



Students, alumni, and
administrators agree:

**Data-driven
communications
make a difference**



Methodology

500 

college students,
ages 18+



502 

alumni, graduated within the
last five years



300 

administrators



Admission/
recruitment

Student
success/
registrars/
advisors

Alumni
relations/
development

The survey fielding was managed by Wakefield Research via email invitation and online survey among U.S. college students, alumni, and administrators between July 19 and August 2, 2018.

The margin for error for results is +/- 4.4 percentage points for the college students and alumni samples and +/- 5.7 percentage points for the administrators sample at the 95% confidence level.

Personal connections with applicants can lead to increased enrollment—and future donations

97%



**of admissions and
recruitment
administrators...**

agree that students who have
a more personalized
recruitment process are
more likely to enroll

97%



**of advising
administrators...**

agree that students who had
a personalized recruitment
experience are more likely
to be engaged with
their college

98%



**of advancement
administrators...**

agree that alumni who had a
personalized college
experience are more
likely to donate

Communication weighs heavily in the enrollment decision



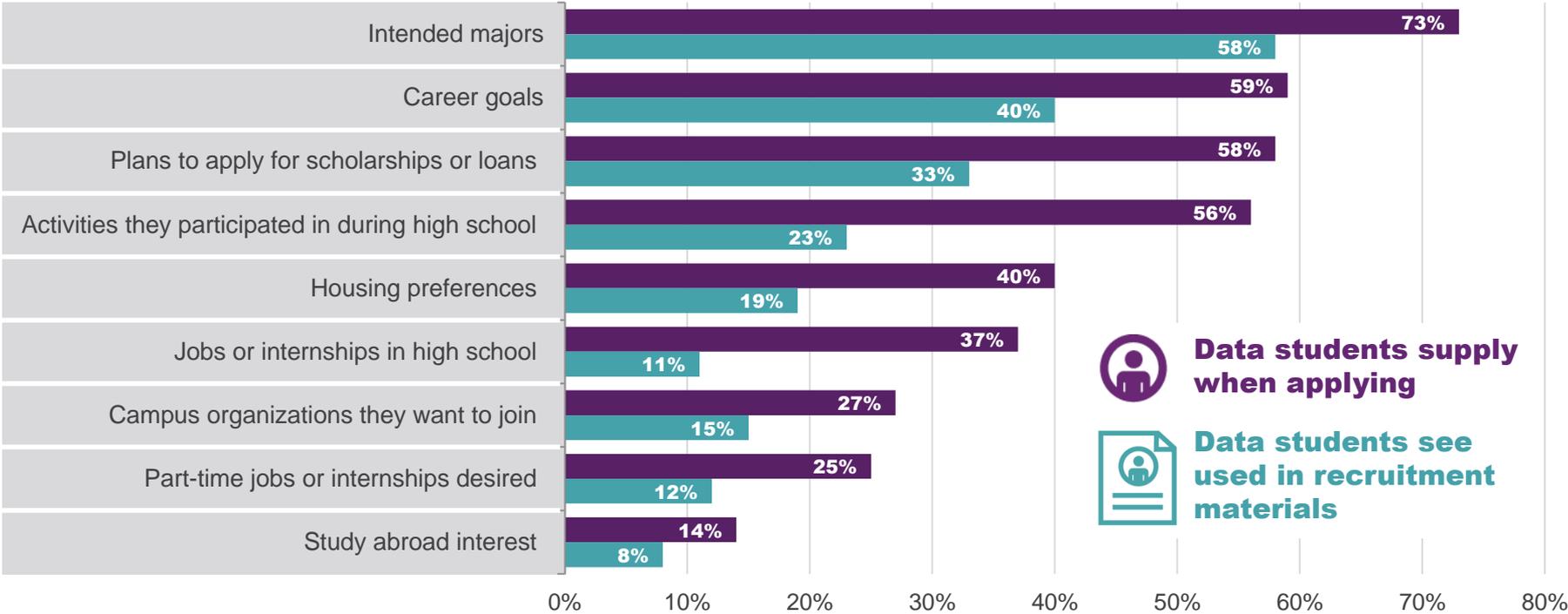
of students who received personalized communications during their application process **agree that it was an important factor in their choice of school**



