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Bridging the Gap Between Skidmore Students and Local Businesses

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Executive Summary

Overview

Skidmore students are an underutilized customer base for small businesses in Saratoga Springs. The purpose of this project is to analyze Skidmore students as consumers in order to determine how local small businesses can better attract them as customers.

Research

102 current Skidmore students were surveyed to ascertain overarching patterns in their purchasing habits. Next, 10 one-on-one follow up interviews were conducted in order to better understand the reasoning behind trends found in the survey.

Key Findings

Survey and interview results indicate that a lack of transportation for students to commute to local business, the expense of purchasing goods or services, and a lack of communication between students and local establishments are the primary obstacles preventing students from patronizing small businesses. However, results also suggest that social media, shared community values among students, and delivery apps present possible solutions that local business owners can tailor to fit their organization.

Recommendations

By coordinating with campus resources already aimed at bridging connections between Skidmore students and the local community, such as certain dining services and First Year Experience programs, small businesses can better communicate with students. Additionally by utilizing their social media and food delivery apps, as well as strategically distributing discounts, local establishments may be able to gain more businesses from Skidmore students.

Introduction

Small businesses are the heartbeat of local economies and communities. In addition to creating job opportunities, the tax revenue generated by locally owned businesses can in turn be used to fund public works and services (Robinson 2010). When a small business thrives, it also creates opportunities for other local businesses, who can use each other's services. Local establishments showcase the character and charm of their respective communities which can improve the daily life of residents and increase lucrative tourism. In addition to these regional benefits, small businesses often offer a more ethical and sustainable alternative to large corporations due to the better environmental footprint of smaller scale production and distribution, and compliance with stricter local labor laws (Korneeva, Skornichenko, & Oruch, 2021).

Despite these positives, small businesses across the country are struggling. It is estimated that 20.8% of worldwide retail purchases in 2023 will take place online, with Amazon accounting for over a third of those ecommerce sales (Baluch, 2023). Off line, Walmart is visited by millions of customers weekly. Large companies are able to engage in mass marketing campaigns and data driven strategies like microtargeting, which uses personal data analysis to target relevant advertising to an individual online. Expensive and technical, such strategies would not be feasible, or even effective, for the average small business to use to communicate and market to consumers.

A one size fits all solution will not help locally owned businesses thrive, nor will attempting to imitate the strategies of larger corporations with more resources. Small enterprise owners must find a creative strategy that is tailored to their community. When asked what marketing mistake small businesses most often make, author and marketing strategist Seth Godin

replied, "They believe in the mass market instead of obsessing about a micro market. They seek the mass market because it feels harder to fail--there's always one more stranger left to bother. It's the small, the weird, and the eager that will make or break you." (2013). In Saratoga Springs, Skidmore College students may be the group to fill that gap for our community. In order to make use of this potential customer base, it is important to first understand the needs, behaviors, and desires of this group and how that fits into the local business scene.

Background

Small Businesses

According to the Small Business Association, establishments are classified as "small" based on their number of employees and average annual revenue, relative to their industry (Nwatu, 2016). There are other criteria that must be met to qualify as a small business; the SBA states that such an establishment must be organized for profit, independently owned and operated, and non dominant in their field. Still, small businesses consist of a wide variety of retail and service oriented establishments. In Saratoga Springs this range is showcased on Broadway, which runs through the center of the Downtown area. Along with its adjacent side streets, the Broadway area hosts many locally owned businesses that could attract Skidmore students, such as food establishments (restaurants, cafes, bars, etc) and specialty stores (clothing, stationary, bookshops, etc), as well certain other establishments such as hair salons or barber shops. Though they face unique challenges and advantages, these are the types of establishments that are the focus of this project, because they are all small businesses that can leverage similar solutions.

In order to strategize for businesses in Saratoga Springs, it is important to consider a few advantages that most small businesses generally share and can leverage in implementing steps to boost business. First of all, locally owned businesses know their product and their community, providing them the ability to provide exceptional customer service which can help them retain customers after the initial hurdle of attracting them. While gaining new customers is challenging, locally owned businesses have a smaller consumer pool to pull from compared to larger corporations. Therefore, they can tailor their approach accordingly which is the primary purpose for researching the consumer behavior of Skidmore students. Additionally, smaller establishments have the ability to adapt to the needs of customers without having to consult and navigate large organizational structures and boards, potentially making it quicker to implement any suggestions that arise from research such as this.

That being said, even though small businesses may have the structure to adapt to customers quickly, they often lack the resources and cash flow to launch large scale changes or take risks. The size of most local organizations also prevent them from being able to compete with the efficiencies and pricing of many large companies and online shops. A local coffeeshop cannot compete with the prices or recognizability of Dunkin Donuts, a small bookshop cannot hand deliver packages to customers' doorsteps within 24 hours of ordering, and no mom and pop store has the means to microtarget customers digitally. For these reasons, communications and marketing are exceptionally valuable because they present opportunities for creative solutions that don't require major changes in product or price that small businesses simply cannot take on.

Saratoga Springs

One of the primary economic advantages of Saratoga Springs is its ability to attract tourists due in large part to the horse races. A 2011 economic analysis of the Saratoga horse races found that off-track visitor spending accounted for approximately $67 million to $94 million in regional economic output yearly (HR&A Advisors, p.4). As a result of the racetrack, as well as nearby attractions such as Lake George, the summer months bring in large quantities of tourists and economic activity.

However, during the other seasons, foot traffic and spending is not as predictable. After noting the vibrancy of downtown Saratoga Springs, an economic strategic plan for Saratoga County emphasized the importance of securing that success, adding, "Economies are dynamic. A community's current success is no guarantee of future success. Saratoga County's own past demonstrates the typical boom/bust cycle. Forward-looking, community-led efforts can mitigate this risk." (Tip Strategies, 2013, p4). If Saratoga Springs is searching for a community-led effort to support the local economy during the off-season, Skidmore College stands out as a potential solution. With a student body of 2,700, the Skidmore population makes up nearly 10% of the Saratoga Springs community. Within this distinct group lies an opportunity for small businesses to understand and target a significant potential customer base composed of college students.

