



2021 Wisr Enrollment Yield Report

Measuring the effects of virtual
enrollment yield programming

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Overview

About Wisr

Wisr is a unique peer-to-peer engagement platform that helps colleges improve their yield rate through powerful virtual communities. Wisr gives prospective students direct access to members of your campus community and other prospective students, within a framework that promotes focused interaction around topics that matter most to them. Wisr is just one component of a comprehensive channel portfolio that enables EAB to move students through your recruitment funnel.

About Enroll360

Enroll360 is EAB's next-generation recruitment ecosystem, designed to deliver marketing campaigns that are responsive, personalized, and precisely timed. Through a tailored partnership of best-in-class marketing and enrollment solutions, our goal is to facilitate as many right-fit matches as possible between prospective students and your school.

About This Report

Each year, we publish a Wisr Yield Report that aims to shed light on how Wisr drives impact at our partner colleges and universities. We work with over 80 schools across the country, including a mix of public, private, and selective institutions. This report examines a subset of those partners.

Among other key findings, we found that:

- ▶ A student's level of activity on the Wisr platform correlates with how likely they are to yield and
- ▶ Prospects who engage with a student ambassador on the Wisr platform convert at a higher rate than those who do not engage in that type of interaction.

Introduction

In 2020, college enrollment teams across the nation reconciled with the notion that they would need to engage with prospective students in a largely virtual environment. Fortunately, Wisr was poised and ready for this dramatic shift from in-person events to digital programming.

Fast-forward to 2021. Despite the relaxation of many COVID-19-related rules and regulations, there is no doubt that virtual programming is here to stay. A large majority of college-bound students continue to use an ever-expanding range of digital channels to research and engage with potential colleges.

Although enrolling the class of 2025 has presented many of the same challenges as the previous cycle, enrollment leaders have had the unique opportunity to be more intentional about how they deploy digital recruitment and yield strategies. As a result, Wisr has continued to gain new university partners, all of whom are looking to accelerate their digital engagement strategy.

“

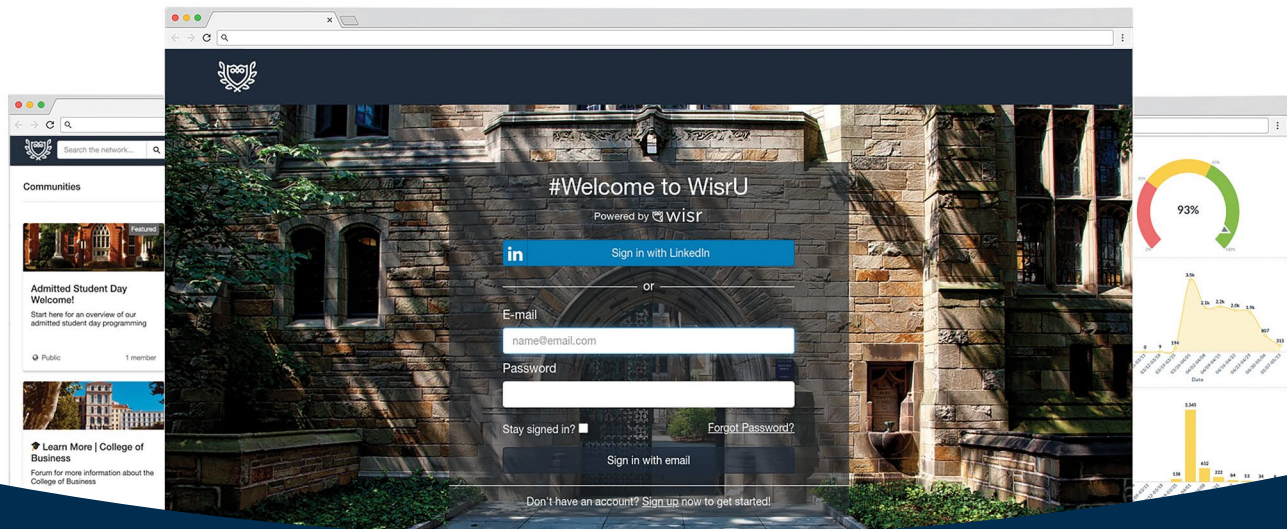
From now on, we will always have virtual elements built in. It's interesting that we didn't implement them sooner with so many of our students being from out of state.”

