

How the Recent Shift to Online Learning has Provided Admissions Offices with Access to New Student Markets

Description

While the rapid shift to online learning by many institutions has occurred out of necessity, it has also presented the admissions office with a few unexpected opportunities.

With the coronavirus outbreak forcing the closure of university campuses, institutions across the globe made the shift to online learning, either in full, or as part of a blended approach to teaching.

While it has presented many challenges, a significant benefit of online learning is that it's a much more flexible approach to higher education, as it doesn't require students to attend campus regularly.

This presents a whole host of new student markets that university staff in admissions can reach out to.

Students in employment

[Research shows](#) that, in 2019, the majority of students studying online degrees were in employment; specifically, 59% are in full-time employment while 18% are in part-time employment.

This demonstrates the fact that the flexibility of online degrees attracts students who wish to remain in employment while also completing their studies.

With more universities embracing online learning, this creates even greater opportunities for institutions to target students who wish to receive further education to explore a new career or to improve their current skills.

Students with care commitments

Online learning also presents a great opportunity for students with care responsibilities.

Whether a student is caring for a child, or for a disabled or elderly relative, they will need flexibility with their study schedule.

With online learning, students can organize their studying around their care commitments, through features such as pre-recorded lectures.

This is particularly important during the coronavirus crisis when many students are required to reduce their contact with others as a result of having a vulnerable person at home.

Students with financial constraints

The average room and board costs at a university in the US amount to [\\$9,800 per academic year](#) at public four-year colleges.

With the additional burden of travelling to and from campus, the cost of in-person study can equate to considerably more than online study.

For online learning degrees, a student has total freedom with where they live, and is therefore able to cut any unnecessary living and transport costs.

The financial incentive of online learning is particularly important for those with care commitments, who wouldn't need to find additional funds for care while they attend campus.

International students

Online learning allows students to study from their own home, which presents a great opportunity for those wishing to graduate from an international university, without having to do so in-person.

Financial difficulties or commitments at home are just a few of the reasons why students may not be able to travel and live abroad at the institution of their choice.

An inability to travel abroad is particularly prevalent during this period where the coronavirus pandemic has put a stop to the majority of international travel.

While some may be disappointed by being unable to study in the country of their choice, online learning is the perfect solution for those who simply wish to receive a degree from a university overseas.

For institutions who are expanding their online learning offering as a result of the coronavirus, this allows for further reach within the global market, with potentially greater numbers of international students from a range of new locations.

For more information on how online learning will impact the admissions office at your institution, please see our white paper: [What Opportunities and Challenges Does Online Learning Present to the Admissions Office During COVID-19 and Beyond?](#)

Additionally, to learn how admissions offices can leverage online learning to reach out to new student segments, join the webinar: *The Move to Online Learning During COVID-19 and Beyond – Opportunities and Challenges for Admissions*, hosted by Alexandra Tanase from QS Unisolution, on 17 September at 04:00 pm CEST/10:00 am EDT. [Register here](#).