Covid 19 and the Rise of Ecommerce

Saratoga Springs normally experiences an influx of college students in the fall and tourists during the summer; the Covid-19 pandemic put a halt to this. In the Spring of 2020, Skidmore, along with every other college in America, sent their students home for the remainder of the semester. The pandemic put daily life on hold, as quarantine kept people isolated in their

homes, and nearly all non essential businesses temporarily shut down in order to slow the spread of the virus. Even as lockdowns slowly lifted, capacity limits, travel restrictions, and health risks further dettered patronage. Speaking to the impact of the loss of the summer tourism on the Saratoga Springs community, Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce president Todd Shimkus said, "Safe to say this is a year for our local businesses to do everything they can to survive. Without fans at the racetrack, SPAC, Live Nation, or the Casino, it's hard for any business locally to thrive." (2021). Towns across the country faced similar circumstances, and many small businesses could not withstand the long period with a lack of steady revenue stream.

Businesses that did survive the pandemic now grapple with the permanent effects of Covid on commerce. According to the US Census Bureau, online shopping surged in 2020. The bureau reports, "Ecommerce sales increased by $244.2 billion or 43% in 2020." (Brewster, 2022). Studies suggest that this increase in online shopping has had permanent effects, resulting in a continued usage of ecommerce sites by many Americans (Shaw, Eschenbrenner & Baier, 2022). Yet, while many brick and mortars were hit by the damaging effects of the uptick in online purchases, big box retailers actually had an increase in revenue. Companies like Walmart, Best Buy, and Target, where consumers could easily stock up on their essentials in one place, appealed to consumers during the pandemic who wished to cut down on their time in public places (Repko & Thomas 2020).

Though exacerbated by the pandemic, Saratoga Springs businesses have faced the impact of mobile shopping and smart technologies for years. Before the rise of the internet, consumers made nearly all purchases in stores, but over the course of the past decades, ecommerce has radically changed the way Americans shop. (Reinartz, Wiegand & Imschloss, 2019). Before online shopping, brick and mortar retailers had a near monopoly on Skidmore students, who had

no option but to purchase their goods and services from nearby sources. Specialty stores, such as art supply shops or bookshops served as the primary available resources for students to purchase goods. Today, however, Amazon and other large commerce sites are easily accessible to students who may opt to purchase their supplies online rather than in person. Small businesses in Saratoga Springs, and in most towns across the country, have to strategize creatively to adapt to this new landscape in which competitors are no longer solely on their block, but at the fingertips of almost every consumer.

Marketing to Generation Z

Because the Skidmore student body is made up of Generation Z, those born between the years 1997 and 2012, it is also valuable to look at some overall generational trends before analyzing the specifics of Skidmore's purchasing behaviors. According to a new CM Group report analyzing the different generation's approaches to consumption and advertising, Gen Z has specific characteristics that should be considered when marketing towards them. According to the 2022 report, smartphone centric consumption is one of the stand out traits of Generation Z, with over 75% stating they occasionally shop via their smartphones and 49% reporting that they consume their news and information via social media platforms (CM Group 2022). In terms of values, Generation Z has a notable desire for authenticity. According to the report, "Authentic, transparent messaging is considered more important than unique products, low prices, or any other competitive advantage among Gen Z shoppers." (CM Group 2022). This provides an opportunity for small businesses which may not be able to compete with the pricing of large corporations but may be better positioned to harness this more intangible, emotional value.

Similarly advantageous to local small businesses is this generation's attraction towards

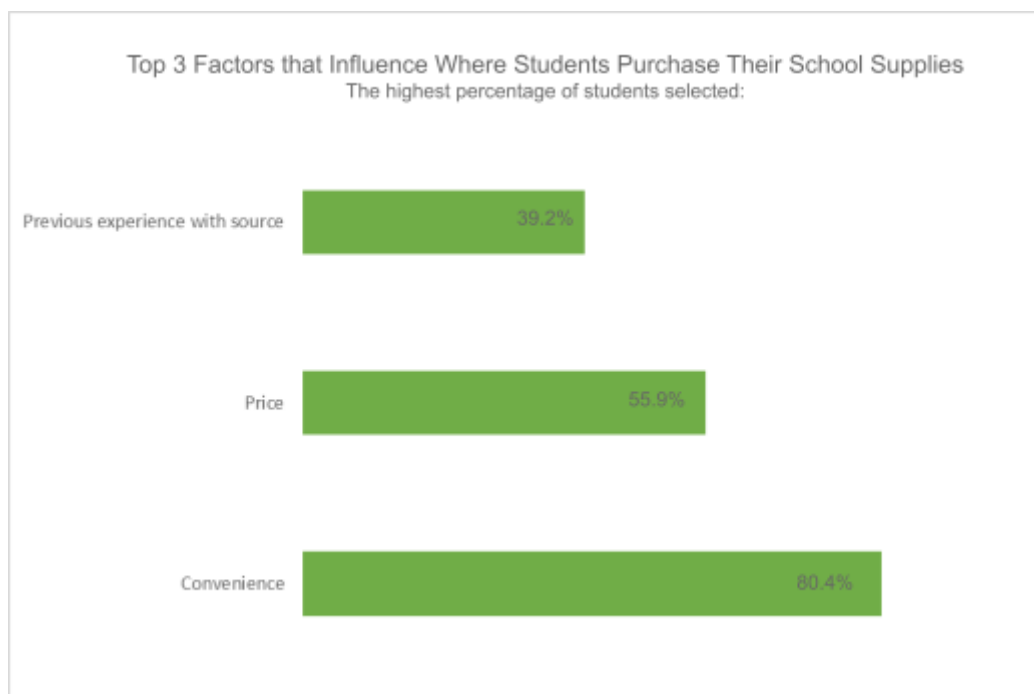sustainability, which is noted in the CM Group study (2022).

Research

      A survey was designed to provide valuable quantitative data and measured insights on

Skidmore student consumption habits and their current level of engagement in downtown

Saratoga Springs in order to better inform recommendations on how to attract them as customers

for local businesses. A multiple choice format in which participants were able to choose one or

more choices was deployed because it is easier for respondents to use, and also provides data that

can be analyzed and quantified (Taherdoost, 2016). Also included in the survey was an 'other'

option for all applicable multiple choice questions in order to combat any inaccuracies that might

result from participants selecting a random answer due to limited options. The survey was sent

out via email to a random sampling of a quarter of Skidmore undergraduate students of all class

years who are currently enrolled in on-campus classes, and generated 102 responses. Following

the completion of the survey, I conducted individual interviews with ten participants in order to

gain a deeper understanding of the reasons behind patterns and themes that emerged from the

survey.

