



How To Maximize Applicants, Yield, and Retention With Video

Introduction

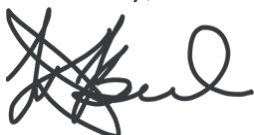


Video content can be a super powerful medium to attract potential students and convert them into enrolled ones, but it's a little intimidating if you're not sure how to create the kind of content that works. Plus, a lot of the resources out there talk about video marketing in the business world, or trying to sell products to consumers.

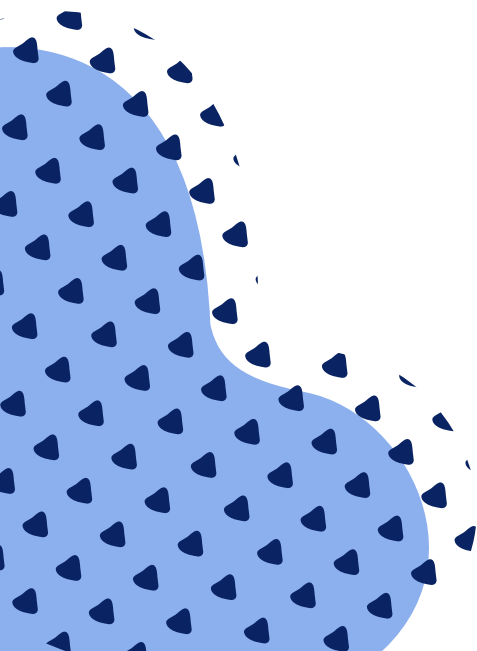
Thankfully, there are tools and tips that make it a lot easier than you might think. Our goal here is to help you find effective ways to add video to your enrollment marketing to improve your success rates, refresh your marketing, and create fun ways for potential students to learn more about you.

In this guide we'll take you through how to maximize your application, yield, and retention rates with video. You'll learn some super useful enrollment marketing strategies and tips for every stage of the higher education admissions funnel.

Sincerely,



JD Beebe
CEO at ThankView





The College Admissions Enrollment Funnel

01.



The Enrollment Funnel

Before we can jump into our enrollment marketing, we first need to look at the admissions funnel on a wider scale.

Like every great funnel, the college admissions funnel has three key stages – top, middle, and bottom. As potential students move through their journey, their needs change. This means you need to adapt your enrollment marketing tactics so they're always relevant.

It's worth keeping in mind that your students might skip sections of the funnel altogether. It's easy to apply for college these days without that pre-application relationship that might've existed pre-internet. Students now have greater access to the kind of information they need from websites, videos, and social media – and you have more opportunities to promote what you do.

Let's take a closer look at the all-important student enrollment funnel.

Top of the Funnel: Building Demand.



At this stage of the funnel, students are just beginning to explore their options. They're thinking about college but may not have committed to a program of study or an institution. Consider them prospects who are yet to be welcomed into your world of messaging.

The focus for your top of the funnel enrollment marketing should be on building demand for your college and programs. To do that, you'll need to show up and create content that gets them excited about who you are and what you can offer them. Focus on inbound marketing strategies that drive interest and traffic, like posting on social media or content marketing.

Middle of the Funnel: Optimizing Yield.

Thanks to your great enrollment marketing in the first part of their journey, prospective students know who you are and have applied. Your goal in this stage is to encourage them to head further down the path towards enrollment.

This means you need to find creative ways to capture their attention, offer valuable information on the application process, and stay visible on the channels that matter to them.



Bottom of the Funnel: Reducing Summer Melt.

The bottom of the college admissions funnel is all about securing those enrollments, reducing summer melt, and supporting your admitted students.

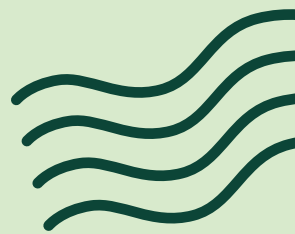
In this stage the focus is on making commitments – like completing an application, paying a deposit, and finalizing things like scholarships. This is a big life moment for your prospective students, so your marketing campaigns at this stage of the funnel require extra attention to increase your conversion rate from inquiry to applicant.





