

<b>Session Title:</b>	<b>The Future of the Prospectus</b>
<b>Speaker(s):</b>	<b>Nathan Monk, Prospectus Plus</b>
<b>Chair:</b>	<b>Steph Coogans, University of Chichester</b>
<b>Reporter:</b>	<b>Ailsa Mackay, Heriot-Watt University</b>

<b>Speaker/Institution Bio/Information:</b>	<b>SMILE – leading strategic website consultancy for the UK Education industry. Last 2 years focusing on the future of the prospectus, project called Prospectus+</b>
<b>Overview/Aim of session:</b>	<p><b>What is a prospectus...</b></p> <p><b>Printed doc, lead generation, tool for sharing with parents and influencers</b></p> <p><b>Is traditional prospectus fit for purpose and examine some of the options.</b></p>
<b>Workshop Content</b>	<p><b>Alien word to many young people, what does it mean?</b></p> <p><b>History of the prospectus – largely unchanged last 50 years (format, content)</b></p> <p><b>Traditional prospectus problematic.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Too long (same length as a novel)</b></li> <li><b>2. They're heavy – typically 350g, 94 pages dedicated to course listings</b></li> <li><b>3. Inaccurate – out of date as soon as printed</b></li> <li><b>4. Paper – perceived as unsustainable practice</b></li> </ol> <p><b>World is changing</b></p> <p><b>Mostclicked.com podcast – youth research identified 50 coolest brands for teens. All of brands were digital first, not one was communicating using traditional print.</b></p> <p><b>Even the IKEA and Argos catalogues have gone digital (marketing to typically for older people). Consumer behaviour is changing.</b></p> <p><b>How are universities are adapting? Conducted an</b></p>

experiment to order a prospectus from university websites:

**UG**

out of 37, 27 responded within 24 hours and received following offerings:

- 9 pdf only
- 7 pdf and print
- 6 completely unclear
- 3 print only
- 2 offered digital experience

**For pg prospectus requests**

- 17 only gave pdf option,
- 8 offered both, 5 choose only one,
- 6 digital experience.

Often pg experience was much poorer than the ug experience. Took 5 months to get first physical copy sent.

Generally, to get physical copy took a long time and was frustrating – 2 weeks plus

Readability on a mobile of some pdfs, particularly the flip version was really poor, poor mobile experience

Printed prospectus often easier to use. Micro prospectuses now being used by a number of institutions. Other more creative methods of engagement discussed eg. Pencils used to stick in the ground and plant

**What is the future of the prospectus: What are needs of audience**

- Sustainable
- Personalised
- instant

**For institutions –**

- the ability to do more for less
- Trackable
- Cost effective

**Why change from traditional approach:**

Unis are organisations that lead by example and pioneer new approaches and best practice. Need to meet student expectations.

Feedback from students: digital better as physical ones are heavy and takes a while to find specific courses. Online easier and flows, personalisation is a baseline expectation of audience today. Can increase page views by 70%, 74% frustrated when website content is not personalised. 83% consumers willing to share their data to get a more personalised service.

	<p>No one size fits all but should be sustainable, personalised and instantaneous and capture data</p>
<p>Case Studies/Examples:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University of Kent – VHS prospectus (1980s)</li> <li>• Falmouth Uni event stand – visibility of cardboard boxes of prospectuses detracting from the look of the premium stand design</li> <li>• Manchester – prospectus is on the website and is a few pages on the website</li> <li>• Another uni – the form is easy and short and big download click and takes you to a pdf. No reason to fill in the form</li> <li>• University of Exeter – info printed onto a tin of beans to be handed out at open days</li> <li>• University of Exeter – no longer printing but you get a pdf version of a printed prospectus. Issues with page numbering and index</li> <li>• University of Nottingham – micro prospectus, qr code leading to form and then to course listings on website. Combined with the Look Book – big, glossy premium book to review at events.</li> <li>• University of South Wales – seeded paper used for micro-prospectus, links to website, references eco credentials</li> <li>• University of Hertfordshire- game based on Animal Crossing can play around on campus and do various tasks</li> <li>• Northumbria University – digital 3D digital experience, unconventional but duplicates a lot of website info, interesting loading times</li> <li>• University of Derby – includes some basic personalisation so that you can add courses to a favourites / mypage</li> <li>• University of Essex – do both print and digital prospectus. The digital version is really personalised and allows you to choose subject areas that you are interested in and then builds a personalised prospectus showing campus and course information that is relevant to you</li> <li>• University of Gloucestershire – went fully digital in 2020. Eco benefits are saved 23.2 million litres of water, saved paper, energy, transportation costs</li> <li>• Eastern Colleges Group – research on what is more useful – digital or printed. 73 voted digital, 20 both, 7 print</li> <li>• Netflix – personalisation at a high level, includes thumbnails changing and even advertising behind players in football games changes depending on where you are</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AmericanGreetings.com – personalised videos</li> <li>• University of Coventry – use of AI to create personalised videos</li> </ul>
Scenarios/Roundtable discussions:	
Questions and Answers:	<p><b>Q: Have we seen long term results from unis eg Gloucester on going digital – do we know what the data is for student reach and admissions after ditching the print copy.</b></p> <p><b>A: now on 4<sup>th</sup> cycle of digital only. 1<sup>st</sup> year saw a 10% increase. Continuation suggests that there has been no negative effect.</b></p> <p><b>Q: Reflections on international audience, dodgy wifi in Nigeria / India – cultural expectations?</b></p> <p><b>A: No one size fits all so need to consider your market, pros and cons to international. File size of pdf downloads 28MB documents is a negative. Digital experiences may be better. Often print is a better option than trad pdf so different digital solution may be required. Sustainability factor of printing and shipping print copies overseas also a consideration.</b></p>
SummaryKey takeaways:	<b>No one size fits all but should be sustainable, peronalised and instantaneous and capture data</b>