

Beyond Reporting: Building a Culture of Data-Driven Decision Making

Your Presenter



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Nine years in higher education

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Today's Agenda

Reporting ≠ Action

What a Data-Driven Culture Looks Like

Practical Tools for Getting There

Case Examples

Building Toward the Future

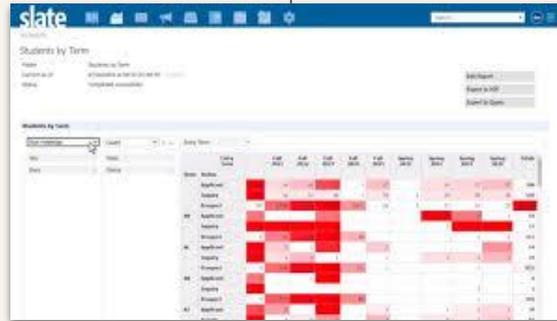
Key Takeaways

Reporting \neq Action

We Have More Data Than Ever.



And More Reports Than Ever.



Reporting Feels Like Progress.

Reporting



Action



But reporting alone doesn't change outcomes.



Most Decisions Still Happen This Way.

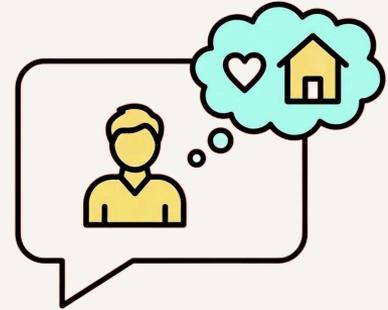
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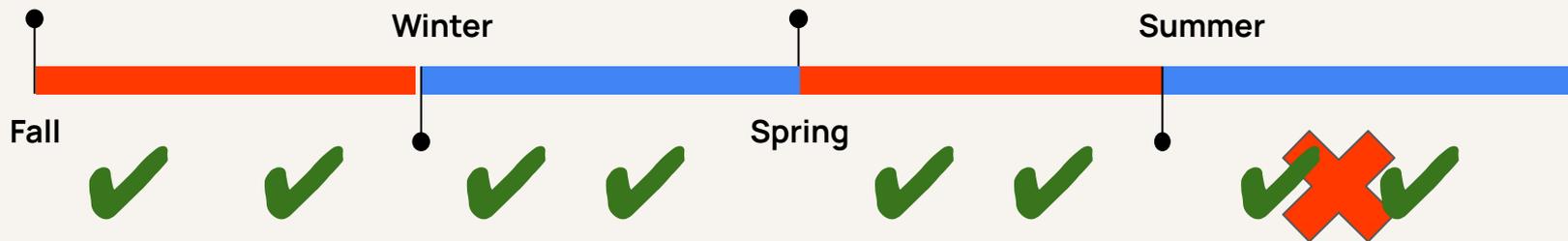


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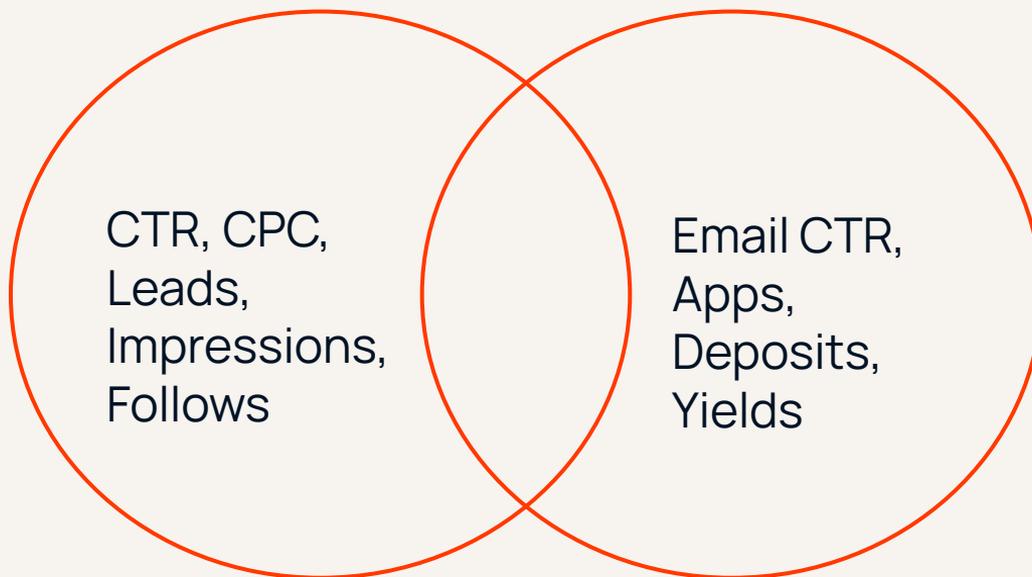
The Timing Problem

