Trends in Student Perspectives of their College Search

2013 #IACAC Conference







How does Zinch help you?









Save time and money by connecting directly with best-fit students around the world



Personalize the recruiting process through social media by putting students first in your outreach



Stay informed about current trends in the industry through best in-class research and professional development

Zinch: By the Numbers









Reaches over 40% of college-bound seniors



Over 9 million connections between students and their right-fit colleges and universities over the past 3 years



Connect with secret shoppers and stealth applicants



Zinch registration population in-line with US population



Chegg

Chegg reaches 35% of current college students

Why this Study









Background: Gain greater insights into high school students' and new college students' selection process in selecting a college or university



Methodology: Survey invitations were emailed to Zinch students



Survey Dates: February 2013 Update to survey conducted February 2012



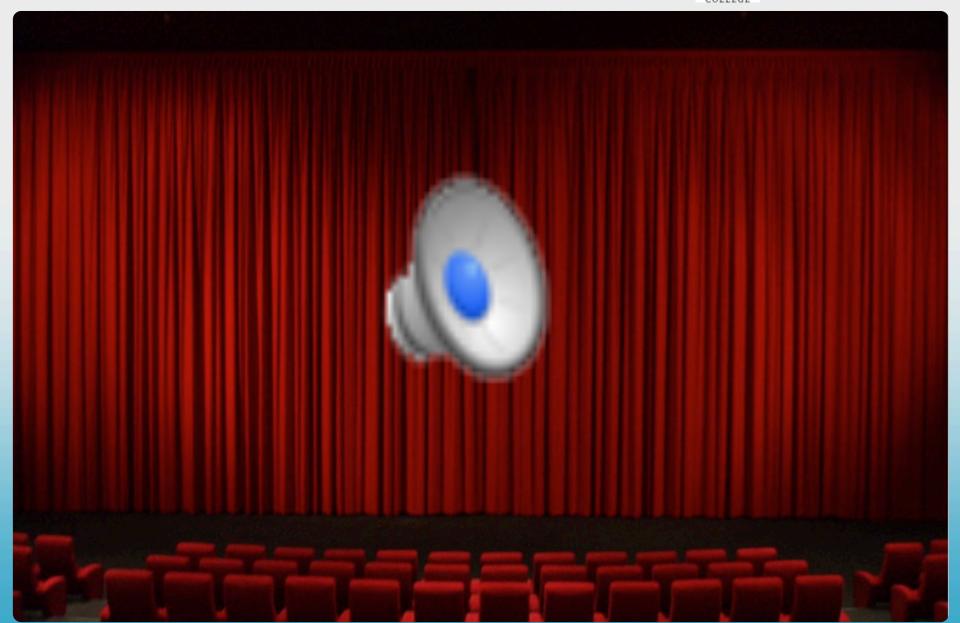
High School Students: 4,013 respondents

- -70% high school seniors
- -30% college freshmen









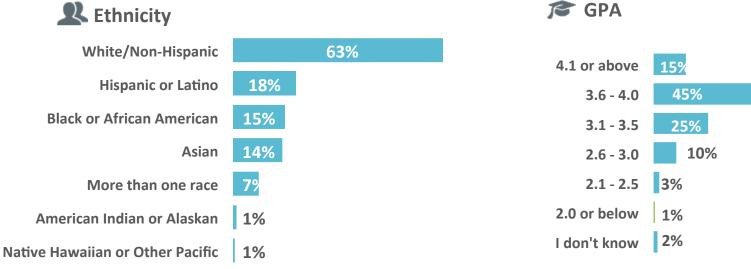
Respondents



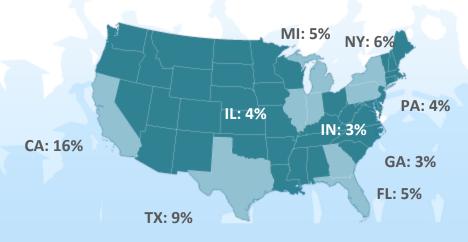




Respondents represent minorities and are representatively spread throughout US







Respondent Status

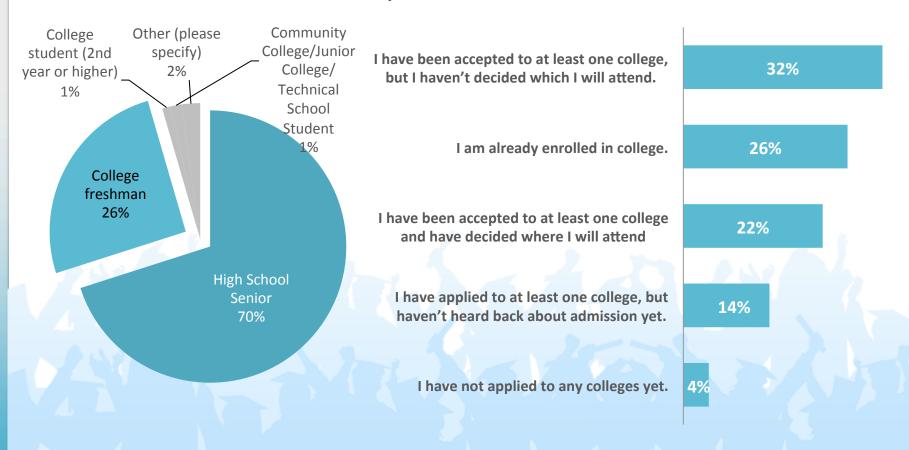






70% are high school seniors; majority have been accepted to at least one college

Respondent Status



Q1. I am a:

Student research frequency