      44.7% of participants reported purchasing their school supplies, excluding textbooks,

from large department stores such as Target or Walmart. A significant portion of students

surveyed also buy their supplies at the Skidmore Bookshop (30.1%) or online (17.5%). Only two

students reported to have purchased their school supplies, such as notebooks, writing materials,

art supplies, etc., from local businesses. As illustrated in figure 1, convenience, cited by 80.4% of

participants, is the most common determining factor in where students purchase school supplies,

which suggests that students view shopping in-person at small stores to be less convenient than online or on campus resources. Follow-up interviews provided possible explanations for this perceived inconvenience. Nearly all participants without a car on campus listed transportation issues as an obstacle to going into the local downtown area, with many depending on a friend's car if they want to go anywhere off campus. While large department stores offer many products in one place and only require one trip, gathering school supplies from local businesses can require visits to multiple stores that may have different hours of operation or be far from each other. .

Figure 1

Top 3 Factors that Influence Where Students Purchase Their School Supplies
The highest percentage of students selected:

|	
Previous experience with source	39.2%
Price	55.9%
Convenience	80.4%

Survey results also indicate a lack of awareness of student discounts and promotions available at local businesses. When participants were asked to list up to three local businesses that offered student discounts, 32% of respondents were unaware of any student discounts, while

only 6% of participants listed three or more businesses (see Appendix). The participants'
inability to name stores that offer discounts demonstrates a lack of effective communication
between businesses and students, who according to follow up interviews, would be motivated to
visit an establishment if they offered discounts. One sophomore participant explained during her
interview that student discounts do encourage her to try new places. She said, "The only student
discount I know of is at the thrift store Treasures, so that's where I go.." Though many local
shops offer student discounts, the very people those promotions are targeting are unaware of
them, meaning that a more effective communications strategy is needed in order to boost sales
from Skidmore students.

66% of Skidmore students use food delivery services at least once or twice a month,
according to the survey (see figure 2). During follow-up interviews, participants were asked
about their personal food delivery habits and their reasoning for ordering in. Nearly all
participants who reported using food delivery apps cited convenience or availability as their
reason for doing so. On-campus students with meal plans sometimes use food delivery services
late at night because it is the only option available to them once the Murray Atkins Dining Hall
(d-hall) closes. For that reason, students listed fast food chains as their usual delivery choice, as
those businesses tend to remain open past most local spots. In addition to being open later,
students explained that fast food restaurants are also more affordable than other local eateries, as
well as available on a larger range of apps. Many local establishments are available on only one
delivery app if any. One participant noted in their interview, "I wish that there were more
restaurants on uber eats. Later at night there were just fast food options, only chains."

Figure 2
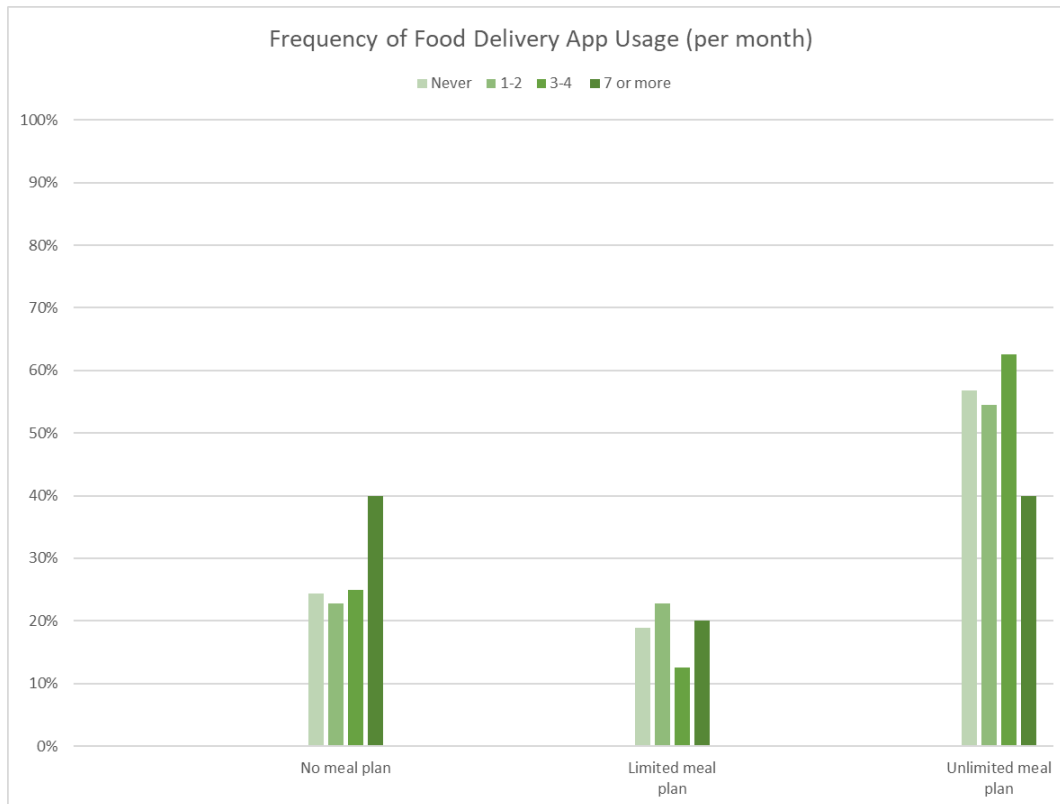
Nearly all survey and interview participants purchase food or drink in person during the

semester. 96% of participants purchase food or drink downtown at least once a month, with the

largest number of participants stating they do so on average 3 to 4 times a month (see Figure 3).

Survey participants who reported they never purchase food or drink off campus currently live in

the Skidmore dorms, which may be in part due to difficulties commuting between downtown

Saratoga Springs and Skidmore campus. Multiple interview participants said that transportation

is a barrier that prevents them from venturing off campus, especially during winter months.

