

# Case Study

## The University of Western Australia (UWA)

Growing digital brand presence internationally to diversify the university's student cohort

# **SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP GENERATING A STRONG DIGITAL PRESENCE AND INCREASING STUDENT ENROLMENTS**

How The University of Western Australia uplifted digital brand presence among students looking to study abroad and diversified into new markets.

#winningstrategies

# 1 Introduction

**New branding methods**

**to grow digital presence**



Like all universities in Australia, The University of Western Australia (UWA) has typically leveraged their broad and strong agent network to recruit international students.

The Marketing and Recruitment Team manage the global brand, plus domestic and international student recruitment.

Working with Studyportals has broadened UWA's reach to domestic and international students, ensuring that they are aware of UWA from an early stage, increasing enquiries, applications and enrolments. Students have the right information to make an informed decision and more likely to make a direct application

The partnership to date has assisted in generating 114 enrolments from 21 countries, with direct applications generated from 11 of these countries.

This direct channel, which is supported by the university conversion team, provides students with an additional choice about how to apply based on their preference.

# 2 The Case Study

## Meet our client & the Institution



### **Joel Wittwer**

*Manager, International Agent Management*

Joel Wittwer is the Manager of UWA's International Agent Management Team within Future Students. He has an academic background in information systems and humanities, with a career in international education spanning more than a decade. His role at UWA encompasses agent engagement, governance, policy and procedures and integrates with the marketing and recruitment activities undertaken by UWA's International Relationships Team to develop regionally specific engagement and solutions to UWA's agent network.



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**WESTERN  
AUSTRALIA**

### **The University of Western Australia**

Established in 1911, The University of Western Australia (UWA) is a member of the prestigious Group of Eight universities in Australia. Now, over 100 years later, UWA is ranked 85<sup>th</sup> globally in the ARWU rankings and 93rd in the QS World University Rankings, according to in their latest editions.

UWA is a comprehensive, research-intensive university consisting of 21 schools, teaching over 25,000 students of which 25% are international from over 100 countries.



# 3 UWA's Goal

**Grow digital brand presence internationally to diversify the university's student cohort**

The University of Western Australia had three main objectives, when starting the partnership with Studyportals:

1. Expand awareness of the UWA brand to a wider, globally diverse audience, by promoting their programmes to over 44 million engaged student users on the Studyportals platforms, reaching them early in their search
2. Capture student interest in countries where UWA does not have an active agent or in-country staff presence
3. Use site traffic data to inform recruitment agent lifecycle decisions



# 4 The Solution

## Studyportals Partnership

Studyportals and The University of Western Australia started working together in August 2018 initially aiming to generate applications for Master's programmes.

In September 2019, the agreement was expanded to an Enrolment Based Partnership (EBP), and Studyportals began promoting all 190+, Bachelor's, Master's and PhD programmes to students across the world.



In addition, UWA also has access to Studyportals' insights dashboard. This real-time student search data provides quantitative support to anecdotal evidence, particularly for programme development, market opportunities and recruitment planning.

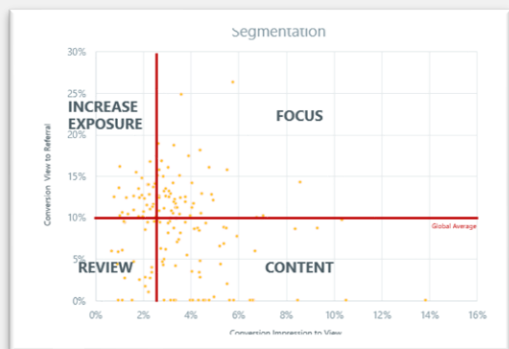


# 5 Implementation & Service

## Data-driven promotions

Studyportals identified key opportunities by using the performance of the applications-based campaign in 2018. We analysed holistic results and individual programme performance. When we grew into a full Enrolment-Based Partnership, we could expand the promotional activity and implement strategic actions to maximise the recruitment potential.

