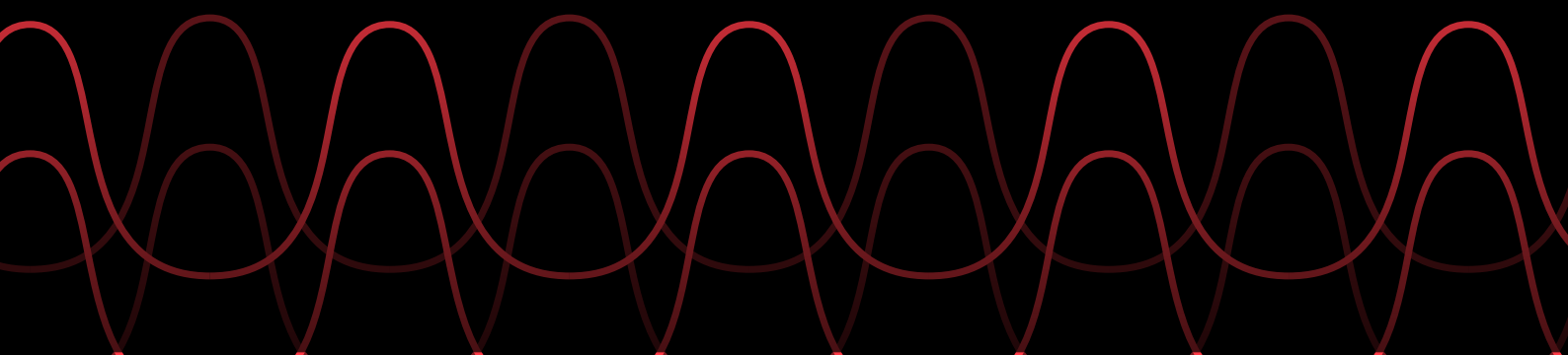




# Global Reach Ongoing Connection



DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE 365 DIGITAL STRATEGIES  
FOR STUDENT RECRUITMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION



# A new era in Higher Education Recruitment

*Hello there,*

In today's competitive higher education landscape, decision-makers like you face the dual challenge of engaging digital-native prospective students and managing budget constraints while meeting challenging enrolment targets.

Traditional open days, while useful, often fall short due to logistical and financial limitations. **These events struggle primarily in two areas: limited engagement beyond the event itself and difficulty in reaching today's digitally-savvy and global student audience.**

In response, many institutions are turning to virtual open days and a 365-day engagement strategy that blends content delivery with community-building, offering a flexible, sustainable alternative to keep students engaged year-round. This approach not only optimises resources but also helps align recruitment efforts with long-term institutional goals.

**This e-book introduces you to evolving trends in student engagement and outlines how a year-round recruitment strategy**—leveraging virtual events and ongoing interactions—can address the challenges of student engagement and resource management. We'll explore practical ideas and offer insights into how **this approach can enhance recruitment outcomes and support your institution's strategic objectives.**



