EAB and Colorado State University

How CSU is using Wisr to Foster Peer-to-Peer Connections, Help Students Find Their Place, and Increase Yield

Wisr Virtual Communities

Using Zoom

Connecting to Audio

Refer to the **webinar confirmation email** you received in your inbox.

Asking a Question

Brief Exit Survey

We'd appreciate your **feedback** on today's presentation.

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Today's Speakers

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EAB

Education's Trusted Partner to Help Schools and Students Thrive

Your Imperatives Determine Ours

INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGY

Prepare Your Institution for the Future

Executive guidance rooted in research to support your strategic priorities

MARKETING AND ENROLLMENT

Achieve Your Enrollment and Growth Goals

Tailored partnerships powered by a recruitment ecosystem with unrivaled reach to enroll your future classes

STUDENT SUCCESS

Build a Student-Centric Campus

Technology trusted by 850 schools to retain, graduate, and empower more students

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Advance DEI on Campus and in Your Community

Technology, research, and bold initiatives to strengthen your DEI strategy and eliminate equity gaps

DATA AND ANALYTICS

Embrace Digital Transformation

Data and analytics solutions built for higher education to guide decisions and accelerate innovation

We partner with 2,500+ institutions to accelerate progress and enable lasting change.

95%+ of our partners return to us year after year because of results we achieve, together.

What Defines High-Quality Digital Experiences?

Gen Z Sets the Standard, but All Audiences Now Have Rising Expectations

GEN Z

DIGITAL NATIVES

Born 1997-2012
Ages 9-24

Typically:
- First-Time UG Freshman
- Transfer Students

- Have been a part of a constant beta state
- Need continuous updates, stimulation
- Truly value easy access to information
- Turned off by spammy, inauthentic, and overmarketed messaging

We asked 1,088 students what type of messaging from a college turns them off the most…

42% *False or unrealistic promises*

33% *Manufactured or fake imagery and video*

20% *Not personalized to me or my situation*

Source: EAB Research in Collaboration with CGK.

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Authentic

Allow students to hear real stories from real people in their own voice

Personalized

Deliver the right content to the right person and make them feel seen

Self-Directed

Create intuitive experiences where a student can "choose their own adventure"

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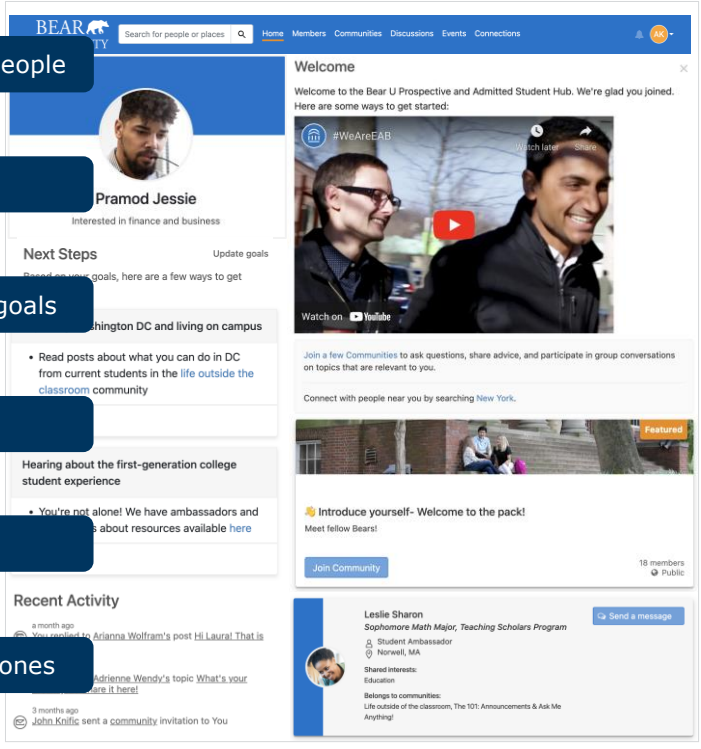
Wisr Is a Place for Students to…

1. Introduce themselves and find new people
2. Connect 1x1 with peers and faculty
3. Get answers to questions and share goals
4. Post in discussions and learn more
5. Join communities they identify with
6. Stay up to date on events and milestones



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Wisr Allows Institutions to…

Build Community and Connections

Give students a safe and centralized place to ask questions

Communities, Discussions, and Events

Help students find and connect with their peers

Ambassador Profiles and 1x1 Chat Options

Keep Your School Top of Mind

Send push notifications in real time

Wisr Communities Mobile App

Share new community posts and event reminders

Community and Event Digest Emails

Maximize Staff Efficiency

Get insights into the effectiveness of your virtual community

Engagement and Content Metrics

Easily manage student ambassadors and other staff

Ambassador Trainings and Toolkits

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What Are Wisr Virtual Communities?