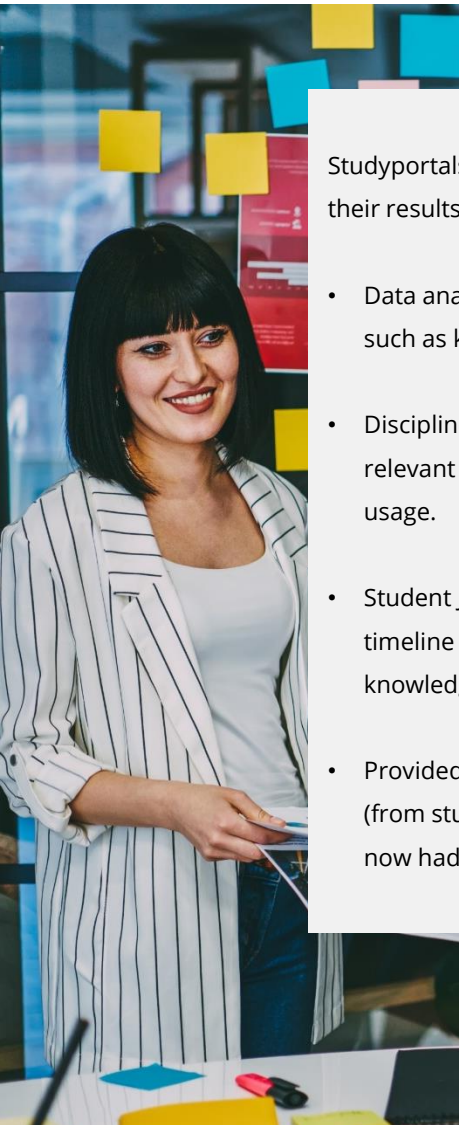
The individual programmes' performance during the campaign was segmented into four main groups, which informed our decisions in the subsequent months.



- **Focus:** programmes of high interest, which should be prioritised in the lead nurturing process, and can benefit from additional promotion, such as mailings and banners.
- **Increased Exposure:** programmes with high conversion that need greater exposure for overall increased results.
- **Content:** examine content to be more appealing, improving conversion.
- **Review:** low interest programmes to examine with further data insights to identify potential issues: price, requirements, competition, supply/demand index

# 5 Implementation & Service

## Pro-active support



Studyportals pro-actively supported the UWA team to optimise their results in the following ways:

- Data analysis to gather relevant insights for focus and targeting such as key markets to boost activity.
- Discipline review to ensure programmes are linked to the most relevant categories, based on search trend data and key word usage.
- Student Journey mapping to understand the user journey timeline and set-up effective nurturing per channel, share knowledge for lead conversion, and more.
- Provided greater transparency of the full recruitment funnel (from students' initial search to commencement) which until now had only been visible from the application stage onwards.

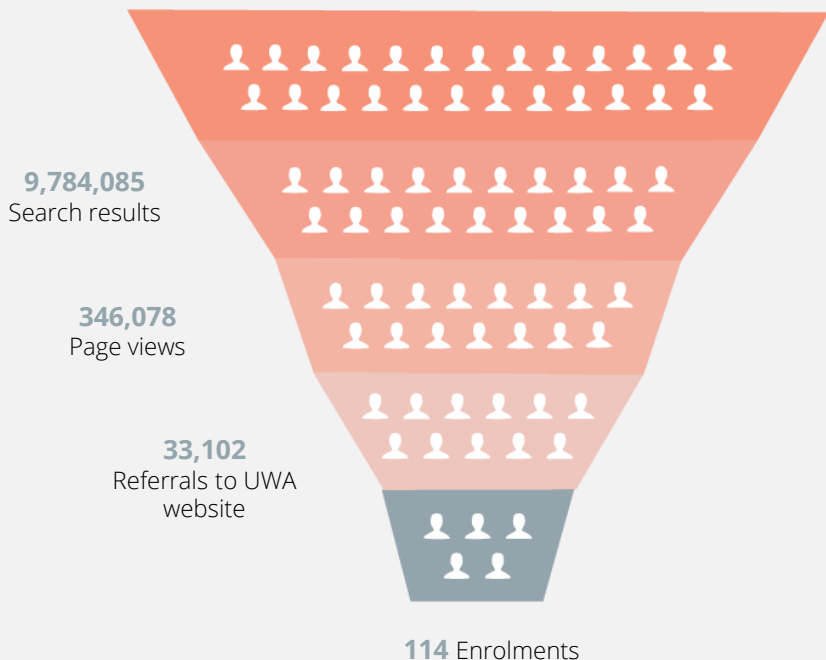


# 6 Main Results

## Exposure, traffic & enrolments

From August 2018 until January 2021, promoting via Studyportals has generated a strong digital presence for the UWA brand with over 9 million brand impressions, over 300,000 page views and 33,000 unique visits to the UWA website.

