Non-Greek
Market Research
Results

Phired Up | **Techni Phi**

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Overview

Since 2015, Phired Up Productions (and its associated brands) have been conducting nationwide research on the perception of non-fraternity/sorority college students. This research has shaped our education, technology, and strategy. This year we collected even more data, and this resource is meant to provide actionable recommendations for people who care about fraternity/sorority growth (like us!).

The findings of these studies, of course, are not perfect. This is basic market research meant to give us general understandings that can help with real-time fraternity/sorority growth strategies. There are plenty of reasons to continue to do more research into non-member perception (and we're doing some of that now!). Please read this data in the spirit it is meant to be read: this gives us important clues but is not the whole picture.

That said, we think you'll find this information as fascinating and as helpful as we do!

Overall, we have received responses from 1,350 students at 28 colleges and universities. Here are all the colleges and universities that have, at some point, had students who have completed one of our Non-Greek Market Research Surveys.

- Baker University
- Binghamton University
- California University of Pennsylvania
- Central Michigan University
- Christopher Newport University
- Devry University
- Eastern Kentucky University
- Fort Hays State University
- Georgia Southern University
- High Point University
- Iowa State University
- Michigan Technological University
- North Carolina State University
- Old Dominion University
- Pace University

- Purdue University
- Purdue University
- Radford University
- Robert Morris University
- St. Cloud State University
- Stevens Institute of Technology
- The College of New Jersey
- The University of Michigan, Flint
- The University of Nebraska at Omaha
- University of Michigan
- Valparaiso University
- Virginia Tech
- Wichita State University
- Wright State University

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It's not terribly surprising what words non-Greeks use to describe us…

The list of words non-Greek students use to describe us is not exactly shocking to most fraternity/sorority leaders. We're aware of our stereotypes. What is frustrating to many is that these stereotypes haven't changed much over the last several decades. And it is unlikely these words will change unless real undergraduate students on real campuses work to take control of their own story in real ways.

When college students who aren't members of fraternities or sororities are asked to list words that they think of when they think of fraternities and sororities, here is a big list they use.

** Image excludes the words party, partying, parties as there were SO MANY references to that stuff.

They think we exist to be "drunk buddies."

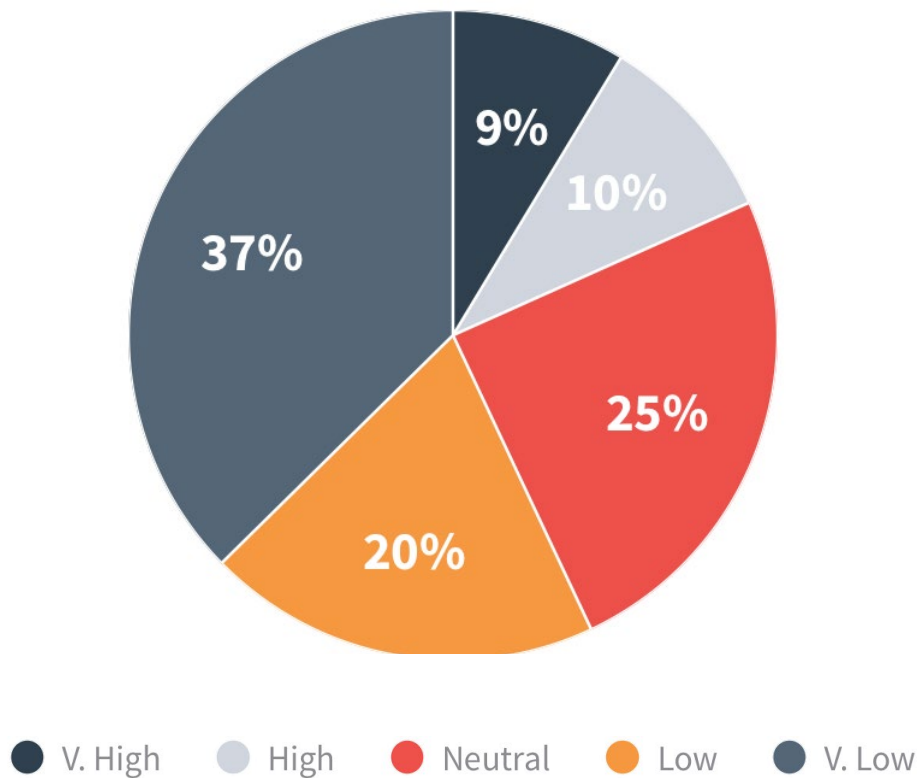When college students are asked what the purpose of fraternity and sorority is, here's how they respond.

