



Student Life Event Marketing

Results from the 2019 Student Life Survey

Center for the Study of Student Life

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THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF STUDENT LIFE

INTRODUCTION

This research report explores the types of university-sponsored events attended by students. University-sponsored events were categorized based on student responses and include: sporting events, fairs, service-related events, celebrities and media, educational and recruitment-related events. Additionally, this report examines how students hear about university-sponsored events. This report aims to offer a more complete image of student event attendance and what steps can be taken to increase students' awareness of events on campus.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Out of 7 classifications of university-sponsored activities, the most frequently reported type of event attended (with **27.0%** recently attending) was sporting events; the second most frequently reported type of event (with **14.5%** of students recently attending) was educational in nature.
- **Word-of-mouth** was the most common method of finding out about events for the majority of event classifications, with the exceptions of educational events and fairs.
- Women were more likely to notice **poster and flyer** forms of marketing than men.
- Undergraduate students were more likely to notice **poster, flyer and Twitter** marketing than graduate/professional students. Additionally, undergraduate students were more likely to pay attention to **word-of-mouth** marketing than graduate/professional students.

METHODS

The Student Life Survey is administered annually by the Center for the Study of Student Life to examine trends in student engagement, sense of belonging and satisfaction with the college experience, as well as to improve institutional practices and to address current issues affecting students at Ohio State. This year, the Student Life Survey also included measures related to philanthropy, careers and the third-year experience.

The 2019 Student Life Survey was administered to random samples of 4,000 undergraduate students and 1,000 graduate and professional students on the Columbus campus during spring semester. A total of 906 students responded to the survey, for an overall response rate of 18.1%. The response rate was 18.7% among undergraduate students and 15.9% among graduate/professional students.

This report focuses on the 289 undergraduate and graduate/professional students who took the survey and answered the questions about event marketing. See Appendix A for a summary of respondents' demographic and academic characteristics.

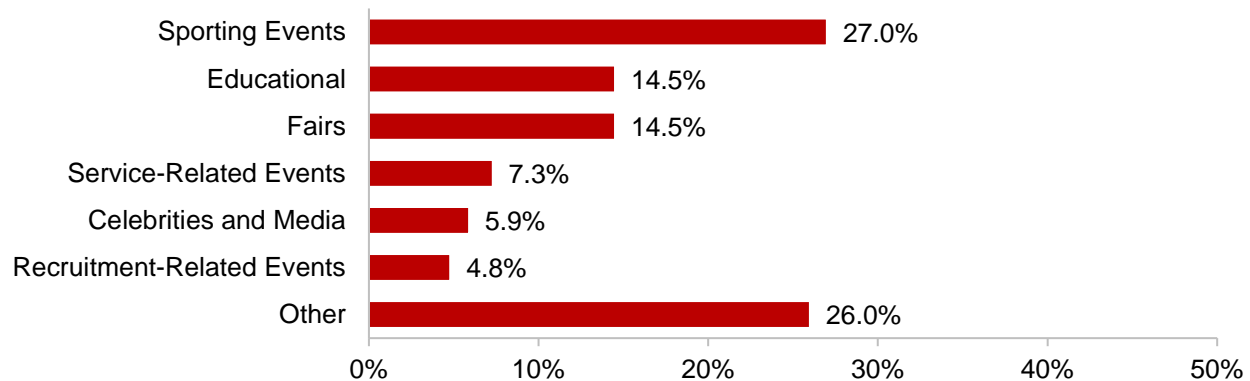
Analyses in this report include frequencies and descriptive analytics for demographic information, along with chi-square analyses.

FINDINGS

Students were asked to report the last university-sponsored event that they attended. These responses were coded into seven categories: Sporting events, educational events, fairs, service-related events, celebrity and media events, recruitment-related events, and other. Sporting events included athletic competitions, such as football and basketball games. Educational events included informational and skill meetings, workshops and conferences, such as COSI Night and HackOH/O. Fairs included career and involvement events where representatives from different areas attended to talk to and potentially recruit students, such as the student involvement fair and the

engineering career fair. Service-related events included charity and community service, such as BuckeyeThon and the MLK Day of Service. Celebrity and media events included visits from celebrity figures and movie nights, such as An Evening with Karamo Brown and Flicks for Free from OUAB. Recruitment included fraternity and sorority recruitment events, such as the recruitment orientation session and the PHA fashion show. All events that do not fit into these categories were coded as other.