The result of this promotion and collaboration is assisting with 114 additional enrolments - over 4 intakes, from 21 countries - who used Studyportals to find a UWA programme.



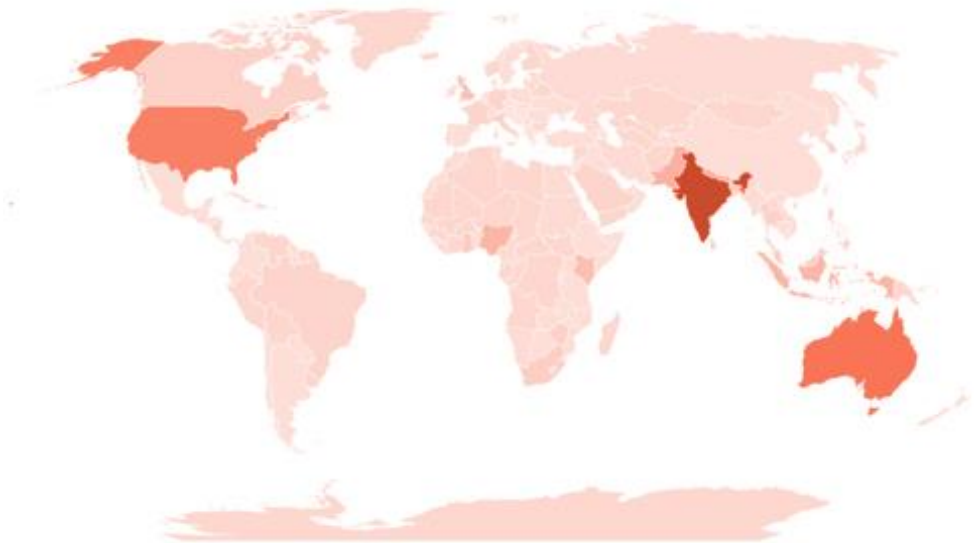
# 6

## Main Results

### International reach

The promotion with Studyportals resulted in a wide market reach with students from all around the globe looking at a UWA programme page.

#### Origin of students reached



# 6 Main Results

## Enrolled Students' Diversity

The enrolments have originated from 21 countries highlighting the diversity of source countries that promoting with Studyportals can achieve.

The full enrolment impact from this campaign period is still to be realised, given the lead time of 16 months from search to commencement.

Origin of enrolled students



UWA has local staff



2020 recruitment serviced by UWA agents and Perth based staff



In a non-pandemic year, UWA staff would visit many of these markets. During 2020, UWA pivoted to create a stronger digital presence.

