



MILLENNIAL ALUMNI REPORT

A STUDY ON MILLENNIAL ALUMNI OF FOUR-YEAR UNIVERSITIES IN THE UNITED STATES





MILLENNIAL ALUMNI REPORT

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TIME FOR UNPRECEDENTED COOPERATION, STRIKING NEW APPROACHES IN ALUMNI FUNDRAISING

MORE THAN 13 MILLION AMERICANS IN THE MILLENNIAL GENERATION hold college degrees, and these socially conscious young people have the potential to become a powerful force in alumni giving. In this study, the first comprehensive look at college donors in their 20s and 30s, we found that at least three-quarters of young college graduates plan to give at some point in the future.

But right now, many young alumni do not have a strong sense of institutional loyalty—and many other nonprofit causes are doing a better job of successfully competing for their dollars. What's more, in the wake of the Great Recession, so many young graduates face big challenges getting their careers off the ground they do not feel financially secure enough to give. As a matter of fact, nearly two-thirds of those who have not donated yet said it was because they couldn't afford to write a check.

Concern that such forces could put the next generation of private support for higher education at risk prompted The Chronicle of Philanthropy to work with Achieve to ask questions of young people that could help colleges around the country do a better job of reaching recent graduates and persuading them to give.

The answers, we found, lie not just in the fundraising office, but in the admissions process, in the classroom, in career-services offices and elsewhere. People who were happy with their interactions on campus with those parts of an institution give much more than those who aren't. That means enlisting faculty members to solicit young donors, improving job counseling offices, and finding more ways to enhance the campus and early-post graduation years of today's college students could have a big payoff for institutions.

But fundraising offices must change, too. They need to find new ways to adjust their messages, offer opportunities to earmark gifts and do more to show that a donation makes a difference.

We hope college leaders, trustees, fundraisers and alumni officials will discuss these findings broadly and use them to fine-tune their efforts to improve giving rates at America's colleges. As my colleagues at our sister publication, The Chronicle of Higher Education, report day after day on the staggering challenges facing the nation's colleges and universities -- as well as their expansive ambitions to educate and prepare young people to change the world -- it is clear that the need for strong and sustained alumni support will be greater than ever in the coming years and decades.

We will continue to work with Achieve to help you chart that course, and we look forward to your feedback on this report.



Stacy Palmer
Editor, The Chronicle of Philanthropy

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

To produce the Millennial Alumni Study, Achieve examined information from four sources:

1. Surveys distributed to Millennial alumni from six partner four-year universities representing public and private institutions with various sizes from small (enrollment of 1,230) to large (enrollment of 35,900).
2. A generic survey with respondents representing a diverse range of colleges and universities across the United States.
3. An ongoing panel of Millennial alumni providing weekly and monthly feedback on their behavior and thoughts towards their alma mater.
4. Recorded user testing of six different universities' alumni solicitations and communications.

METHODOLOGY

For this study, Millennials were defined as individuals born from 1980 to 2000.

According to United States Census 2013 Educational Attainment data, the national total of Millennials with a four-year degree was approximately 13,156,000. The total number of participants (U.S. alumni with a four-year degree) for the Millennial Alumni Study was 3,660 alumni. Using these numbers, the data in this study maintains a 99% confidence level with a 2.2% margin of error.

SURVEY

- Open February 20, 2014 to April 30, 2014
- 3,660 validated survey respondents
- Female respondents: 68%
- Male respondents: 32%
- Represents more than 20 four-year higher ed institutions in the United States
- Findings released September 25, 2014 by The Chronicle of Philanthropy

USER TESTING

- Conducted May 1, 2014 to July 15, 2014
- Consists of five participants, born between 1980 and 2000
- Includes video-recorded feedback and usability testing on messaging and solicitations (emails, direct mail letters, solicitations, websites, social media and magazines)

MILLENNIAL PANEL

- Follows, tracks and analyzes 15 Millennial alumni from various university research partners to study their ongoing engagement and giving habits
- Tracks information that Millennials receive from their alma mater and monitors their attitudes, behaviors and perceptions

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INTRODUCTION

AS FOUR-YEAR UNIVERSITIES WORK

to secure alumni donors and preserve an existing alumni base, they are doing so in the midst of transforming higher education world. Factors brought about by rising tuition costs, changes in the job market and new educational options are presenting challenges for universities across the country. On top of these transformations emerges a new generation of alumni, with preferences, attitudes and experiences that vary greatly from those of previous generations. If universities are to engage these alumni as the next generation of donors and boosters, they must first learn how the alumni prefer to engage with the university.

The following findings and analysis comprise the inaugural Millennial Alumni Study. Achieve has produced this study in partnership with The Chronicle of Philanthropy, with the help of educational institutions across the country. Our report is the result of compiling and analyzing survey data from Millennial alumni and qualitative results from focus group testing. Throughout the report, you'll also see quotes taken from anecdotal comments and free-response answers to questions. These quotes offer a more qualitative snapshot of the findings.

This report is divided into three different but interwoven categories: Experience, Connection and Giving.

Experience covers the time these alumni spent at their universities, from the recruitment and admissions process to graduation. **Connection** details the attitudes and relationships alumni have with their alma maters. Finally, the **Giving** section reports on the preferences and experiences alumni have had with being solicited to by their university. All of these sections are connected with each other and reflect a rounded examination of the Millennial alumni story. The findings help answer preliminary questions like these:

- How do Millennials view their role as alumni?
- How does college experience translate into alumni support and donations?
- What do Millennials want from their alma mater?

Today's universities are looking for a way to solidify their future alumni giving base. This research will help them with that endeavor. More importantly, universities must recognize the actions that don't effectively resonate with the Millennial audience.

