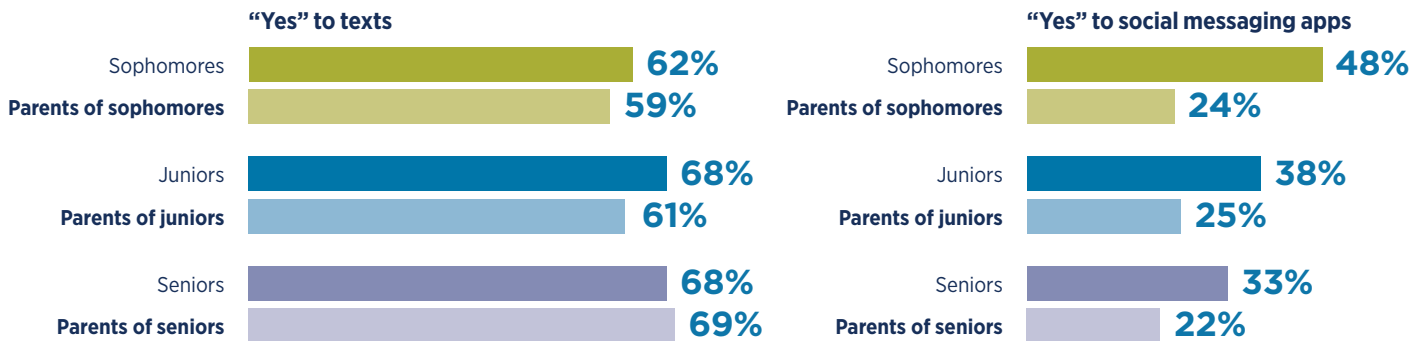
## DID YOU KNOW?



# 6

About 2/3 of students and parents are receptive to text messaging, and 1/3 to 1/2 are open to social app messaging, but most have received neither.

WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO ALLOW A COLLEGE TO SEND YOU TEXT MESSAGES OR USE A SOCIAL MESSAGING APPLICATION (SUCH AS MESSENGER, KIK, OR WHATSAPP) TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOU? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)



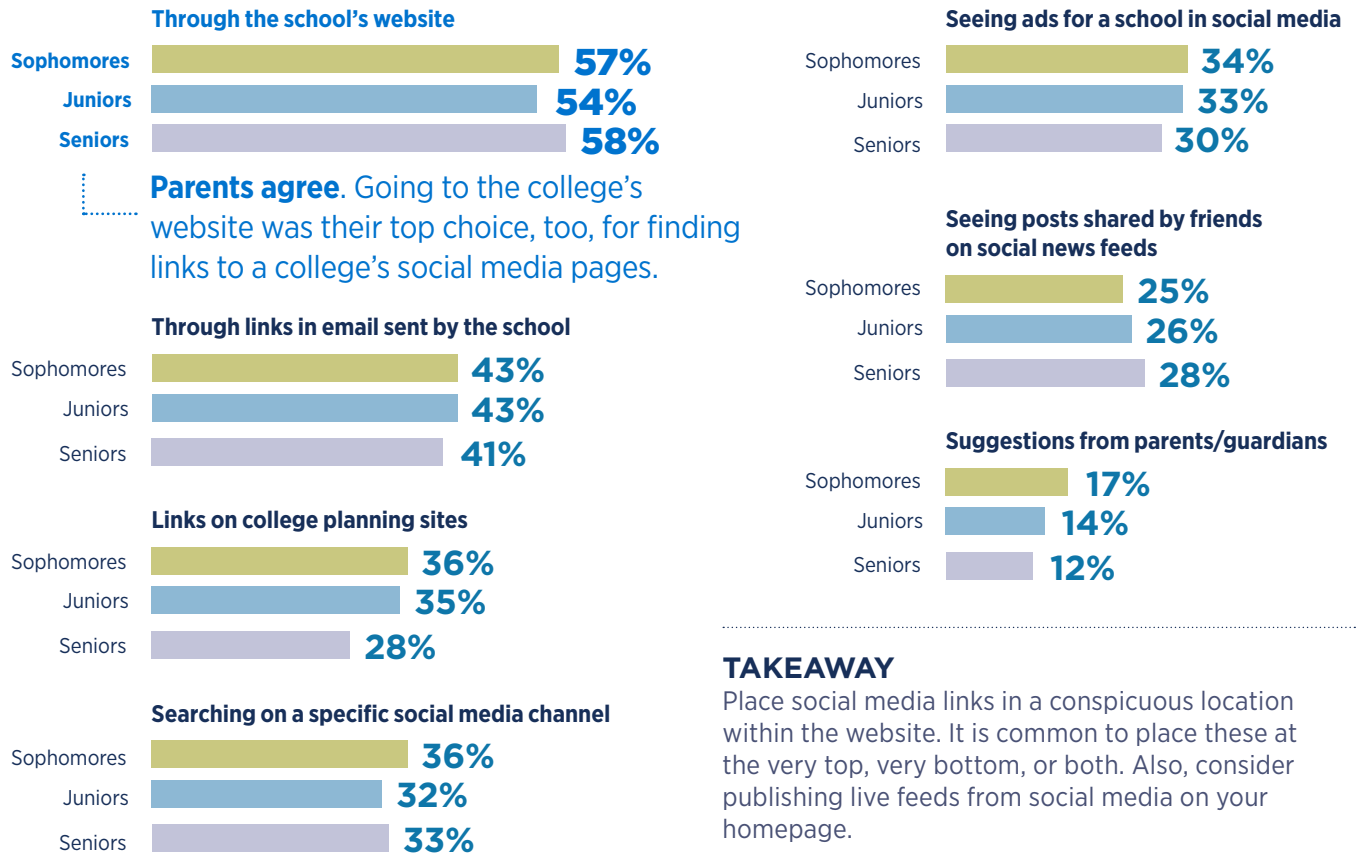
## TAKEAWAY

Based on these findings, more institutions should, at minimum, begin to incorporate texting. The findings of a separate 2017 report from Ruffalo Noel Levitz confirmed that texts are effective for recruitment. (See *2017 Marketing and Student Recruitment Report of Effective Practices*, page 4.)

# 7

## Students' #1 place to find social media links is the college's website.

HOW DO YOU FIND SOCIAL MEDIA SITES THAT ARE SPECIFIC TO A COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY? (SELECT ALL)



**Parents agree.** Going to the college's website was their top choice, too, for finding links to a college's social media pages.

### TAKEAWAY

Place social media links in a conspicuous location within the website. It is common to place these at the very top, very bottom, or both. Also, consider publishing live feeds from social media on your homepage.

# 8

## Snapchat is #1 for daily use, but Facebook is #1 for learning about a college.

### Preferred for daily use by high school students

1. Snapchat
2. Instagram
3. YouTube
4. Facebook
5. Twitter
6. Google+
7. Pinterest
8. LinkedIn
9. Periscope
10. Vimeo

### Preferred for learning about a college by high school students

1. Facebook
2. YouTube
3. Instagram
4. Google+
5. Twitter
6. Snapchat
7. Pinterest
8. LinkedIn
9. Periscope
10. Vimeo

**Parents** use Snapchat, Instagram, and YouTube at much lower rates than students on a daily basis, and they use Facebook, Google+, and Pinterest at higher rates on a daily basis.

### TAKEAWAY

Colleges and universities should continue to use a mix of social media, as students and parents both use a variety of channels. Videos and photography are key. Consider assigning a social media expert on staff to make sure social media is managed well.