Last Attended University-Sponsored Event (*n* = 289)



In the following tables, all methods of finding out about events are arranged in frequency order (from most common to least common).

SPORTING EVENTS

How did you find out about the event?	<i>n</i> = 77
Word-of-mouth	57.1%
Email	39.0%
Website	22.1%
Twitter	16.9%
Facebook	10.4%
Poster/flyer	7.8%
Resident Advisors or Residence Hall	2.6%
Presentation in a meeting	1.3%
CABS bus ads	1.3%
Other	19.5%
Other responses:	
a) Schedule (6)	
b) Cheer coach	
c) Class	
d) Common knowledge	
e) Done it before and loved it	
f) I grew up coming to OSU football games and would never dare miss a home Michigan game while I'm still a student!	
g) Was taken as a guest for both events	
h) Work	

EDUCATIONAL

How did you find out about the event?	<i>n</i> = 42
Email	42.9%
Word-of-mouth	28.6%
Poster/flyer	16.7%
Website	9.5%
Presentation in a meeting	7.1%
Resident Advisors or Residence Hall Staff	7.1%
Facebook	4.8%
Twitter	2.4%
CABS bus ads	0.0%
Other	23.8%
Other responses:	
a) Clinical	
b) From the organization	
c) I had to go for work	
d) Professor (3)	
e) Tom W Davis Clock Tower	
f) Was required by my college to attend	
g) Was taken as a guest for both events	

FAIRS

How did you find out about the event?	<i>n</i> = 42
Email	42.9%
Word-of-mouth	40.5%
Website	21.4%
Poster/flyer	16.7%
Presentation in a meeting	11.9%
Resident Advisors or Residence Hall Staff	7.1%
Facebook	4.8%
Twitter	0.0%
CABS bus ads	0.0%
Other	2.4%
Other responses:	
a) Club	

SERVICE-RELATED EVENTS

How did you find out about the event?	<i>n</i> = 20
Word-of-mouth	55.0%
Email	25.0%
Resident Advisors or Residence Hall Staff	15.0%
Website	15.0%
Presentation in a meeting	10.0%
Facebook	5.0%
Poster/flyer	5.0%
CABS bus ads	0.0%
Twitter	0.0%
Other	25.0%
Other responses:	
a) Alpha Phi Omega	
b) From my club	
c) I am in BuckeyeThon	
d) Teacher	

CELEBRITIES AND MEDIA

How did you find out about the event?	<i>n</i> = 17
Word-of-mouth	47.1%
Poster/flyer	23.5%
Twitter	23.5%
Email	17.6%
Facebook	11.8%
Resident Advisors or Residence Hall Staff	5.9%
Website	5.9%
Presentation in a meeting	0.0%
CABS bus ads	0.0%
Other	23.5%
Other responses:	
a) Instagram (4)	

RECRUITMENT-RELATED EVENTS

How did you find out about the event?	<i>n</i> = 14
Word-of-mouth	71.4%
Poster/flyer	14.3%
Email	14.3%
Website	14.3%
Presentation in a meeting	14.3%
CABS bus ads	0.0%
Facebook	0.0%
Resident Advisors or Residence Hall Staff	0.0%
Twitter	0.0%
Other	14.3%
Other responses:	

-
- a) I was forced to go because I am in Greek life
 - b) Sorority recruitment
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OTHER

How did you find out about the event?	<i>n</i> = 75
Word-of-mouth	41.3%
Email	36.0%
Poster/flyer	20.0%
Facebook	14.7%
Website	9.3%
Resident Advisors or Residence Hall Staff	4.0%
CABS bus ads	2.7%
Twitter	2.7%
Presentation in a meeting	0.0%
Other	18.7%

Other responses:

- a) Greek life
- b) Hes advisor
- c) It was required
- d) Mandatory Presenting
- e) MBA Requirement
- f) On-campus job
- g) Organization event
- h) The Lantern
- i) Through SSP
- j) Tom W Davis Clock Tower
- k) Work manager

Note. Events in the “other” category included Light Up the Lake, Homecoming and Grad/Prof Trivia.

DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES IN MARKETING STRATEGIES

Chi-square tests were run comparing certain demographics regarding the method that students found out about events to determine if certain groups noticed different types of marketing strategies. Although there were more gender categories included in the survey, only those who identified as men and as women had enough responses to be included in the chi-square tests.

Gender Identity

How did you find out about the event?	Men (<i>n</i> = 102)	Women (<i>n</i> = 181)
Poster/flyer*	7.8%	17.7%
CABS bus ads	1.0%	1.1%
Email	39.2%	34.3%
Facebook	8.8%	9.4%
Presentation in a meeting	2.9%	5.5%
Resident Advisors or Residence Hall Staff	2.0%	7.2%
Twitter	9.8%	5.5%
Website	15.7%	14.4%
Word-of-mouth	52.0%	43.1%
Other	12.7%	20.4%

International Student Status

How did you find out about the event?	Domestic Students (<i>n</i> = 273)	International Students (<i>n</i> = 14)
CABS bus ads	1.1%	0.0%
Email	35.5%	42.9%
Facebook	8.4%	21.4%
Poster/flyer	15.4%	0.0%
Presentation in a meeting	4.0%	14.3%
Resident Advisors or Residence Hall Staff	4.8%	14.3%
Twitter	7.3%	0.0%
Website	15.0%	14.3%
Word-of-mouth	47.3%	28.6%
Other	17.9%	14.3%

Academic Career

How did you find out about the event?	Undergraduate (n = 232)	Graduate/Professional (n = 55)
Word-of-mouth**	51.3%	25.5%
Poster/flyer*	16.8%	5.5%
Twitter*	8.6%	0.0%
CABS bus ads	1.3%	0.0%
Email	34.1%	43.6%
Facebook	8.2%	12.7%
Presentation in a meeting	4.7%	3.6%
Resident Advisors or Residence Hall Staff	6.0%	1.8%
Website	15.1%	14.5%
Other	16.8%	21.8%

CONCLUSION

This report provides a perspective on the types of events that Ohio State students attend and how students hear about these events. When asked about the last event they attended, students cited sporting events the most, followed by educational events and fairs. For all event types except for educational events and fairs, word-of-mouth was the most common method of finding out about events. In these event types, word-of-mouth was selected as the most commonly noticed advertising method by between 40% and 70% of students. For educational events, email was the most common way of finding out about events (43.9% of students indicated email). For fairs, email and word-of-mouth were tied for most common ways of finding out about events (41.5% of students indicated these advertising methods for fairs).

Chi-square tests were run on the data to determine any significant differences in marketing strategies for certain sub-groups. There was a statistically significant difference between men and women on noticing posters or flyers. Specifically, 7.8% of men heard about events through poster/flyer compared to 17.7% of women. Between domestic and international students, there were no significant differences. For undergraduate and graduate/professional students, there were significant differences on hearing about events through word-of-mouth, Twitter, posters and flyers. To summarize, 51.3% of undergraduate students heard about events through word-of-mouth compared to 25.5% of graduate students. Further, 16.8% of undergraduate students heard about events through posters/flyers compared to 5.5% of graduate students. Additionally, 8.6% of undergraduate students heard about events through Twitter vs 0.0% of graduate students.

The findings in this report may provide insight into what kind of events students attend, as well as how best to make students aware of these events.

APPENDIX: PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

	<i>n</i>	Percent
Total	287	100.0%
Gender		
Woman	181	63.1%
Man	103	35.9%
Genderqueer/Gender Fluid	2	0.7%
Prefer not to disclose	2	0.7%
Trans Man	1	0.3%
Agender	0	0.0%
Trans Woman	0	0.0%
Preferred identity or more than one identity	0	0.0%
Race/Ethnicity		
White	239	83.3%
Asian	32	11.1%
African American/Black/African	15	5.2%
Hispanic and/or Latinx	15	5.2%
Middle Eastern/Arab American	4	1.4%
Native American/American Indian	2	0.7%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1	0.3%
Prefer not to answer	3	1.0%
Other race	1	0.3%

Note. All data were self-reported by the student on the survey instrument.