Distinct 'Hubs' for Each Stage of the Student Journey

Wisr is a student-centric **virtual community** that allows prospective and admitted students to make impactful **peer-to-peer connections** and **get answers** to critical college-search questions.

Prospective Student Hub

Inquiry to Application

- ✓ A virtual welcome center for prospective students
- ✓ Allows you to deliver content that is applicable to the **early stages of college search**
- ✓ Learn more about your prospective students and their interests

Admitted Student Hub

Admit to Enrolled

- ✓ A community for admitted students that increases yield and reduces melt
- ✓ Allows you to deliver content that is applicable to **high school seniors** in their final stages of the college decision-making process

Enrolled Student Hub

Enrolled+

- ✓ Create an engaging digital orientation and **first-year experience** for incoming students
- ✓ Deliver content that helps first-year students succeed at your school

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1 An Introduction to CSU

2 Why CSU Chose Wisr Virtual Communities

3 How CSU Leverages Wisr Virtual Communities to Support Enrollment Efforts

4 Impact and Success

5 Takeaways and Looking Ahead

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Colorado State University

Background

Large, Public, 4-year institution located in Fort Collins, CO

32,500+	69%	26%
Total Enrollment	In-State Enrollment	Diverse* Enrollment
250+	8	17:1
Programs to Chose From	Colleges	Student to Faculty ratio

Challenge

CSU needed an enrollment solution that helped to increase yield, diversity, and access. They were in search of a solution that helped prospective admitted students find their academic homes, build community among peers, and better engage specific cohorts and subgroups.

1) * Students who racially identify with groups other than white or have multiple racial identities

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Finding the Right Peer-to-Peer Network

Challenges CSU Faced with Social Networks	Gaps Wisr Virtual Communities Filled for CSU
Outside scamming and solicitation	✓ Closed/private network
Branding consistency	✓ College branding
Lack of places for students to join groups specific to their needs and interests	✓ Ability to build communities around affinity groups, interests, and support
An easy way for students to follow recent activity and find curated information	✓ Newsfeed, "recommendations" for you, featured communities
Guidance for student ambassador/mentor program	✓ Provided toolkits and trainings for student ambassadors
Marketing support	✓ Email digests, invite templates
Insights into user behavior and activity (students and ambassador/mentors)	✓ Analytics dashboard to track activity and predict yield
Student login authentication	✓ SSO functionality
CRM Integration	✓ Slate integration

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The Impact of Virtual Community on Yield

Joining an Online Community Increases the Likelihood to Enroll

Higher Education Marketing Through Digital Community:
Understanding the Motivations of Joining and Participating in University-Sponsored Communities and the Effect on Yield

Background:

Online survey for admitted students at Colorado State University in 2016 to learn more about why students join admitted online communities and participate in them and the possible impacts of the participation

Findings:

Students who had a clear plan to choose a college joined the community and reported more communicative action; they also reported higher intent to enroll at the university

Impact:

Findings underscored the relationship between online community participation and intent to enroll, which supports the use of communities like Wisr (**Admitted Rams Community**)

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Expand Reach by Adding Wisr as a Connection Point