Why Video?

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Why Is Video Important?

Enrollment marketing has changed. You can't just have a booth at college fairs and send out publications any more.

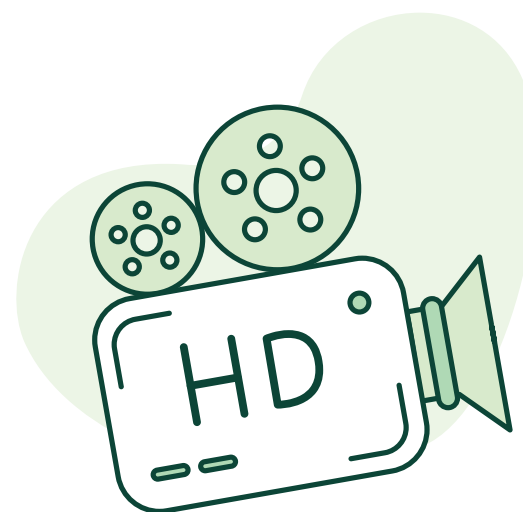
Today's students are gifted with so many great ways to find information, solve questions, and arrive at a decision. Video plays a huge part in helping students find the perfect college for them. Here's why it's a must-have for your enrollment marketing this year.

It's Relevant To Gen Z.

The Gen Z crowd is a huge fan of visual content. If you're not using video as part of your enrollment marketing, you're missing out on a huge opportunity to connect with them as they decide where to go to college.

A recent study found that Gen Zers are super active on video-first platforms, with **89% using YouTube**, 74% using Instagram, and 68% using Snapchat on a weekly basis. This means you know exactly where to go to create interest for your school — and you know that video is the medium for it.

You might think that high school students just want to watch videos and spend time on social media to relax, but that isn't the case. Research directly from Google shows that **80% of Gen Zers** say YouTube has helped them become more knowledgeable about something. Use that as your reminder to create useful, engaging video content for your target audience.



It's Highly Engaging.

Video can capture people's attention and engage them in a way that written text and photos just can't. It gives people a way to really connect with you in a more natural way — like they're meeting one of your student mentors over coffee. Plus, you can have a lot of fun with video content. Who wants to read about what really happens on campus when you can show it?

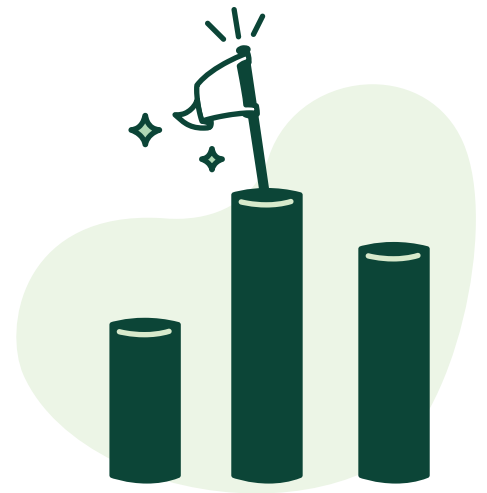
Think about all the different elements that come

together to make a video. The scenery, the sound, the atmosphere — and that's before you even consider what you're going to say, share, or do. College life gives you so many amazing opportunities to create video content — like football games, lectures, student presentations, and students hanging out in their dorm rooms. Video gives you room to be creative and make something that holds your prospective students' attention.

It Gives You a Competitive Edge.

Think about it — if you're not already using video for your college admissions marketing, chances are competing schools aren't either. This is your opportunity to use digital marketing to create an experience for your prospects that's way more engaging than other colleges they're considering.

While other schools are focused on text chats and personalized email subject lines, turn your attention to video. Look for ways you can give more — like hosting a live video call or sending personalized introduction videos to applicants. It's all about using video to give you an advantage and create a fun experience for your hopeful students.





How To Use Video To Build Demand From Prospective Students

03.





Using Video To Create Demand

We all know there are plenty of amazing reasons to use video in the college admissions marketing process. One of the best places to add video is right at the start – creating interest, demand, and excitement around your institution and programs.