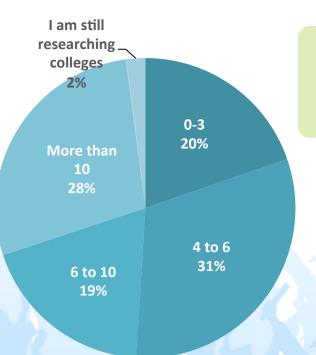






The number is high, but below widely adopted industry perception

Number of schools researched before applying



Students applied to an average of 5.4 schools

Though many are still waiting for responses, students have been accepted into an average 3.1 schools so far

The College Search







February 2013









The College Search



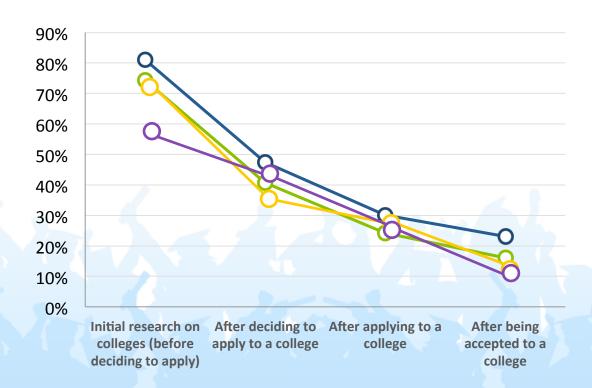




College websites, search engines most used; All resources used most for initial research

- The college's .edu site
- Online search sites
- College board website
- Information on other website
- Gather and share info
- Direct mail from schools
 I didn't request info from
- Materials from a College fair
- Emails from schools
 I didn't request info from
- Direct mail from schools
 I did request info from
- Campus Tour
- Speak to a college counselor
- Speak to faculty at the college
- Speak to admissions officers at the college

Online and non-online sources used throughout the application process



Q10. Which non-online resource(s) did you or would you use during each phase of the college application process?

Q11. Which online resource(s) did you or would you use during each phase of the college application process? (Select all that apply)

Students' Consideration Set

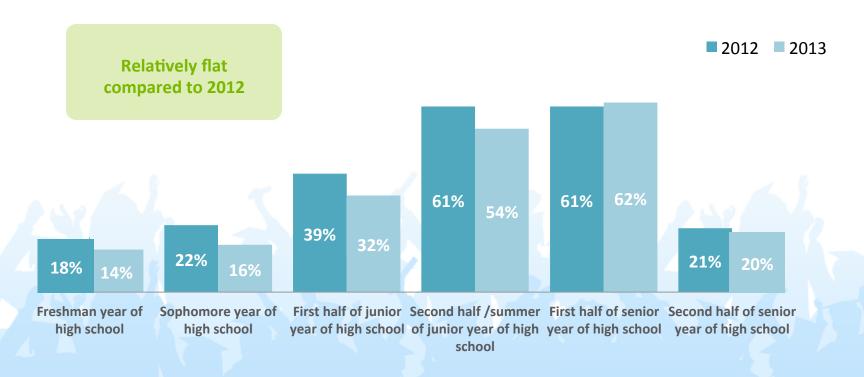






Students' consideration set is decided second half of junior year, first half of senior year

When students added colleges to their consideration set



Q4. At what points in your college research process did you add colleges to your list of schools to which you would apply?