Students cited the variety and quality available as their main motivators for choosing off

campus options for food and drink. Students opt for more casual dining options; sit down

restaurants were cited as too expensive for students to dine at. For this reason, most participants

interviewed listed casual eateries or coffee shops as their most attended locations downtown.

Namely, Uncommon Grounds was mentioned by 4 out of 10 participants, as an affordable cafe with a nice atmosphere that is a popular location for Skidmore students. When asked why she goes to Uncommon Grounds, one participant observed, "It's just one that everyone likes and goes to." The participant further explained that it is somewhere she goes to both alone and with friends, oftentimes to study.

Figure 3

The popularity of Uncommon Grounds among Skidmore students underscores the importance of word of mouth as a factor in attracting Skidomore students as customers.Interview participants noted the influence of fellow Skidmore students in their relationship to downtown Saratoga Springs. When asking senior participants whether or not they go to bars and clubs downtown over the weekend, nearly all explained that whether or not they go out - and where - is dependent on if other students will be attending. According to interview participants, on most Fridays or Saturdays, one bar will hold a majority of the Skidmore students who are out downtown. Another student, who stated that one of the few things he spends money on

downtown is getting his haircut, also spoke to the importance of word of mouth. I asked him how he decided on the barbershop, which he has attended consistently throughout his time in college. The participant explained, "Someone told me about it actually, he said, 'it's the only spot you go to here.'" When asked if he did research, or relied solely on his friend's recommendation he clarified, "Not really a friend. Just someone who went to Skidmore."

Another way students discover new places is via social media. After one participant shared that she is most likely to spend money on coffee, I asked if she was loyal to her current go-to cafes, or if she was interested in trying new places. She responded that after seeing the Whit Cafe on a Skidmore Instagram story recently, she was planning to try it. Another participant also shared that they will look at a business's social media page before trying it for the first time in order to gain more information on its atmosphere, menu, and possible promotions.

Finally, survey results also demonstrated certain differences in data trends depending on class year. Seniors were more likely to spend money on bars and alcohol than other class years, which was expected as they are mostly students who meet the legal drinking age. The most notable results regarding class year involved junior participants, who had significantly different results than other class years in multiple categories.While a majority of freshman, sophomore, and senior students attend the Saratoga Springs farmers market, only one third of juniors do. Similarly, while 50% of freshmen, 60.7% of sophomores, and 90% of seniors have attended Chowderfest, only 33.3% of juniors had attended (see figure 4). A possible factor for this difference in the juniors' results may be that their first year at Skidmore was severely impacted by the Covid pandemic. During their freshman year, a time when most students begin to explore and learn about their local community, there was no ChowderFest, and the Saratoga Springs

Farmer Market was severely altered. Despite the return of such events, Juniors still reported

lower attendance than the grades below them, indicating that their low attendance rate is not just

the result of not being able to go one year. Instead, this may suggest that purchasing habits

formed freshman year may have a lasting effect on students throughout their time at Skidmore.

Further supporting this idea, one sophomore explained that she likes to go to Uncommon

Grounds because it, "...reminded her of freshman year." If habits from someone's first year at

Skidmore are influential throughout their college years, as survey and interview results may

suggest, figuring out how to best appeal to first year students may be beneficial to businesses.

Figure 4
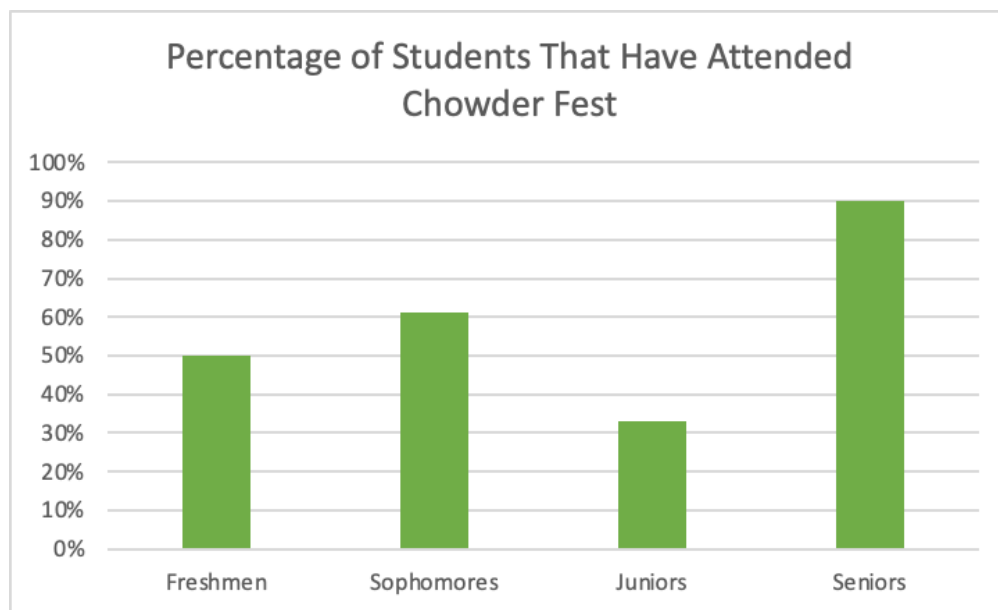
Key Takeaways

Obstacles: Transportation & Convenience, Affordability, and Communication

Transportation and Convenience: As noted in the survey and interview section, students without

a car find transporting around Saratoga Springs difficult, specifically in the winter months.

Instead, they may opt for more convenient options when purchasing goods such as school supplies, toiletries, food, etc., such as finding options on campus or ordering online.

Affordability: Survey and interview participants noted that many local businesses were too expensive for them to frequent during the school year. Following up in the interview, most participants stated that more student discounts would encourage them to try a new business.

Communication: In the survey, a majority of students could not list two or more local businesses that offered a student discount, and the interviews yielded similar results.

Opportunities: Student Trends, Social Media, Delivery Apps, New Students, Sustainability

Student Trends: Experience based brands grow through word of mouth and the shared positive experience of users. Survey and interview results indicate that students are more likely to frequent businesses their peers also attend.

Social Media: Students may discover new businesses to attend via social media posts created by friends, institutions, or local businesses. Students also use social media pages to research further details of a business before attending in person.

Delivery Apps: Survey and interview results show that students are likely to spend their money on food delivery services. Students often order food later in the evening, and look for somewhere affordable.