To see success with video marketing at this stage of the funnel, it's all about showing up where your potential students are. Focus on video-first social media platforms, create bite-sized video content, and use digital ads to get in front of the right people.

Here are some of our best ideas on how to use video to create demand for your college.



Partner With Influencers.

Social media platforms popular with Gen Zers are also the playground of influencers. Partner up with influencers on your admissions marketing for a fresh way to reach and connect with potential students.

Run campaigns across content and marketing channels like Snapchat and TikTok with influencers that appeal to your ideal students. Use a reputable influencer marketing agency to source talent and pitch your campaign to them, or ask your current students who they watch the most to find the

perfect match. If they're an alumni, even better – you can encourage them to share their own personal story of why attending your college was so great.

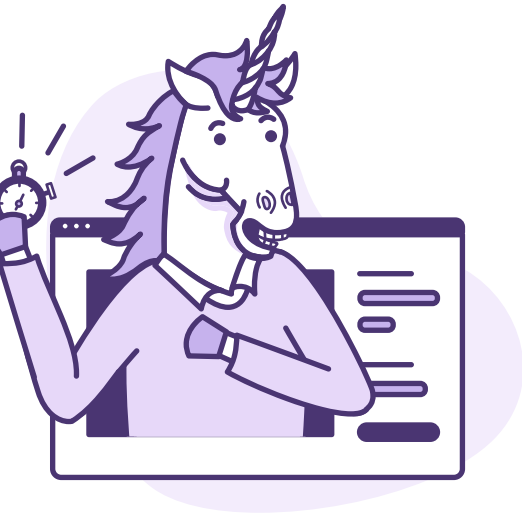
Share a Look at Student Life on Campus.

Studies have found that people rate user-generated content as **50% more trustworthy**, so getting your current students onboard can be a great way to connect with the next generation.

Film testimonials from current students, faculty, and admissions counselors about life on campus. Give future students an insight into campus culture through engaging videos, then share them across social media, put them on landing pages, and use **ThankView** to distribute them via email.



Make Your Videos Short and Snappy.



Don't be tempted to add a long, slow intro to your promotional videos. Today's students want you to get to the point, or they'll be tempted to scroll past and view something else.

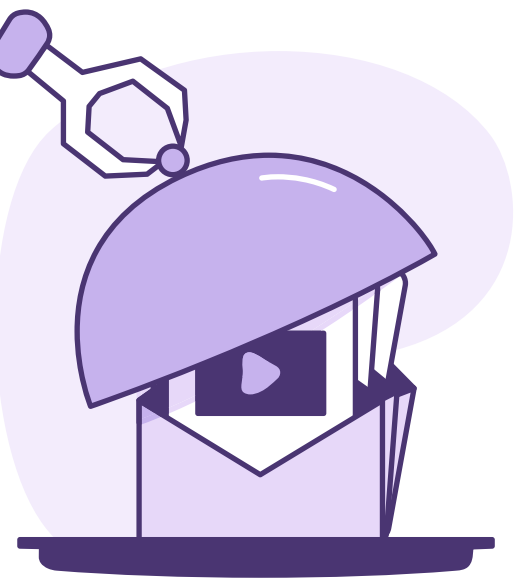
Think about how Gen Zers consume content now. Instagram Stories and Reels are capped at 15 seconds, and **research suggests 2-5 minutes** is a sweet spot for Facebook video content.

Experiment With Over the Top Ads.

Most of us aren't watching TV the same way any more. With online streaming services leading the way, it's easier than before to run ads between your audience's favorite shows with "over the top" ads.

"Over the top" ads are the ad breaks that appear between streamed content online – like on Hulu or Twitch. These ad spots allow you to reach potential students while they're catching up on their most-loved shows, in a way that's more affordable and targeted than traditional TV advertising.





Get Your Students and Staff Involved.