This research contains the actual opinions and preferences of these Millennials, coming from the voices of Millennials themselves. While it's useful to study how young alumni donate to and engage with universities, it's even more tactical to examine why they engage and donate. The Millennial Alumni Study offers a glimpse into why Millennials would donate to their university and how their university can inspire them to do so.

EXPERIENCE

OUR EXPERIENCES ARE CULTIVATED in the attitudes and associations we have with the places, people and events we've encountered. For universities, experience is crucial for selling the institution, as well as for retaining an engaged student body and leveraging a connected alumni base to become future supporters.

Beyond overall satisfaction, experience involves the memories that manifest for alumni and the opinions alumni hold about their alma mater. As the research will show, post-graduation giving and involvement can be traced back to aspects of the experience that alumni associate with a university, making it the starting point and first theme we'll use to describe the Millennial Alumni Study findings.

Along with studying overall satisfaction, the following section shows the subjects that were discussed and the impressions made during the recruitment or admissions process. What expectations did alumni have before attending the college?

Were those expectations met?

Next, the findings demonstrate common experiences after graduation and how these interactions and events affect how alumni view their time and resources spent in college.

Overall, 92% of the Millennial alumni who took part in this study said they were generally satisfied with the education they received

at their respective institutions. In the anecdotal comments, some of the positive words and phrases used to describe why they were satisfied with their education included campus life, friendship, good job, teachers and reputation.

In contrast, among the anecdotal comments used to describe why expectations were not met, the most common wording included lack of networking or help finding a job, quality of degree or major program, disinterest in courses, ranking and lack of time with faculty. A less-than-helpful economy and difficult job market added to these challenges.

"I WAS NOT THAT EXCITED TO GO TO COLLEGE, BUT I ENDED UP FALLING IN LOVE WITH THE UNIVERSITY. I WAS FORTUNATE TO FIND STUDENT GROUPS WHERE I COULD DO THINGS THAT I WAS PASSIONATE ABOUT, WHICH REALLY SHAPED MY EXPERIENCE."



A QUESTION TO MILLENNIALS

WHAT WERE THE TOP 5 THINGS YOU WERE SATISFIED WITH ABOUT YOUR COLLEGE EXPERIENCE?

- CAMPUS LIFE
- PROFESSORS
- OBTAINING A GOOD JOB
- FRIENDSHIPS
- COLLEGE REPUTATION

WHAT WEREN'T YOU WERE SATISFIED WITH?

- POOR COLLEGE RANKING
- LACK OF INTERESTING COURSES
- LACK OF NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES
- QUALITY OF DEGREE PROGRAM
- LACK OF TIME WITH FACULTY

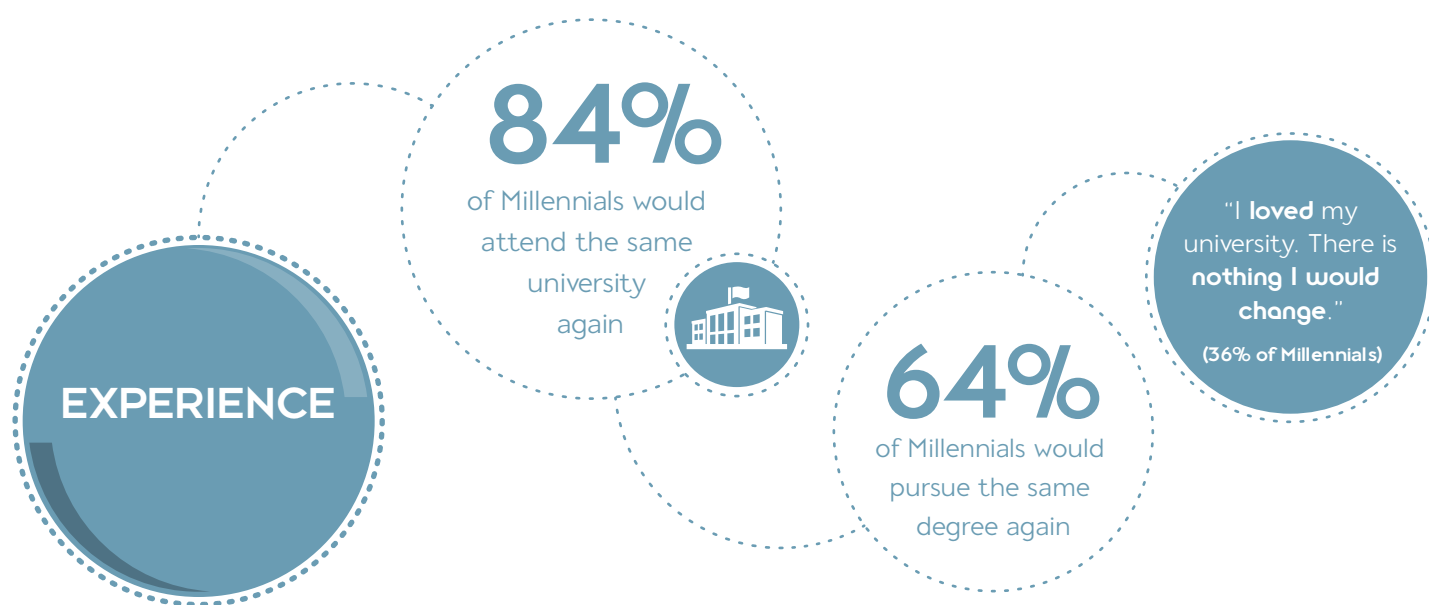
HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR DEGREE?