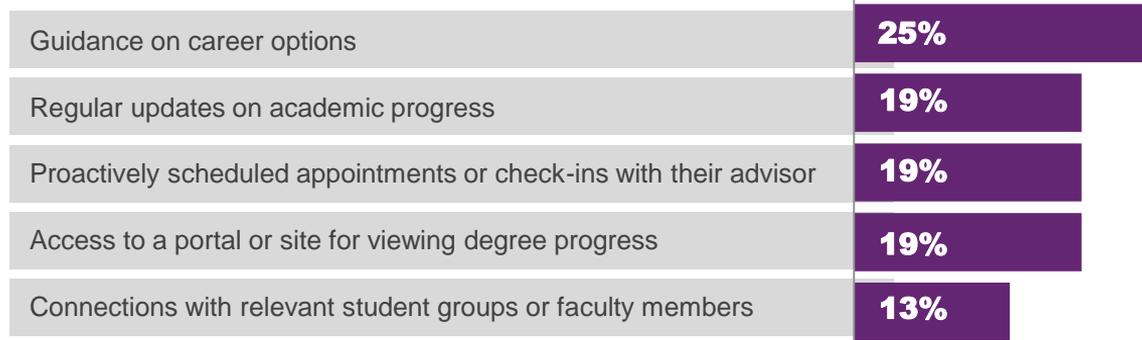
of students who applied to multiple colleges **decided against attending a school because of poor communication during the application process**



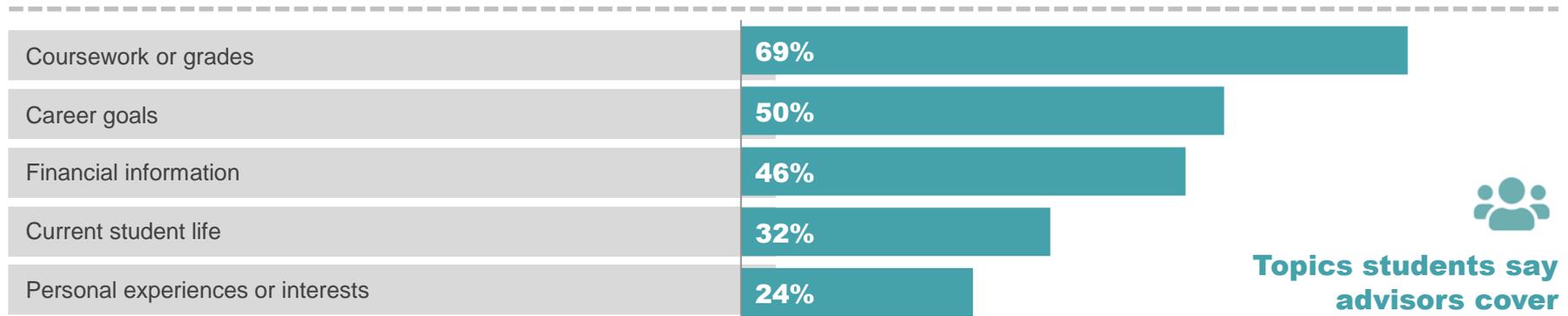
Students are supplying the data, but how is it being used?



Students crave advice...



Advising services that students think present the greatest positive impact on success