New Students: Habits and preferences formed freshman year often remain with students throughout their time in Saratoga Springs. This presents an opportunity to build a consistent customer base.

Sustainability: While most students value sustainability, they also feel that more ethical and sustainable options are oftentimes pricier.

Recommendations

Utilize Delivery Apps

A majority of Skidmore students use food delivery apps during the school year. Interview participants indicated they often order fast food on delivery apps because those establishments are open late at night and available on most apps. Small businesses can use food delivery apps (which are also used by pharmacies, liquor stores, etc.) with strategic hours of availability on the app to gain more business from students while minimizing lost profit to app fees.

Offer service on delivery apps from 7 pm until closing.

- Students with meal plans use food delivery services when they want something other than what is available that night in the dining hall, or when they are hungry after the dining hall has stopped serving dinner (8 pm).

- Offering during the suggested time frame allows students to assess dining hall options. This time frame also provides availability after the dining hall has closed. By limiting service hours on apps, restaurants can maintain their own pick-up and delivery services (if already offered) that do not cost them additional fees, therefore only using the apps when most effective.

Use DoorDash

- Students cannot keep track of which establishments are available on each delivery app. Small businesses should use the same app so that they are easily accessible to students. Using the same app would also increase traffic to the platform, further boosting exposure.

- DoorDash is a leading food delivery app that is popular amongst Skidmore students. Commission charges vary but usually reach 30%. While pricey, this is the industry norm.

However, DoorDash offers businesses the first thirty days with zero commission fees, which provides a trial period in which management can determine whether or not the platform works for them.

<u>Skidmore Meals</u>

- Offer a few menu items on delivery apps only available to Skidmore students. Restaurants can tailor a specific meal that is still profitable but more affordable than other menu items. This meal option could be a late-night menu item that makes use of excess ingredients that need to be used before closing. A hole-punch model, where students receive a discount after purchasing a certain number of those meals over time, could encourage students to purchase continually from that restaurant.

21+ Students and Nightlife

Downtown bars and clubs are popular amongst Skidmore students who can legally drink, almost all of whom are Seniors or Juniors. Over three quarters of senior participants indicated in their survey that they are likely to spend money on alcohol or at bars during the semester. This brings an influx of students downtown on Friday and Saturday evenings. However, nearly all businesses besides those related to nightlife are closed at that time except for a couple of late-night food spots, which are bustling on weekend nights. Restaurants and cafes miss out on these hours when students are in town and want to purchase food.

<u>Team Up:</u>

- Small businesses in different fields can work together to help boost revenue. For example:

Most bakeries and cafes close early in the evening, as their peak hours are during the day, and remaining open late would not make financial sense. Such businesses also often wind up with remaining goods that will not be fresh in the morning and go to waste. Giving remaining goods after closing to local bars to sell to customers who want food after a night out and then splitting the profits would add additional revenue to both businesses while cutting down on unnecessary waste.

Build Relationships with New Students

Survey and interview results indicate that purchasing habits formed during the first year of college have a lasting effect on students throughout their time at Skidmore. Therefore, connecting with students early in their time at Skidmore is essential for building and maintaining brand loyalty.

Connect With Freshman: Offer Discounts to Pre-Orientation Programs

- The First Year Experience office at Skidmore offers a variety of orientation programs in which students arrive on campus a few days early. Many of these programs involve excursions into Saratoga Springs, and offering a discount to these groups may encourage them to visit a certain establishment, therefore starting a relationship with a new group of freshmen.

Salons, Barber Shops, and Similar Services: Offer Referrals

Certain businesses need a large clientele because customers only require their services semi-regularly so gaining and sustaining a large customer base is vital. Besides the survey respondents who could not name any student discounts, participants able to list student

discounts cited similar establishments, with many overlaps in chosen businesses.The awareness of certain businesses rather than others may speak to the effectiveness of word of mouth at Skidmore, as students gravitate towards businesses that are peer approved.

- Offer a small discount to Skidmore customers who successfully refer business to generate a buzz among students while also building on relationships with current Skidmore clients.

Create an Experience

Experience based brands grow through word of mouth and the shared positive experience of users. By catering to potential customers' specific tastes and characteristics, businesses can seamlessly weave into the digital and in person conversations of the public. Brands with successful social media strategies are not only promoted on their own platforms, but shared by other users as well.

Clothing Retailers and Specialty Stores: Turn Sales into Events

Survey results show that Skidmore students are less likely to purchase clothing and jewelry than other goods or services. Clothing and specialty stores need to draw students in by giving them a reason to venture to their store.

- An event can turn a store into an experience. To promote sales, launch with a one day event (even if sales will be ongoing) to create motivation and urgency for students to visit the store. This will not only boost sales for that day, but more importantly introduce the store to first time student visitors. Survey results show that most Skidmore students have attended an event they discovered from a poster on campus. Creating an event allows store owners to utilize this tactic by creating posters for their sale events.

- At sale events, have an employee photograph any customers who want their photo taken in the clothes they are trying on. This not only adds an experiential element to the store, but also provides a social media opportunity. Not only will any photos taken in the store and shared on social media help display products, there are steps businesses can take to further encourage customers to share on social media. For example, stores can hold themed competitions based on the time of the event, in which they give a gift card to whoever put together the best outfit using store clothing. This could help promote business amongst Skidmore students who indicated in interviews they value discounts and also use social media in order to research new businesses.

Sell Products on Campus

Skidmore Dining Services partners with local producers to promote a more sustainable campus, but this opportunity is underutilized. A large percentage of Skidmore students, including nearly all underclassmen, live on campus. Interview participants expressed transportation is a barrier that prevents them from venturing off campus; combat this obstacle by taking advantage of campus facilities. By selling products at Skidmore businesses can avoid losing out on customers unable or unwilling to commute to brick-and-mortar locations while familiarizing students with their brand.

<u>What to Sell:</u>

- Distributing on campus allows businesses to tell students about their brand through their product. Since Skidmore students value variety, quality, and price when purchasing food and drink off campus, businesses should choose a menu item that is unique to their establishment but is small and affordable so that students are willing to try it.

For example, Duo Japanese Cuisine & Hibachi now sells Bubble Tea at Burgess Cafe. This item is unavailable elsewhere on campus and is similarly priced to Burgess menu items.

