

A hand holding a smartphone, with several white envelope icons and a network of dots connected by lines floating above the screen, symbolizing email communication and digital connectivity.

# Developing an Email Communications Plan to Recruit International Students

# Presenters

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# Communications Plan

## Evaluating Current Processes (Part I)

- What are your current challenges within the email portion of your communication plan?

# Communications Plan

## **Evaluating Current Processes (Part I)**

- List an Issue/ Growth Opportunity
  - Example: We have to manually send each email and the first one doesn't get sent until 3 to 4 days after a student signs up.
  - Example: We respond to every email within 24 hours and then they go into our CRM and receive emails every month. We rarely get a response from the students

# Agenda

- The Need for Leads
- Why Email?
- Developing a Communications Plan
- Questions and Discussion



# Leads

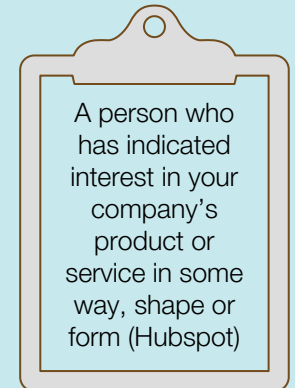
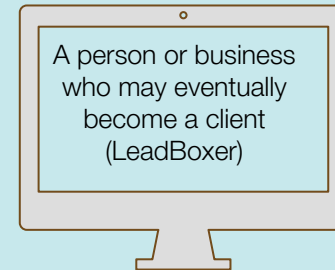
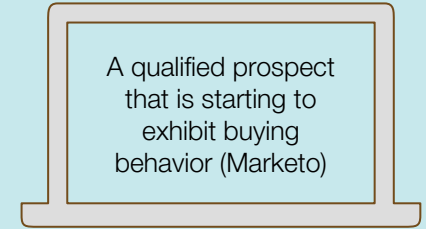
## What are they?

- Necessary – Without them you don't need a communication plan

## Where do they come from?

- Recruiting fairs, list buys, your website, our website.....

A student that has expressed interest in studying at your school



# Communications Plan

## Why Email?

- Nearly 105 billion emails are sent each day
- Email is 40 times more effective at acquiring new customers than Facebook or Twitter.
- 73% of millennials identify email as their preferred means of business communication.

The single most effective way to engage with and communicate with potential students



# Communications Plan

## Email Building Blocks

- Subject Line
- Content & Call to Action
- Think Mobile
- Speed and Frequency
- Tracking and Testing





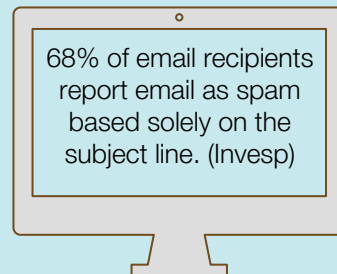
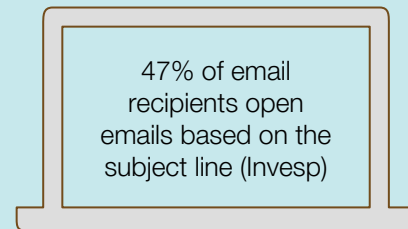
# Communications Plan

## Building Blocks- Email Content

- Subject Lines:
  - Should be compelling - “Open Me!”
    - Urgent
    - Mysterious
    - Offerings
  - Should be the right length (6-10 words = 21% open)
  - Should be relevant to content
  - Extra points for personalization (22% more likely to be opened)
    - Avoid ‘no-reply’ sender name

*“Alijandro, You May Qualify for a Scholarship”*

*“Don, Register for our Admissions Webinar”*



# Communications Plan

## Building Blocks- Content

- Focus the message and calls to action
- Keep a call-to-action above the fold
- Personalize the email greeting
- Ensure they can contact you



The application for admission is open and we want **YOU** to apply! Appalachian is a unique place full of endless opportunity and we're looking for students like you.

Learn more about the [admission process](#) and [how to apply](#). Let us know if you have questions about academic programs, athletics or anything else. You can contact your [admission counselor](#) with these questions and more! **The deadline to submit your application for early action is November 1 (with all supporting materials submitted by November 15) in order to receive your admission decision by January 25.**

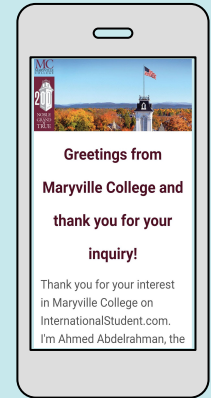
Don't wait – it's time to take the first step to becoming a Mountaineer!