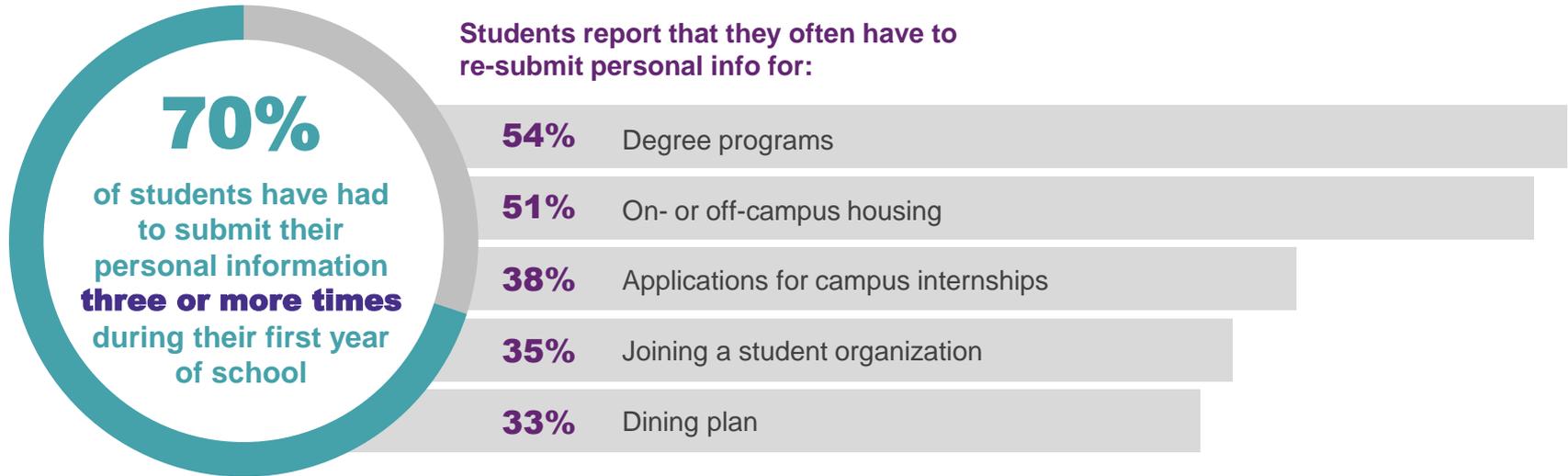


Topics students say advisors cover



...but often struggle to get it

Students report having to talk to **up to four people** to answer an advising question



Attending college is a significant life milestone, connecting alumni with their alma mater for life

Many are still involved with their colleges:



41%
attend social or athletic events



26%
network with other alumni



24%
are members of their alumni associations



22%
volunteer at college-sponsored events



19%
donate money



13%
participate in prospective student interviews; mentor students

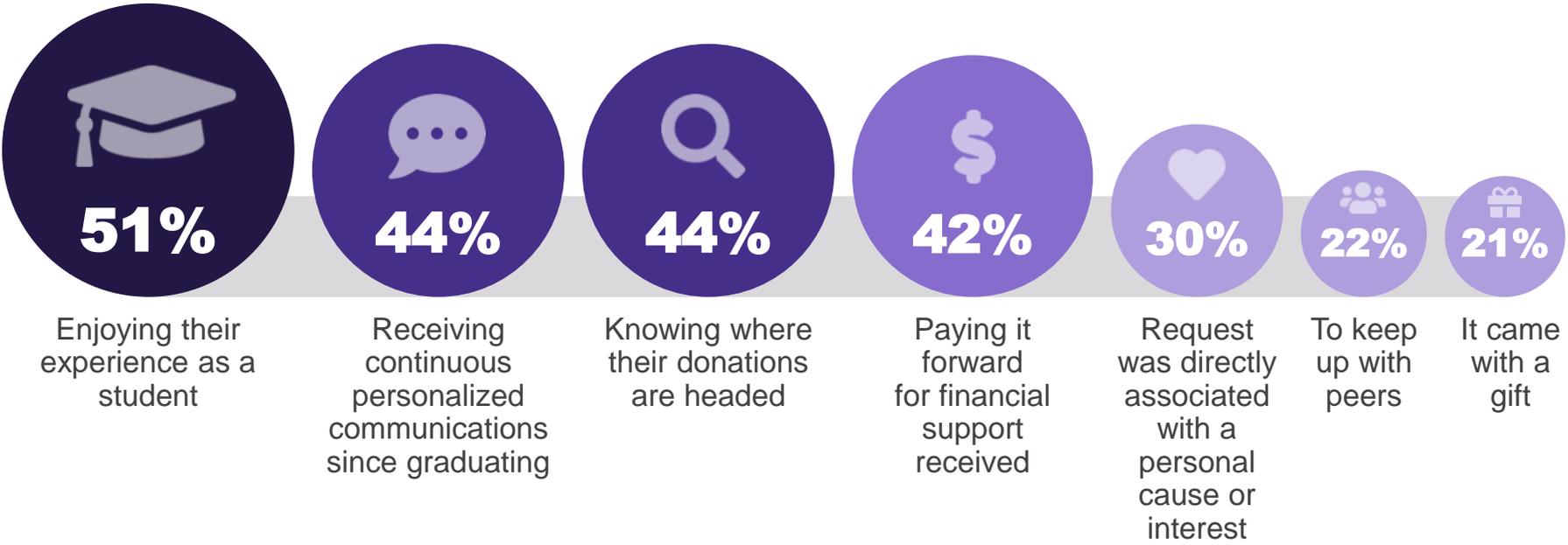
89%
would be more likely to take advantage of post-grad opportunities if they involved the groups or activities they participated in while in college



