

AI & THE FUTURE OF SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

“

THE FUTURE
BELONGS TO
THOSE WHO ADAPT
BEFORE THEY ARE
FORCED TO.

HOW SCHOOLS
ARE REDEFINING
ADMISSIONS,
TRUST, AND
PARENT
ENGAGEMENT.

LEARNING
TODAY
LEADING
TOMORROW

01 THE AI-POWERED PARENT

How schools are adapting to the new age of AI-powered parent decisions.

02 THE FUTURE SCHOOL ADMISSIONS FUNNEL

From discovery to admission—how AI is changing every stage of the parent decision journey.

03 WHAT SCHOOLS MUST RETHINK BEFORE 2027

The strategies, systems, and experiences schools need to stay relevant in an AI-driven world.

04 AI IN SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

The platforms and technologies helping schools, improving communication, engagement, and admissions efficiency.

THE FUTURE OF ADMISSIONS BEGINS WITH HOW PARENTS MAKE DECISIONS TODAY

EDITOR'S **NOTE**

“

The future of school admissions will not belong to the schools with the loudest message.

It will belong to the schools that adapt, innovate, and build trust faster than everyone else. ”



Pankaj Budhwani

Pankaj Budhwani

Founder & CEO

MEDI GARH

The Schools That Adapt Fast Will **Lead The Future**

Every major shift in education creates new opportunities—and new challenges.

The rise of Artificial Intelligence may be the most significant transformation schools have faced in decades.

Across the schools we work with, one trend is becoming increasingly clear:

Parent expectations are evolving faster than traditional school systems.

Today's Parents Expect

Speed. Transparency. Personalisation.

They want instant access to information, faster communication, greater visibility, and more confidence before making admission decisions.

Yet many schools continue to rely on processes and communication models designed for a very different generation of parents

The New Reality

Artificial Intelligence is changing how parents discover schools, compare options, evaluate credibility, and make decisions.

The schools that embrace these changes will strengthen admissions, communication, and parent engagement.

The schools that ignore them may find it increasingly difficult to remain competitive.

The Challenge Is Not Technology.

The Challenge Is Adaptation.

- » AI will not replace schools.
- » But it will change how schools communicate, operate, and build trust with families.
- » The question is no longer whether AI will influence education.
- » The question is how quickly schools will adapt.

HOW AI IS CHANGING THE WAY PARENTS CHOOSE SCHOOLS

AI is quietly influencing every step of the parent decision journey.



01-THE PROBLEM

- » Parents now start with AI, not websites.
- » Schools are filtered before they are discovered.
- » The first shortlist is increasingly AI-generated.

02 - THE INSIGHT

- » AI drives discovery.
- » Parents drive validation.
- » Trust is built through digital proof, not promotion.

03 - THE EVIDENCE

- » AI is becoming part of everyday decision-making.
- » Parents use it to compare, evaluate, and shortlist schools.
- » The shift is happening faster than most schools realize.

04-THE STRATEGIC MEANING

- » The funnel has flipped.
- » AI creates the shortlist before engagement begins.
- » Visibility now depends on being part of that recommendation set.

05 - THE ACTION

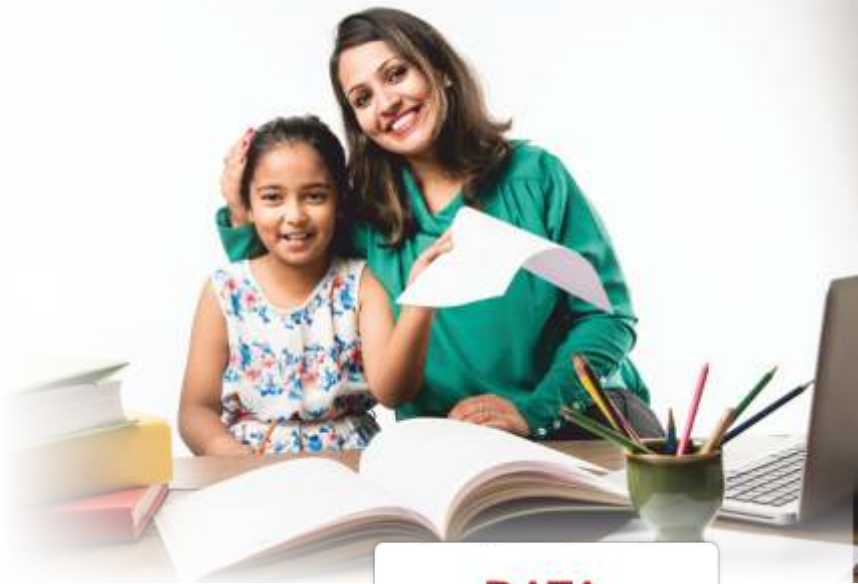
- » Improve AI visibility.
- » Strengthen digital credibility.
- » Respond faster and build trust consistently.