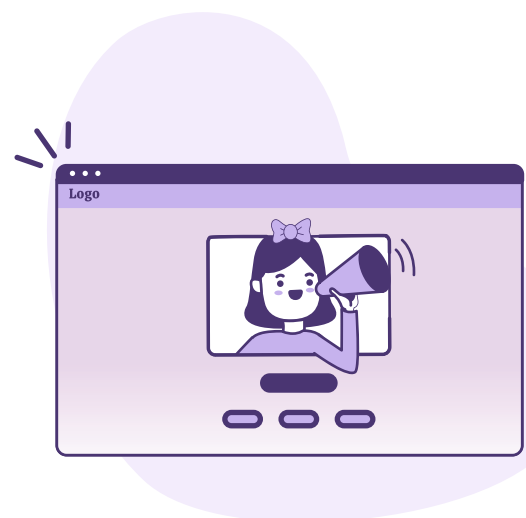
There's nothing more powerful than content that comes straight from the people that make your college what it is. Look for ways to involve your students and staff wherever possible.

Use our **video requests feature** to collect content from your student community, staff, and scholarship recipients. You can then easily share this content across all your channels to showcase the passion behind your institution.

Use Retargeting Ads To Show Up Regularly.

Your prospective students aren't always going to make an early decision after seeing one piece of content. It's going to take more than that to bring them into your ecosystem. Make showing up where they are easier than ever with clever retargeting ads.

Set up a ThankView landing page with an informational video about why your institution is so great. **Add a retargeting pixel** to that page, and you can then set up tracking within Google Analytics to automatically serve display ads to people that visit your page on sites they visit the most.





How To Use Video To Cultivate Applicants and Optimize Acceptance Rates



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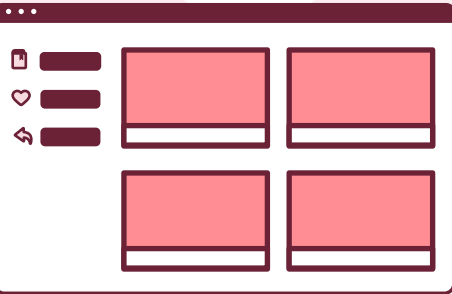
Using Video for Higher Yield Rates

Once you've got potential students excited about your institution, the next step is getting them to apply. From there, you've got the difficult task of reviewing applicants and sending out acceptances. The journey doesn't stop there though – you still need to convert those admittances into enrollments.

Trying to get the highest yield rate possible can be a major struggle for colleges, with even top-rated selective colleges sitting around a **50% yield rate**. Competition for talented students with high test scores is fierce, especially with selective schools, so give your college the best chance of holding on to great applicants with stellar video content.

Want to increase those applications and see higher yield rates? Here's how to use video to put you on the journey towards those high yield rates.

Create Application “How To” Videos.



Starting and completing your college applications is hard. Make it super easy for your potential students by making simple, useful “how to” videos on the subject.

Create one standalone video or break it down into a series of smaller, bite-sized videos instead. For maximum impact, complement your “how to” videos with a live Q&A session with some of your admissions team.

Share Reminders About Key Application Dates.

There are some pretty big deadlines in the college admissions journey, and you don’t want amazing students to miss out because they didn’t get their application in on time. To help them take early action to hit deadlines, create short, fun reminder videos about important application dates.

You don’t need to share a lot of information in these videos, so they’re perfect for super short video platforms like Reels or Stories. You can also share these videos with your potential students via email, with a reminder to submit financial aid and scholarship applications when relevant.





Create an Explainer Video on Financial Aid Options.

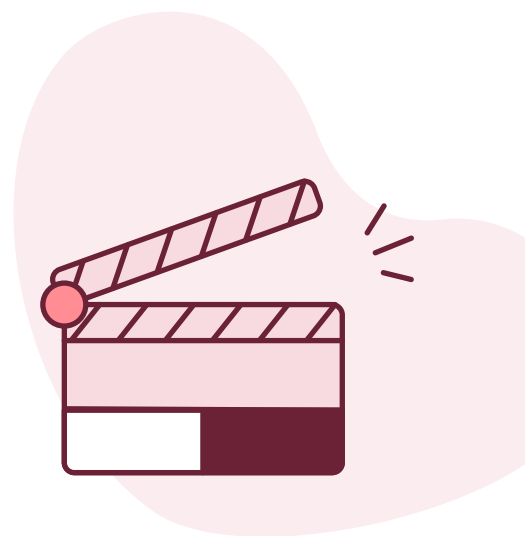
The world of college financing is a mystery to most students. Help them understand the options and support available to them with a short and simple explainer video.