20%
report not being involved with their alma mater post-graduation

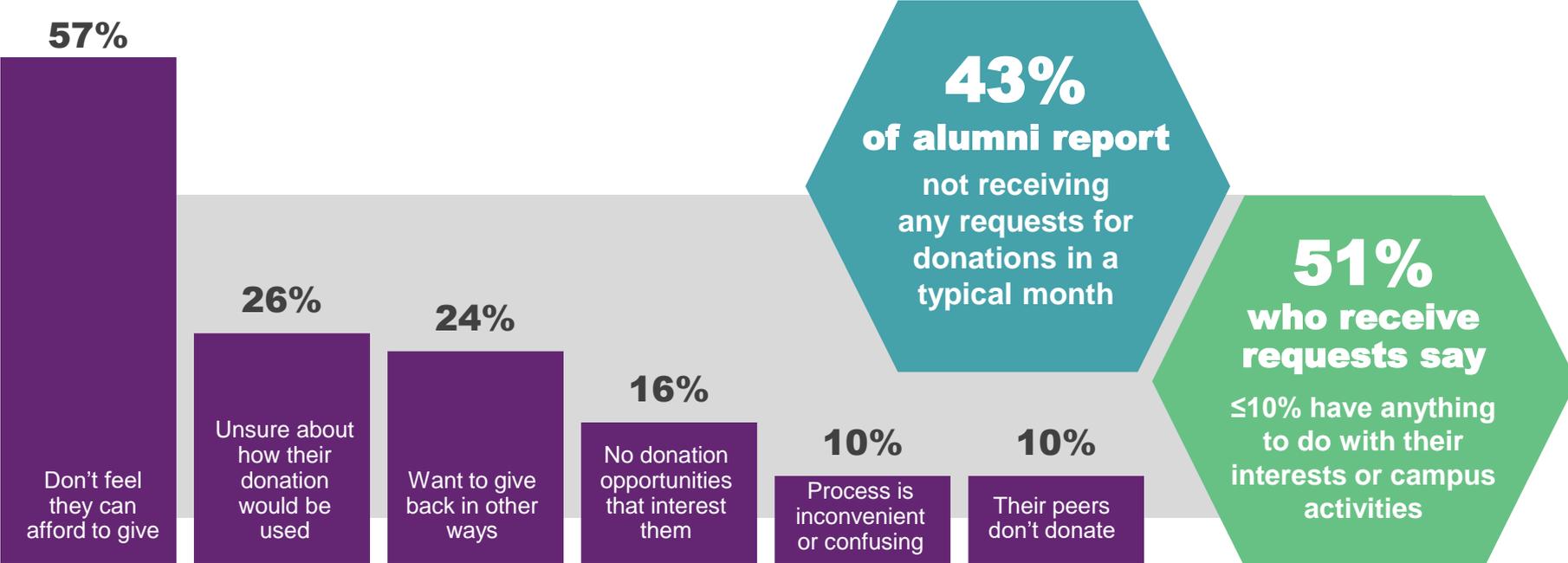
Alumni who donate do so with the best of intentions

Reasons for giving include:

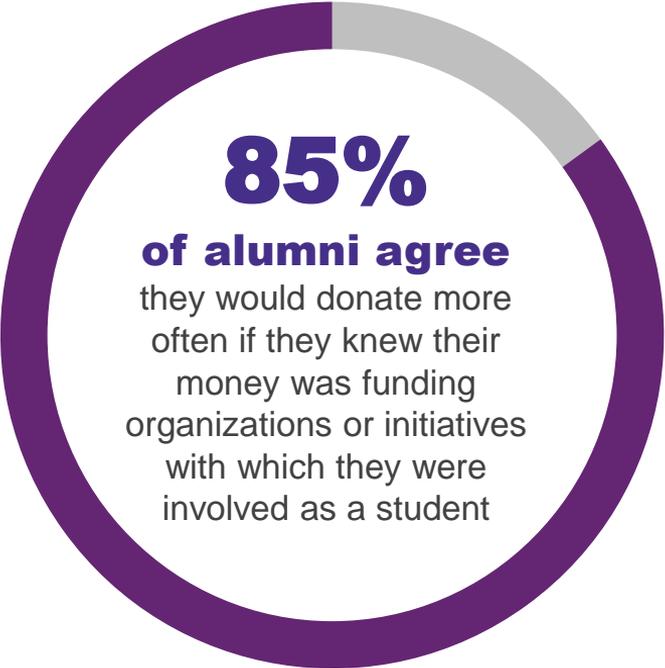


Affordability is only one factor in the donation decision process

Why alumni don't give:



