Harnessing Generative AI for International Student Recruitment & Admissions
The advent of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) has caused a significant shift across numerous industries, including international higher education. With its capabilities to learn from data, generate new content, and make predictions, this technological marvel is now finding substantial application in international student recruitment and admissions. This paper delves deep into the potential and opportunities presented by generative AI in transforming international enrollment management.

The core of generative AI is its ability to learn patterns from large datasets and apply this knowledge to produce original outputs. The potential for generative AI in international enrollment management must be addressed. The era of standard recruitment strategies and decision-making processes is being replaced by dynamic, personalized, and data-driven operations, setting the stage for a revolution in how universities and institutions engage with prospective international students and manage admissions.
The significance of generative AI in facilitating personalized recruitment strategies cannot be overstated. These algorithms can analyze vast amounts of data, enabling universities to gain insights into each prospective student’s preferences, study patterns, cultural background, and more. With this valuable information, institutions can craft highly personalized campaigns that deeply resonate with potential students, leading to increased engagement rates and successful applications.

Numerous universities have already embraced generative AI to create successful recruitment campaigns. For example, Taylor University, a small liberal arts college in Upland, Indiana, partnered with software giant Salesforce to collect data on prospective students, including hometown, household income, intended areas of study, and other relevant data points. Leveraging this data, Taylor University can target specific populations more likely to apply, enhancing their recruitment efforts.

The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) has taken a step further by introducing an inquiry management app to transform interactions with prospective students. Armed with this data, LSE can offer proactive service, anticipating and addressing questions prospective students may still need to ask. For instance, LSE might include details about available scholarships in their response to an international student’s inquiry.

Incorporating generative AI into recruitment campaigns brings forth several additional benefits. Notably, it enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of managing campaigns, elevates student engagement, and delivers superior user experiences. By receiving tailored information aligned with their interests and needs, prospective students feel recognized and valued, contributing significantly to their decision-making process.
A significant advancement in improving communication and support for prospective international students is the adoption of AI-powered chatbots. These sophisticated software applications mimic human conversation, delivering prompt and effective responses to inquiries, thereby greatly enhancing student engagement and support services.

AI chatbots come equipped with features that streamline the admissions process. They offer multilingual support, ensuring language barriers do not hinder early communication with international students. Moreover, these chatbots are available 24/7, providing real-time responses to inquiries, irrespective of different time zones. This around-the-clock availability and their ability to handle multiple queries simultaneously are invaluable in offering prospective students immediate and efficient support.

Leading universities worldwide have already integrated AI-powered chatbots into their recruitment and admissions procedures. For instance, Georgia State University pioneered adopting these chatbots and introduced “Pounce” in 2016. Since its launch, Pounce has provided hundreds of thousands of answers to questions from potential students and even contributed to reducing “summer melt” by 20 percent. By offering step-by-step assistance, chatbots can guide students through the application process, significantly reducing dropout rates and marked improvement in overall application figures.

Implementing AI-powered chatbots represents a significant step forward in providing personalized and accessible support to prospective international students. As more institutions embrace this technology, it is expected to revolutionize the admissions process, fostering better interactions between universities and students while enhancing the overall student experience.
Generative AI has facilitated a remarkable transformation in student recruitment by introducing data-driven predictive analytics. By scrutinizing historical data, this technology can detect trends and predict student behavior, including their likelihood of application, choice of discipline, or the probability of successful program completion.

Predictive analytics offer a more scientific and informed approach to decision-making in the admissions process. Universities can tailor their strategies and recruitment processes by providing insights into patterns that may take time to become apparent to human evaluators. This precise targeting improves efficiency and enhances the potential for successful student engagement and enrollment.

AI-powered predictive analytics can analyze data from past admissions cycles to identify patterns and forecast application trends based on factors such as nationality, academic history, and personal interests. This valuable insight helps universities better allocate resources and refine recruitment strategies to attract the most promising candidates. For instance, the University of Oklahoma utilizes AI to assess unstructured information, including student application essays, as part of its recruitment and retention analyses.

Florida International University is among the universities that have implemented AI to predict and support students at risk. Similarly, Georgia State University has leveraged predictive analytics to identify students at risk of dropping out, resulting in a remarkable 21% increase in graduation rates. Nova Southeastern University in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, employs AI to identify students most likely to leave, enabling the institution to prioritize early retention efforts for at-risk students.

The application of predictive analytics powered by AI in student recruitment and admissions empowers universities to make data-driven decisions, optimize resources, and enhance student outcomes. By harnessing the potential of generative AI, institutions can create a more personalized and efficient recruitment process, ultimately benefiting both the university and prospective students.
Generative AI is critical in automating and enhancing the application evaluation process. With the ability to scan applications, assess qualifications, and predict student success, AI algorithms expedite the process while reducing the risk of human error or bias.