IF YOU ARE NOT IN THE AI SHORTLIST, YOU ARE NOT IN THE DECISION.



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The AI-Powered School Admission Funnel



Old Funnel vs. AI-Powered Funnel

OLD FUNNEL

Push Marketing

School Speaks

One-Way Communication

Information Sharing

Delayed Responses

More Enquiries

AI-POWERED FUNNEL

Pull Discovery

Parents Research

Two-Way Engagement

Personalized Answers

Real-Time Conversations

Better Admissions

THE MODERN PARENT JOURNEY



DATA SNAPSHOT



+40-60%*

Increase in parent research before enquiry



15-30%

Higher conversion rates for schools with strong digital credibility



2-3X

More schools considered before making a decision

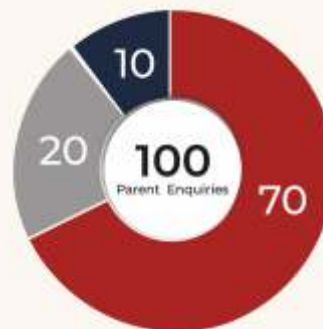
More interest ≠ more admissions

WHERE ADMISSION FUNNELS BREAK

- Slow Response to Enquiries
- Generic Communication
- Lack of Trust Signals
- Weak Follow-Up Systems
- Inconsistent Parent Experience

WHY THIS IS HAPPENING

- Parents Explore More Options
- Parents Validate Before Contacting
- Longer Decision Journeys
- Greater Reliance on Digital Trust Signals



- 70 Research but never engage
- 20 Drop due to lack of trust
- 10 Become serious admission prospects



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THE ADMISSION FUNNEL IS NO LONGER A PIPELINE. IT IS A PARENT DECISION SYSTEM.

The New Digital *Attention* *Span*

Parents don't consume school information anymore.

They evaluate it.

The 8-Second Reality

Today's parents live in a world of endless information, constant notifications, and unlimited school choices.

Their challenge is no longer finding schools.

It's deciding which schools deserve attention.

Every website, advertisement, brochure, social media post, or admission message enters an instant evaluation process:

- » Is this relevant to my child?
- » Can I trust this information?
- » Is this school different from others?
- » Is this worth my time?

THREE BEHAVIOURS DEFINING MODERN PARENT DECISIONS

01-FIRST IMPRESSIONS DECIDE ENGAGEMENT

Parents don't gradually become interested.

- » Website quality » School presentation
- » Communication style » Online presence

02-CLARITY OUTPERFORMS INFORMATION

More information doesn't always create more engagement.

- » What makes this school different?
- » Is this the right fit? » Will my child thrive here?

03-TRUST IS BUILT BEFORE ENQUIRY

Most parents form opinions long before contacting a school.

Reviews, parent experiences, testimonials, student outcomes, and school reputation often influence perception before the first enquiry is made.

WHAT'S CHANGING?

70%

of parents decide within seconds whether to continue exploring a school or move on.

60%

of parents leave school websites that are confusing, outdated, or difficult to navigate.

82%

Prefer clear, visual, and easy-to-understand communication.

78%

Trust parent reviews and recommendations before school marketing messages.

PARENT DECISION SNAPSHOT

8

Seconds

Average time taken to decide whether a school deserves further attention.

2.5×

Higher engagement with visual, mobile-friendly school content.

95%

of parents research schools online before making contact.

72%

trust recommendations from existing parents more than advertising.