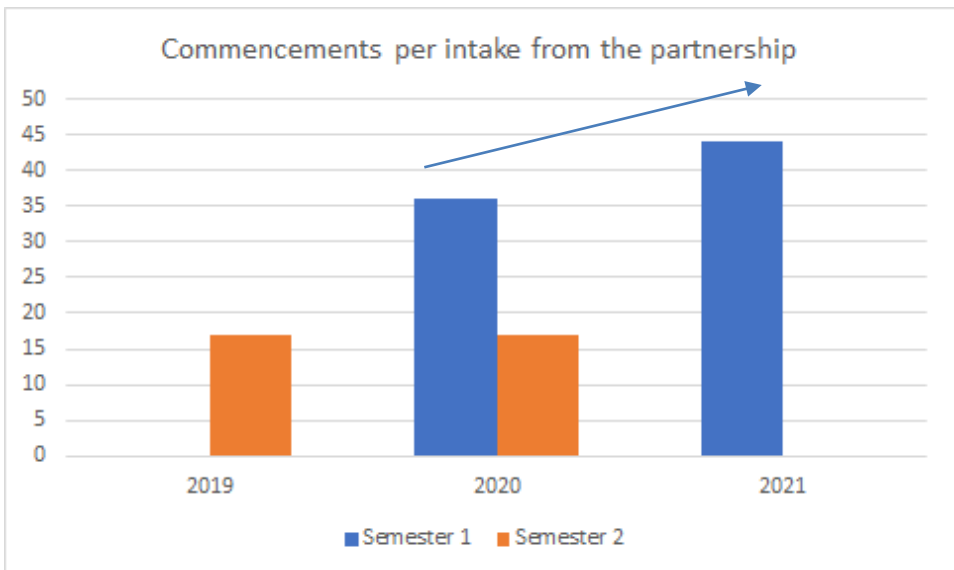
# 6 Main Results

## Enrolled Students' trend

As the Partnership started in April 2018, and students typically take 12-18 months from discovery to enrolment, the full enrolment effect will go beyond semester 1'21.

Also, due to tracking limitations, only a small portion of the students can be tracked from discovery to enrolment. The full enrolment effect of the partnership is estimated at 150-350 enrolments, based on conversion rates if full tracking was in place.

The trend graph below shows that despite COVID, semester 1 2021 enrolments are higher than semester 1 2020 and almost the same level as the full year 2020.



# 6 Main Results

## Enrolment diversity

Beyond diversity by country, these enrolments span 31 programmes in nearly all study areas, highlighting the spread of student interest.



Business  
and Commerce



Health and  
Biomedical Sciences



Engineering



Humanities and  
Social Sciences



Psychology



Law



Data and  
Computer Science



Music and Fine Arts



Education



Physical Sciences  
and Mathematics



Agricultural,  
Environmental  
and Biological Sciences



Architecture, Design  
and Planning

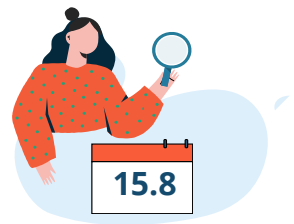
# 7 Key benefits

## THE KEY BENEFITS

- Studyportals provides **increased brand exposure**, particularly in non-core recruitment markets
- Students get the right information to make an **informed decision**, and are more likely to make a direct application
- Student search data provides **quantitative support** to anecdotal evidence
- The UWA Studyportals partnership offers an end-to-end view and opportunities to **optimize the recruitment funnel**

By matching data, Studyportals and UWA identified that on average, students were first active on the portals almost 16 months before commencing at UWA.

Combining this with activity dates with UWA and other partners such as agents, UWA can establish nurture tracks by channel.







## In your words



**How would you describe your overall collaboration experience with Studyportals?**

We have access to our account manager(s) whenever needed and to other staff such as the Analytics team. We find Studyportals very approachable and responsive to our needs and requests.

**How was the set-up and alignment at the start of the collaboration?**

The client service team proactively contacted us during set up and continue to do so to ensure our programmes are promoted appropriately on the portals. There is an opportunity to improve the content accuracy & comprehensiveness, but our account managers are always swift in making updates or adjustments when requested.

**How do your results with Studyportals compare to other marketing efforts?**

Studyportals care about our business and proactively help us to improve our digital presence and lead conversion via regular campaign presentation and via strategic meetings throughout the year.

The most valuable was the insight we gained on our recruitment funnel. This insight now drives our lead nurturing project, which should set us up for an improved student engagement process.



# 9 Get in touch

## Increase brand awareness

Make it easy for potential students to find you. Ensure that your university stands out through SEO, search results, targeted banners, emails and newsletters.

## Capture student interest, diversify

Have interested students referred to your university and programme landing pages. Capture their requests for additional information.

## Convert interest into enrolments

Track the full student journey, measure the ROI of your digital campaign, reduce your risk and scale your result.



**Student-first**



**Transparency**



**Best fit**



**Diversity**



**Best tracking**



**Results-driven**

Would you like to explore how your institution can benefit from next-generation student recruitment?

[www.studyportals.com/institutions](http://www.studyportals.com/institutions)

Or schedule a meeting with our colleagues for an introduction via [hello@studyportals.com](mailto:hello@studyportals.com)



Get in touch to discover how we can help  
you enhance your international  
student recruitment strategy

[hello@studyportals.com](mailto:hello@studyportals.com)