The insight comes too late.



Siloed Data = Siloed Decisions

Marketing sees one story. Admissions sees another.



Reporting ≠
Action

The problem *isn't* data. It's *how*
(*and when*) we use it.

So What
Needs to
Change?

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From Reporting → Insight

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From Insight → Action

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From Action → Impact

What a Data-Driven Culture Looks Like

What Does Being Data-Driven Mean to You?

Data consistently changes
decisions, priorities, and behaviors
in service of business goals.

What is often the biggest blocker to making a data-driven decision?

Time.

The Culture Shift

A data-driven culture changes behavior.

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Before

After

Review → Discuss → Move On

Review → Decide → Act



Insight Is Accessible to Everyone.



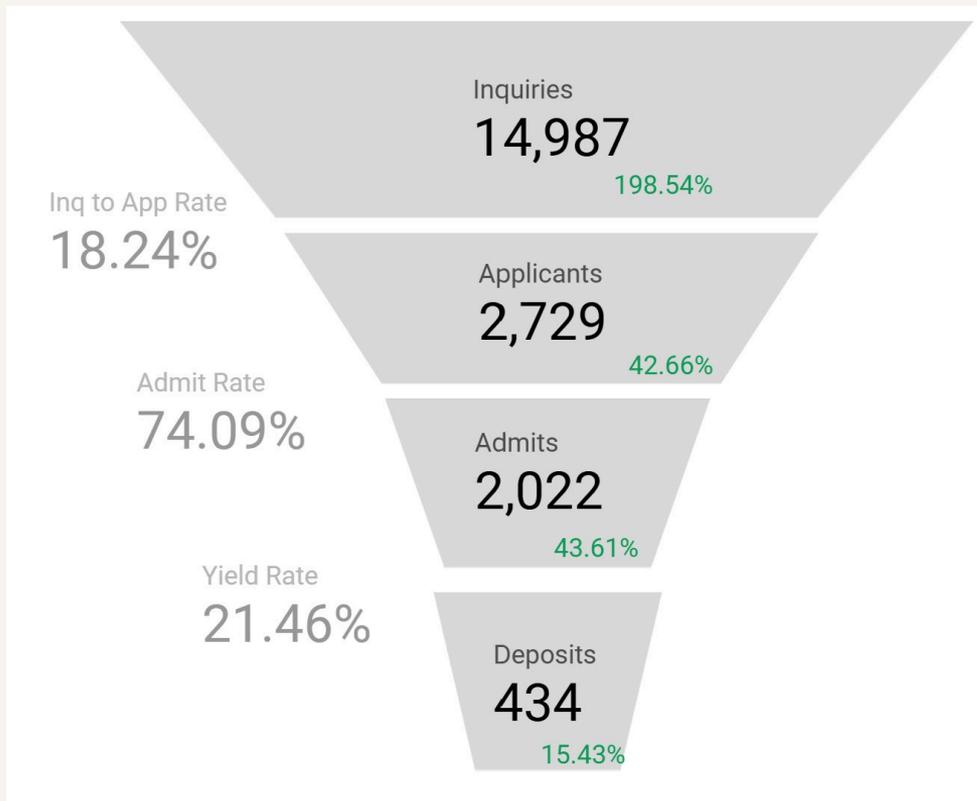
Right data, right level, right time

Not Everyone Needs the Same View.



