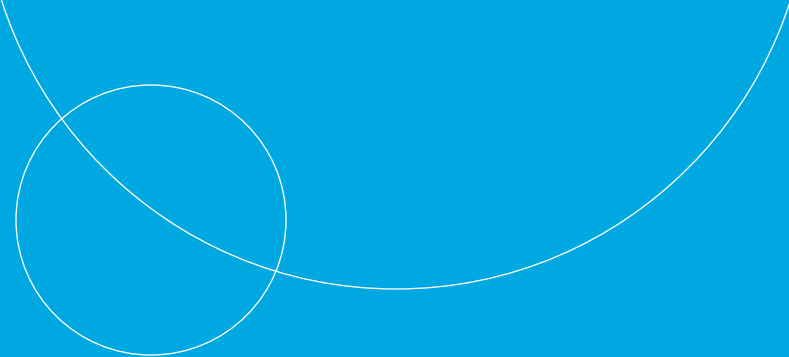




rnl national conference  
**leading ai innovation**  
**empowering higher education**



# How to Personalize Your Web Experience When Your Visitor is Stealth

**Zach Chastain** – Vice President of Partnerships at StudentBridge

**Brian Fortman** – Vice President of Enrollment Management at RNL

# Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- State of Student Search
- The Digital Landscape
- Higher Ed Realities
- Bridging Entertainment & Information
- Content Persuades Action
- Bonus: Family Engagement
- Bonus: AI

# Introductions



**Zach Chastain**

Vice President of Partnerships  
StudentBridge



**Brian Fortman**

Vice President, Enrollment Management  
RNL



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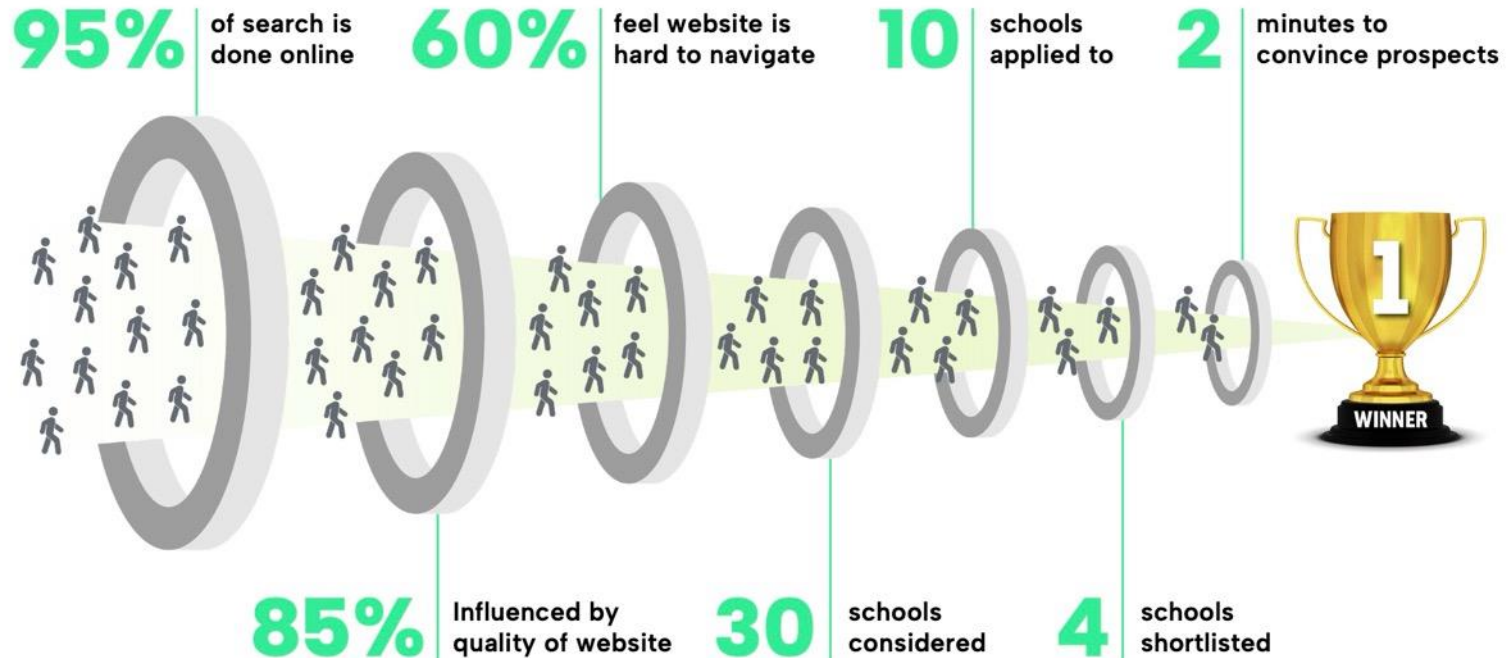