CHAPTER N.1

# 2 Reasons Why Traditional Student Recruitment Struggles



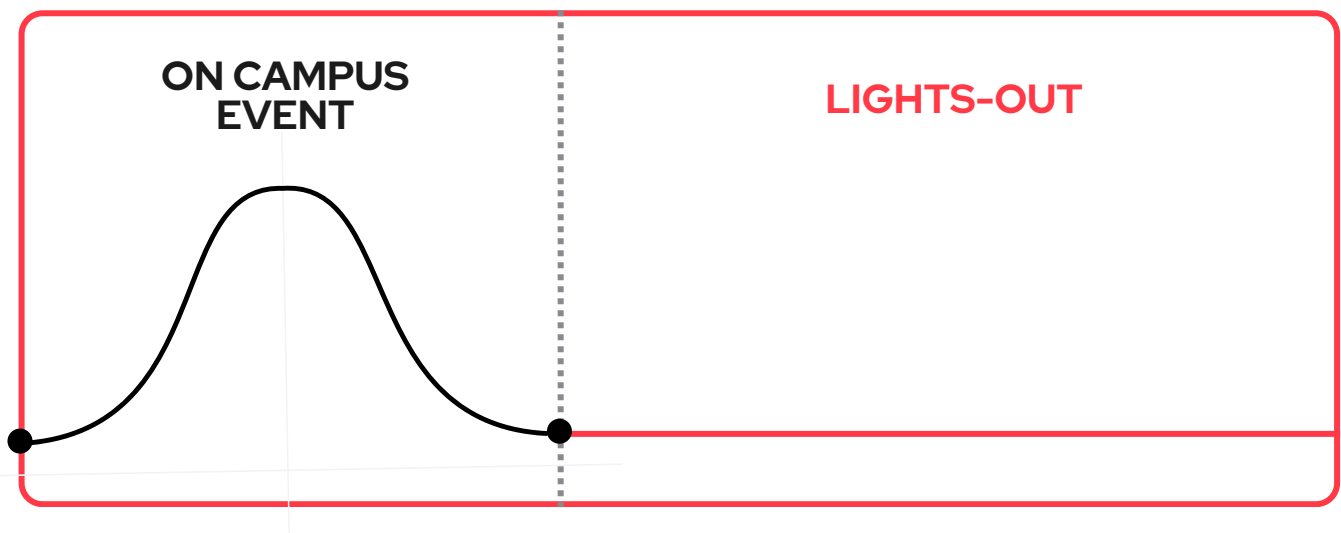
# 1. Engagement Gaps

The main challenge of traditional recruitment is its **over-reliance on physical open days**, which are restricted by geographical constraints, limiting the pool of attendees, particularly **international students who are vital for maintaining both diversity and ROI**.

**Timing is also critical when it comes to student recruitment.** Traditionally, universities schedule open days during key periods—usually in the spring and autumn—when prospective students and their families are actively exploring their options. These events are essential components of the recruitment cycle, designed to showcase your institution and convert interest into applications. However, because many universities host their open days at the same time, the competition is intense. Prospective students are inundated with choices, making it increasingly difficult for any single institution to capture and sustain their attention.

**Then imagine the growing financial pressures on universities, compounded by the logistical demands of traditional open days.** Your team spends months meticulously planning an on-campus event. The day arrives, and the campus buzzes with energy. Prospective students and their families are excited as they explore, attend presentations, and engage with faculty.

Engagement peaks, just as you planned. But what happens after?



As depicted earlier, **after this initial surge of interest, engagement typically drops off sharply during the "Lights Out" phase.** The momentum you've worked so hard to build starts to fade, and prospective students—who were once looped-in—begin to lose touch with your institution. In today's hyper-competitive global market, where students have countless options and expect ongoing interaction, this drop in engagement is a significant risk. It represents a missed opportunity to keep these students connected, informed, and committed to your university or college.

Additionally, the sheer volume of events creates another layer of complexity. With so many universities competing for the same students at the same time, **there's constant pressure to ensure your event stands out**—not just during the open day, but long after it's over. This environment demands that you not only deliver an outstanding event but also maintain engagement after the event concludes. Without a strategy to sustain engagement, even the most successful open day risks becoming a fleeting memory.

**This "Lights Out" period highlights a critical gap in traditional recruitment strategies: the inability to sustain engagement and nurture relationships with prospective students before and after the event.** As the landscape of higher education becomes more competitive, the need for a continuous, year-round engagement strategy is not just a luxury—it's a growing necessity.

## 2. Financial Constraints

Physical open days require significant financial investment, covering venue setup, staffing, and catering. On top of that, large marketing budgets are necessary to attract attendees, further straining already tight budgets. Universities face several key financial pressures:

- **Stagnating real-term income:** With domestic tuition fees frozen and inflation on the rise, universities' real-term income has decreased, making it harder to fund expensive recruitment events.
- **Reliance on international students:** As universities depend more on the higher fees from international students, they become vulnerable to fluctuations in enrollment caused by policy changes and global events.
- **Rising costs and investment demands:** Operating expenses like staff wages and facility maintenance are climbing, while universities must also invest in sustainability initiatives and infrastructure upgrades.
- **Financial sustainability concerns:** Many universities are facing deficits and liquidity challenges, raising concerns about long-term financial health. Effective cost management and diversifying income streams are critical to avoiding financial distress.