Everyone Needs to Speak the Same Language

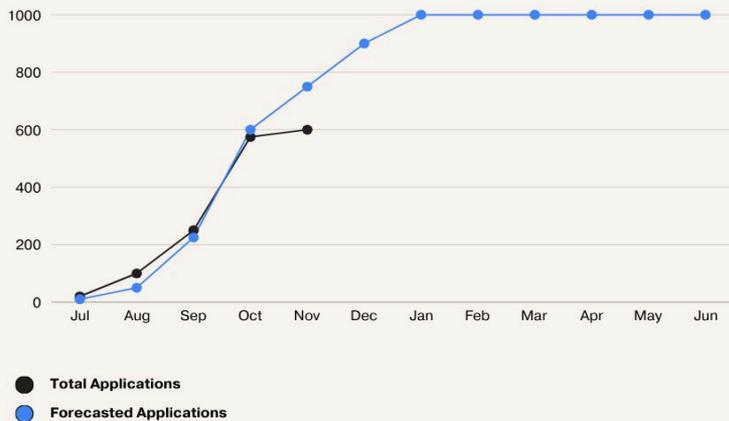
One funnel. One source of
truth.



Problems Are Identified Early.

Example of Application Submissions Diverting from Forecast

Applications by Month



Seeing risk before it becomes reality.

Ownership is Clear

Insights only matter if someone owns the outcome.



Lead Quality - Marketing

Through a comprehensive marketing plan aligned with the strategic vision and goals, marketing focuses more on generating high quality leads than a high quantity.



Yield - Admissions

Comm flows, drip campaigns, and personal outreach utilize demographic and psychographic segmentation with a focus on turning quality leads into apps and enrollments.



Enrollment - Shared

Both teams pace to their respective KPIs but have a shared responsibility for the ultimate key result, enrollment.

This Is a System, Not a Tool”



Practical Tools for Getting There

How Data Becomes Action.



Surface the Insight.

Identify the metrics and trends that matter most to your desired outcomes.



Interpret the Risk or Opportunity.

Understand what the data is signaling and why it matters right now.



Decide What Changes.

Determine what should shift in strategy, budget, or focus based on the insight.



Act and Measure.

Execute the change and monitor impact to inform the next decision.

Make Insights User Friendly: Design Dashboards for Decisions

If everything is important, nothing is actionable.



Make Insights User Friendly: Tie Every Metric to a Decision

- + Application Pacing → Budget Reallocation
- + Yield Trend → Outreach Strategy
- + Lead Quality → Channel Optimization

Close the Loop Between Marketing & Admissions



Integrate CRM & Marketing Data

Show impact of marketing campaigns from first-touch through enrollment.



Add Behavioral Data Points

Incorporating behavioral data points such as the type of content a prospect is viewing on the website can fuel further personalization.



Personalize Website & Outreach

Marketing works with admissions to understand their email personalization and segmentation strategy and mirrors that on the website.



Build Shared Funnel Reports

A shared funnel means shared accountability.