Sustainability

Survey participants reported sustainability to have at least a little importance in their decision-making as customers. However, interviews indicate that while most students value sustainability, they feel more ethical and sustainable are often pricier which makes it a difficult factor to incorporate into consumption choices.

- Coffee shops and similar businesses can make sustainable choices the more affordable option by offering discounts to customers who bring reusable dishware in order to appeal to student's ethical and financial values.

- If unable to offer discounts, these businesses can instead charge a minor additional charge (around 10 cents) for plastic to-go cups. This reinforces the idea that the sustainable option is the more affordable choice without sacrificing any profits.

Bridging the Gap Between Skidmore Students and Local Businesses

SPREAD THE WORD
students are more likely to frequent businesses their peers also attend.

referrals
Offer discount to Skidmore customers who successfully refer business to generate a buzz among students and build relatipnships with current Skidmore clients

UTILIZE DELIVERY SERVICES
Commission fees can be pricey, but delivery apps can boost sales and exposure. DoorDash offers a 30 day commission free trial – see if delivery apps work for your business.

66%
of Skidmore students use delivery apps at least once a month

BRING YOUR PRODUCT TO CAMPUS
Reach out to Skidmore Dining Services to sell your product at Burgess Cafe, Spa, or other dining options at Skidmore. It's a great way to boost sales while building brand exposure amongst students.

Top 3 Motivators for Skidmore Students Buy Food and Drink Off Campus *according to student survey*

1. Variety 2. Quality 3. Price

SUSTAINABILITY
students care about sustainability, but can't always afford the added price.

Coffee shops and similar businesses can make sustainable choices the more affordable option by offering discounts to customers who bring reusable dishware in order to appeal to student's ethical and financial values.

Approximately 90% of students live on campus

90%

what to sell
Choose a product to sell that is unique to your business, can't be found elsewhere on campus, and is inexpensive so that first time customers will try it.

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH FIRST YEAR STUDENTS

offer discounts to freshmen pre-orientation programs
Purchasing habits formed during the first year of college have a lasting effect on students throughout their time at Skidmore

NIGHTLIFE
Upperclassmen who are over 21 are often downtown on Friday and Saturday nights. Restaurants and cafes miss are not open when students are in town and want to purchase food; distirbuting leftover products to bars to sell to customers can help make a profit for both parties.

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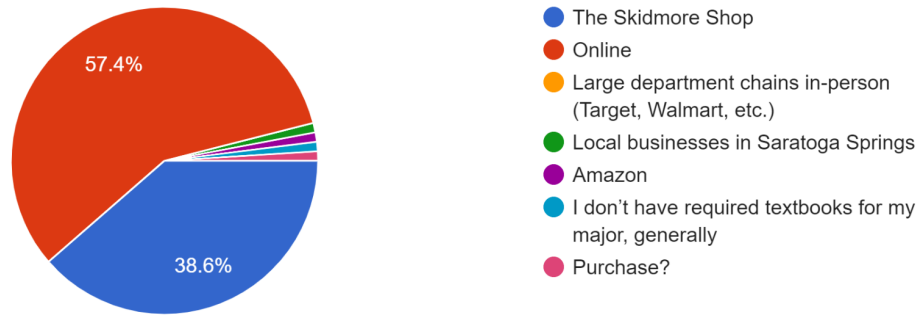   http://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijresmar.2018.12.002.

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Appendix

Survey results.

Where do you most often purchase textbooks during the school year?
101 responses

- The Skidmore Shop
- Online
- Large department chains in-person (Target, Walmart, etc.)
- Local businesses in Saratoga Springs
- Amazon
- I don't have required textbooks for my major, generally
- Purchase?

Where do you most often purchase school supplies during the school year?
103 responses

- The Skidmore Shop
- Online
- Large department chains in-person (T…
- Local businesses in Saratoga Springs
- Amazon
- stationary and stuff I usually get at tag…
- I take electronic notes and otherwise…
- Skidshop or amazon probably a mix

▲ 1/2 ▼

Why do you purchase school supplies from the source you selected in the previous question? Check all that apply.

102 responses

| Category	Value
Price	57 (55.9%)
Convenience	82 (80.4%)
Recommended by Professor	14 (13.7%)
Previous experience with that s…	40 (39.2%)
Quality	15 (14.7%)
Immediately purchased/don't h…	1 (1%)
Book supply card	1 (1%)
I exclusively use e-textbooks. If…	1 (1%)
Student supply card (can only…	1 (1%)
better for the environment	1 (1%)
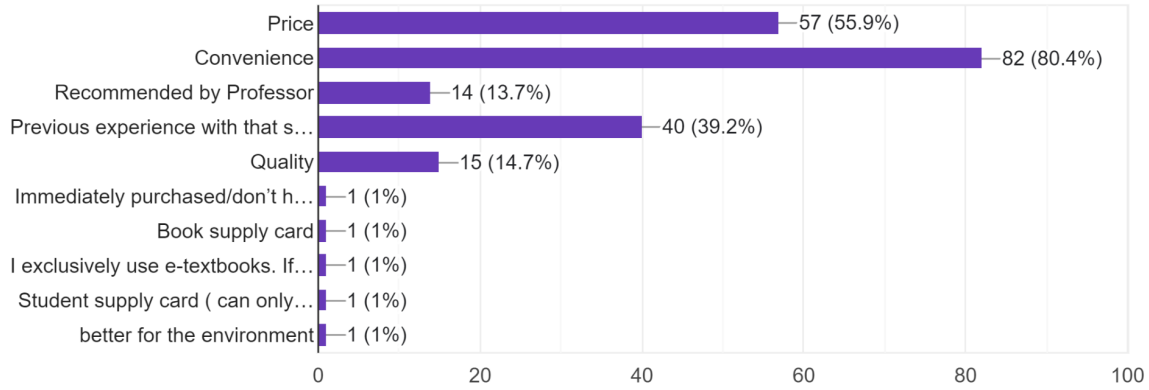
Have you ever attended a club meeting or other event that you learned about from a flyer on campus?