(Select all responses that apply)

Top Online Resources

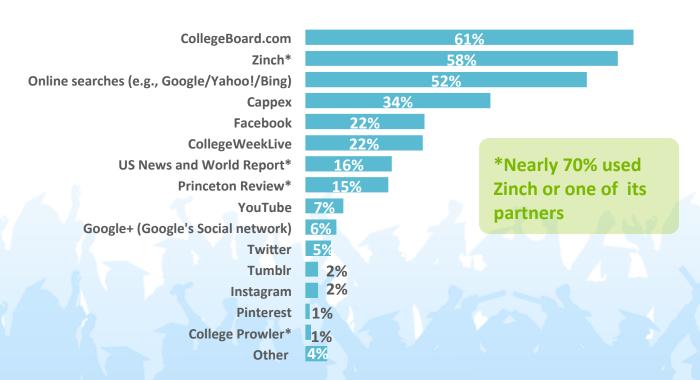






CollegeBoard.com and Zinch are top online sources where students hear about schools

Online sources where hear about colleges researched



The Zinch Cloud





Real-time access to students searching for you across the web

Advantage with cross-app students

Targeted outreach across multiple platforms

Highly qualified inquiries

Unsolicited Communications

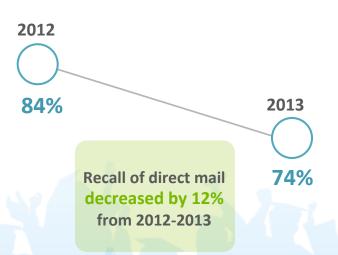




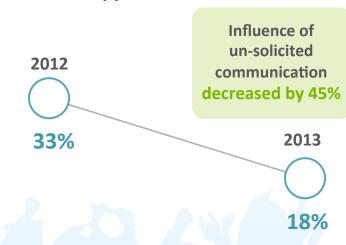


Direct mail and email declining in relevance; Only effective 18% of time

Recall of direct mail



Influence the communications had on application decision



Q15. Did you receive messages (email, phone calls, or mail in your mailbox) from schools you had not heard of before starting your college search? (select all that apply)

Q16. To what extent did any of these communications influence your decision to apply to any of these schools?

Unsolicited Mail



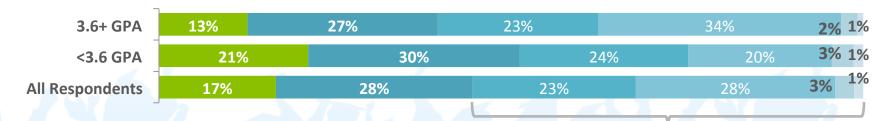




Still, 55% of students throw out the bulk of unsolicited direct mail

57% of students with GPAs 3.6+ read less than half of their unsolicited mail Vs. 44% of those with GPAs under 3.6

- 100% -- I read it all until I made my decision
- About 75% -- I read most of it until I made my decision
- About 50% -- I read half of it until I made my decision
- About 25% -- I threw out most of it
- 0% -- I threw out all of it
- I didn't receive any mail



More than half of respondents threw away half or more of the unsolicited mail they received (consistent with 2012)

Q12. Colleges often send mail (actual paper – brochures, pamphlets, letters) to high school students with the hope of getting that student interested in considering that college. The next few questions deal with this unsolicited mail. Thinking of the mail in your mailbox you received from colleges that you didn't specifically request, how much of that mail did you read?

