

***“College [or education] is not a commodity.
Stop treating it like one.”***

Hunter Rawlings, PhD
Former president, Association of American Universities
The Washington Post, June 9, 2015

"Wait! What? But everyone wants to know our tuition."

Precisely. So take it off your website for two practical reasons and one philosophical (but still important) reason.

First, the practical reasons. (And remember, the recruiting purpose of your website is to **get potential parents on your campus.**)

There is no acceptable tuition rate.

No matter what your tuition rates are, some parents will see them as too low ("How can they possibly provide an excellent education for only \$6,000 a year?") and other parents will see them as too high ("We can't possibly afford \$600/month for tuition.") Very, very few parents will see them as just right.

In either case, they won't contact your school and you'll have lost the chance to start a relationship and minister.

Leaving your tuition rates off your website means they will have to call—your chance to start building a relationship as a helpful, friendly voice on the phone setting up an appointment. (And yes, this means your website needs to be compelling enough to earn a spot on their call list.)

The financial picture is too complicated to explain online.

Though you write "with the tongues of men and of angels" web viewers aren't likely to stick with you long enough to understand:

- the difference between tuition and the actual cost of educating their child,
- the role of support from your local church and the conference, or
- the availability of financial aid.

Web viewers are emphatically viewers, not readers (how many of you read these messages word for word?). They are almost certainly scanning the page for a number—and moving on as soon as they find it, based on their reaction as described above.

However, in the context of an Education Success Consult, they are more likely to listen and hear how your tuition works—and in the context of experiencing what makes your school special.

And now the philosophical reason as noted by Dr. Rawlings.

Education is not a commodity.

Commodities are products (not services) which are essentially the same regardless of where they are purchased. Commodities can be shopped for by price and convenience because Skippy Peanut Butter will be the same whether you buy it from Safeway or Amazon. Thus, commodities are ideal for online sales.

But education is not a commodity. As Dr. Rawlings points out, much of education depends on the efforts of the student and his/her interactions with the teacher. These are not the same from one school to another and they can't be adequately described online. Therefore, our websites should not encourage parents to shop for education based on price and convenience—but to come experience how education will happen for their child and see if that is a match for their family.

Delegating:

This can be delegated to whoever updates your website.

Binder tab: June

School size: All

Marketing process step:

- 1) Who are we?
- 2) What do families want?
- 3) What needs to change?
- 4) How do we tell our community?
- 5) How do we track results?