103 responses

Yes — 84.5%
No — 15.5%
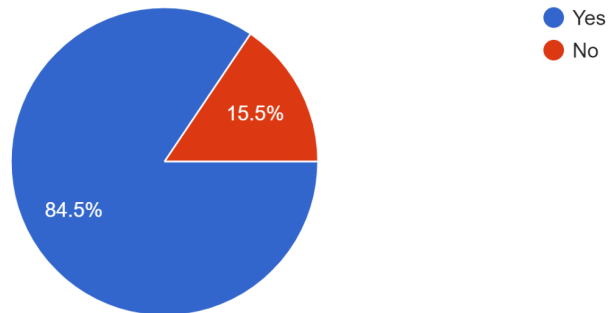
To what extent does sustainability factor into where you purchase goods/services from? Rank on a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being it is never a factor, and 10 being it is always a factor.
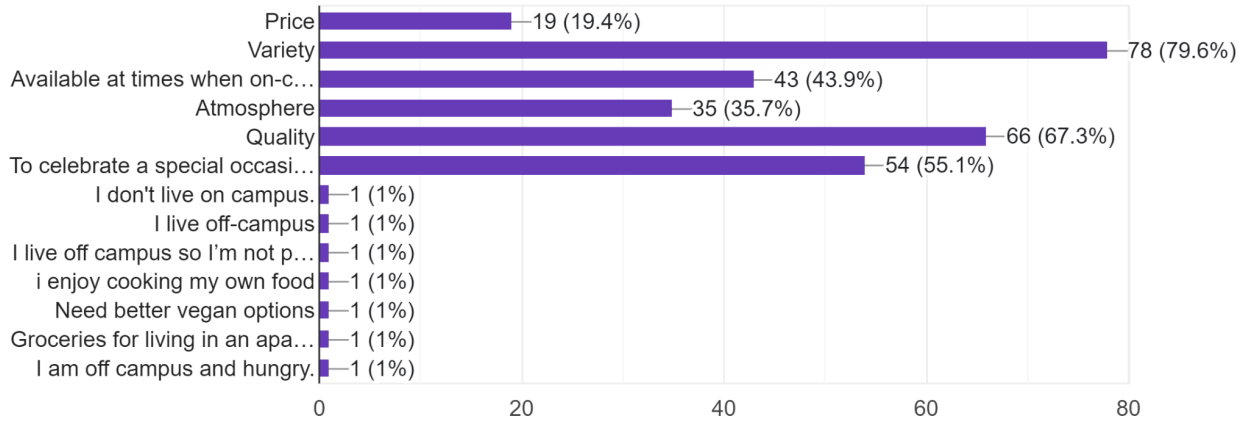
103 responses
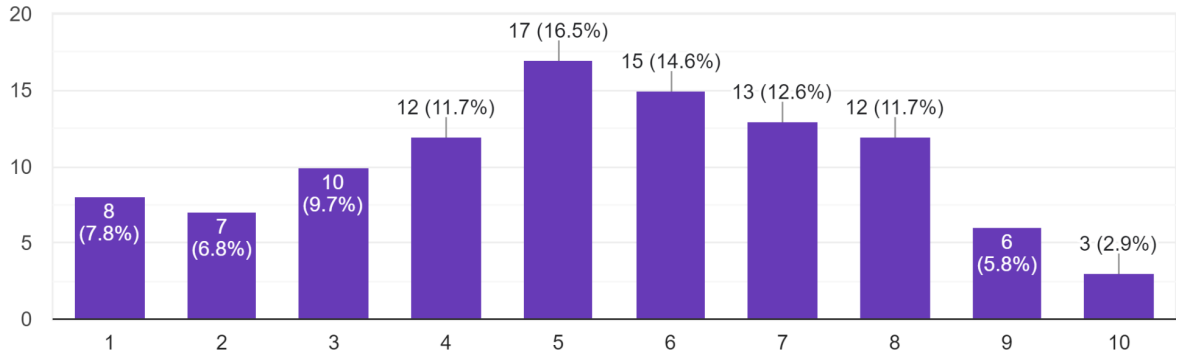
How many times per month during the school year do you purchase food or drink off-campus? (excluding food delivery apps)
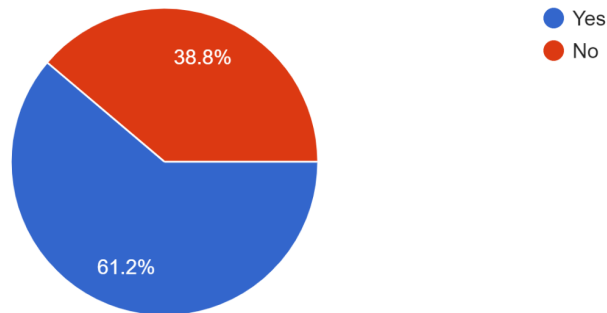
103 responses

- 0 times per month
- 1-2 times per month
- 3-4 times per month
- 5-6 times per month
- 7 or more times per month
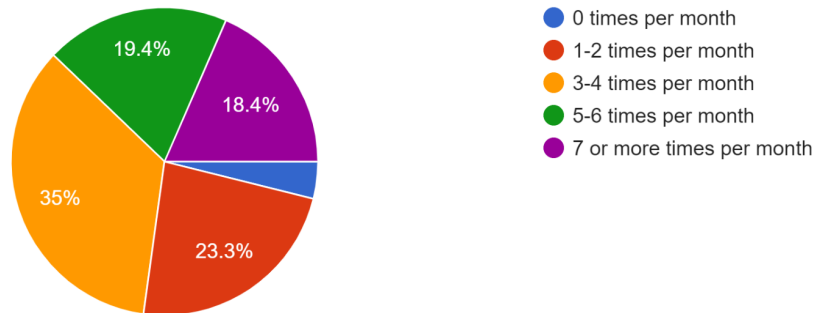
If you answered 1 or more times, why do you choose to purchase food or drink off campus? Check all that apply.