**Given these challenges, traditional recruitment methods are becoming increasingly unsustainable.** It's time to explore innovative, cost-effective solutions that can directly address these issues.



CHAPTER N.2

# Higher Ed Engagement Trends: **New Approaches for Year-Round Recruitment**



VIRTUAL OPEN DAYS AND  
A 365-DAY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

# Virtual Open Days

Virtual open days provide students with essential information on courses and support services through virtual tours, live chats, and one-on-one sessions with lecturers. **These events mirror the in-person experience while offering enhanced flexibility, as lecturers can continue answering questions in on-demand sessions.**

Common formats include **webinars, panel discussions, presentations, and live chats with lecturers and department heads. Universities can fully customise their virtual open days to meet specific needs.**



## COST EFFECTIVENESS

**Hosting a virtual open day provides significant savings and efficiency.** Traditional in-person events require extensive resources—campus operations, staffing, and catering—plus travel costs for students and their families. Shifting to more virtual events reduces these expenses while still reaching prospective students effectively.



## SUSTAINABILITY & REUSE

Virtual events provide the added benefit of reusability. Unlike a one-time physical event, **virtual open days can be recorded and reused multiple times**, extending their value and reducing the overall carbon footprint—a factor that resonates with environmentally conscious students.



## FLEXIBILITY

After an in-person event ends, those who missed it have no further access, and the event is limited to set hours. Virtual open days, however, let attendees access presentations and information at their convenience, even after the event is over—especially helpful for international students in different time zones.



## ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility is greatly enhanced with virtual events. By eliminating the barriers of time, location, and physical ability, virtual open days create an inclusive environment that welcomes all prospective students. Those who might not have been able to attend due to financial constraints, time limitations, or physical disabilities can now participate fully with just an internet connection and a smartphone or computer.



## DATA-LED INSIGHTS

Virtual events provide robust analytics, tracking metrics like attendance duration, questions asked, and booth visits. **Post-event, this data allows you to refine future engagement strategies, using insights to better tailor touch points and improve overall student satisfaction and recruitment success.**