- PERFECT FOR MY CHOSEN CAREER (37%)
- GLAD TO HAVE IT, EVEN THOUGH I'M NOT WORKING IN THE SAME FIELD (36%)
- NOT SURE IT WAS WORTH THE COST (12%)
- NOT THE RIGHT DEGREE FOR ME (4%)
- VIRTUALLY USELESS (3%)

THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE BEGINS IN THE RECRUITMENT AND ADMISSIONS PROCESS

To begin studying what aspects lead to Millennial alumni satisfaction and engagement, we asked respondents to recall conversations from their admissions process. When asked what first attracted them to their alma mater and influenced them to attend, 34% said it was the best place for what they wanted to study. The second most popular force was campus culture (20%), followed by scholarships (11%), family members who were alumni of the institution (9%) and friends who were either attending or had attended the institution (3%).

Millennial alumni had relatively high expectations prior to attending college. Approximately 42% of Millennial alumni expected college to be the best years of their lives. A smaller but significant portion of Millennial alumni (31%) expected to earn a degree and get a job. About 13% of Millennial alumni expected to have fun in college and that's it, while only 3% of respondents had low expectations prior to attending college and 12% said they had no expectations at all.



Academics and classes were the most common topics Millennials remembered hearing about during the admissions and recruitment process (82%). The second most common topics were campus activities, events and traditions (57%). A significant portion of Millennial alumni said they remember hearing about the more abstract topic of "campus culture" during the admissions process (40%). Approximately 38% of Millennial alumni remember discussing college rankings and awards.

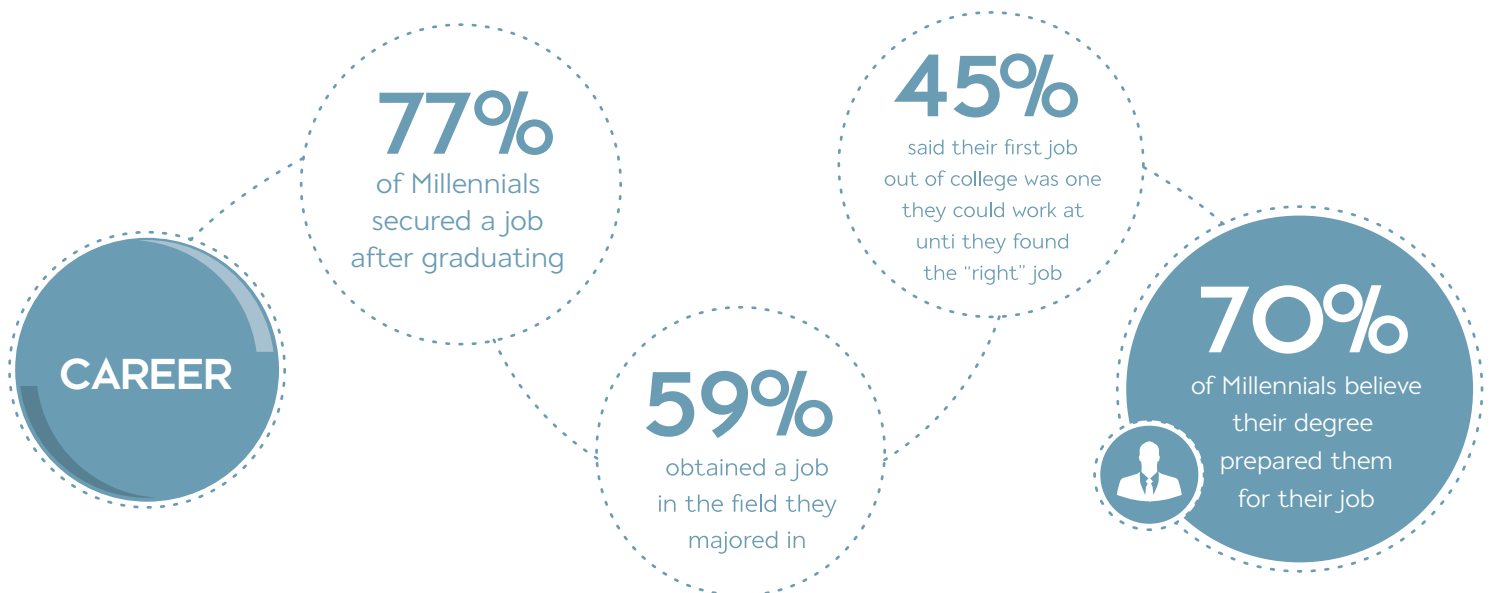
Other topics respondents remembered hearing about included the institution's history (24%), life after college and career development (23%), athletics (9%) and famous alumni (5%).

Interestingly, these topics seemed to have carried important weight in these Millennial alumni's college searches. **Approximately 78% of respondents said that the top three things they heard about during their admissions process influenced them to attend their alma mater.** An even greater portion of Millennial alumni (86%) said their alma mater lived up to expectations set in their admissions process, meaning 14% of the respondents felt that what they were told during their admissions process didn't turn out to be true.

"I'M FROM A GENERATION OF KIDS WHO WERE TOLD THAT GOING TO COLLEGE MEANT GETTING A GOOD JOB AFTERWARDS. I GRADUATED RIGHT AFTER THE RECESSION HIT, AND THERE WERE A LOT OF JOBS THAT REQUIRED YEARS OF EXPERIENCE, WHICH MEANT I WAS NOT QUALIFIED FOR ANYTHING."

Although the experience Millennials typically have with a university begins with the admissions process, graduation doesn't signify the end. In fact, Millennial alumni appear to be most critical of their university immediately after graduation, as they begin their careers or next steps. This is the time when alumni evaluate their education and how prepared they are for their next phase of life.

Approximately 77% of Millennial alumni said they were able to secure a job shortly after graduation. Of those who did, 59% said the job was in the field they majored in. Many alumni weren't immediately satisfied with their first out-of-college job, with 45% of respondents saying their first job out of college was one they planned to work at until they found the "right" job.