98 responses

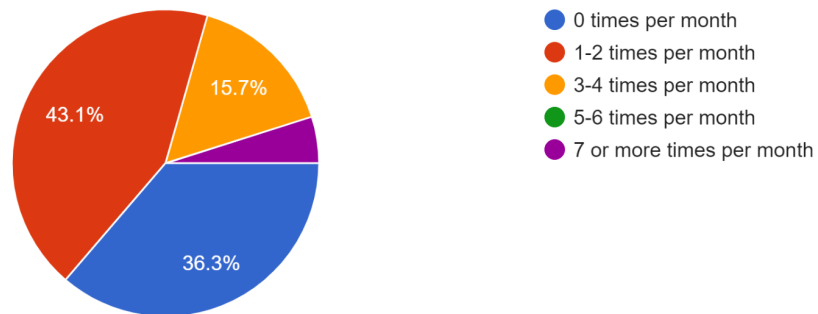Have you ever attended ChowderFest in Saratoga Springs?
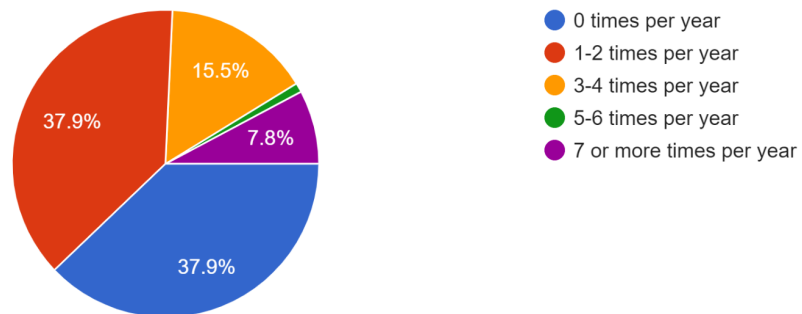
103 responses

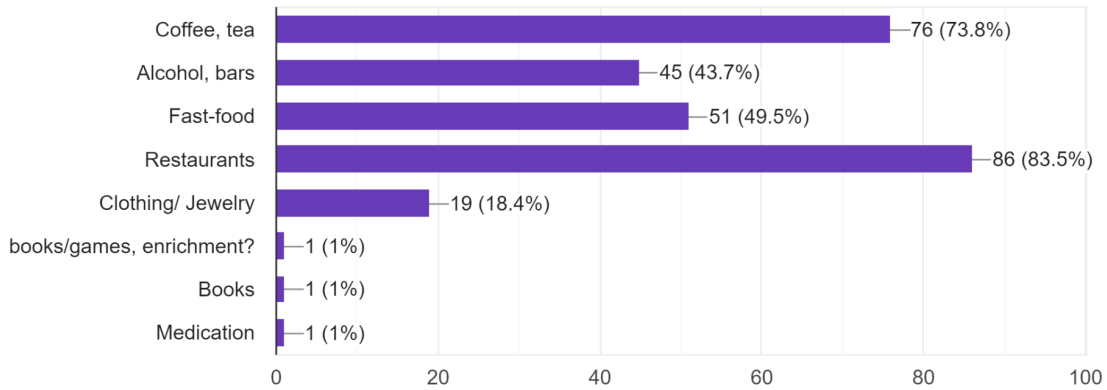How often do you use food delivery apps? (Ex. UberEats, Seamless)
102 responses

- 0 times per month
- 1-2 times per month
- 3-4 times per month
- 5-6 times per month
- 7 or more times per month

43.1%
15.7%
36.3%

How often do you attend the Saratoga Springs farmers market?
103 responses

- 0 times per year
- 1-2 times per year
- 3-4 times per year
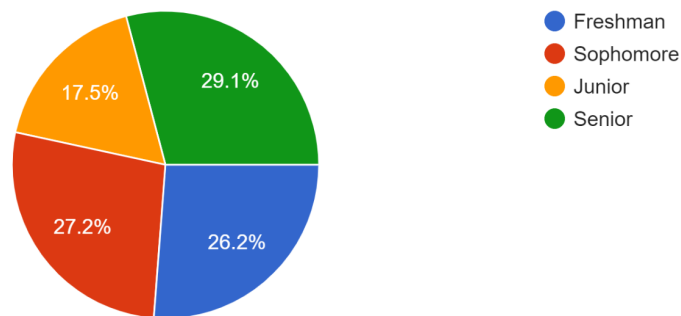- 5-6 times per year
- 7 or more times per year

37.9%
15.5%
7.8%
37.9%

Which of these categories would you be most likely to spend money on in Saratoga Springs? Check all that apply.

103 responses

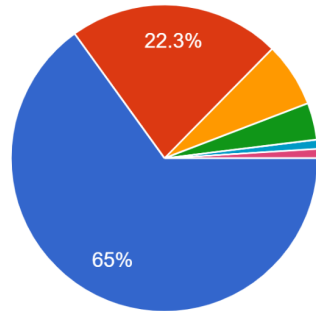| Category	Value
Coffee, tea	76 (73.8%)
Alcohol, bars	45 (43.7%)
Fast-food	51 (49.5%)
Restaurants	86 (83.5%)
Clothing/ Jewelry	19 (18.4%)
books/games, enrichment?	1 (1%)
Books	1 (1%)
Medication	1 (1%)

What year are you?

103 responses

- Freshman — 26.2%
- Sophomore — 27.2%
- Junior — 17.5%
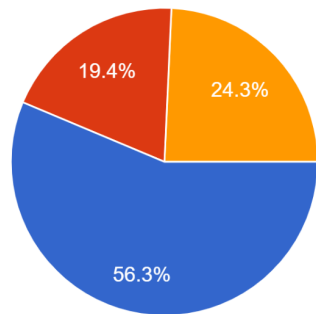- Senior — 29.1%

What is your gender identity?
103 responses

Legend:
- Woman
- Man
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to answer
- Gender identity not listed above (you may specify in the option below)
- Genderfluid
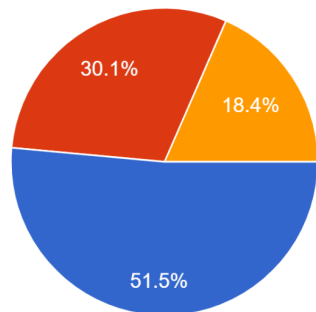- Transgender woman

22.3%
65%

Do you have a Skidmore meal plan?
103 responses

Legend:
- Yes, I have an unlimited meal plan
- Yes, I have a limited meal plan
- No, I do not have a meal plan

19.4%
24.3%
56.3%

Do you live on or off campus?
103 responses

Legend:
- On campus dorm
- On campus apartment
- Off campus (in Saratoga Springs)

30.1%
18.4%
51.5%