Provide More Ways to Connect with Students

Each Channel Serves a Distinct Purpose

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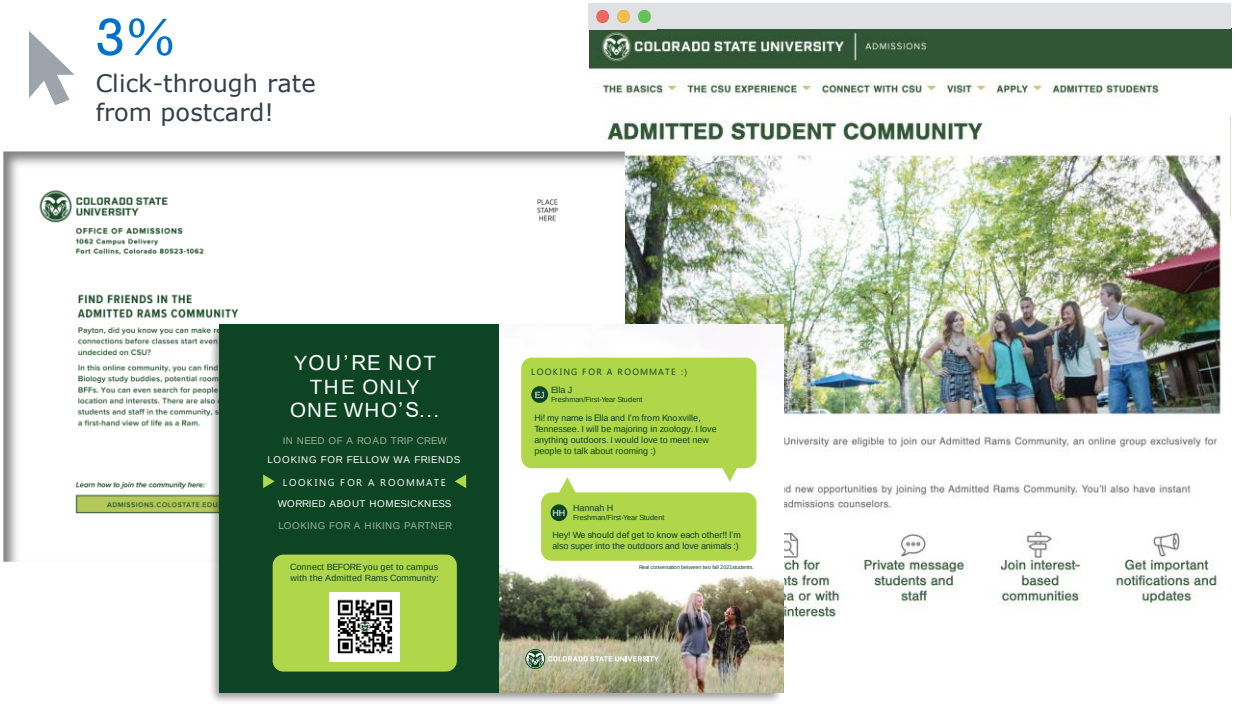
Help Students Connect as Soon as Possible

Promote Peer Networks Early and Often to Capitalize on Excitement

3%

Click-through rate from postcard!



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When Traditional Marketing Can Only Go So Far

Wisr Opens Opportunities for More Niche Communication

Traditional Marketing:

Communities Support a Different Side of Communication and Connection:

Common Interests: Outdoor Adventure and

941 members
Public
Join Commu

Hiking

Last active Mar 19
149 views

Posted in Common Interests: Outdoor Adventure and Travel

hey everybody! im looking to put together a group chat with people who would be interested in participating in some hiking,backpacking, or outdoor trips next year!! feel free to reply and let me know if you'd like to be added! im planning on getting everyone's phone # or using instagram to create the grou...

42 Replies

What's the first trail you're going to hit in Fort Collins?

Last active 1d
4 views

Summer hiking is one of the most special parts of living in Colorado. Is there a certain trail or area [https://admissions.colostate.edu/2018/06/05/6-trails-near-campus/] that you can't wait to hit with new friends once the semester starts? Share below!