Create a really visual explainer video that walks your students through all the different financial aid and scholarship options available to them. Share this across social media, as well as to your email list of students that have expressed an interest in financial aid support.

Film and Share a Personalized Video Tour.

Campus tours are one of the highlights of the process for prospective students. They get to explore the campus and experience what it'll be like when they're a student there. But campus tours aren't always an option for everyone.

To make this accessible to all, create a video tour of your campus. Make this even more special and record a personalized message from campus tour guides on all those burning questions your applicants might have.



Nudge Stealth Applicants With Incomplete Interest Forms.

Sometimes students will make it partway through the process but not complete the steps. A little encouragement goes a long way, so use video to send a gentle reminder to stealth applicants that they're almost finished with their interest form.

Send a short, warm video that says, "We'd love to know more about you!" to these stealth applicants. Your goal here is to lead them through the process and find out more about them as an applicant, so

you can personalize their application and admissions experience and make them feel welcome.



Share Positive Messages From Student Ambassadors.

Prospective students want to know what life is really like as a student with you. Let your most passionate student ambassadors do the talking and use their own personal experiences and stories to inspire future students.

Ask your student ambassadors to share their thoughts on college life, the value of studying at your institution, and their personal achievements.

If your email segmentation is on point, you can then use micro targeting to send highly personalized content based on applicants' interests, desired programs, and needs.

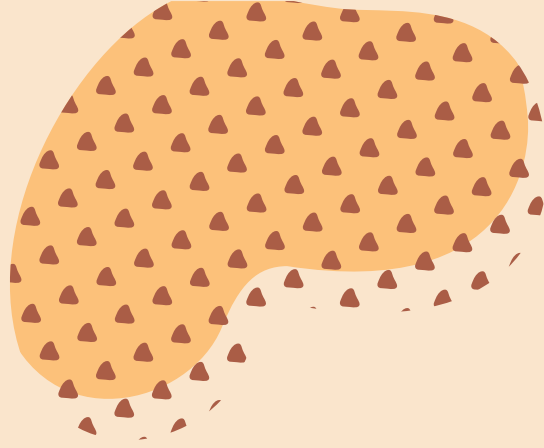


Host a Virtual Event With Your Admissions Office Team.

Being sent information via snail mail or email from college marketers is still useful, but students often want something that feels more interactive. Show your potential students how welcoming and supportive you are and set up a live event for future students, led by your friendly admissions team.

This is a great way to introduce the people they'll be speaking to over the next few months, and gives them a safe space to ask questions about the process. Host a live event — like a video livestream or recorded podcast — then send a recorded version to any applicants that have expressed an interest so they don't miss out.





How To Use Video To Reduce Summer Melt

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Using Video To Reduce Summer Melt

Summer melt can be a huge problem for colleges. Research suggests that between **10-20% of students don't complete their enrollment** to college due to summer melt. It's a figure that rises to up to 40% in low income families.

The long summer can be a tough time for potential students, with limited access to support and guidance to prepare them for starting college. Video outreach makes staying in touch with your accepted students easy — and it creates a relaxed, casual way to get help, support, and information to help them stay excited about college.

Here are some engaging ways to use video to reduce summer melt, improve enrollment management, and inspire your students to stick with you.

Send a Personalized Welcome From Your President.

A great way to make your enrolled student feel special is to send a personalized welcome video from your president, dean, or program lead. Film a thoughtful welcome address, then use **ThankView** to personalize it and send at scale.

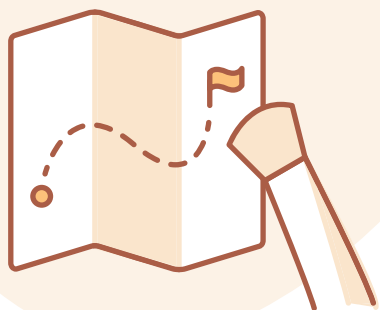
Not only does this help you stay connected to your students, but it's an opportunity to introduce a summer full of content that you'll be sharing with them. Start your marketing plan early and you can use this video to let your students know about live Q&As, virtual tours, orientation programs, and more.