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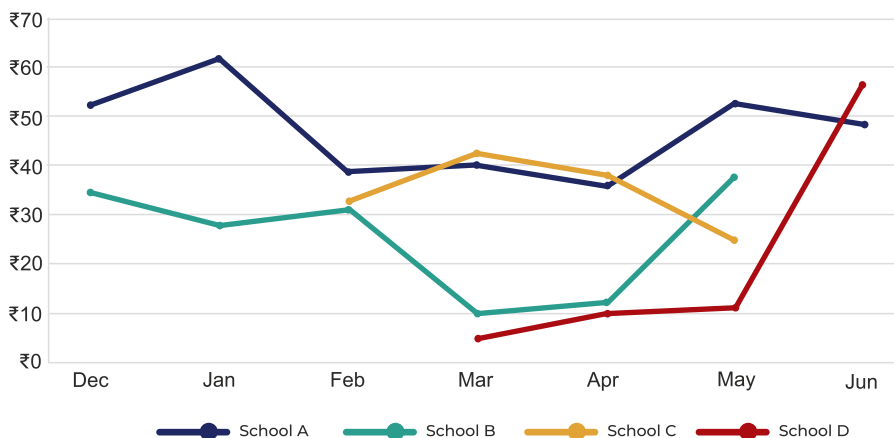
PARENTS DON'T REWARD SCHOOLS THAT COMMUNICATE MORE.
THEY REWARD SCHOOLS THAT COMMUNICATE CLEARLY, CONSISTENTLY, AND CREDIBLY.

PAYING MORE REACHING LESS

Across the analysed campaigns, schools investing similar budgets experienced rising acquisition costs and reduced enquiry efficiency.



CPC Trend : 2025 vs 2026



EXECUTIVE FINDINGS

01 | RISING MEDIA COSTS

Advertising competition has pushed CPC up by 88.9%, reducing the buying power of the same marketing budget.

02 | LOWER ENQUIRY VOLUME

Despite similar investment, enquiry generation has declined by 46.3%, signalling reduced campaign efficiency.

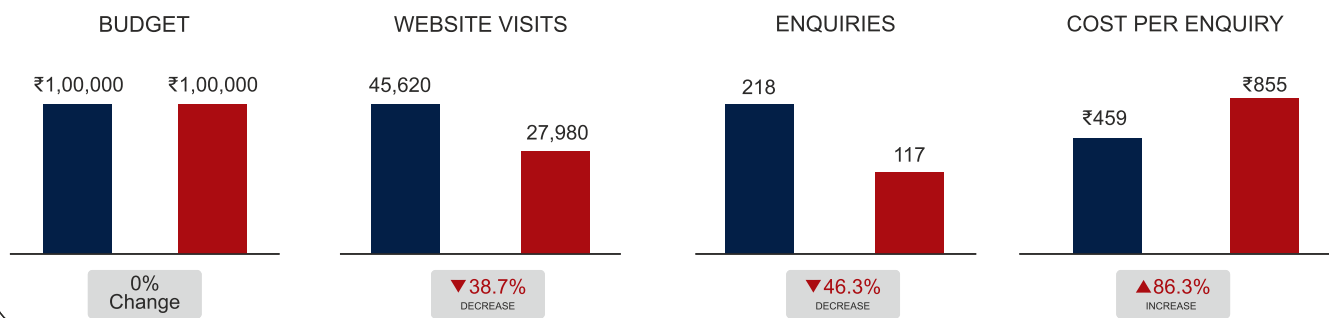
03 | COST PER ENQUIRY IS INCREASING

Schools are spending substantially more to generate each admission enquiry, putting greater pressure on marketing ROI.

04 | PARENT BEHAVIOUR HAS CHANGED

Parents now research, compare and validate schools across more digital touch points before making contact.

SAME BUDGET. DIFFERENT RESULTS.



Research Note: Findings reflect observed trends across analysed campaigns and may vary by school.

WHEN EVERY ENQUIRY COSTS MORE,
RELEVANCE BECOMES YOUR MOST VALUABLE
ADVANTAGE



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EDU VOICE FEATURE

A SCHOOL ISN'T BUILT IN A YEAR. IT'S BUILT OVER GENERATIONS.

What **25+ Years** of Educational Leadership
Teaches Us About Building Institutions That Last.

THE BELIEF THAT SHAPED EVERYTHING

"Education is not about giving degrees.
It is about transforming lives."

For **Dr. Keshav Badaya**, building institutions was never about expansion alone. It was about creating environments where students could grow academically, personally, and professionally.

THE REAL TIMELINE OF A GREAT SCHOOL

Many People Expect Quick Growth.
Schools Don't Work That Way.