0 Replies

Mar 26

Hi

My name is , I love climbing! I have mostly done indoor climbing, but I also enjoy outdoor climbing. Horsetooth (just 15 min from CSU!) has some great bouldering. I am a 5.11/5.12 climber in the gym, but I don't recall what my outdoor range is. Are you planning to join the CSU climbing team? If so, I am looking forward to meeting you there. My Insta is

0 Replies

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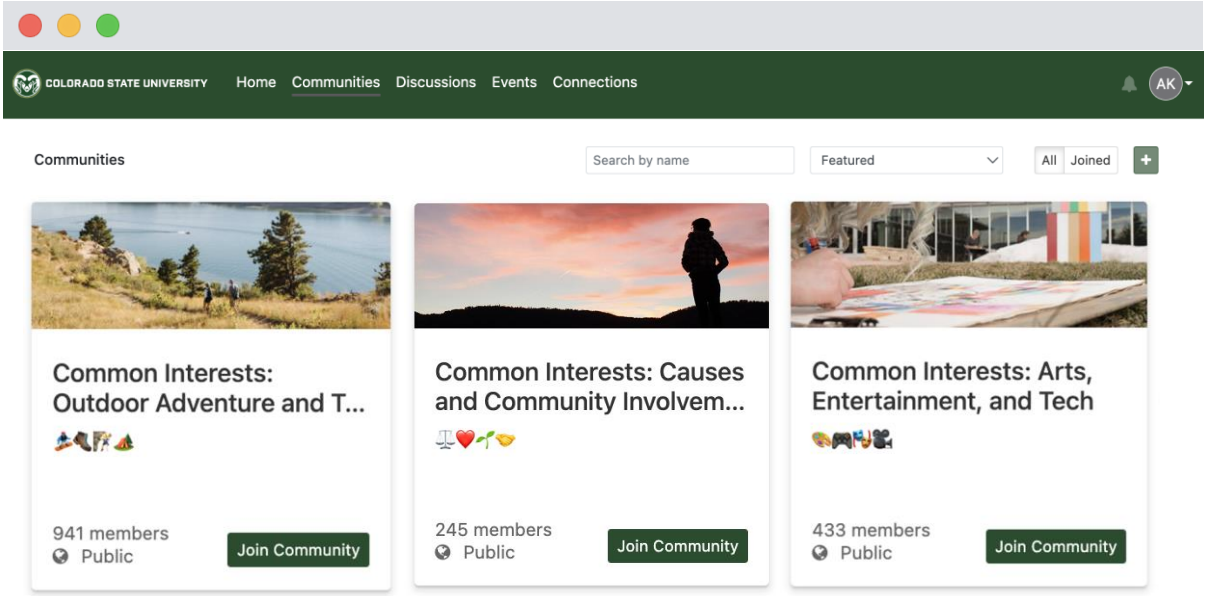
Maximize the Impact of Online Communities

Lean into Student Interests and Identity to Build a Sense of Belonging



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A Student-Led Approach Drives Participation

The Best Voices Are Student Voices

Set Student Ambassadors Up for Success:

Keep Hands Off

Let students feel empowered to take charge and get creative!

Reduce Duplicate Efforts

Utilize and scale the resources you have

Respect Time

Make Wisr a very intentional and clear time commitment

Be Intentional

Assign a Community Leader to each community

Compensate

Make participation in Wisr a paid program

Seed for Success

Help build content that can be nurtured over time

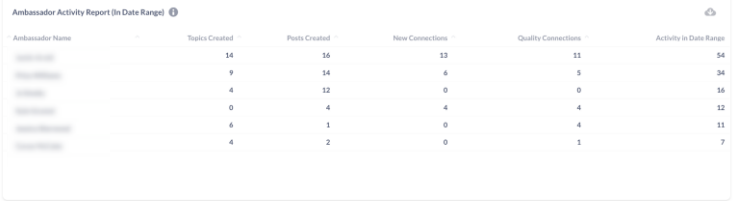
Track Success with Wisr Analytics:

Student Ambassador Metrics:

- ✓ Number **of topics and posts** created
- ✓ **New connections** made
- ✓ Activity around **quality connections** (responses)

Admitted Student Metrics on Communities/Topics:

- ✓ **View, reaction,** and **reply** count


Ambassador Activity Report (In Date Range)

Ambassador Name	Topics Created	Posts Created	New Connections	Quality Connections	Activity in Date Range
[redacted]	14	16	13	11	54
[redacted]	9	14	6	5	34
[redacted]	4	12	0	0	16
[redacted]	0	4	4	4	12
[redacted]	6	1	0	4	11
[redacted]	4	2	0	1	7

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Opportunities to Engage Target Enrollment Groups

