



EdTech Survival 101: 7 Ways to Secure Your Future on the Edge of the Enrollment Cliff

With a 15% drop in student enrollment (also known as the enrollment cliff) already hitting college recruitment hard, EdTech companies and universities need to adopt new strategies for student acquisition, optimize their processes, and cut costs. That's the only way to continue focusing resources on what's core to the institute: delivering the best student outcomes. What if you could get results like:

40%

reduction in
operating
costs

60,000

backlogged
support cases
cleared in
60 days

20%

increase
in CSAT
scores

Scalable,

repeatable
digital
marketing
solutions

\$7M

in recovered
student debt

That's what Firstsource can do so that you can invest in the learning experience. Dive into 7 key ways that a strategic partner can help you survive the enrollment cliff.

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Students as consumers: a mindset shift to embrace

In education, most organizations think of the student as just a student. A learner, someone who will pursue education no matter what. That mindset needs to change. Students aren't guaranteed, especially not with the cratering population of 18-year-olds and shifting trends in who chooses to attend college. The learners you're recruiting are your customers, and a smarter student acquisition strategy – a strategy for the future of education – treats potential students as consumers. Consumers need to be nurtured. You need to work to build a relationship with them, offering personalized touchpoints and embracing digital marketing strategies. An innovative acquisition strategy also doesn't limit who the consumer is: adult learners and non-traditional students should be targeted as much as high school seniors. This is the first imperative for EdTech today: embrace students as your customers.



The second key is to recognize that student acquisition is not your core service. Focusing on recruitment diverts energy from creating content, supporting learners, and delivering exceptional education. Leave the acquisition to experts like Firstsource. We have the deep industry knowledge to build a new digital recruitment strategy that effectively brings students to your door. From lead generation and targeted outreach to brand awareness and campaign management, we deliver outcomes thanks to the latest technology and AI-supported tools. For one university, this meant scaling digital marketing in a cost-effective way, supporting their growth goals and enabling them to invest more heavily in the learning experience, in retaining the best teachers, and in positive student outcomes.

Focus on the education, not the recruitment

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Embrace partnerships: the only play to slash costs and boost efficiency



Education professionals may not always consider external support— but as the education landscape goes global and learning models continue shifting, embracing this approach is the only answer. It's definitely a new way of working, but one of our EdTech clients saw major results. This client faced limited staffing hours and staffing shortages that couldn't keep up with their large, global customer base. Some support resolutions took up to 30 days. Firstsource tackled these challenges by implementing flexible and international staffing, alongside digital tools and a revamped structure. Our strategy cleared 60,000 backlogged cases in just 60 days and improved the client's CSAT scores by 20%. The data tells the story: using external expertise allows you to focus on what you do best.

Student experience - from onboarding and financial aid management to faculty and learner support - is becoming more important than ever as universities and EdTech providers struggle to prevent student churn. Implementing omnichannel support processes that meet students and faculty where they are (like text, email, online chats, and calls) makes it easy to resolve challenges and build positive student relationships. At Firstsource, we empower companies with self-service portals, AI-enabled agents, and next-generation customer experience solutions to expand support options effectively.

Improve customer support with digital, omnichannel tools

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**Make sure
you can
repeat and
scale your
processes**



An investment in new processes can only go so far if those processes aren't repeatable and scalable. That's the strength of a partner like Firstsource. Our focused problem-solving and deep-dive approach allows us to build process templates for each organization that can be applied across functions or departments. One university's digital marketing model, created by Firstsource, was such a success that they're now implementing that model in their graduate school programs as well. Solutions should grow with you, not hold you back.

Personalization is the name of the game today. Every customer expects a tailored interaction in every experience— and that includes students. That's why education providers need to make the most of data and insights to create individual learning journeys. Each learner can find personalized support across their education path – from targeted acquisition methods to individualized onboarding, learning analytics, engaged support, and more. If you don't have the tools to understand this data, Firstsource is the partner for you. We've got the time and resources to dive into student personas, understand their individual needs, and chalk out a unique journey for each. The result? Happier, supported students.

**Make the
most of
your data**

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Remove student roadblocks



Enrollment often hinges on clearing obstacles like overdue student loans. Unfortunately, for universities and EdTech companies, loan recovery isn't all that simple. How can you recover debt while maintaining a positive student relationship and ensuring that your brand is protected? One university that turned to Firstsource knew the answer: seek expert help. Firstsource leveraged its decades of collections experience with its customer satisfaction know-how and deployed empathetic, sensitive associates to manage student outreach. The result? The university recovered \$7M in debt through more than 110,000 charge-off cases— with its brand reputation protected.

A Call to Action for Transformation

The enrollment cliff is here, and transformation is crucial for universities and EdTech companies. From embracing partnerships to leveraging data, it's time to rethink the old models of working. An experienced partner like Firstsource can help you navigate that challenge, allowing you to focus on student outcomes and secure your future.

Reach out to Firstsource to learn more.