AI algorithms offer consistency, handle large application volumes efficiently, and promote a fair and objective selection process. This automation saves time for admissions officers, allowing them to focus on nuanced decision-making aspects. For example, the University of Edinburgh reduced admissions staff workload by 90% by using AI to screen computer science program applications.

Institutions like New York University and Southeast Missouri State University employ services like Element451 to assess prospects’ potential for success based on interactions with the university’s website and responses. AI also grades essays objectively, as seen in the Educational Testing Service’s use in the Graduate Record Examination.

AI conducts virtual interviews and analyzes students’ facial expressions, tone, and language to evaluate communication skills and emotional intelligence. The University of Southern California uses AI-powered Kira Talent for this purpose.

Additionally, generative AI automates international credential verification, saving time and ensuring accurate admissions decisions.

Overall, integrating generative AI in admissions revolutionizes the process, enhancing efficiency, accuracy, and fairness. This transformative technology empowers universities to offer a more personalized and streamlined application experience for students and institutions alike.
These are but some practical applications of generative AI already being explored. This technology can revolutionize international enrollment management when better understood and effectively harnessed. Generative AI already offers innovative solutions to attract, engage, and select international students while enhancing efficiency and inclusivity.

However, despite the many actual and potential benefits, the adoption of generative AI is challenging. Concerns about cost, the need for technical expertise, ethical considerations regarding fairness, privacy, consent, legal and regulatory compliance, and the risk of over-reliance on technology are all valid points that need to be considered. Addressing these challenges requires careful planning, robust ethical frameworks, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation of AI systems to ensure fairness and effectiveness in the recruitment and admissions process. Institutions need to balance the benefits of AI adoption and the potential risks and challenges involved.

The possibilities that generative AI presents to elevate international student recruitment and admissions may eventually outweigh its many challenges. What is certain today is that generative AI is not just a technological innovation or a passing whim; we are witnessing the beginning of a paradigm shift in international higher education practice.

As you explore the adoption of generative AI in your international student recruitment and admissions efforts, we encourage you to share your experiences with others. Collectively, we can harness the power of generative AI to transform how we connect with, attract, and enroll tomorrow’s global leaders.
About the Authors

ChatGPT
ChatGPT, developed by OpenAI, is an interactive language model designed for engaging in natural language conversations. It generates human-like responses, providing informative and creative discussions. Users can ask questions, seek suggestions, and receive helpful insights. OpenAI, founded in 2015, is an AI research laboratory and company dedicated to ensuring the development of beneficial and safe artificial general intelligence (AGI) for the benefit of all.

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Dr. Ogden is the founder and managing director of Gateway International Group. He is a respected scholar-professional with 25+ years of experience in international higher education. Ogden has held senior leadership positions at renowned institutions such as Pennsylvania State University, the University of Kentucky, Michigan State University, and the University of Wyoming.

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Jesús is a Strategic Partnerships Executive at Coursera, spearheading new partnerships, strategic business development, and innovative solutions to bolster universities in online learning, student recruitment, micro-credentialing, and internationalization. He has worked in the education space for over 14 years. Previously, he served as a Regional Director at QS Quacquarelli Symonds, providing invaluable support to global university leadership in comprehending international rankings and formulating data-driven institutional strategies.

This image was created artificially by SectaAI.
Getting Started with Chat GPT

Chat GPT is a state-of-the-art conversational AI model developed by OpenAI. It’s designed to generate human-like text based on the input it receives.

1 Accessing Chat GPT
- Visit OpenAI’s website to access Chat GPT or learn more about its capabilities.
- Follow the on-screen instructions to create an account or sign in.
- Once logged in or on the appropriate page, you’ll see an interface or text box where you can start your conversation with Chat GPT.

2 Begin the Conversation
- Type your question, prompt, or message into the provided text box or interface.
- Press ‘Send’, ‘Enter’, or the relevant action button.
3

**Reading the Response**

- Wait a few moments for Chat GPT to process your input.
- The model will generate a response that will appear in the interface.
- Read the response to get your answer or the generated text based on your prompt.

4

**Engaging in a Dialogue**

- Feel free to ask follow-up questions or provide more information.
- Chat GPT can handle back-and-forth conversations, so you can dive deeper into a topic or clarify any doubts you may have.

5

**Ensure Safe Interactions**

- Be cautious about sharing personal information.
- It's best to avoid sharing sensitive details, as you're communicating with a machine.
- Remember that Chat GPT’s knowledge is based on a vast amount of data, but its information may have a cutoff date and might not be up-to-date with the latest information or events (currently, they are limited to 2021).

6

**End the Conversation**

- Simply close the interface or end the session when you're done.
- There's no need for a formal goodbye, but you can if you'd like to!
- Remember: Chat GPT is a tool, and while it can produce human-like responses, it doesn't have emotions, consciousness, or an understanding of context in the same way humans do.
- Always use it with discretion, and enjoy the vast knowledge and creativity it brings to the table!