When asked how they felt about their degree, only 37% of Millennial alumni said their degree was perfect for their chosen career. Approximately 36% of respondents said they were glad to have their degree even though they're not currently working in the same field, with fewer respondents having negative views of their degree; 12% of Millennials didn't think their degree was worth the cost, 4% said their degree wasn't right for them and 3% believe their degree was virtually useless.

EXPERIENCE SHAPES ATTITUDES TOWARD THE UNIVERSITY

In the survey, respondents were asked to reflect on their experience at their alma mater and evaluate how they might act differently if they could go back in time, knowing what they know now about their educational and post-graduate experience. Of the Millennial alumni surveyed, 84% said they would attend the same university again and 64% of Millennial alumni would pursue the same degree again.

These findings demonstrate a larger regret in degree choice and major in contrast with a more limited regret in attending the institution itself.

When asked about their present opinion of their alma mater, most Millennial alumni (55%) said that it's a great school, but they would change some things. Approximately 36% of respondents selected the most positive option, "I love it, and I have nothing but great things to say about it." Less than 4% of respondents said they aren't sure how they feel about their alma maters. Only 4% of Millennial alumni said they think negatively about their alma maters, with another 3% having "more negative feelings about it than positive feelings," and only 1% of respondents saying they would actually discourage others from going there.

84%
of Millennials would
attend the same
university
again



This opinion is important for universities to note, as the majority of Millennial alumni have some kind of grievance or criticism of their institutions. Most of these criticisms stem from experience, which continues throughout post-graduate alumni-university connections.

USER #4

"You have that benefit of bringing alumni back on campus, showing them what a good time they had. You're compelling them to say you had a great time. Now wouldn't it be great if you could donate or contribute a little bit."

[3:30]

CONNECTION

NEW ALUMNI ARE NOT SURPRISED to find that just because they've graduated doesn't mean the university will lose touch with them. Connection describes the next section of findings, demonstrating the preferences and realities Millennial alumni discover in their interactions with their alma maters.

For some, the connection could be stronger in terms of help and advice received after graduation. For others, the connection is successful, engaging them in current events and needs at respective universities.

These findings display the helpfulness Millennials hope to find in their alma mater after graduation, the most effective ways universities can connect with their Millennial alumni and how these individuals prefer to volunteer and give up their time and talent for a university.

"IF MY ALMA MATER WASN'T IN CONTACT WITH ME, I WOULD THINK THEY'VE FORGOTTEN ABOUT ME."

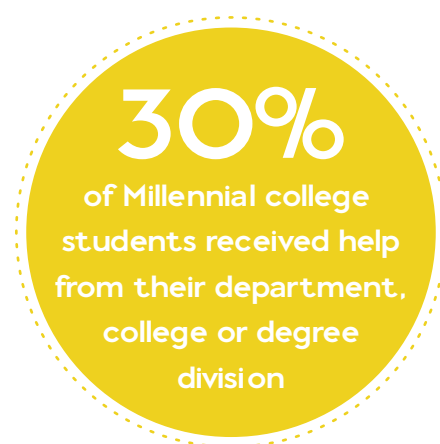
ATTITUDES TOWARDS GIVING ARE INFLUENCED BY POST-GRADUATION ASSISTANCE

To evaluate how helpful universities and university assets are to alumni after graduation and whether this affected their feelings of connectedness, we asked Millennials to evaluate their alumni relations department, their alma mater's career services and their degree program, college or academic department (e.g. School of Business, College of Arts, Engineering Department).

Only 30% of Millennial alumni had found their alma mater's alumni department helpful, and of those who had actually asked for assistance from their alumni department, approximately 25% said that their university alumni department was unhelpful.

When examining career services (a resource for students and alumni at many universities), only 14% of Millennial alumni said they had received help from career services since graduation, with 45% indicating they had personally found their alma mater's career services unhelpful. In regard to degree programs and academic departments as resources, approximately 30% of Millennials had received help from their past program/department, with 41% saying their faculty/department had not been helpful since graduation.

Connection to and positive experience with these university resources appears to increase with Millennial alumni who have given or volunteered with their universities. For example, 46% of alumni who found alumni services helpful had volunteered or served their university since graduation. Approximately 43% of alumni who received help from alumni services said they had donated money to the university.