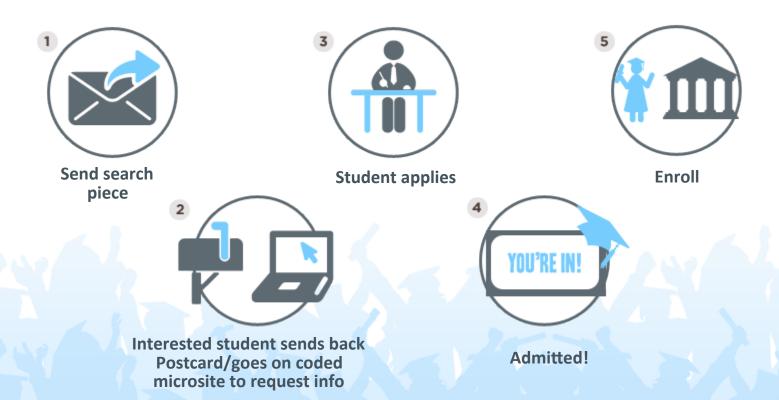
Getting Stealth Applicants on Your Radar







Traditional Search Process



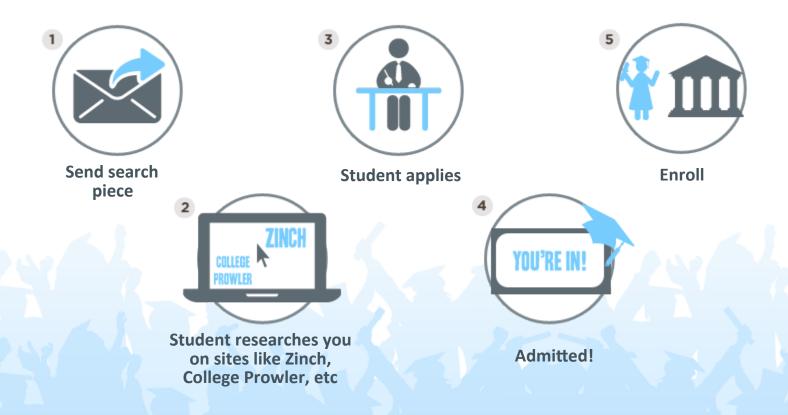
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Today's College Search



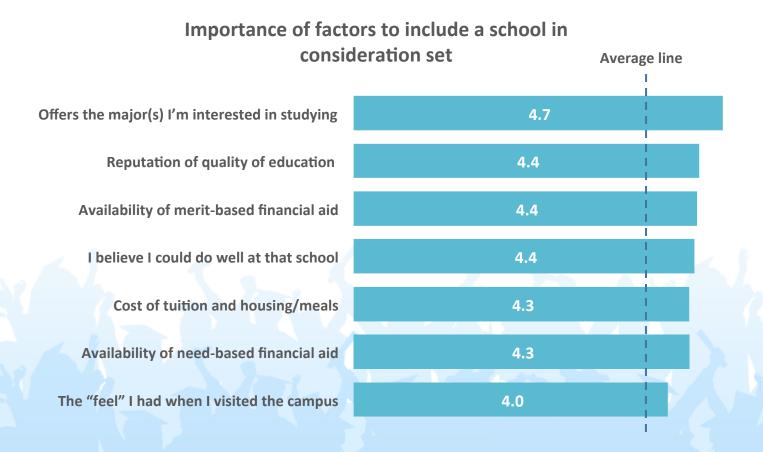
Majors and Reputation







Majors and reputation matter most in considering a school; tuition and school fit follow



Q8. When putting a college on your list of schools you would consider applying to or attending, how much weight do you put on each of these additional factors?

School Consideration Set



Average line





Other less important factors in placing school into consideration set

Importance of factors to include a school in consideration set – Other factors

	Average inte		
I thought I could get in	3.8		
Reputation of on-the-job training opportunities at	3.8		
Geographical location of school (e.g., town I like, near	3.7		
Distance from my hometown	3.7		
Size of college population	3.5		
The school will accept my transfer credits	3.4		
College focus (e.g., religious based, art school, etc.)	3.2		
Reputation for college social life	3.2		
Recommendation of teacher or school counselors	3.2		
Diversity of student body/faculty	3.1		
Availability of intramural and/or club sports programs	2.8		
I know people in that area (family, friends)	2.8		
I know people who go to that school	2.5		
Friend attended that college	2.4		
Family member attended that college	2.2		
Prestige of intercollegiate athletic teams	2.1		
Availability of athletic scholarships	1.8		

Q8. When putting a college on your list of schools you would consider applying to or attending, how much weight do you put on each of these additional factors?