Assistant Director of Admissions,
Private Liberal Arts College
in the Midwest

Methodology

In August 2021, EAB compiled data from fourteen partnering colleges and universities to evaluate the impact of digital community and student ambassador engagement on enrollment outcomes for the 2021 recruitment and yield season.

The study includes a broad array of institutional types, public and private, large and small, urban and rural, with acceptance rates ranging from 4–75% to a historical yield rate of 15–83%. The institutions cited cumulatively accepted more than 47,000 incoming first-year students.



2021 Yield Results

1.

Clear Correlation Between Number of Actions Taken and Likelihood to Yield

Similar to our 2020 findings, we found that students had a significantly higher propensity to deposit if they were actively engaged with a Wisr site. And perhaps more importantly, we were able to identify certain patterns and thresholds of activity that correlated with a higher likelihood to yield.

Of the fourteen schools that shared their 2021 yield data, all of them saw significantly higher yield rates for Wisr users compared to non-Wisr users. The predictive power of Wisr participation varied widely by school and historical yield rate, but at a minimum, students were 1.6x as likely to yield if they joined a Wisr community. (Reference Figure 1)

3.4x
 Median difference in likelihood to yield for students who joined Wisr

Reference Figure 1:
Participating University Site Data as of June 1, 2021

Partner School	2018 Yield Rate from IPEDS	2021 Yield Rate from University Data	2021 Wisr Cohort Yield Rate	2021 Non-Wisr Cohort Yield Rate	Multiplier
Partner School #1	29%	27%	64.5%	7%	9.50
Partner School #2	15%	16%	69.3%	8%	8.73
Partner School #3	22%	19%	78.6%	13%	5.99
Partner School #4	27%	18%	57.5%	10%	5.60
Partner School #5	38%	47%	74.7%	17%	4.30
Partner School #6	48%	51%	71.7%	19%	3.76
Partner School #7	47%	49%	84.6%	24%	3.46
Partner School #8	47%	33%	51.4%	15%	3.33
Partner School #9	20%	21%	50.4%	18%	2.77
Partner School #10	61%	65%	84.2%	37%	2.25
Partner School #11	36%	36%	54.6%	26%	2.12
Partner School #12	56%	60%	73.5%	39%	1.88
Partner School #13	83%	83%	90.9%	52%	1.75
Partner School #14	77%	80%	90.1%	57%	1.58

Additionally, the deposit rate of Wisr users increased from 64% to 85% as they moved from 100 to 200 site actions taken, with the most common site actions being opening an email digest and logging back in to a site. This data suggests that the 200-site-actions “break point” can serve as an important yield indicator for colleges and universities using the Wisr platform. (Reference Figure 2)

2. Email Digests Are a Highly Effective Means of Driving Student Engagement

Part of the Wisr experience includes automated and customized digest emails that nudge students to view content and return to the Wisr site. These emails have proven highly effective when it comes to reengaging students and increasing site engagement.