Create a Video Series With a Roadmap.

Summer can feel like a long haul — especially if your student has college on their mind. To help them feel like they're getting closer to the end goal, create a video series that walks your students through life at your college.

Film current students and ambassadors talking through key parts of college life — like what's available on campus, extracurricular clubs and societies, and other opportunities that students can get involved with. Share these videos across social as well as through email as part of a weekly series.



Film a Guide on How To Fill in Essential Forms.

Filling in forms is hard — especially if there's a lot stacked on it, like with FAFSA forms. Give your college students the best possible chance at getting the support they need by filming and sharing a guide on how to fill in all those important forms.

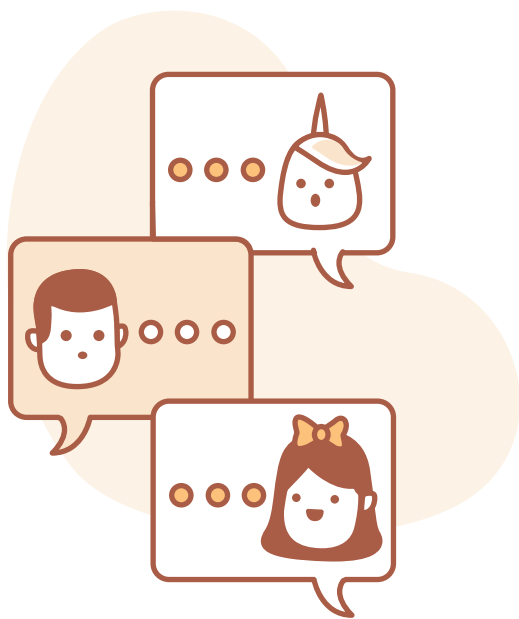
These videos make great content for anyone, not just students for your particular school, so don't be afraid to publish them on YouTube and Facebook. Share them with your students by email too — and include a call to action for them to get in touch with you for extra support if they need it.



Host a Live Q&A Session for Your Students.

Heading to an undergrad program is a total unknown for most students, and it's a fresh new experience that comes with plenty of questions. Give your students a fun space to ask all those major and minor questions with a live Q&A session.

These Q&A sessions work great on Facebook and Instagram, where you can go live in places that your students spend their free time. Use these sessions to empower your students with the information they need, so they're less likely to fall to summer melt and stay enrolled with your institution.



Host a Live Video Session for Parents and Guardians.

Just as college is a new experience for students, it's also new to a whole collection of parents and guardians too. Support for parents and guardians can be lacking, so give them plenty of attention too.

Create a dedicated area of your website for this group with written and video guides, and host a live video session for them to join and ask any questions. A well-supported parent or guardian can inspire and encourage your students to stay committed to college, so it's a super worthwhile investment.



Create an FAQ Video for Incoming Students.

Live sessions are awesome, but you don't want to exclude those students who can't make it. Pull together your most frequently asked questions and film a really useful FAQ video for incoming freshmen and transfers.

Feature all the common topics here – like financial aid and how to enroll for classes. If you have a lot of questions, create smaller, topic-specific FAQ videos so students can watch the ones that are most relevant to them.



Promote Your Student Mentor Program.

Starting college is an exciting new adventure, but for some students it's challenging and easy to feel lost. Let your students know there's a whole host of support out there for them and put the spotlight on your student mentor program.

Film your student mentors sharing their positive experiences — both about life at college and with the mentorship program itself. Interview mentees too if you can, so they can share their story and inspire others. Use this video alongside a call to action to encourage students to sign up and be paired up with a mentor of their own.

