

# Text for Success

Do's and Don'ts of Student Text Campaigns



# Goals

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- How to leverage the power of texting to reach students
- How to partner with Project Success and Trellis to design and implement text message campaigns
- Do's and don'ts of text message campaigns



# Target Audience

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- MSI students
  - Low-income
  - Under-represented
  - First-generation
- Large age range
  - Gen Y
    - Returning to school, work experience, families
  - Gen Z
    - Entering adulthood
    - Larger percent of new students



# Student Behavior

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- Developing brain
  - <25
- Has poor relationship to time
- Pushes off decisions
- Prefers texting and face-to-face interaction
- Values relationships

# In planning and preparing for college, students and families face...

Complex  
information



Complex  
processes



# The Science of Texting

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- Overwhelming info = no action
  - Clear, short instructions more likely to drive action
- Medium meets students where they are
  - 1 in 3 teens sends more than 100 text messages a day
- Results show impact
  - 11% increase in matriculation, 20% increase in persistence



# Summer Melt Review

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- May-August
- 15 partner institutions
- 100,000 text messages
- Covered:
  - Financial aid and verification
  - Key enrollment tasks
  - Orientation
  - Registration



# Lessons Learned





# 1) Plan Ahead

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- Internal communication audit to determine information gaps
- Prepare for increased student engagement
  - Emails, phone calls, in person visits
- Meet with ISC's weeks in advance
- Inform internal campus partners once campaign is confirmed and ready to deploy



## 2) Do No Harm

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- Avoid jargon
- Use deadlines
- Predict student confusion and have answers
- Update school resources (website, portal)
- Refresh data in multi-step reminders



### 3) Master the Data File

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- Send via CrushFTP
  - Avoid violating FERPA
- Send three days in advance
- Clean before sending
- Format using template
- Include only relevant information
- Include a legend if not following template



## 4) Nudge, Don't Annoy

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- Include “call to action”
  - Deadlines are key
- Avoid sending the same nudge too many times
- Be wary of stop-outs
- Break up topics into different texts



## 5) Write Effectively

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- Short, sweet, to the point
- Limit to 160 characters
- Use “professional text speak”
  - Conveys you understand student
    - Okay = Q’s for questions, @ for at, appt for appointment
    - Not okay = u for you, l8r for later





## 6) Track Outcomes

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- Track impact metrics
  - Impact nudge meant to create
  - Create measurement plan before sending
- Stop-outs and engagement
  - Trellis tracked

Moving Forward



# Campaigns vs. One-Offs

- Campaigns

- Multiple texts with one larger goal
- Ex: Fall = Retention
- Planned in advance

- One-Offs

- Any topic, any time
- Best used for reminders
- Compliments larger school communication



# Suggested Fall and Spring Campaign Modules

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- Financial Aid Disbursement and Tuition Payment
- Motivation
- Time Management and Organization
- Academics and Study Tips
- Coping with Stress
- Campus Life
- Working and Money Management
- End of Semester

Hey there, *first name*!  
This is School of Rock  
checking in. Congrats  
on your admission and  
welcome to the Eagles  
family!

It's that time, *first name*!  
Tuition is due 8/31. Pay  
now to secure your  
classes. <link to pay>  
Need help? Text us! STOP  
= end msgs

Finals are around the  
corner! Don't let stress  
get you down. Take time  
daily to eat well, sleep 7-9  
hours, and exercise for  
free at Dolly Gym.

You've got this, *first name*!  
Text back w/ Q's. STOP =  
end msgs





# Next Steps

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- Establish campus texting team
- Meet with ISC
- Scope out campaign and establish goals
- Meet with Trellis Team and co-develop content
- Sign up for CrushFTP
- Send data and final content approval
- Launch!
- Evaluate impact



# How can we help?

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- Assist in identifying goals and designing campaign
- Write or co-write content
- Identify potential student questions or concerns
- Deliver texts
- Respond to student texts
- Send reports through ISCs