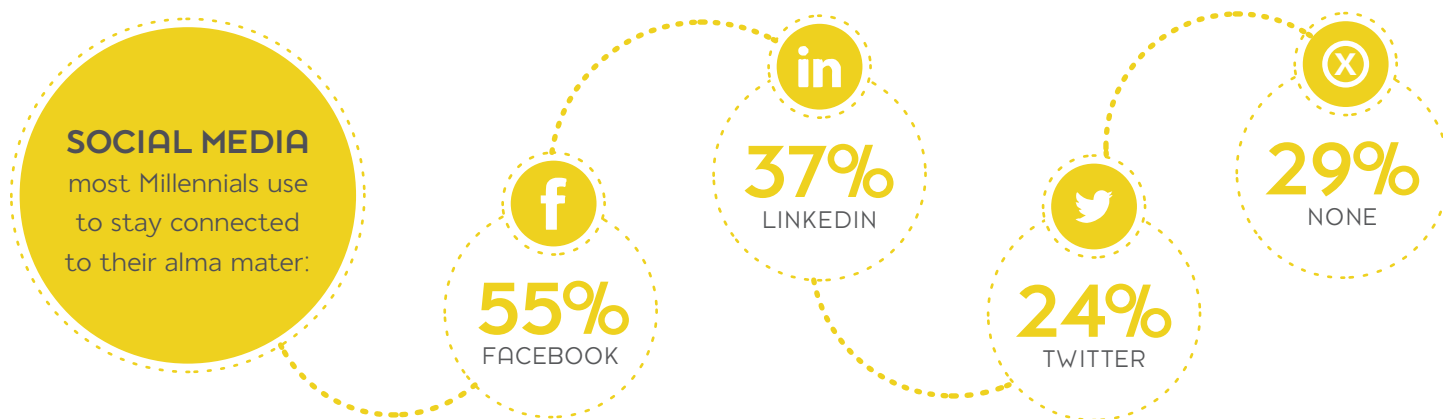


MILLENNIAL ALUMNI PREFER TO CONNECT WITH AND RECEIVE INFORMATION FROM UNIVERSITIES DIGITALLY

Approximately 81% of Millennial alumni have visited their alma mater's website since graduation. As the first generation to grow up with the Internet, Millennials prefer to browse and connect with institutions over the web, especially via social platforms. However, this inherent use of social media did not seem to appear in the alumni-university connection. In focus testing, answers were contradictory. Some alumni stated a desire for universities to do more on social media, while others weren't following their alma mater on social media platforms.

While Millennials lead the charge in the social media revolution, this study's findings show less engagement with their alma mater's social media platforms. Interestingly, 29% of Millennial alumni said they did not follow their alma mater on any social networks. For those who did engage with universities through social media, Facebook garnered the most engagement, with 55% of Millennial alumni saying they followed their alma mater on Facebook. LinkedIn, a network aimed at a more professional, career-oriented audience, was the second most common platform, with 37% of Millennial alumni following their alma mater. Other common social media by which Millennial alumni follow their alma mater included Twitter (24%), Instagram (9%), YouTube (3%), Google+ (2%) and Pinterest (1%).

"I AM PROUD OF MY ALMA MATER. I LIKE TO HEAR ABOUT IT WHEN THE UNIVERSITY IS DOING WELL, AND I WANT TO KNOW IF IT'S STRUGGLING."



When asked what information they want to see from their alma mater on social media, 88% of Millennials said they wanted to see general news about the campus and university. Other types of social-media-driven information included alumni news and accomplishments (64%), stories about students and professors (63%) and athletic news and information (36%).

Overall, the top stories Millennials desire on social media included general news about the campus and university, with 59% of respondents choosing it as their number-one type of information. Approximately 15% of Millennial alumni preferred stories of alumni accomplishments and updates, followed by stories about current students and professors (14%). Only 6% of Millennial alumni said they preferred athletics news and information on social media.

MILLENNIALS PREFER TO BE CONTACTED VIA EMAIL

When asked if they actually want to receive email from their alma mater, a surprising 73% of Millennial alumni said yes. Approximately 85% of Millennial alumni wanted to receive general news about the campus and university via email, with 60% wanting to receive stories about students and professors and 29% news and updates about sports and athletics.

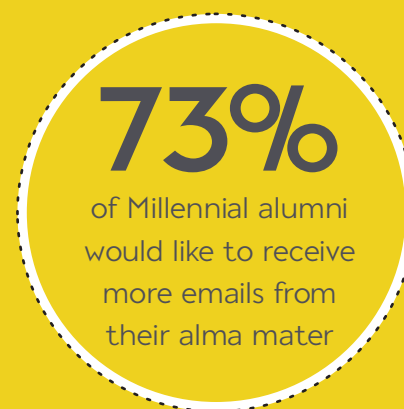
Only about 15% of Millennial alumni said they wanted to receive information about donating to the university through email. However, when questioned about their preferred method of being asked for a donation, 61% of Millennial alumni selected email.



A QUESTION TO MILLENNIALS

WHAT INFORMATION DO YOU WANT TO SEE THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA?

- GENERAL NEWS ABOUT THE CAMPUS AND UNIVERSITY (88%)
- ALUMNI NEWS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS (64%)
- STORIES ABOUT STUDENTS AND PROFESSORS (63%)
- ATHLETIC NEWS AND INFORMATION (36%)
- OTHER (9%)



MILLENNIAL ALUMNI WANT TO DONATE THEIR TIME, TALENTS, SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE TO THEIR ALMA MATER

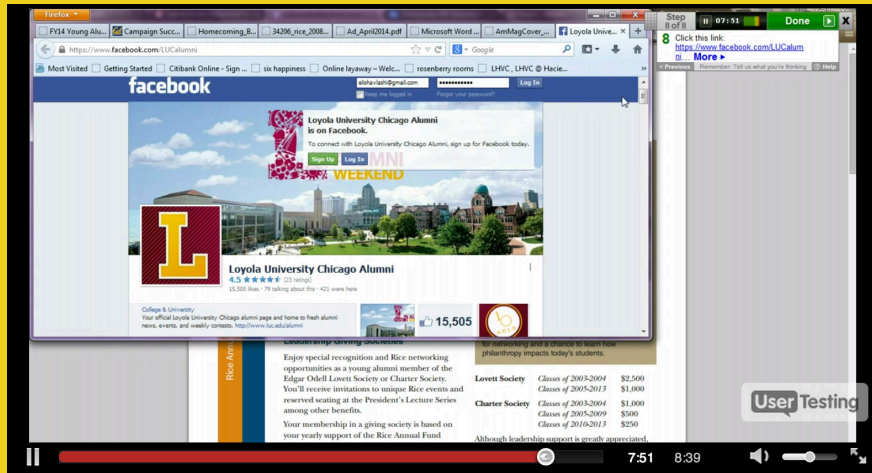
Approximately 30% of Millennial alumni said they had volunteered or helped their alma mater since graduation. Of those who had volunteered, 40% said their motivation to help came from a desire to “give back” to the university. Around 33% of Millennials who volunteered with their alma mater said they helped because they were asked directly to assist in some capacity (e.g., speaking in a class or event, advising a committee, mentoring students). Approximately 10% of Millennial alumni said they volunteered simply because their alma mater was in need of their help and they happened to have extra time and 8% who volunteered said it was because a friend or acquaintance encouraged them to.