Forecast, Don't Just Report: Forecast the Funnel, Not Just the Top

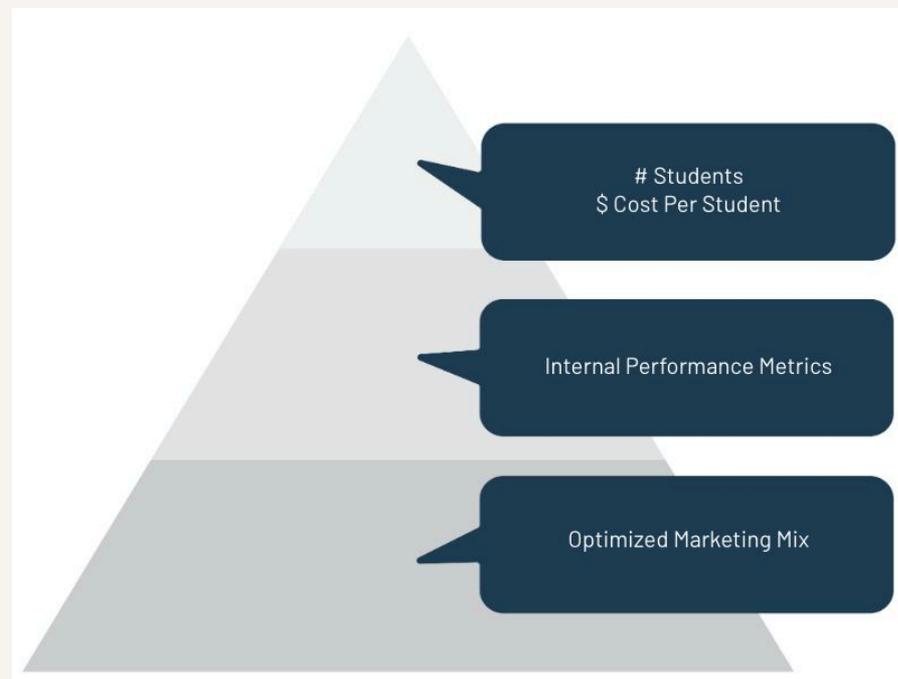
Model Inputs

Historical enrollment & conversion data

Tuition and credits

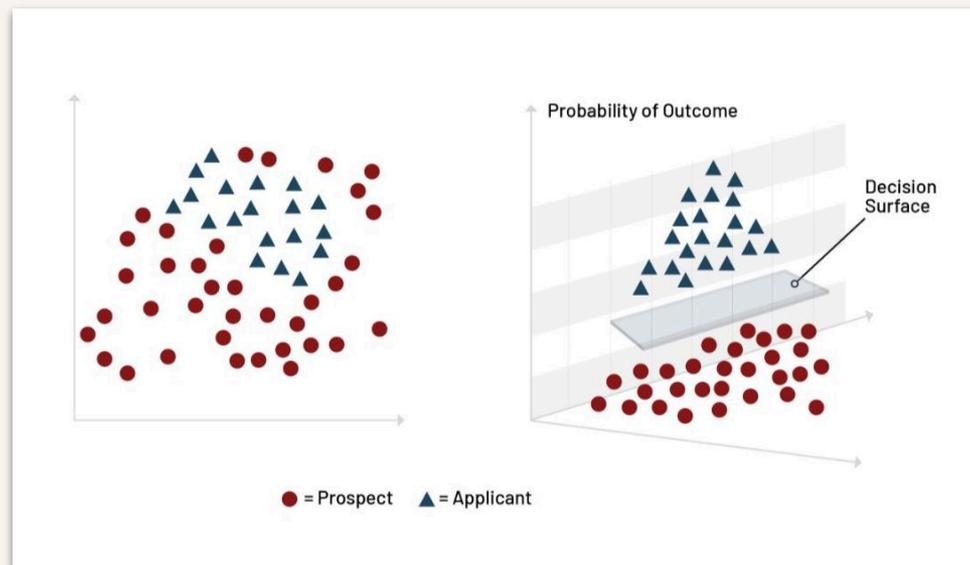
Program-specific assumptions

Industry benchmarks and market intel



Forecast, Don't Just Report: Predictive Models Guide Resourcing

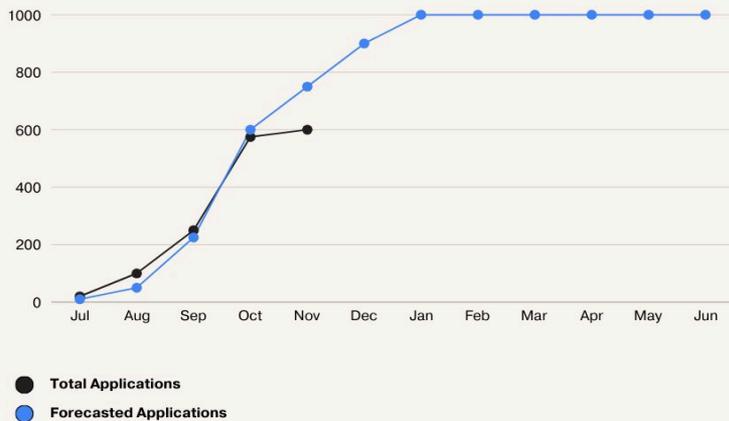