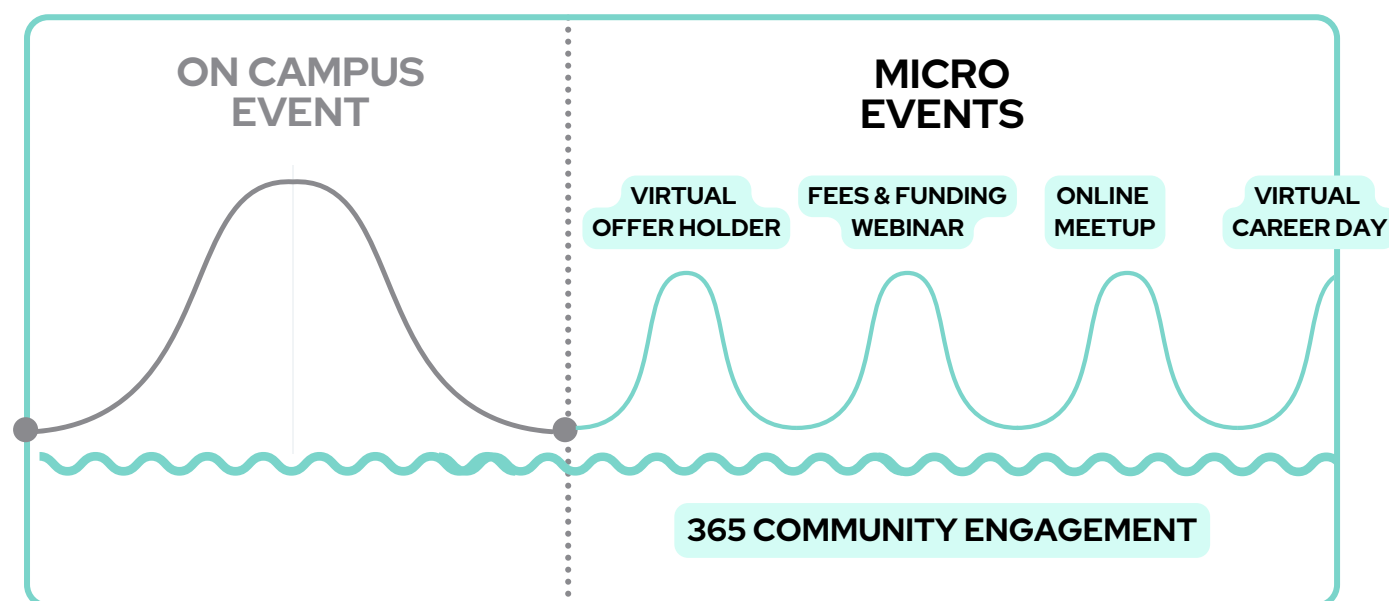


# Moving Beyond One-Off Events: The 365-Day Engagement Mindset

Virtual open days are playing an important role in reshaping how universities engage prospective students, offering increased flexibility, accessibility, cost-effectiveness and sustainability. However, as we move toward 2025, it's evident that one-off events are no longer enough. After more than a decade working with universities, one thing became clear: **student engagement is shifting toward event-led, year-round strategies that integrate content and community elements.** This sustained, 365 strategy has proven to significantly improve engagement levels, recruitment outcomes and ROI.

Starting with engagement, here's how universities can improve it:

- **Use technology** to make access easier, personalise experiences, and gather feedback through tracking and insights.
- **Integrate events throughout the student journey**—from first interest to enrolment—so each interaction (whether through events, content, or community) supports discovery, decision-making, and connection
- **Focus on two-way communication** to build real, active relationships that add value at every stage of the student journey