**Apply now!**

# Communications Plan

## Building Blocks- Think Mobile

- 48% of the traffic to InternationalStudent.com is from a mobile device (Google Analytics)
- 80% of users delete emails that are not optimized for mobile. (Bluehornet)
- By the end of 2018, worldwide mobile email users are expected to total over 2.2 billion. (Radicati)

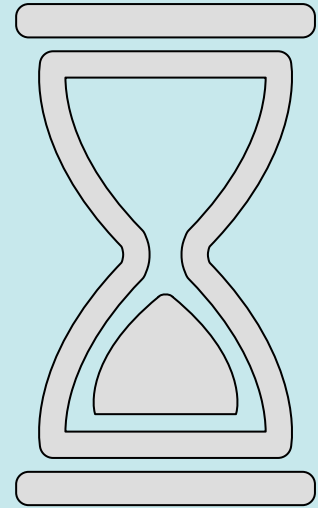


# Communications Plan

## Building Blocks- Response Time

- You have to have a solution in place to respond ASAP
- Speed-to-lead (VanillaSoft)
  - One Hour - 38% engagement success
  - Twenty-four hours - 8% engagement success
  - More than twenty-four hours - 5% engagement success

Welcome emails have on average 4x the open rate and 5x the click-through rate of a standard email marketing campaign. (InboxArmy)



# Communications Plan

## Building Blocks- Frequency of Contact

- How often:
  - Share relevant information
  - Time it around your admissions cycle
  - Determine frequency that works for you
  - Monitor the campaign, opens, clicks and unsubscribes
  - Adjust your frequency and messaging based upon results

[illegible]

# Communications Plan

## **Building Blocks- Frequency of Contact, Examples**

Messaging depends on where the student is in the funnel.

- Enquired student Communication Track (leads)
- Applicant Communication Track (students who have applied to the institution)
- Accepted or admitted Communication Track (students who have been accepted to the institution)
- Deposits Communication Track (students who have made the enrollment deposit)

Consider messaging plans for students who have decided not to attend our institution.

# Communications Plan

## Choosing an Email Program



Price = \$0-\$199/mo

12,000 Emails/mo

2,000 subscribers

Easy to use templates

Basic tracking

Great place to start -  
Ease of use - A bit buggy  
at times



Price = \$20-\$125/mo

Unlimited

500-2500 subscribers

Easy to use templates

Decent tracking

Great place to start - Free  
trial - Price increases as  
subscribers increase



Price = \$0-\$199/mo

12,000 Emails/mo

2,000 subscribers

Easy to create workflows

Good tracking

Marketing automation  
solution - Also offer a  
CRM



Price = \$1,250 -\$4000/mo

Unlimited emails/mo

10,000 subscribers

Known for ease of use and  
for automated emails

Good tracking

Marketing automation -  
Integrates into Salesforce -  
a bit pricey

# Communications Plan

## Tracking

- Delivered
- Opens
- Clicks
- Unsubscribes
- Bounces



## Testing (A/B)

- Subject line
- Call to action
- Day and time
- Personalization
  - Name
  - Country
  - Nationality
  - Program



# Communications Plan

## Establishing Goals & Strategy (Part II)

Using your established growth opportunity, what are you trying to accomplish and how are you going to accomplish these goal(s)?

### Example 1

Issue- Growth Opportunity: We have to manually send each email and the first one doesn't get sent until 3/4 days after a students contact us.

Goal: Develop a comprehensive communication plan

Strategy: Compile all needs, research options that will meet your criteria and budget.

### Example 2

Issue- Growth Opportunity: We have no idea where students drop off in our communications plan.

Goal: To track where students are dropping off so we can further evaluate and improve.

Strategy: Gather and compare data within your communication plan (or start getting data in general) and see where students stop opening, clicking, or unsubscribing.

# Questions



# Communications Plan

## Best Practices

- Response Time
- Frequency of contact
  - Adapting message based on school calendar
- Email Content
  - Subject Lines
  - Think mobile
  - Focus the message and calls to action
  - Keep call-to-action above the fold
  - Personalize the email greeting -
- Tracking and Testing
  - Test your emails - send test emails to colleagues for second opinions



# Communications Plan

## Why Email?

- A Comfort Zone
- Options for Every Budget
- It can be Instantaneous and Automated
- It is Measurable and Trackable (Analytics! Yea!)
- Conversation Starter
- It is Customizable
- It Allows for Multiple Touch Points
- It's Effective