Predictive engagement models estimate a student's likelihood to apply and enroll based on observed behavior. By forecasting performance at multiple funnel stages, institutions can **prioritize effort, allocate resources strategically, and intervene earlier** to improve enrollment outcomes.



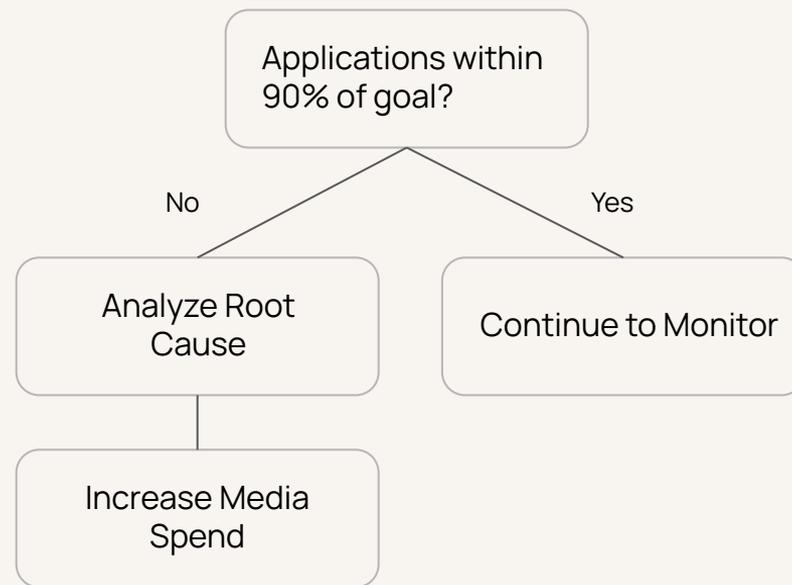
Define Decision Triggers in Advance: Remove Guesswork from Decision-Making