51%

Open rate for Wisr Digest Emails

*Data for January 1, 2021, to May 30, 2021

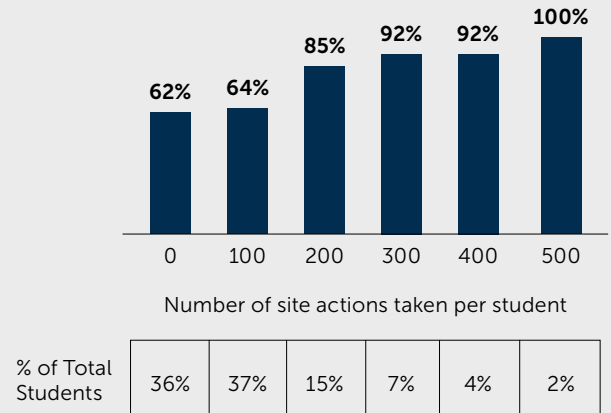
15%

Click-Through Rate to the Wisr App

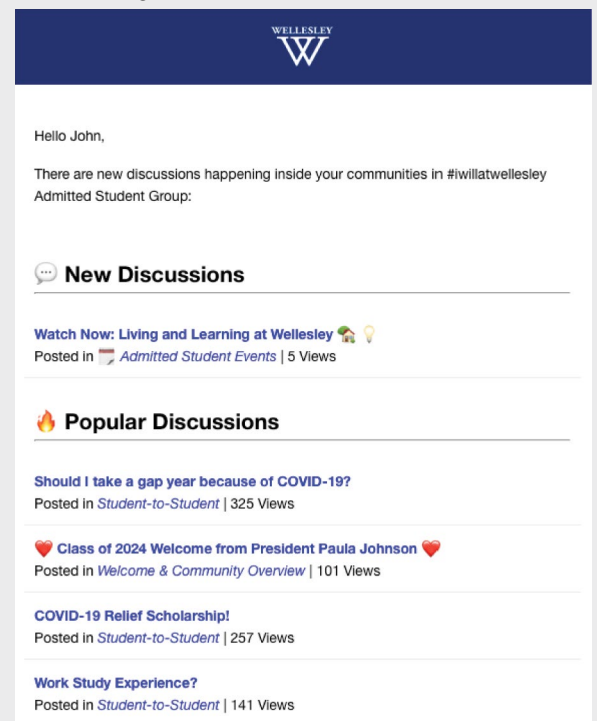
Both open and click-through rates are extremely high for this student demographic (Reference Figure 3) and point to the importance of providing relevant and timely content for admitted students. Within the Wisr platform, much of this content is generated by student ambassadors and faculty/staff ambassadors who initiate or contribute to a discussion topic. The confluence of ambassadors alongside online events and resource-sharing has created a “hub-like” effect within Wisr that keeps admitted students coming back for more.

Reference Figure 2:

Deposit Rate by Number of Site Actions Taken Wisr Users



Reference Figure 3:



3.