Interestingly, of those Millennial alumni who had not volunteered at their alma mater, 43% said it was because they had never been asked. The second most common reason for not volunteering was a lack of time (25%). Of those who had volunteered with their alma mater, 82% said they planned to donate money to the university in the future.

A large majority of the Millennial alumni surveyed (77%) would be willing to serve their alma mater in an advisory capacity. The reasons for this desire varied, with 78% wanting to simply serve the university and help students, 57% wanting to help grow the university, 18% having a lot of new ideas the university needs to hear and 11% having extra time and looking to get involved.

Millennial alumni preferred the idea of using specific skills, talents or expertise to help their alma mater. With 86% of respondents enjoying this method of volunteering, 78% of them said they would prefer mentoring current students.

Other preferred forms of volunteering skills and expertise included helping with career training and advising (61%), working with alumni services (30%), helping in an administrative or advisory role (24%), and assisting the university with marketing and promotions (19%)



USER #2

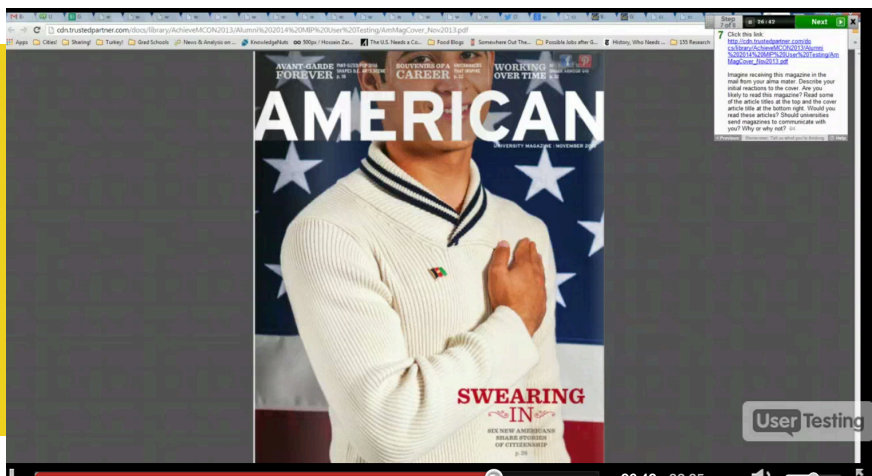
"I'm connected to my alma mater on Facebook. I like seeing updates. I like their pretty spring pictures when they show the courtyard is blooming; it reminds me of when I used to attend there. They'll show information and links on when alumni events are coming up, alumni news, alumni research, ways to stay in touch. So Facebook is pretty good."

[7:45]

Not surprisingly, faculty and staff members seem to play a significant role in establishing and maintaining connections between Millennial alumni and their alma mater. Professors, in particular, are influential in the college experience on a personal level, and faculty appear to personify many alumni's experience with a university.

Beyond the faculty-student relationship, the bonds alumni build and maintain with peers also significantly influence the university connection, including the students alumni graduated with, as well as peers they encountered in their respective academic departments.

In order to cultivate and grow a strong, reciprocal connection with engaged alumni, universities must capture these interpersonal relationships to foster positive attitudes and beneficial actions from the next generation of donors and supporters.



USER #2

"I find that a weekly update about what's going on in the university in an email is better than print."

[26:30]

GIVING

TWO CORE TRUTHS THAT DIFFERENTIATE MILLENNIALS from previous generations of alumni are the rapid increase in college tuition averages and the United States economic recession, both of which most Millennial alumni have experienced either during or not long after college. For many, these financial obstacles directly affect how Millennials will give monetarily to their alma mater.

For universities and especially alumni foundations, these economic truths paired with a changing job market make Millennials a unique demographic to solicit donations from. We know through previous research that Millennials donate money to charity. In fact, 76% of the Millennial alumni surveyed in this study said they had made a donation to a cause or nonprofit organization.

MILLENNIALS ARE MORE LIKELY TO GIVE MONEY TO ANOTHER CAUSE OR CHARITY BEFORE DONATING TO A UNIVERSITY

When asked about giving preferences between their favorite cause and their alma mater, 75% of Millennial alumni would donate to a different organization before they would donate to their alma mater.

Female alumni, in particular, were less likely than male alumni to give to their alma mater: 78% of female alumni were more likely to give to their favorite cause first, compared to 68% of male alumni.

What makes them have a favorite cause and why do they donate to it? While the top motivations for giving to particular organizations differed among respondents, the most common reason was that the cause or organization created some type of emotional connection (77%). Other motivations for giving to favorite causes included:

- It has helped or is helping someone I know (33%)
- I believe this organization uses donations better than other organizations (30%)
- It has helped me personally (28%)
- The organization convinced me that they needed my money (24%)



"I RECEIVED A PHONE CALL RECENTLY FROM MY ALMA MATER ASKING FOR A DONATION. THE PHONE CALL WAS DURING A BUSY PERIOD DURING MY WORKDAY AND THE PERSON CALLING WAS AWKWARD AND PUSHY."

LESS THAN HALF OF MILLENNIAL ALUMNI HAVE DONATED TO THEIR ALMA MATER

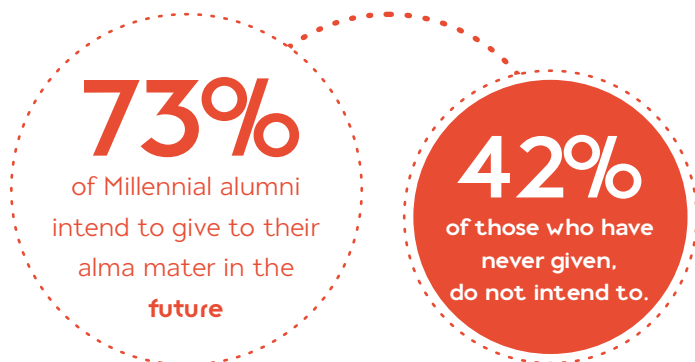
Of the Millennial alumni surveyed, approximately 47% have made a financial donation to their alma mater. For those who gave, 69% said it was because they had enjoyed their college experience and wanted to give back to the university. Half of Millennial alumni who gave (50%) said they did so because they wanted to support a specific department, campus group or event.