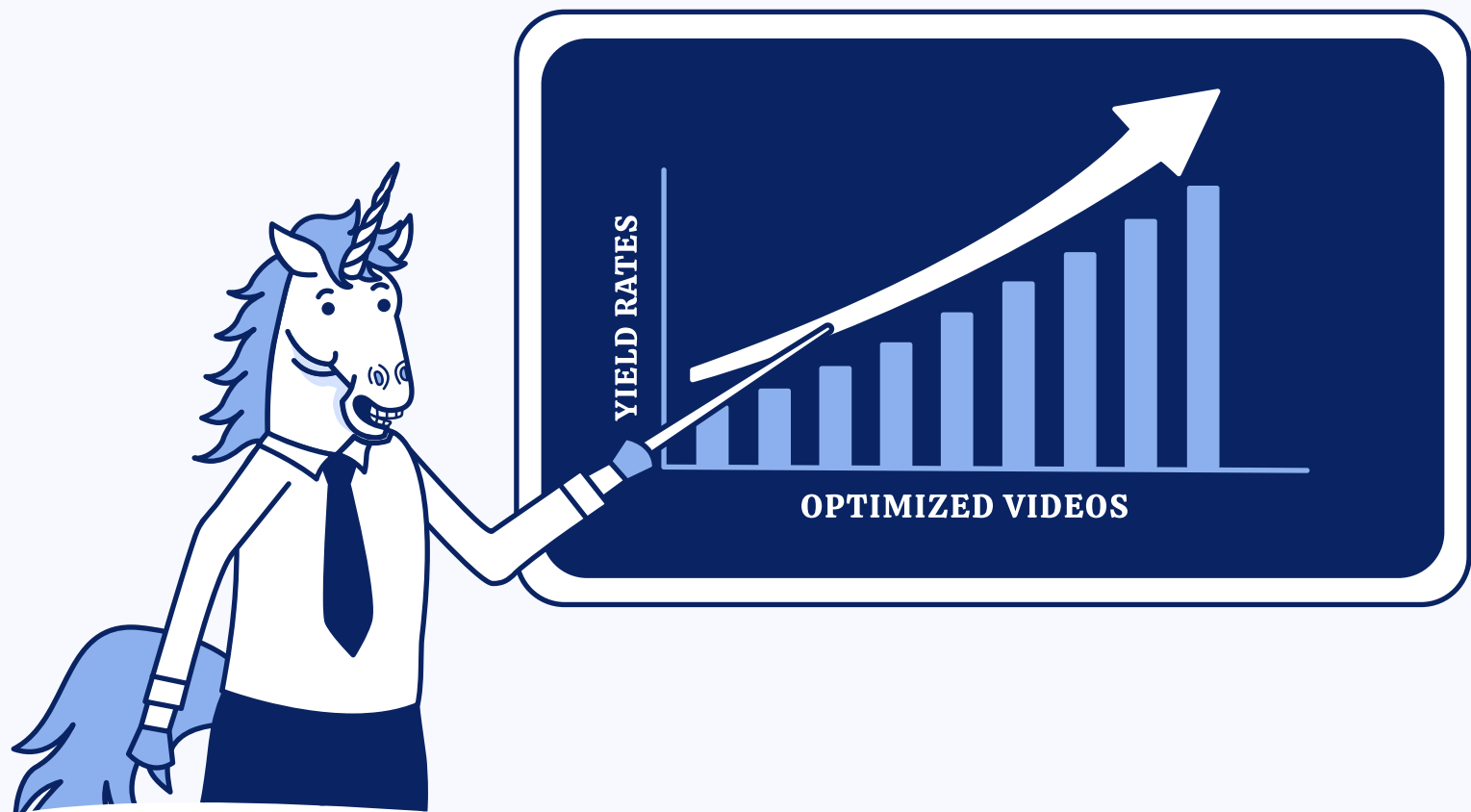




Use Video To Supercharge Your Enrollment Marketing

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Using Video for Higher Yield Rates

Video is here to stay when it comes to enrollment marketing. It gives you an unrivaled method to connect with and engage potential and enrolled students in a way that text and images can't. Being smart about how you use video allows you to give potential students an amazing experience, while helping to maximize your success rates.

Look for ways to not only share your video content on social, but through personalized emails too. This is a super effective way of building a connection with your prospective student and supporting them right through from inquiry to enrollment.

Book a free walkthrough of ThankView to find out how it can help you engage students and improve those all-important yield rates.

[Book a Free Walkthrough](#)





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