Direct Communication with a Student Ambassador Provides an Extra Boost

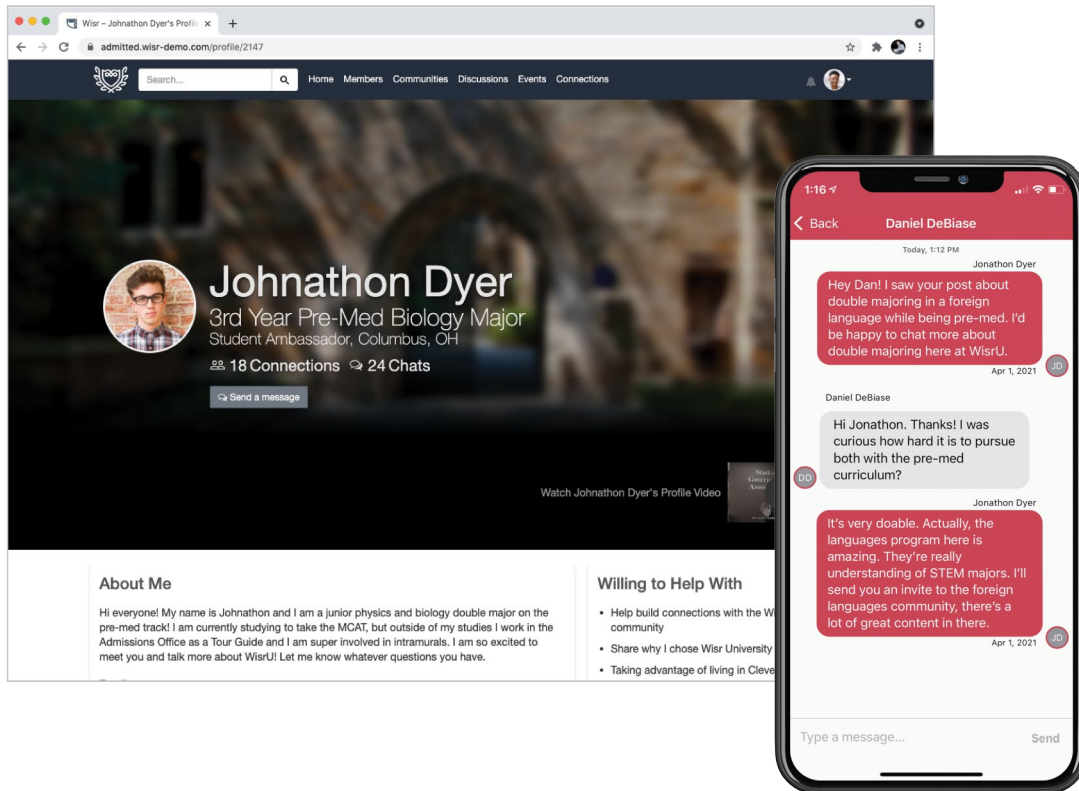
Admitted students who had a chat exchange with a student ambassador were 6% more likely to yield than students who had chats with other types of users within Wisr. This kind of lift can be very meaningful in an environment where schools need to “win at the margins” in order to meet their enrollment goals.

These findings also point to Gen Z’s preference for closed social networks where they can get highly trusted information directly from peers. This is part of the reason why offering a Wisr experience moves the dial with admitted students.

“

Our Facebook group for admitted students had been deteriorating with involvement over the last few years. Students just don’t have Facebook anymore. Wisr was a good option to incorporate peer-to-peer engagement and filled a need for socializing virtually.”

Assistant Director of Admissions,
Private Liberal Arts College
in the Midwest



Case Study #1

Impact of Early Engagement at Wellesley College



Wellesley College has long stood as an elite institution for some 2,400 undergraduate women. Situated in quaint Wellesley, Massachusetts, the selective women's liberal arts college has served as a magnet for women across the globe and is deeply rooted in tradition.

Wellesley College was among our first partners to pilot engaging prospective students pre-application with a Prospective Student Hub using similar approaches to their Admitted Student Hub: student ambassadors, online events, and real-time discussion boards. This Hub was branded "The Wellesley 101," and since launching in June of 2020, more than 5,000 prospective students have joined the community.

Sample Wellesley 101 Sign-Up Email

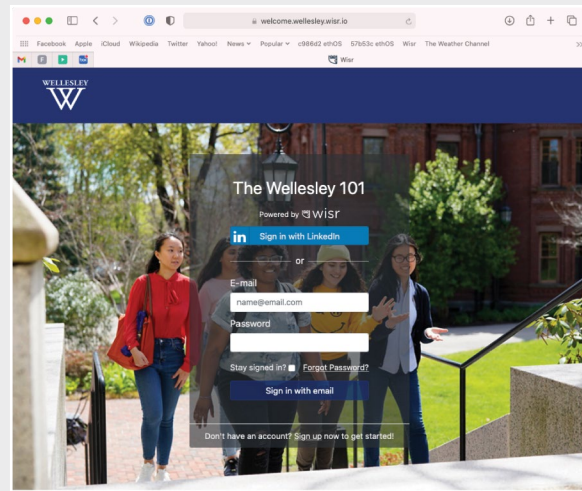
Hello smart, interesting person!

Meet: **The Wellesley 101**. Everything you could possibly need to know about Wellesley College, all in one place. Where the people who know Wellesley best post content, answer your questions, and share their experiences to help you find the right college fit.

