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## TOP TIPS #7

# Diversifying markets

## How to manage diversification challenges in your global recruiting strategy

It's almost inevitable that our institutions can become over-represented by students from a limited number of countries: resulting from global demographics, recruitment strategies or just the positive effects of word-of-mouth recommendation.

We need to provide the best possible student experience and ensure we aren't overly dependent on a single market (a high strategic risk). As such, we need to recruit as widely as possible to positively impact the diversity of our international populations. How can we best manage this in an increasingly competitive marketplace and with limited resources?

Barton Carlyle consults regularly on market diversification and emerging markets in international enrollment management as a specialization of the company, offering advising, training and presentations worldwide. Contact us to see how we could support you: [pamela@bartoncarlyle.com](mailto:pamela@bartoncarlyle.com)

## TOP TIPS #7

# Market Diversification

### 1. Balance developing vs exploratory markets.

While market diversification is important, it is more expensive and can be more complicated. Consider carefully how you manage the balance so that you are working on new markets while maximizing your presence in more familiar, and higher yielding markets.

### 2. Diversify your current, large markets.

In large markets, there is often an opportunity to widen your recruitment in-country. Within China and India for example there are distinctive and important differences from region to region. Try to maximize your current footprint as much as possible.

### 3. Ensure domestic recruitment is in alignment.

It is essential that you have an effective strategy to recruit international students who are already studying in the USA. Not only are these students well prepared to study at your institution, they are often from a number of diverse locations that are not currently part of your recruitment program.

### 4. Four-year school? Factor in local college partnerships.

You will need to have effective pathway and collaborative arrangements for students coming from community colleges – many international students begin their studies at 2-year colleges.

### 5. Diversify across program portfolio.

Often international student populations skew to popular subjects. Consider how you can develop proactive recruiting for other programs that have fewer international students, and research that demand profile.

### 6. Market intelligence is essential

When you need to consider recruiting in additional markets, develop a proactive market intelligence plan using insight from a variety of sources, well ahead of putting in place your recruitment plan. Develop a library of resources on each country and add to these for when you are ready.

### 7. Undertake rigorous market research.

No one should travel to a new market without in-depth research which will include an assessment of political and economic factors at a minimum. Develop the key criteria important to your institution and use as a guide for market research reports.

### 8. Use your agents

If you use recruitment agents, they can be a great source of market insight. Try commissioning some research on the market for particular programs and get a good feel for student demand and opportunities.

### 9. Understand the competition.

Spend some time and effort on understanding who is active in the market and assess your program against the competitors. Decide how you will compete: price, location, quality of program? Ensure this is reflected in your marketing material.

### 10. Advocate internally for required resources.

Diversification often comes with additional cost. Understand your ROI and make the case within your institution for how to deliver those new students. Evaluate new markets using ROI assessment factors.

## EXTRA RESOURCES

[www.monitor.icef.com](http://www.monitor.icef.com) The best aggregator of market news and research for international recruitment and marketing professionals. See also [thepienews.com](http://thepienews.com)

[http://2016.export.gov/industry/education/eg\\_main\\_108888.asp](http://2016.export.gov/industry/education/eg_main_108888.asp) Education and Training Services Resource Guide is an invaluable tool from the US Commercial Service. Check out the handy market reference guide at the back.

[www.roiie.com](http://www.roiie.com) This site has the background and models for return on investment calculators. An essential tool for market diversification.

<https://ei.britishcouncil.org/educationintelligence/10-trends-transformative-changes-higher-education> This British Council report offers a fascinating look into the complex trends shaping higher education globally, interesting context informing how we diversify.