Trends for 2022's Transfer and New Freshman Incoming Class

5,100+

of admitted students joined the Admitted Rams Community

of students who joined are out-of-state students

of students who joined are non-White

Student Body Stats

of the student body is from out of state

of the student body who deposited are non-White

Potential **to engage students from further away** within Wisr

Potential to **engage more diverse students** within Wisr

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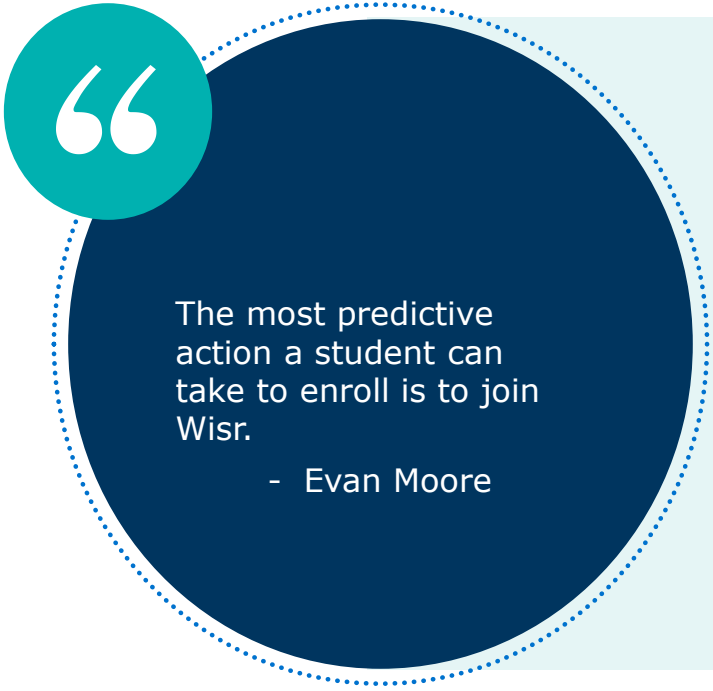

The most predictive action a student can take to enroll is to join Wisr.

- Evan Moore

#1

Wisr is the largest predictor of enrollment

45%

of students who joined Wisr deposited

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Success Is More than the Numbers

Success Is…

PROVIDING ACCESS

Opening more ways for students to connect

BUILDING COMMUNITY

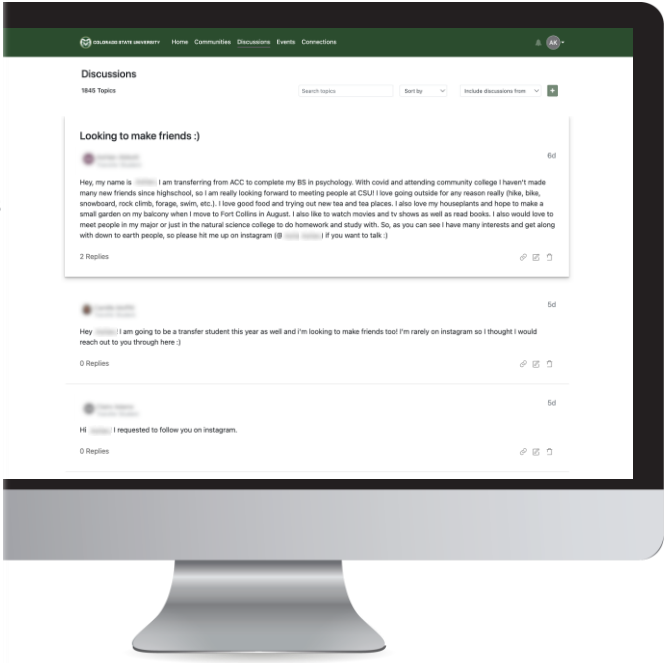
Creating a space for students to feel welcome

PICTURING A FUTURE

Empowering students to envision themselves at your institution

NURTURING FRIENDSHPS

Facilitating friendships that students enter college with



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3 Takeaways

Personalize to students

Test, fail, and be willing to pivot

Focus on students who have demonstrated interest

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Looking Ahead

Applying Learnings from This Cycle to Beat Next Year

1 **Expanding Communities**

Supporting "Concern Based" communities

2 **Getting Support**

Involving campus partners

3 **Leveraging Events**

Utilizing "Events" capability in a Hybrid Model

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