Here's a short (but mighty!) list of all you can do by [joining The Wellesley 101](#):

- 👥 Meet current and prospective Wellesley students
- 💬 Chat with Wellesley alumnae, faculty, and staff
- 📖 Explore academics, student life, outcomes, and (much, much!) more
- 🔍 Collect tips and tricks on navigating a successful college search

Click the button below to join. **Note:** You'll need to register for The Wellesley 101 using the email address to which we sent this communication.



To measure impact, we evaluated how many members of The Wellesley 101 community who were admitted migrated to Wellesley's Admitted Student Hub (Wellesley THRIVE '25) and ultimately deposited.

We found that:

- ▶ 67% of admitted students participated in The Wellesley 101, and
- ▶ The Wellesley 101 users were 2x more likely to yield than those who did not participate.

These findings support how important it is to engage students early in their college search process, which includes giving them access to ambassadors and peers.

Case Study #2

How Mobile-First Creates a Level Playing Field at Albion College



Albion College

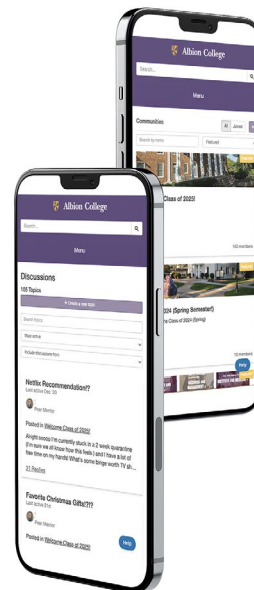
Wizr is built to be fully mobile-responsive to accommodate all major browsing devices, regardless of operating system and screen size. Of the 1.17 million individual web sessions logged between July 2020 and July 2021, Apple iOS was used by 38% of users, while Android OS was used by only 3% of all users. With this information, Wizr partnered with a select number of schools to launch a discretely branded native iOS application during yield season.

Albion College participated and saw approximately one-quarter of their admitted students download the app after launch. There was a significant difference in the activity level of students utilizing the app versus those not utilizing the app.

	Count	Average Chats	Average Topic Views	Average Topic Creation
iOS App Participants	118	1.35	16.88	0.19
All Others	415	0.92	5.35	0.1
Increased Usage on iOS		46%	216%	93%

Included in this pilot were focus-group interviews with students participating in the pilot. One such student is a native of Ghana who was planning to attend Albion College in the fall. He utilized Wizr to connect with other international students who were navigating the immigration process to the United States and to gain a better understanding of life in Albion, Michigan. He described the Wizr app as his “primary source” for Q&A in the spring and summer leading up to Orientation.

This has not been an uncommon finding, with slightly higher average utilization rates among both international students and first-generation college students. With this information, EAB is increasing its investment in the Wizr app and will monitor its impact on yield moving forward.



Conclusion

The 2021 yield season continued to present unique challenges for colleges and universities across the country. As seen in 2020, enrollment leaders wrestled with uncertainty around student intent and faced tough decisions regarding in-person recruitment activities. Overall, most schools embraced the fact that virtual recruitment is here to stay, and many of them made strategic investments in order to operate successfully in this new reality.

For many schools, Wisr was one of those critical investments, and this year's analysis revealed strong and direct correlations between Wisr adoption and an admitted student's propensity to yield. The data also pointed to a critical "break point" where the level of student activity predicted a much higher likelihood to yield.

The Wisr platform continues to confirm that this generation of students has extremely high expectations when it comes to digital experiences. The site has also demonstrated the power of facilitating authentic peer-to-peer connections. Partner schools found that by providing admitted students with an opportunity to connect directly with their peers in a secure and accessible environment over an extended period of time, they could not only better predict which students would yield, but in many cases, they also could improve their overall yield rate.

- ▶ If you would like to learn more about the Wisr platform, please [contact us](#) to speak with an enrollment expert.
- ▶ Subscribe to our [Enrollment Blog](#) for the latest insights.



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