

Penn State Berks Market Research Project, Fall 2007

BACKGROUND:

In fall 2007, Penn State Berks contracted ICR to conduct phone surveys to 600 randomly selected residents in the Berks (BK) and Lehigh Valley (LV) service areas. The objective of the market research project was to determine:

- (a) Familiarity with BK and LV,
- (b) Competitive set,
- (c) Attributes important to selecting a college,
- (d) How did you hear about BK and LV, and
- (e) Degree program preferences.

Traditional respondents, ages 16-23, and non-traditional respondents, ages 24-64, were polled. Phone respondents who indicated that they were considering college and had not completed a four-year degree were asked to participate.

RESULTS:

(a). Familiarity with BK:

Traditional and non-traditional respondents were similar with respect to the percent of those who responded they were very familiar or somewhat familiar with Penn State Berks. Fifty-eight (58.4%) percent of the traditional and fifty-five (55.0%) of the non-traditional respondents were very familiar or somewhat familiar with Penn State Berks.

How familiar are you with Penn State Berks?	Sample	
	Percent * Traditional	Percent *Non- Traditional
Very familiar	24.7%	20.3%
Somewhat familiar	33.7%	34.7%
Not too familiar	14.0%	10.7%
Not familiar at all	27.8%	34.0%

* Percent based on total sample.

(b). Competitive Set:

Respondents were asked how familiar he/she were with several colleges. Penn State Berks ranked fifth among traditional respondents and fourth among non-traditional respondents with respect to the percent of very familiar and somewhat familiar responses of ALL schools.

How familiar are you with...?	Sample	
	Percent * Traditional	Percent *Non- Traditional
Penn State-Main Campus	88.3% (1)	67.7% (2)
Kutztown University	82.3% (2)	75.3% (1)
Temple University	72.0% (3)	58.7% (3)
Bloomsburg University	61.7% (4)	--
Penn State Berks	58.3% (5)	55.0% (4)
Millersville University	55.0% (6)	--
Albright College	51.3% (7)	48.3% (6)
East Stroudsburg University	48.7% (8)	40.7% (7)
DeSalles University	47.3% (9)	--
Alvernia College	44.0% (10)	38.7% (9)
Penn State Lehigh Valley	37.3% (11)	39.7% (8)
Cedar Crest College	--	49.3% (5)

* Percent based on total sample who are very familiar/ somewhat familiar with listed school. Rank indicated in parentheses. Best & worst ranks are in bold.

(c). Attributes Important to Selecting A College:

Unequivocally, *Cost* is a very important attribute in the college selection process for both the traditional and non-traditional samples. Eighty-six (81.3%) percent of the traditional sample and eighty-eight percent (88.0%) of the non-traditional sample stated that cost is a very important factor in the college selection process.

Availability of financial aid (78.0%) was the second with respect to being a very important factor in the selection process for traditional respondents. *Location* (73.7%) was the second most frequently cited very important factor in the selection process for non-traditional respondents.

Availability of on-campus recreational facilities had the least number of traditional (45.7%) and non-traditional (16.7%) respondents indicating these factors were very important in the college selection process. *A campus atmosphere with events & activities* (22.7%) posted the second least number of non-traditional respondents indicating these factors were very important in the college selection process.

Importance in College Selection Process	Sample	
	Percent * Traditional	Percent *Non- Traditional
Affordable Education	81.3% (1)	88.0% (1)
Availability of Financial Aid	78.0% (2)	72.0% (3)
Academic Reputation	69.3% (3)	66.7% (4)
Interact with People Like Me	65.3% (4)	42.3% (7)
Availability of Residence Halls	59.0% (5)	--
Availability of Internships/ Co-op Education	58.3% (6)	49.3% (6)
A campus atmosphere with events & activities	58.0% (7)	22.7% (9)
Availability of the latest technology/ state-art facilities	50.3% (8)	62.3% (5)
Opportunity to work with faculty on undergraduate research projects	49.3% (9)	38.0% (8)
Location	46.0% (10)	73.7% (2)
Availability of on-campus recreational facilities	45.7% (11)	16.7% (10)

* Percent based on total sample that ranked attribute as very important. Rank is shown in parenthesis. Best & worst ranks are in bold.

(d). How did you hear about Penn State Berks:

Almost two-thirds of the traditional (63.1%) and non-traditional (68.5%) respondents indicated they heard about Penn State Berks via a *Friend or relative*.

College guides (51.6%) and *guidance counselors* (48.4%) are the second and third respectively most frequently cited means traditional respondents heard about Penn State Berks. *Current students* (47.2%) and *Local newspaper advertisements* (46.2%) are the second and third respectively most frequently cited means non-traditional respondents heard about Penn State Berks.

How did you hear about Penn State Berks?	Sample	
	Percent * Traditional	Percent *Non- Traditional
Family or friend	63.1% (1)	68.5% (1)
College Guide (Barons, CollegeBoard, Student Source)	51.6% (2)	18.3% (9)
Guidance/School Counselor	48.4% (3)	--
Student who Attends Penn State Berks	47.9% (4)	47.2% (2)
Television Feature	40.1% (5)	25.9% (7)
Billboard	36.4% (6)	44.2% (4)
Penn State Berks Website	29.0% (7)	21.8% (8)
Radio	25.8% (8)	42.1% (5)
Local Newspaper Advertisement	23.5% (9)	46.2% (3)
Other Website (CollegeBoard 8.3%, Penn State-Main 4.1%, Google < 1.0%, Petersons < 1.0%)	19.8% (10)	8.6% (10)
Local Newspaper Article or Feature	17.5% (11)	37.6% (6)

* Percent based on respondents very familiar/ somewhat familiar with Penn State Berks. Rank is shown in parenthesis. Best & worst ranks are in bold.

(e). Degree Program Preference:

Respondents were asked if a specific program was offered would it increase the likelihood of attending Penn State Berks. Below are the percent of traditional and non-traditional respondents who said that they would be more likely to attend Penn State Berks if that specific program was offered.

Degree Program	Sample	
	Percent Traditional*	Percent Non-Traditional*
Communications Arts & Sciences	40.1% (1)	36.1% (1)
English	35.9% (2)	29.4% (4)
Biology	30.4% (3)	34.5% (2)
Global Studies	29.5% (4)	32.0% (3)
Physics	25.8% (5)	17.8% (6)
Theatre	23.5% (6)	15.7% (8)
Security and Risk Analysis	17.3% (7)	17.3% (7)
Electrical Engineering	14.7% (8)	13.7% (10)
Mechanical Engineering	14.7% (8)	19.8% (5)
Industrial Engineering	8.3% (10)	15.2% (9)

* Percent based on those who indicated they were very familiar or somewhat familiar with Penn State Berks. Rank is shown in parenthesis. Best & worst ranks are in bold.