# State of Student Search



# The State Of Student Search

The recruitment journey starts online



# The State of Student Search

Competition is intense

60%

think the digital first impressions are **MORE** important than in person

(RNL)

45%

of students who graduated in 2023 were admitted to 5 or more schools

(Niche)

79%

of students are accepted to their first choice

(Niche)

# The State of Student Search

Continuous digital engagement is key

## Top 5 Sources of Information According to RNL

- The College Website
- Emails
- Video
- Printed Brochures
- Financial Aid Calculators



Takeaway

All digital impressions matter



# The Digital Landscape





# The Digital Landscape

## Video is king personalization is queen

- Video comprises **65%** of all internet traffic, with Netflix and YouTube generating the most traffic.

(Source: Sandvine)

- **7 in 10** teens spend over 3 hours a day watching mobile video every day

(Source: eMarketer)

- Search engine volume will drop **25%** by 2026 as social search, image search and GenAI rise

(Source: Gartner)



### Takeaway

Students are optimized for a world of authentic, immersive digital video where personalization is effortless

# Higher Ed Realities



# Higher Ed Realities

The equation doesn't add up

# 60%

of students feel the website is hard to navigate

(Source: RNL)



## Takeaway

Lost opportunity to reveal the stealth visitor



Hard-to-find information about specific majors/programs



Confusing directions related to the admissions process



Hard-to-use navigation or hard-to-use links



Lack of information about job opportunities related to each major



Lack of information about admission statistics—how many students like me were admitted to particular majors, etc.

# Higher Ed Realities

The equation doesn't add up

Add video here

In @:44 Question: How did you find information about the school...

Out @not vary organized in terms of student life.”

# Higher Ed Realities

## Pull don't push

*“The **narrative** prospective students hear **can greatly influence** their likelihood to pursue a college degree... it’s time for colleges to step up and give students access to quality advising, rather than social media threads, to base their decisions on.”*

— March 2024

The screenshot shows a web page from Inside Higher Ed. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the logo, a search icon, and links for 'My account', 'Become a Member', 'Find a Job', and 'Solutions'. Below the navigation bar, the date 'March 13, 2024' is displayed. The main headline is 'Doubts About Value Are Deterring College Enrollment'. Below the headline, a sub-headline reads: 'Survey data suggests that prospective learners are being dissuaded from college by skepticism about whether degrees are worth the time and money.' The author is listed as 'By Jessica Blake'. To the left of the main text is a vertical list of social media sharing icons. The main text begins with a paragraph: 'Higher education experts have been concerned about an "readu" from higher education since long before pandemic-reassessed enrollment declines.' Below this is a photograph of a student sitting at a long table in a classroom or library. To the right of the main text is a promotional box for a 'FREE Student Success Newsletter' with a 'Sign up now' button. Below the main text is another paragraph: 'Enrollment has been declining in higher education for more than a decade, and the most common explanations in recent years have been lingering effects of the pandemic and a looming demographic cliff expected to shrink the number of traditional-aged college students. But new research suggests that public doubts about the value of a college degree are a key contributor.' Below this is a final paragraph: 'The study—conducted by Edge Research, a marketing research firm, and HCM Strategists, a public policy and advocacy consulting firm with funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation—uses focus groups and parallel national surveys of current high school students and of adults who decided to leave college or who didn't go at all to link the value proposition of a college degree and Americans' behaviors after high school.'