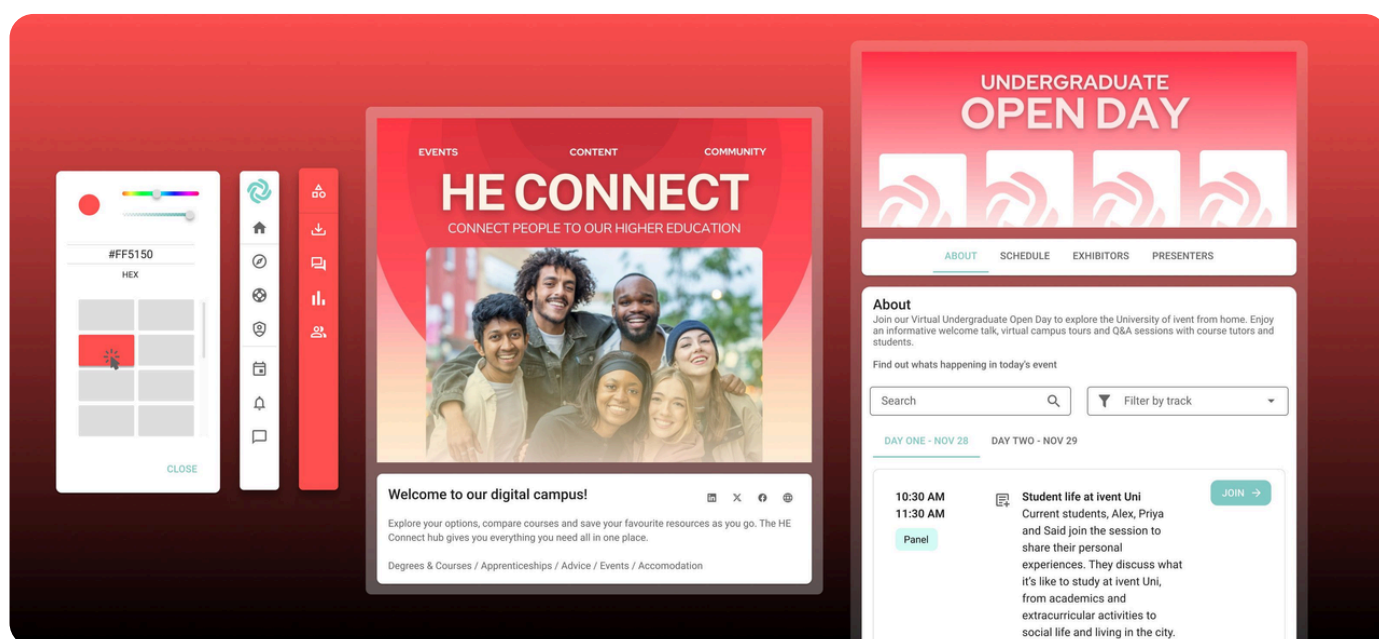




# FUTURE-PROOF YOUR RECRUITMENT STRATEGY WITH A Digital Campus

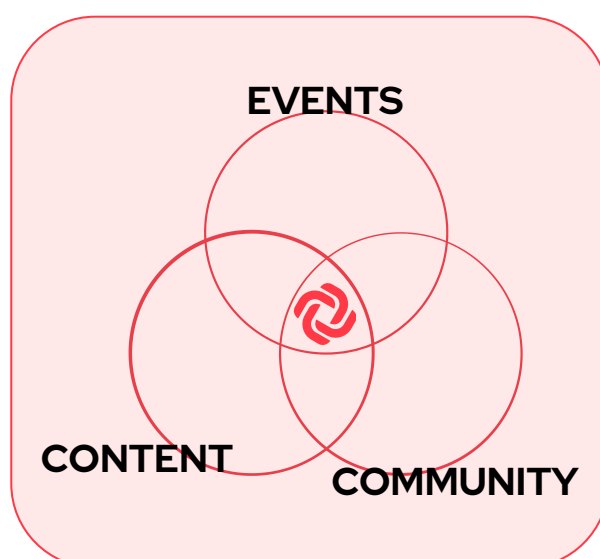
Think of them as flexible, measurable, accessible, and completely customisable next-gen digital hubs for engaging with audiences through events, content, and community.

Digital venues like the ones provided by us at [Ivent UniPro](#) are conceived as strategic assets, enabling brands to own their discovery, engagement, and growth ecosystem, from the domain and branding to the content and community nurtured within.



## An example of an [Ivent UniPro](#) Digital Campus

[iVent UniPro](#) offers a comprehensive solution specific for student recruitment, allowing universities to engage prospective students anytime, anywhere through flexible, accessible digital events like virtual open days and webinars. Seamlessly integrating with your existing tools, [Ivent UniPro](#) simplifies recruitment workflows, provides personalised event management, and delivers real-time feedback and insights to help you track engagement and follow up meaningfully. By addressing common challenges such as maintaining year-round engagement and financial, [iVent UniPro](#) enables universities to transform their recruitment strategy and achieve stronger results.



# There's more

## TO STUDENT RECRUITMENT THAN *EVENT TECH*

The proliferation of virtual and hybrid event platforms has underscored the importance of choosing event partners aligned with your institution's values and goals.

Event technology, while important, is not a panacea. **Success comes from using those tools with insight, strategy, and a particular skillset to design meaningful experiences.**

Ivent UniPro stands out because we integrate a human touch in a digital world, offering a unique blend of technological innovation and human-centric support.

This specialised skillset ensures that businesses can leverage the most advanced event technology while receiving expert guidance and support in designing and executing event-led growth activities successfully.

**Learn how our software and team can help you deliver unparalleled value to your prospective students, enhancing their experience and ultimately improving enrolment results.**

LET'S TALK