Schools could take better advantage of alumni's willingness to give



Alumni *could* be persuaded to donate, if provided the proper motivation:



Details about where the donation would go



Knowing the donation would go to a cause or interest they had while in school



Getting a gift, like tickets to a game, in return



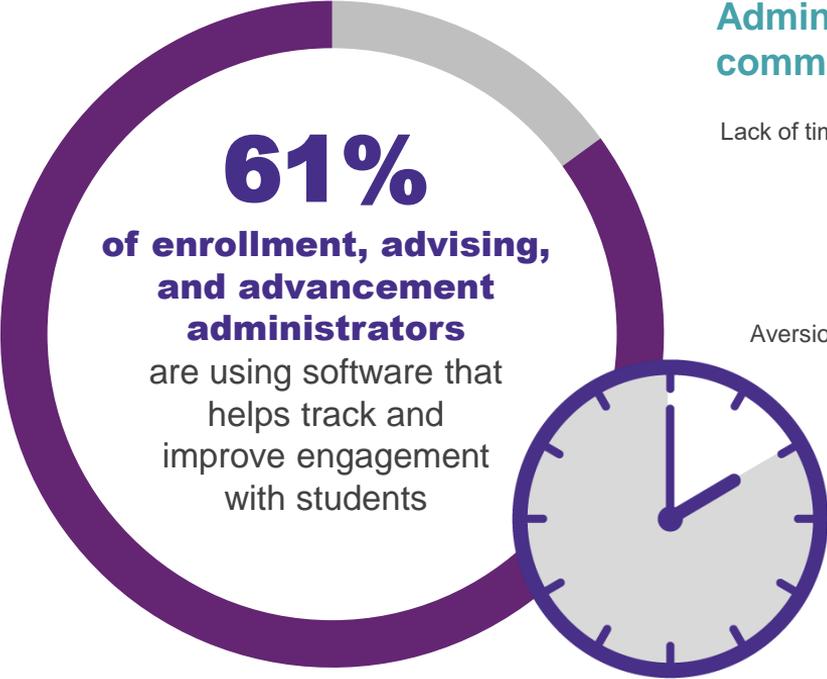
Seeing peers donate



Continuous personalized communication

Answers from those who have not donated

Administrators are using tools to improve engagement, but it's not enough



Administrators face obstacles when it comes to updating communication strategies, including:



More than 1/3 of student advisors spend **20+ hours per week** manually communicating with students

Administrators still need more data



95%

of advisors...

wish they had access to more complete and up-to-date information on students' financial, academic, and student life data



95%

of advancement officials...

believe they would have a better relationship with alumni if they had access to more data across the student lifecycle

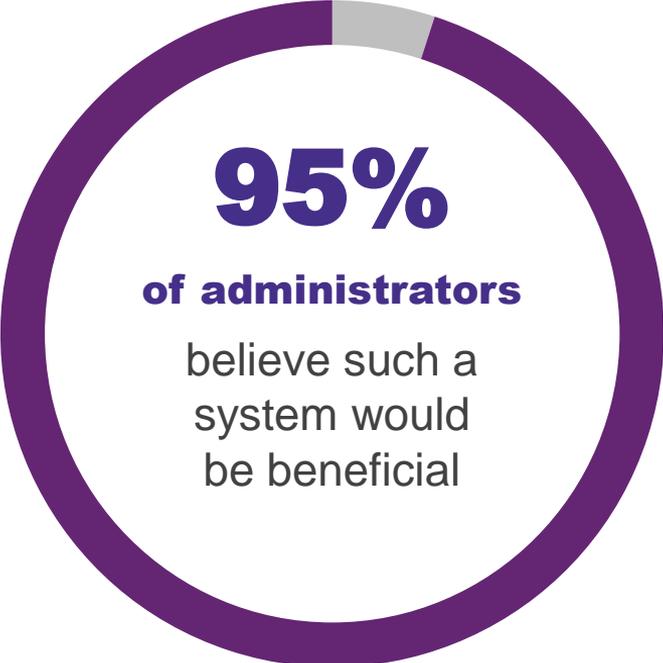


87%

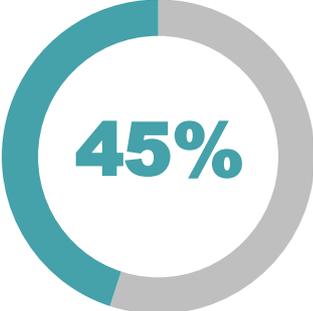
of administrators...