A child entering Grade 1 reaches Grade **12 after twelve years**. Add years of trust-building, alumni success, and community reputation, and a truly respected school often takes **15-17 years** to establish.



THE FOUNDATION OF PARENT TRUST

Parents don't choose schools because of buildings alone.

They look for:

- Strong Quality
- Faculty Retention
- Operational Discipline
- Consistent Standards

Trust is earned when schools consistently deliver on these expectations.

"If you want to survive
in education, keep doing good
work. It takes time, but trust
eventually follows."

FEATURING
DR. KESHAV BADAYA
Chairman, St. Wilfred's Group

THE NON- NEGOTIABLES

According to Dr. Badaya, schools should never compromise on:

They look for:

- Teacher Quality
- Faculty Retention
- Student Development
- Operational Discipline

Because consistency creates credibility.
And credibility creates growth.

WATCH THE FULL EDUVOICE PODCAST

Scan the QR Code to hear the complete conversation with **Dr. Keshav Badaya** on employability, industry-integrated learning, student expectations, and the future of management education.



SHARE YOUR STORY

Have an insight, innovation, or leadership journey worth sharing? EDU Voice features conversations with Chairmen, Vice-Chancellors, Directors, Founders, and education leaders shaping the future of education.

- Connect with the Mediagarh team to be featured in an upcoming EDU Voice conversation.

STRATEGY + TRUST = ADMISSION GROWTH



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CASE INSIGHT

ST. WILFRED'S SCHOOL

From Parent Enquiries to Admissions Growth

St. Wilfred's School was generating consistent admission interest, but enquiries were arriving through multiple channels with varying quality and intent.

While awareness existed, the challenge was creating a structured admission journey that could convert interest into meaningful admission opportunities.

The goal wasn't simply generating more leads. It was identifying, nurturing, and converting the right parents.



WHAT WAS HAPPENING

Despite Strong Interest

Multiple lead sources
creating fragmented parent
experiences

Inconsistent lead
quality across different
channels

Follow-up dependencies
slowing admission
progress

Limited visibility
into high-intent
parents

THE STRATEGY

Instead of focusing on individual channels, the admission process was rebuilt around the parent journey.

Three Key Changes Drove The Results

- › Centralised lead tracking across channels
- › Faster parent follow-up and engagement
- › Focus on high-intent admission opportunities
- › Better visibility into admission-stage movement

THE IMPACT

2,700+
Parent Enquiries
Generated

300+
Admissions
Secured

THE ADMISSION JOURNEY

Meta Ads
1,600+
Parent Enquiries

Google Search
700+
High-Intent Enquiries

Direct Calls
400+
Parent Conversations

**UNIFIED
ADMISSION
FUNNEL**

KEY INSIGHT

This case highlights a simple but important reality:

- › Awareness alone doesn't drive admissions
- › Not all enquiries carry equal intent
- › Speed improves parent confidence
- › Structure improves conversion

ADMISSIONS NEED TRUST, NOT JUST LEADS.



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MEDIAGARH INTELLIGENCE

EduVoice Briefing • Admissions Performance Series

The Admissions Ad Economy:

What ₹30 Lakh of School Google Ads Spend Actually Buys

Analysis of school Google Ads campaigns reveals that ad spend alone doesn't drive admissions. Campaign strategy and parent intent make the difference.



