Are You Saturating Your Primary Market in Search?

Every college and university has a primary recruitment market. Although the way each institution defines that market varies, none can afford to overlook any qualified student residing in its boundaries. This simple process helps you determine the percentage of admissible, primary market students you’re missing in Search. It offers ways to improve your coverage for the class of 2020, leading to better response rates and more enrollments.

**Step 1**: Log in to your College Board Search Account.

**Step 2**: Click the Search for Students tab, then Start new search.

**Step 3**: Expand Graduating Class. Select Research & license students with a College Board assessment. Choose 2019 HS grad class.

**Step 4**: Expand Geography and select your primary market as you define it (e.g., Illinois). If you’re not sure, conduct a Proximity search—a radius of 155 miles from your campus zip code. (Institutions ranked outside the top 100 typically enroll a significant portion of incoming students within 155 miles. *)

**Step 5**: Expand College Board Exams. Add SAT scores first, after selecting Total Score. Enter the lowest total score you’ll admit and 1600 as your highest score (e.g., 900–1600).

Click Add Another, and select PSAT/NMSQT and Total Score, subtracting 60 points from your...
minimum SAT score (to accommodate student score growth). Enter 1520 as your highest score (e.g., 840–1520).

Click Add Another. Select AP Exams and Any AP Exam taker, or select a defined score range (e.g., 3–5).

Step 6: Hit the orange Calculate button and record the number of names available here:

Figure A: (e.g., 65,122)
This is the number of 2019 students residing in your primary market that met your admissions criteria but were never licensed by your institution.

Step 7: In the Graduating Class section, under New prospects, toggle from Include only new students not included in my other orders to Include all students. Hit Calculate again and record the number of names available here:

Figure B: (e.g., 96,424)
This is the total number of 2019 students residing in your primary market that met your admissions criteria, including those licensed by your institution.

Step 8: Fill in the blanks with your numbers from steps 6 and 7, and complete this equation:

\[
\text{Figure B (Step 7): (e.g., 96,424)} - \text{Figure A (Step 6): (e.g., 65,122)} = \text{Figure C: (e.g., 31,302)}
\]

Across all orders, this is the number of 2019 graduates you searched in your primary market.

Step 9: Fill in the blanks with your numbers from steps 7 and 8, and complete this equation:

\[
\text{Figure C (Step 8): (e.g., 31,302)} / \text{Figure B (Step 7): (e.g., 96,424)} = \text{Figure D: (e.g., 0.324 or 32.4\%)}
\]

Figure D shows the percentage of eligible students in your primary market you recruited for the enrolling class of 2019.

Why is the percentage of students you recruited in your primary market important?

As demographics decline and competition increases, every eligible student in your primary market should hear your value proposition. Most institutions are surprised by how many eligible students they missed the chance to search and recruit.

Here are a few simple ways to improve your primary market coverage:

1. Avoid overfiltering. In the primary market, keep criteria simple. Use as few filters as possible. If you must use a filter and “No Response” is an option, always include it. This helps you avoid missing a perfect-fit
student living near your college who skipped a section on the Student Data Questionnaire.

2. **Search more frequently**, ideally with standing orders that deliver new names to you monthly, or with each data load.

3. **Use all test sources** (SAT, PSAT-related assessments, and AP).

4. **Avoid aspirational test score ranges.** Include high achievers as well as all other students you’re willing to accept.

If your institution is missing students, it’s time to consider implementing some new Search strategies.

For help building orders or changing strategy, request a consultation at research.net/r/consulting or contact: collegeboardsearch@collegeboard.org 866-499-5357

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How many more 2019 enrollments might have resulted from licensing all eligible students in your primary market?

Fill in the blanks below using the numbers from this worksheet and your average funnel conversion rates. For example:

1. \[
\frac{65,122}{\text{Suspects missed}} \times 0.10 = 6,512
\]

2. \[
\frac{6,512}{\text{Prospects missed}} \times 0.20 = 1,302
\]

3. \[
\frac{1,302}{\text{Apps missed}} \times 0.75 = 976
\]

4. \[
\frac{976}{\text{Admits missed}} \times 0.18 = 175
\]

Your analysis:

1. \[
\frac{65,122}{\text{Suspects missed}} \times \text{Prospect conv. rate} = \text{Prospects missed}
\]

2. \[
\text{Prospects missed} \times \text{App rate} = \text{Apps missed}
\]

3. \[
\text{Apps missed} \times \text{Accept rate} = \text{Admits missed}
\]

4. \[
\text{Admits missed} \times \text{Yield Rate} = \text{Enrollments missed}
\]

How would this many more enrolled students impact your bottom line in 2019?