Purpose of Greek Membership?				
Socializing	119	112	231	30.4%
Belonging	117	106	223	29.3%
Drinking	105	75	180	23.7%
Parties	102	90	192	25.3%
Bonds	101	98	199	26.2%
Fun	99	68	167	22.0%
Involvement	82	103	185	24.3%
Connection	77	69	146	19.2%
Network	74	76	150	19.7%
Conformity	61	45	106	13.9%
Status	58	39	97	12.8%
Academics	45	54	99	13.0%
Opportunities	53	52	105	13.8%
Service	30	35	65	8.6%
Hazing	21	25	46	6.1%
Support	21	18	39	5.1%
	389	371	760	

Socializing, belonging, parties, bonds, drinking, fun, network, connections… Many of the most prominent responses to the questions revolve around something that could easily be summed up as "Fraternities and sororities are basically drunk buddies."

Perhaps this isn't terrible news. After all, they could probably say worse things about our organizations. Also, many non-Greek students probably also have drunk buddies! The thing is, they don't have to pay for theirs.

There are a lot more folks interested in fraternity/sorority than are joining.

When we ask current college students what their current level of interest in joining a fraternity or sorority is, 43% report either a very high, high, or neutral level of interest! This is a big deal because around North America on campuses where fraternities and sororities exist, approximately 10% of students join sororities or fraternities. There are a lot more folks interested than there are actually joining.

● V. High   ● High   ● Neutral   ● Low   ● V. Low

They don't hate us.
They just don't know us.

Why are there so many students interested in fraternity/sorority life, but so few joining? At least one answer seems incredibly obvious and very simple to overcome. When we asked survey respondents if they had ever been recruited, 75% said "no."

To drive that point home further, when we asked non-affiliated students how many members of their fraternity or sorority community they could name, about half of the respondents said they could only name 5 fraternity/sorority members or fewer.

Please select the top three reasons that most accurately describe your reasons for not joining a fraternity or sorority.				
Recruitment is Not Appealing	111.00	99	210.00	27.6%
Reputation of Greek Orgs	91	102	193.00	25.4%
Lacking Finances	119	149	268.00	35.3%
Lacking Diversity	52	64	116.00	15.3%
Lacking Time	183	119	302.00	39.7%
Concern for Academics	60	68	128.00	16.8%
Don't Know Members	61	53	114.00	15.0%
Alcohol/Part Scene	73	107	180.00	23.7%
Negative News Articles	21	34	55.00	7.2%
Hazing Concerns	43	50	93.00	12.2%
	371	389	760.00	

Remember, we know that "people join people," and that often the most important factor in a person showing interest in a fraternity or sorority is whether they have a personal relationship with someone in the organization. Most non-members wouldn't be likely to understand that or be able to communicate it.

With that in mind, here are their stated reasons for not joining. Time and money are no surprise (especially considering today's students demand for a return on their financial investment). But also take notice that the way we recruit is actually keeping people away.

Maybe we shouldn't lead our growth efforts by shouting "GO GREEK!"

When we asked non-Greek students this question, "If there was an organization on campus about high moral development, human connection, and making a positive impact on the world, would you be interested in learning more?" 91% said "YES!"

91%
of respondents said they were "interested in an organization on campus about high moral development, human connection, leadership, and making a positive impact on the world."

We think you'll agree that most fraternities and sororities are about those things. If we describe our organizations, but don't name them, they are almost universally loved! But as soon as we shout "GO GREEK!" or stand at a table plastered with our colors and letters, or lead every conversation with "Want to come to our rush event?"' we scare nearly half of our audience away!

Conclusion

We have learned a lot by talking with non-Greek college students over the years. The information shared in this document is just a sampling of what we've learned.

Perhaps the most important less is… we, as fraternity/sorority leaders, need to get better at truly listening to the voices, priorities, and values of non-affiliated students. If we want to attract students who will make our organizations better, safer, and healthier, we need to make sure our marketing and recruitment efforts are informed by data such as this.

We help fraternities
& sororities grow

We've been helping fraternities and sororities recruit new members and improve their organizations since 2002.

Educational Training

We provide Educational Training to teach organizations how to recruit better and retain more high-quality members. And we put the art and science of relationships at the center of all of it. Our educational trainings include:

- Keynotes
- Chapter Consultations
- Board Trainings
- Interactive Workshops

Strategic Consulting

We provide Strategic Consulting to give organizations a long-term plan for recruitment success and a coach to to keep them accountable and help them on the way. This work often looks like:

- Marketing Strategy
- Long-Term Coaching
- Deep-Dive Consulting
- Research & Data Analysis

Technology Solutions

Through our sister company, TechniPhi, we provide a suite of technologies to help organizations easily manage their recruitment processes, vote and score PNMS, and help guide PNMs through recruitment.

- ChapterBuilder™
- Campus Director™
- MyVote™
- PNM Companion™ App

See why over 300 campuses and more than 75 headquarters trust us to help grow their organizations!

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