₹30L

AD SPEND

1,542

TOTAL LEADS

97%

SEARCH LEADS

87%

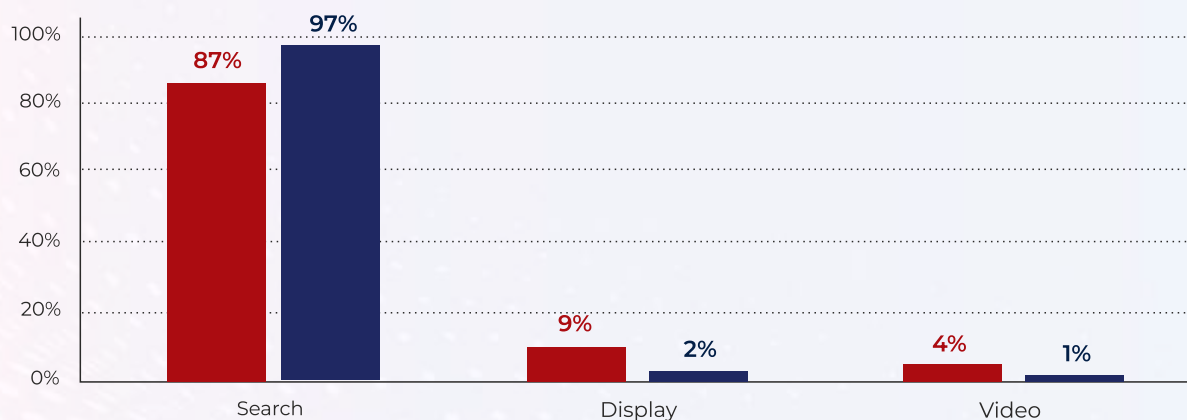
SEARCH SPEND

SEARCH DRIVES ADMISSIONS

Parents searching for schools already have admission intent.

Where the Budget Goes vs Where the Leads Come From

■ Ad Spend (%) ■ Leads (%)



Key Finding 01

Search Drives Admissions

- » Parents searching for schools already have admission intent.
- » Although Search consumed 87% of ad spend, it generated 97% of total admission leads.
- » High-intent campaigns consistently delivered the strongest admission performance.

Key Finding 02

Budget Allocation Matters

- » Display and Video support awareness but contribute fewer admission enquiries.
- » Efficient budget allocation has a greater impact than increasing overall spend.
- » Prioritising intent-driven campaigns improves enquiry quality and marketing efficiency.

Source: Mediagarh Campaign Intelligence (2025–2026). Findings are based on analysed school campaigns.

BETTER BUDGET ALLOCATION DELIVERS BETTER OUTCOMES



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₹53 LAKH. TWO PLATFORMS. ONE FUNNEL

How Google Ads and Meta Work Together to Drive School Growth

Building on the Google Ads findings, this section examines the complete ₹53 lakh Google Ads + Meta campaign dataset to understand how both platforms contribute to admission growth.

Field Report | Jan–Jun 2026 | Multiple School Accounts | Google Ads + Meta

CPL COMPARISON

Average Cost Per Lead



Note: CPL = Cost Per Lead (in ₹)

Key Observation:

Meta improved lead efficiency, while Google Search captured stronger demand.



₹23L
Meta Ad Spend



₹804
Avg Meta CPL
Cost Per Lead



₹1,955
Avg Google CPL
Cost Per Lead



81M+
Impressions
Across Platforms

THE ADMISSION PLAYBOOK

META

Create Awareness

Build visibility and introduce your school to prospective families.

GOOGLE SEARCH

Capture Active Demand

Connect with parents already searching for school admissions.

REMARKETING

Reinforce Consideration

Stay visible to interested families across multiple touch points.

ADMISSION CONVERSION

Convert Enquiries

Support timely follow-ups to maximise admission opportunities.

Research Note: Findings are based on anonymised campaign analysis conducted by Mediagarh. Results represent observed trends and may vary by campaign objectives, budgets, and institutions.

GROWTH COMES FROM AN INTEGRATED ADMISSION STRATEGY.



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HOW MANY **ADMISSIONS** DID YOUR SCHOOL LOSE LAST YEAR?

ADMISSION
TARGET

250

STUDENTS

ADMISSIONS
SECURED

100

STUDENTS

UNFILLED
SEATS

150

STUDENTS

150 LOST ADMISSIONS

₹2.25 CRORE

POTENTIAL ANNUAL REVENUE

THE REAL CHALLENGE

- » Parents are already looking for schools.
- » The real question is whether your school stands out when they compare their options.

HOW MEDIAGARH HELPS SCHOOLS

- » Generate qualified admission enquiries
- » Improve Google & Meta campaign performance
- » Increase enquiry-to-admission conversion
- » Strengthen digital trust and reputation
- » Build a predictable admission funnel

EVERY UNFILLED SEAT IS A MISSED OPPORTUNITY.

Book Your Admission Growth Strategy Session



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Book a Free Admission Growth Audit

THE FUTURE OF **SCHOOL GROWTH**
HAS ALREADY BEGUN

INDIA'S **SCHOOL** **GROWTH** PARTNER

TRUSTED BY EDUCATION LEADERS

150+ | 80,000+

EDUCATION BRANDS

ADMISSIONS INFLUENCED

BUILDING BRANDS. DRIVING ADMISSIONS.

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