Another common reason for giving was that Millennial alumni benefited from funds donated to the university when they were in college (32%). Approximately 26% of Millennial alumni said they donated because they had extra money at the time and the university asked for a donation. Finally, 19% of Millennial alumni said they donated because they wanted their alma mater to rank higher in national reports.

"I DONATED BECAUSE THEY TOLD ME EXACTLY HOW THE MONEY WOULD BE USED. IT WAS CRYSTAL CLEAR: THIS GIFT WILL BE GOING TO HELP THIS GROUP OF STUDENTS IN THIS WAY."

Approximately 73% of Millennial alumni planned to give to their alma mater in the future. For those who had not donated money to their alma mater, the top reason for not giving was that they were not financially able (62%). Many of these alumni said they hadn't given because they're still paying off student loans (52%).

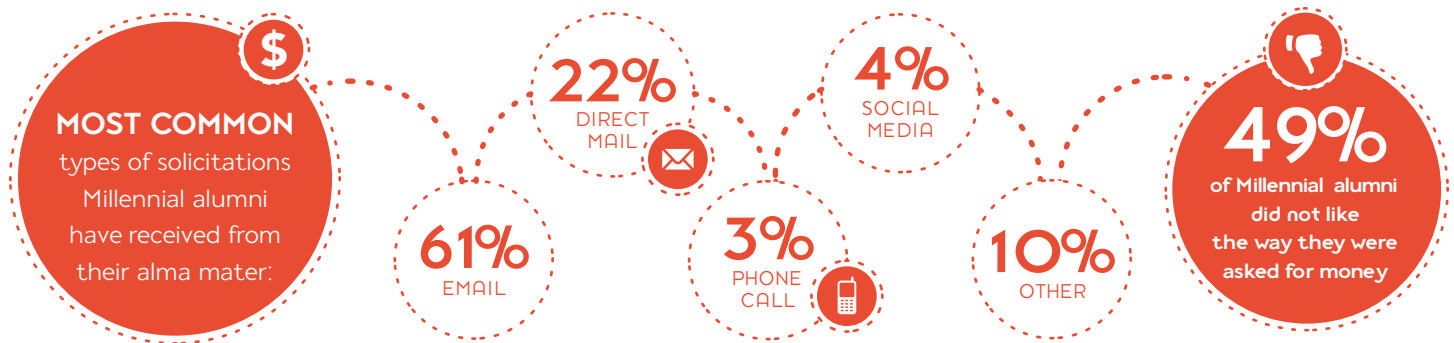
About 33% said their main reason for not donating to their alma mater was that their donation would go to better use with another cause. A smaller portion of Millennial alumni said they hadn't given because they didn't think their alma mater needed the money (19%). Only about 8% of Millennials said they hadn't donated because they didn't want to support the university. Of the Millennial alumni who had not given financially to their alma mater, 42% said they did not plan to ever donate to the university.



Giving preferences appeared to differ between male and female respondents. In total, 56% of male alumni had donated to their alma mater, compared to 44% of female Millennial alumni. However, when comparing university donations to charitable donations in general, 77% of female Millennials had given to their favorite cause, compared to 73% of male Millennials. While female alumni were more likely to donate to a cause or charity than male alumni, the male respondents were more likely to donate to their alma mater.

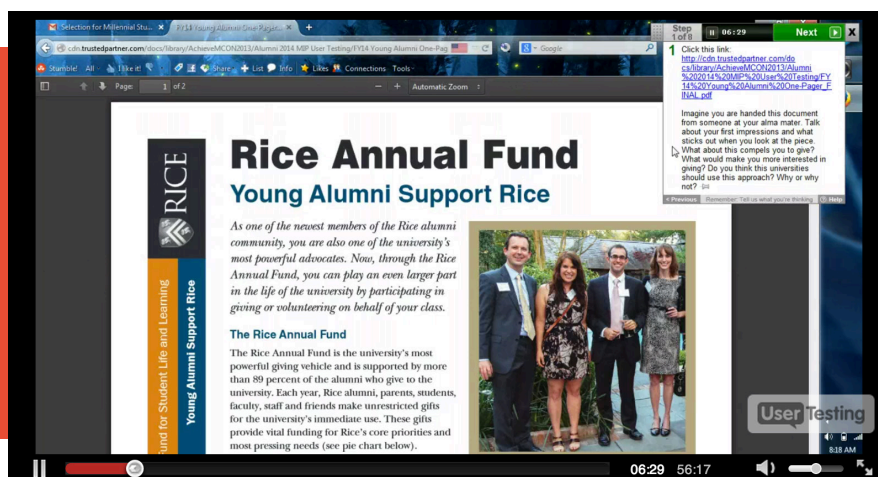
MILLENNIAL ALUMNI PREFER TO RECEIVE COMMUNICATION FROM THEIR ALMA MATER VIA EMAIL, AND THEY LEAST PREFER PHONE CALLS

The way a university asks their alumni for money matters. Almost half (49%) of Millennial alumni surveyed said they did not like the most recent way their alma mater asked them for money. The reason for this dissatisfaction becomes clearer when examining the preferences Millennials have for how they're solicited versus the ways they're commonly asked to donate money.