Example of Application Submissions Diverting from Forecast

Applications by Month



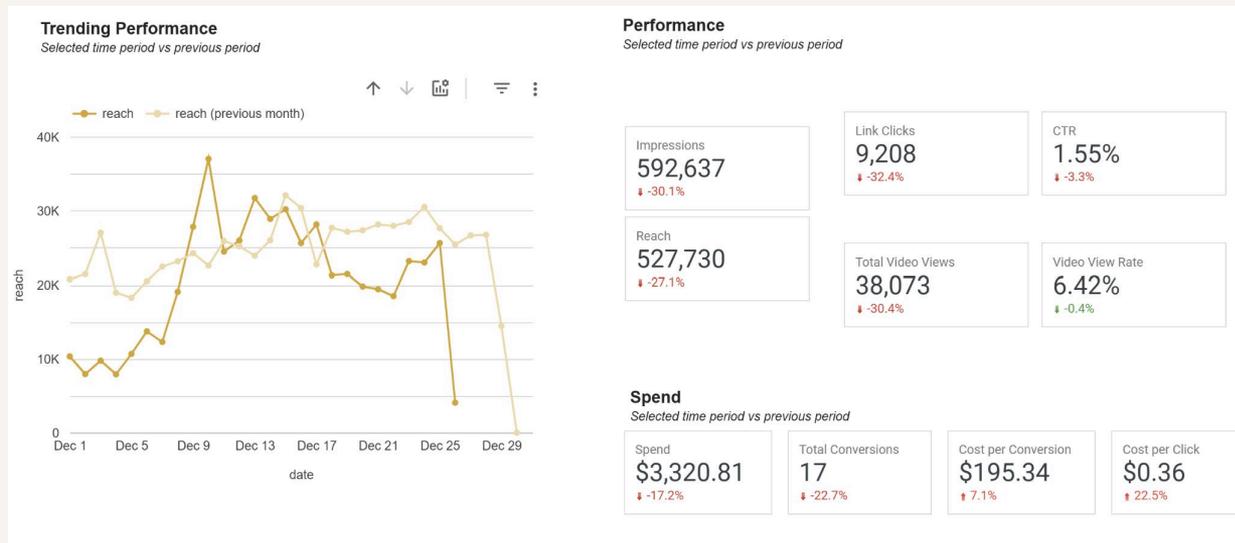
Metric → Threshold → Action



Case Examples

Unifying Social Media Data

Solving the challenge of organic, in-house paid and agency run paid social campaigns being analyzed separately.



30%

Increase In
applications.

11%

Increase in
deposits.

10%

Increase in enrollment.

Predictive Models to Increase Enrollment

This institution utilized likelihood to apply and enroll modeling to optimize their first-year recruitment strategy.

Prioritization of application deadline calls

Reduction in marketing materials costs

Data Modernization & Operational Framework

Unifying Marketing & Communications data to deliver actionable insights.



Democratizing Data Access

By investing in the build of a complete data pipeline, cross-channel campaign performance data becomes available immediately to all employees.



Determining Ownership

A “Data Council” is formed to ensure alignment across the institution for common metrics and assign metric responsibility.



Simplified Reporting

Moving from a comprehensive, manual input, spreadsheet to a 3-tier simplified dashboard structure.



Speed To Insight

To reduce time intensive data analysis and encourage broad adoption of a data-driven mindset, an AI analytics tool will be deployed.

Building Toward the Future

Moving Beyond Reporting

The future is about how teams work, not the tools they buy. In the end, analytics is really just decision intelligence.

Reporting

Reporting tells us what happened.

Insights

Insights tell us why it happened

Decision Intelligence

Decision intelligence helps us decide what to do next – and when.

Decision Intelligence: From Knowing to Doing

Decision intelligence uses data, analytics, and predictive signals to guide decisions before outcomes are locked in.

Data → Insights → **Decisions** → **Actions** → Outcomes

Why This Matters Now

The enrollment environment has changed.



Greater Competition.

Institutions are competing for a smaller pool of prospective students.



More Channels.

Student recruitment now spans more platforms, touchpoints, and moments than ever before.



Higher Acquisition Costs.

Reaching and converting prospective students requires greater investment and efficiency.



Greater Scrutiny.

Enrollment and marketing decisions are increasingly examined for impact, ROI, and accountability.

Technology is the Enabler - Not the Solution

Culture determines
whether the data gets
used.

Culture

Data is expected to be used in decision-making

Collaboration

Marketing & Admissions strategize and plan together

Capability

Teams are trained to interpret and act

Key Takeaways

Being
Data-Driven is
a Behavior, Not
a Tool

Data matters only when it
changes decisions, priorities,
and actions.

Three Practical Ways to Act on Data

Clarity beats complexity.

Simplify

Focus dashboards on a small set of decision-driving metrics, but remembering not everyone needs the same view.

Anticipate

Use pacing and forecasting to identify risk early and take proactive action.

Standardize

Create playbooks and decision trees that define how teams respond when indicators or forecasts change.

Thank you.

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