College-Bound Students Aren't Looking for an MTV Look in Recruitment Videos; They Want Images of Academic Rigor and a Bird's-Eye View of Campus, New Study Shows

Follow this and additional works at: https://ecommons.udayton.edu/news_rls

Recommended Citation

COLLEGE-BOUND STUDENTS AREN'T LOOKING FOR AN MTV LOOK IN RECRUITMENT VIDEOS; THEY WANT IMAGES OF ACADEMIC RIGOR AND A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF CAMPUS, NEW STUDY SHOWS

Too many university and college recruitment videotapes emphasize the fun of college and don't show enough about what people go to college to do—get an education. And as popular as videotapes have become in the student recruitment process, they will never replace a campus visit, say potential college students.

Before scripting a new 10-minute promotional video, University of Dayton officials conducted "focus group" research with alumni, current students and prospective students to gain insight into their expectations for the "college experience" and which images convey those expectations. Among the suggestions:

1) Convey a message of academic rigor—"high school students want to go to a good college where good is defined as tough."

2) Include aerial shots of campus because they provide information about its size and location relative to its surroundings. Don't use a fish-eye lens to photograph dorm rooms because it distorts the true size.

3) Don't script dialogue.

4) Include factual information in either the videotape or the accompanying materials about cost because, as one participant indicated, "If they don't send cost info, then they don't really want me to go there."

5) Show students living, socializing and studying together. Several participants verbalized their greatest fear: coming to college and ending up alone.

Most information college-bound students receive is sent in letters or brochures—many of which are "filed" without another glance. While students say they find videotapes more interesting than brochures, many expressed appreciation for "unique" correspondence: cassette tapes, telegrams, information mailed in cylindrical tubes, telephone calls from current students and personal letters.

Rebecca Yates, associate dean and director of the M.B.A. program in the University of Dayton's School of Business Administration, conducted three focus group interviews in the University's Information Systems Laboratory. The lab contains multiple cameras with independent recording capabilities that allow researchers to record and store reactions and non-verbal communication on a quad-split screen.

The video, scheduled to be completed by January, will focus on the theme, "Learn. Lead. Serve." For media interviews, contact Rebecca Yates at (513) 229-3733.