think their colleges and universities will not be able to stay competitive without integrating their data across departments in the next five years

Administrators want to use CRM because they understand the power of personalized information



Answers from those who don't have a CRM at their institution



cited **inter-departmental visibility** as the top benefit of implementing a CRM system

Followed by:



Greater process automation or efficiency



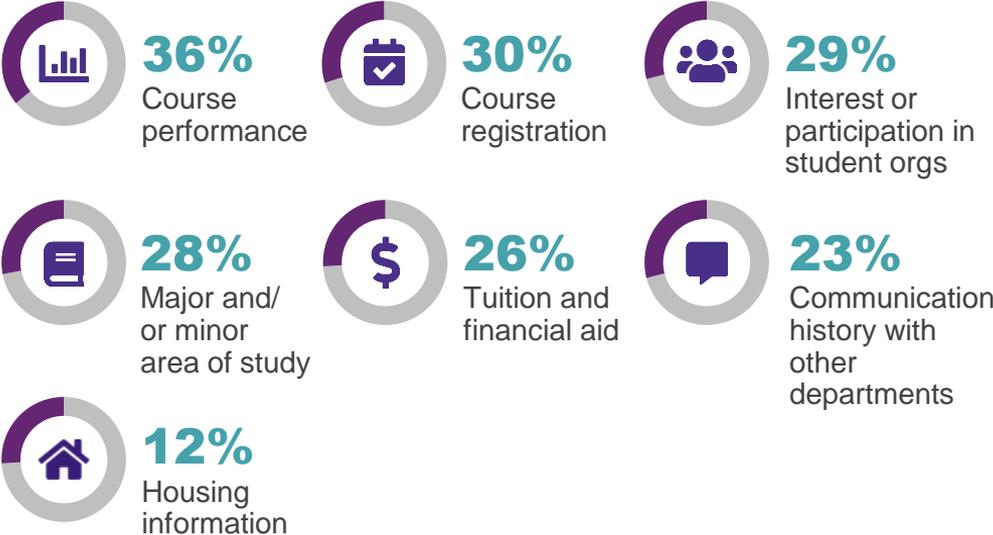
Increased monetary donations



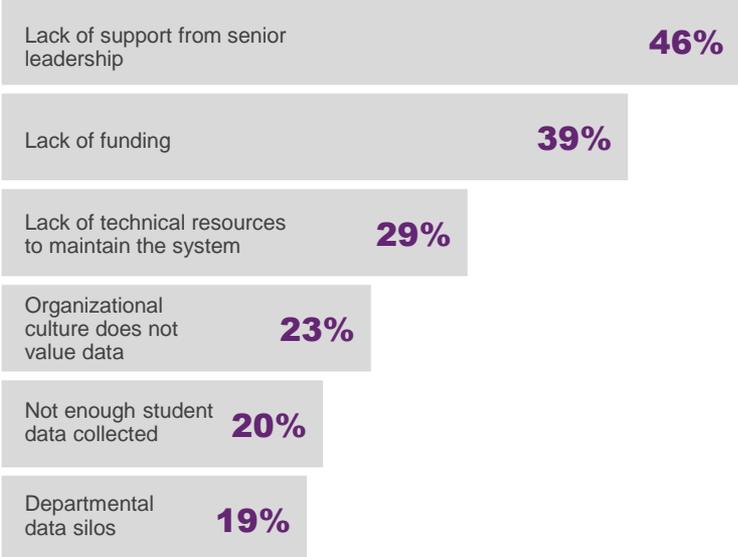
Increased number of applications

Administrators will need to overcome obstacles to access much needed data

Data that administrators think would help them better serve students and alumni:



Top obstacles institutions face in acquiring CRM



Answers from those who don't have a CRM at their institution

Today's connected students are driving a new experience on campus

They share a lot of personal information and expect a personalized experience across all areas of the student lifecycle—admissions, advising, and advancement—in return.

Institutions that personally connect with applicants can look forward to increased enrollment. And students are more likely to get the most out of their college experience—from classes and clubs to housing and financial aid—if data is used to inform conversations. When students enjoy their experience, they become alumni who donate to their institution, especially when they receive requests that relate back to their interests.

The integration of data across departments to tailor communication with students and alumni is vital to improving the student experience as well as long-term student loyalty and future giving.





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