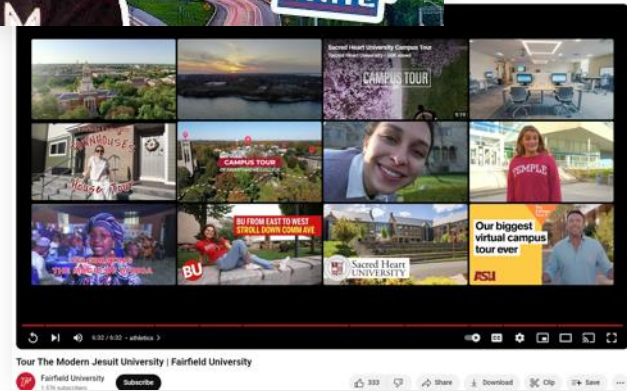
# Bridge Entertainment & Information



# Bridge Entertainment & Information

Convert traffic to meaningful and controlled interactions

- YouTube: 2<sup>nd</sup> biggest search engine
- People stay 2 minutes longer with video
- The dangers of social media
  - Brand
  - Engagement
  - Action



# Bridge Entertainment & Information

## Personalization is prized

56%

of students are interested in  
personalized web content

(Source: RNL)

43%

of seniors and 40% of 10th and 11th  
graders like websites that allow them to  
filter and personalize their content

(Source: RNL)



### Takeaway

Willing to share personal information for personalized content



# Bridge Entertainment & Information

## Video and personalization are memorable

- It was from one of the schools they were interested in
- They used their name and that made the feel special
- They were simple, and they could understand them
- They were positive messages
- They used humor (they were funny)
- They had a link to video
- They were honest and straightforward (no gimmicks)
- They had a link to a virtual tour
- They invited them to visit (an easy way to schedule)
- They invited them to meet with a rep who was going to be in their high school or in their area
- They invited them to ask a question from a live person (via chat)



# Bridge Entertainment & Information

## Personalization is sticky

- Empower students to drive their experience on your website with immersive content
- Reward their search with rich media to evoke emotion

Add video here  
(Slate excerpt)



### Takeaway

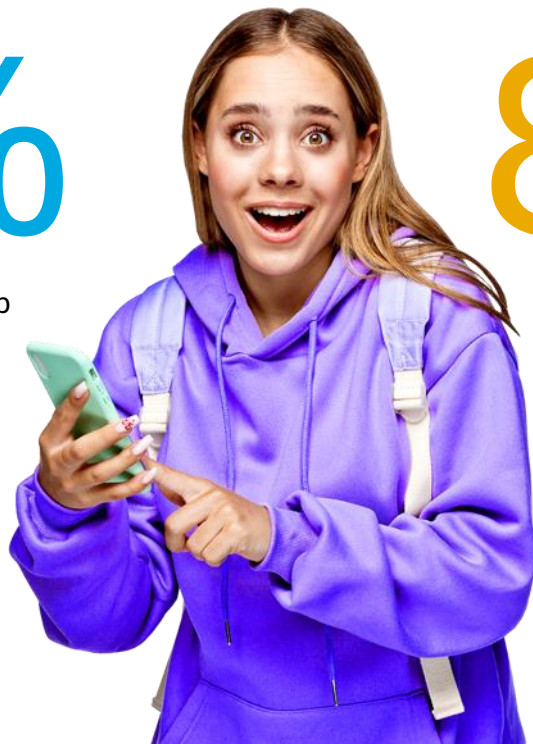
Video causes students to raise their hand

# Bridge Entertainment & Information

Personalized video is key

82%

of students watch videos, up  
from 70% in 2021  
(Source: RNL)



83%

find video helpful  
(Source: RNL)

# Content Persuades Action



# Content Persuades Action

## Keeping them engaged



### After viewing a virtual tour or virtual reality video

1. Schedule a visit
2. Fill out a form for more information
3. Follow the school's social pages
4. Continue examining the website
5. Start an application



### After clicking on an ad's link

1. Look for information on school's website
2. Watch a video
3. Follow the school's social pages
4. Fill out a form for more information
5. Take virtual tour