Email was the most common communication medium that Millennial alumni received from their alma mater, with approximately 85% of respondents saying they had received university emails. Direct mail was the next most common type of solicitation received (82%), followed by phone calls (75%). Only 14% of respondents had received social media messages or solicitations from their alma mater.

When asked how they preferred to be solicited for money, 61% of Millennial alumni said they preferred being asked via email. At only 22%, the next most commonly preferred means of solicitation was direct mail, followed by 10% who preferred various other types of solicitations and 4% who preferred being asked through social media. Notably, according to Millennial alumni, the least preferred way of being asked to donate to their alma mater was over the phone.



USER #1

"Alumni are more willing to donate to something they have a connection to, rather than general university funds."

[7:00]

EXPERIENCE AND TRANSPARENCY INFLUENCE FUTURE DONATIONS

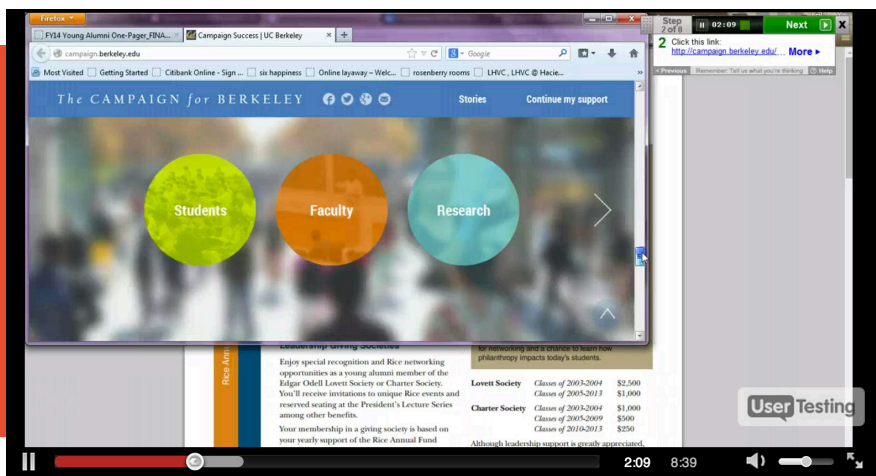
Combining both the respondents who had and hadn't donated to their alma mater, 73% said they did not know how the university would use their donation.

When asked how they would prefer the money they might donate to the university be used, 51% of Millennial alumni chose scholarships and aid for current students. The next most popular option for allocating university donations was funding for a specific department or major (29%), followed by club, organization, or athletic funding (7%). Only 5% of Millennial alumni preferred their donations be used for building and renovation costs. Female alumni were more likely to prefer donating to scholarships and financial aid (55%) than male alumni (43%). More male alumni preferred donating to a specific department or academic major (33%) than female alumni (27%).

In examining how experience with a university resulted in giving, we found that Millennials who appeared to have a more positive view of their alma mater were more likely to be donors. For example, 84% of Millennial alumni who said they would attend the same university again had already made a donation to their alma mater.

Similarly, more than half (64%) of Millennials who said they would pursue the same degree or major had made a donation to their alma mater. As mentioned earlier, 86% of Millennial alumni said their university lived up to the expectations they had prior to enrollment; of those respondents, approximately 49% had already made a donation to their alma mater, and 79% planned on giving in the future.

"AS SOMEONE WHO ATTENDED COLLEGE WITH FINANCIAL AID, I DONATED SO THAT PEOPLE FROM ALL FINANCIAL SITUATIONS CAN CONTINUE TO BENEFIT FROM A HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION, AND IN THE HOPE THAT SMALLER DEPARTMENTS CONTINUE TO EXIST."



USER #2

"Lots of data gives you comfort in knowing that your funds were well distributed."

[2:15]

CONCLUSION

THE PURPOSE OF RESEARCHING MILLENNIALS in particular was not to compare their actions to those of previous generations. Rather, the purpose of this study was to learn their actions and attitudes because they are the future benefactors of our nation's institutions. In the very near future, these preferences will no longer be unique to a small demographic of young alumni. They will be the norm for four-year institutions.

The findings of the Millennial Alumni Study offer insight into the future of university-alumni engagement and giving. Several main ideas emerge:

- Millennials are more likely to give to other causes before donating to their alma mater.
- Male Millennial alumni are more likely than female alumni to give to their alma mater over other causes. Male alumni are also more likely to donate to their alma mater in general, more likely to volunteer at their alma mater and appear to find alumni resources more helpful than female alumni.
- Millennials have high expectations before attending college and are disappointed when those expectations aren't met, which then has implications for their future giving propensity.
- Millennial alumni expect their university alumni, career services and academic departments to be helpful after graduation, when needed. Failure to be helpful negatively affects their willingness to give.
- Millennials prefer to be communicated with and solicited via email. They do not respond well to phone calls from their alma mater.
- Less than half of Millennial alumni have given to their alma mater, most because of financial constraints such as student loans.

Upon evaluating the data and qualitative findings in this year's research, we've also noted the following takeaways that universities may implement:

- Broaden the definition of "campus culture." Include alumni giving as a part of that culture.
- Recognize and include faculty (particularly in specific departments) as chief connectors between the university and young alumni.
- Help alumni visualize how exactly their donation will be used through examples and tailored stories. "You benefited from [INSERT SCHOLARSHIP], now your gift will allow another student to attend [INSERT UNIVERSITY]."
- Outlets like career services and the alumni relations department should adopt a service model that assists students and alumni after graduation. It's no longer enough to facilitate networking. Offer resources that help recent graduates transition into the career they want.

These findings and takeaways will improve over the next year as we conduct the ongoing Millennial Alumni Panel. As we track the information alumni receive from universities and analyze them with the attitudes and actions they cultivate, we hope to garner even more understanding of Millennial alumni and their relationship to universities.



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