I've Applied ...



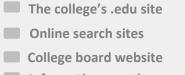
I've Applied or Decided to Apply





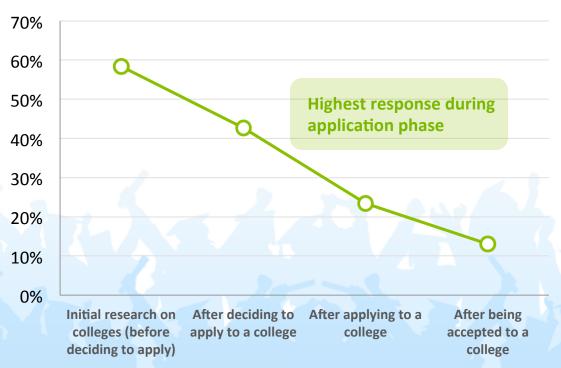


Requested direct mail from schools is best means of contact after students apply



- Information on other website
- Gather and share info via social media
- Direct mail from schools
 I didn't request info from
- Materials from a College fair
- Emails from schools
 I didn't request info from
- Direct mail from schools
 I did request info from
- **Campus Tour**
- Speak to a college counselor
- Speak to faculty at the college
- Speak to admissions officers at the college





Q10. Which non-online resource(s) did you or would you use during each phase of the college application process?

Q11. Which online resource(s) did you or would you use during each phase of the college application process? (Select all that apply)

Students Attending a Wide Range of Schools







School attending/planning to attend



Q24. If you have applied to and been accepted by a college, what school did you end up attending / are you planning to attend?

(Please leave blank if you haven't applied or heard back yet)

The Decision





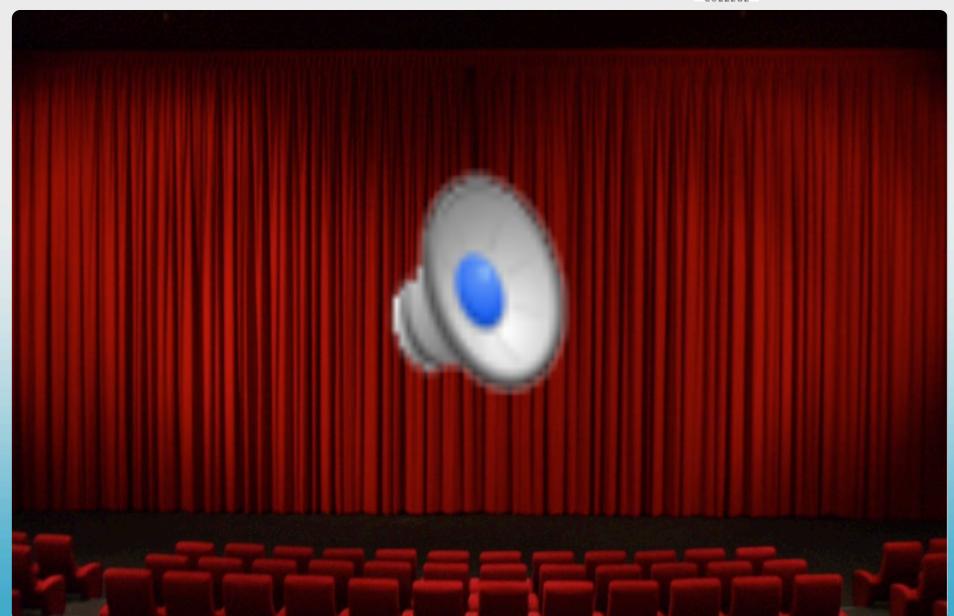


February 2013









The Decision



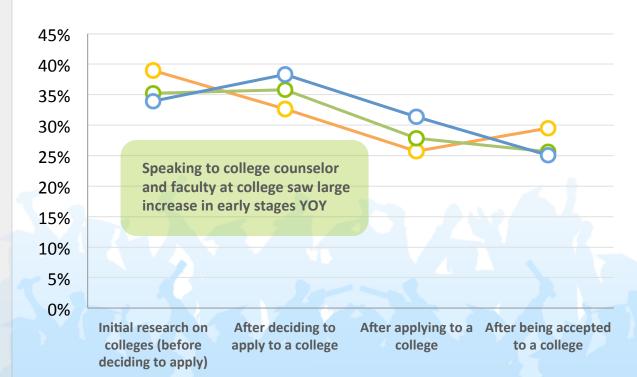




Personal contact maintains level of importance throughout the process

- The college's .edu site
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Sources used throughout the application process