### Top actions after an online chat

1. Start an application
2. Fill out a form for more information
3. Have a phone conversation with an enrollment team member
4. Follow the school's social pages
5. Look for information on the website

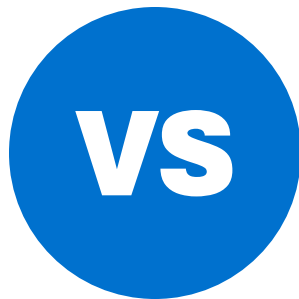
# Content Persuades Action

Using data to enroll right fit students



**Expressed  
Interest**

someone has told you something  
they are interested in



**Demonstrated  
Interest**

observing what they actually  
are drawn to

# Content Persuades Action

## Build a profile for anonymous users



How often students visit



Volume of content they engage with



Type of content



Activity trends after visiting



Percentage of video watched



Number of videos watched



Hotspots clicked



Geographic trends (behavior by location)



Shared content

# Content Persuades Action

Listen, learn, convert

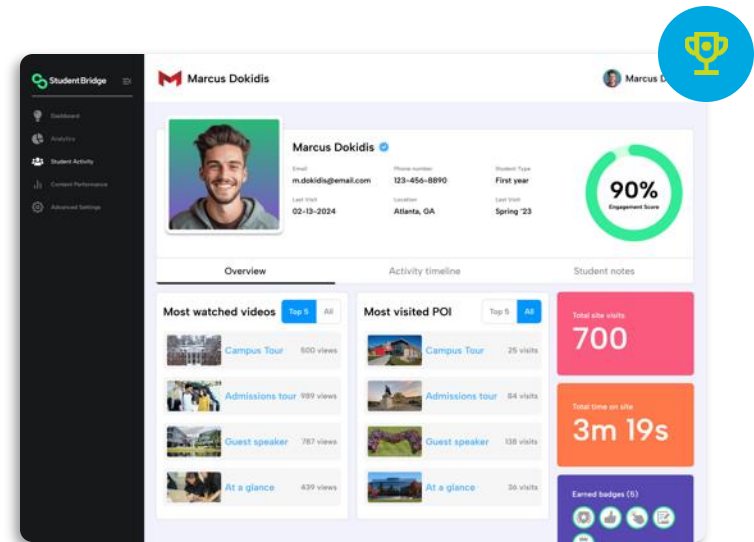
Contact

## Marcus Dokidis

Full Name: Marcus Dokidis  
Grade Level: Senior  
High School: Carson High School  
Email Address: ima.person@mail.com  
Phone Number: 123.234.4567  
Mobile Number: 345.456.6789  
Method of Contact: Text Message  
Mailing Address: 123 Simple Street, Atlanta, GA 30310, United States

Notes:

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Ut et massa mi. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Ut et massa mi. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Ut et massa mi.



StudentBridge

Marcus Dokidis

Marcus Dokidis

Email: m.dokidis@email.com  
Phone Number: 123-456-8890  
Last Visit: 02-13-2024  
Location: Atlanta, GA

Student Type: First year  
Last Visit: Spring '23

90% Engagement Score

Overview Activity timeline Student notes

Most watched videos

Video	Views
Campus Tour	800 views
Admissions tour	889 views
Guest speaker	787 views
At a glance	439 views

Most visited POI

POI	Visits
Campus Tour	25 visits
Admissions tour	84 visits
Guest speaker	138 visits
At a glance	36 visits

Total site visits: 700

Total time on site: 3m 19s

Earned badges (5)

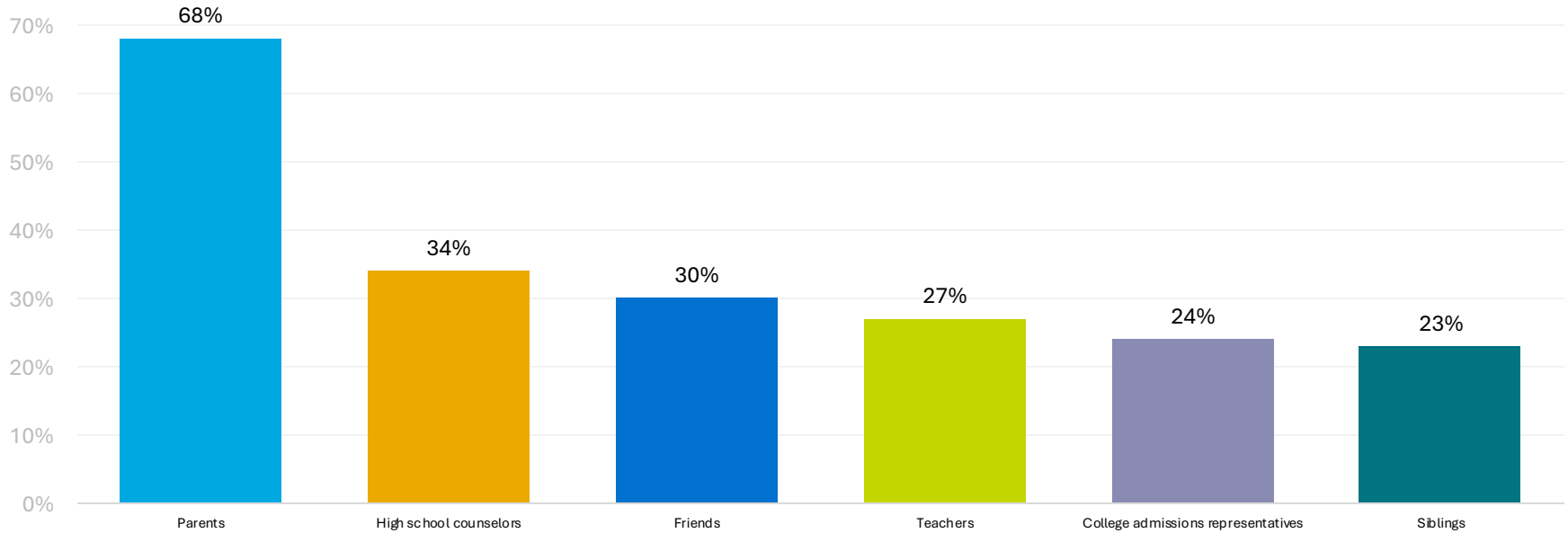




# **Bonus: Family Engagement**

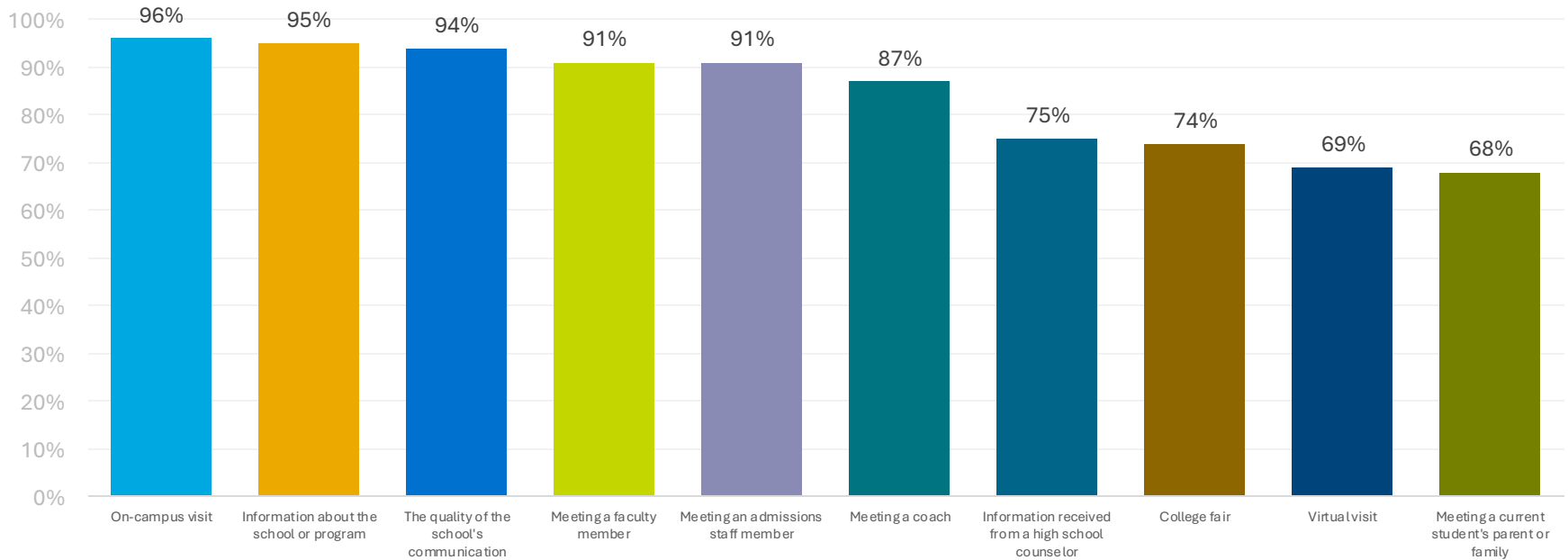
# Family Engagement

## Influence the influencers



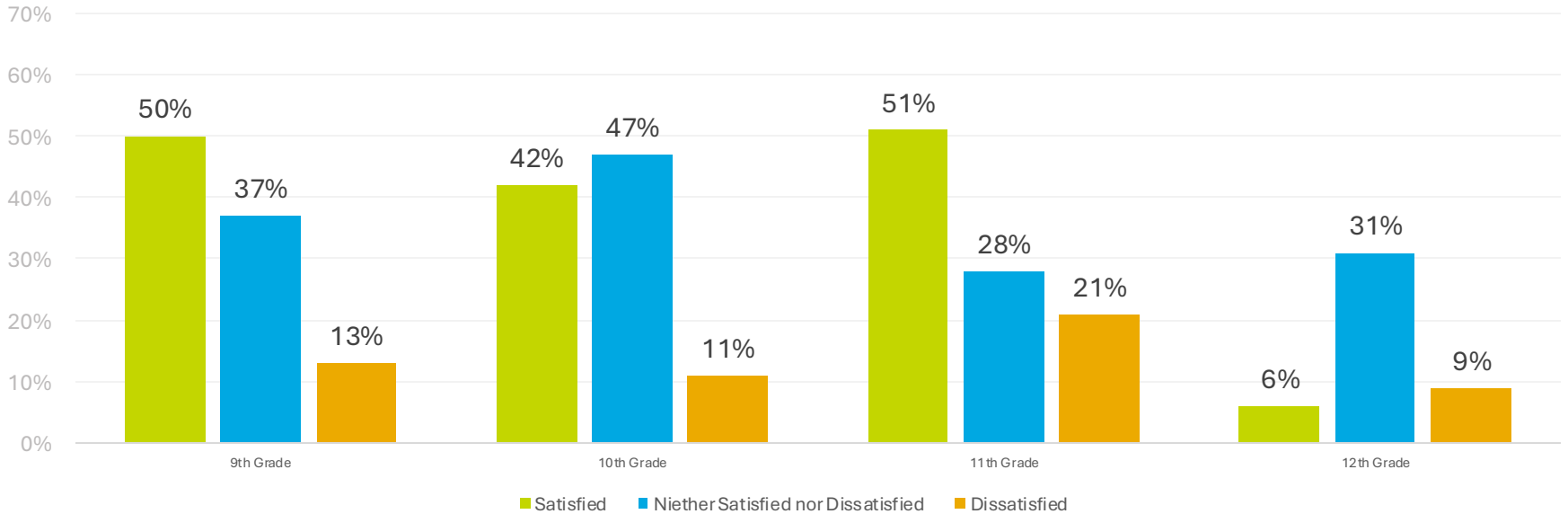
# Family Engagement

## Utilized experiences



# Family Engagement

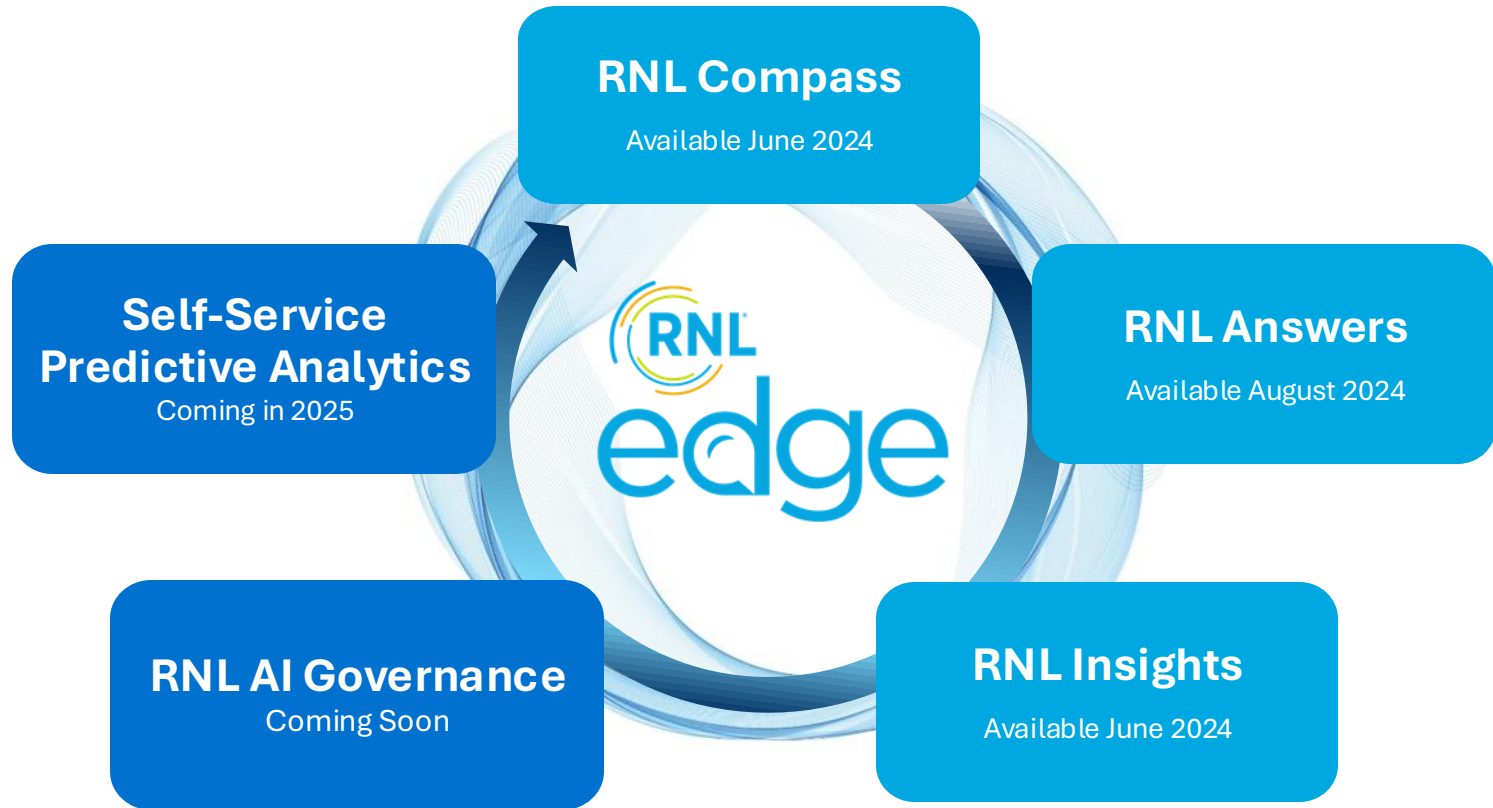
## Satisfaction with virtual tours





**Bonus: AI**

# RNL Edge (AI) Portfolio



# Thank you!



**Zach Chastain**

Vice President of Partnerships  
StudentBridge



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RNL



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The background of the slide features a monochromatic blue gradient. Overlaid on this gradient are several interlocking gears of varying sizes and orientations, rendered in a lighter shade of blue. The gears are slightly out of focus, creating a sense of depth and mechanical complexity. The overall aesthetic is clean, professional, and technical.

**Open Q&A**





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ready to lead the way with RNL?

**schedule a quick  
consultation**



scan here