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Direct Mail and Email







Direct mail maintains impact at decision, personal contacts rise in significance

Preferred methods of contact by schools throughout selection process

	Email	Direct mail/ letters	Phone	Text message	Social Media	Skype/ Virtual Open Houses
First contact from the school	64%	64%	12%	3%	6%	4%
Follow up from the school	73%	50%	26%	5%	5%	
After applying	75%	55%	34%	8%	10%	7%
Regarding application after applying	75 %	50%	37%	9%	7%	4%
Regarding campus visit	78%	44%	32%	8%	7%	5%
After campus visit	78%	43%	27%	7%	8%	4%
Regarding admittance or rejection	65%	70%	27%	7%	6%	3%
After being admitted	76%	63%	40%	12%	15%	7%

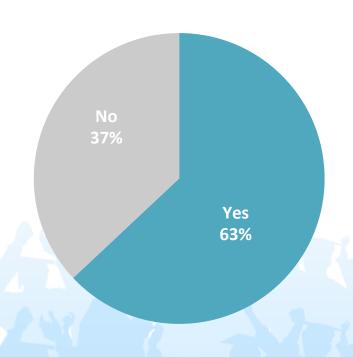
School Attendance

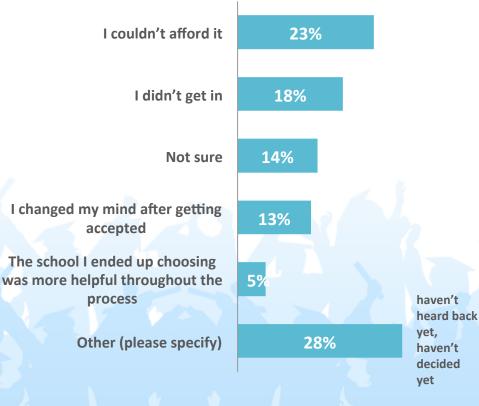






Two-thirds are attending first-choice school; If not, finances, acceptance are top barriers





Q25. Was this your first choice of the colleges to which you had applied?

Q26. If no, why did you not attend your first choice school?

Top Factors in School Attendance



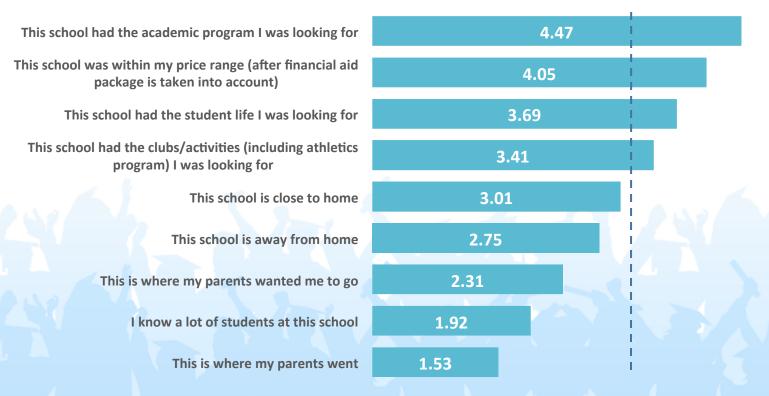




Academic program and finances are top factors in deciding which school to attend

Impact of factors in helping decide which school to attend

Average line



Q27. How impactful are the following in helping you decide which school to attend?

Key insights & recommendations







Institutions should continue to consider shifting their recruitment investments. Decline in recall and influence of traditional outreach is on the decline.

Cost and affordability must be an integral part of communications, particularly at the yield phase. Nearly 25% of students limiting choice due to cost.

Colleges and Universities must maintain their presence online, outside of their ".edu". Ex. The Zinch Cloud reached close to 70% of students surveyed while doing their research online.

Thank you!





