

Application Trends Survey 2002

In June, 2002, the Graduate Management Admission Council® (GMAC) conducted an Application Trends Survey on-line. An invitation to participate was sent via e-mail to 138 graduate business schools. The results present responses from the 76 schools that completed the survey.

The survey tracks the percent increase in the number of applicants seeking enrollment in the 2002-03 school year, compared to the number who sought enrollment in the 2001-02 school year. Results are grouped by program type and school type. Only 8 non-U.S. schools participated in the survey; therefore, results will not be displayed by world region.

Besides general application trends, the survey also asked questions regarding

- changes in female and international application volume
- historical and current yield trends
- special outreach
- Web-based applications
- deposits and deferrals

The majority of the schools indicated an increase in applications over last year. It is likely that there are several factors driving this trend. Key factors include:

The economy is weak (worldwide):

The impact of a weak economy and financially unstable companies may be driving some prospective students into the MBA applicant pool. For others who had already planned to attend business school, the weak economy may have simply accelerated their decision process.

According to results from the Global MBA™ survey, nearly three-fourths of MBA students say their MBA degree is increasing their career options by allowing them to switch industries and/or to diversify the types of organizations with which they can seek employment. Three-fifths or more say it (the MBA) is increasing their career options by allowing them to expand the number of organizations with which they can seek employment or allowing them to make a career transition.

Increased competition:

Business schools experienced a surge of applications for their early deadlines. This may be due in part to the perception of significantly increased competition this application season. The media heavily reported on the “rush back to b-school” theme—literally hundreds of articles were published world-wide within a three-month period. As a result, applications soared; however, it was not only due to an increase in the number of applicants, but also attributable to changes in applicant behavior. When comparing the applicant behavior of this year’s MBA Forums® attendees to last year’s, it clear that applicants are less likely to apply only to one school (20 percent compared to 24 percent of those last year).

Application Trends Survey 2002

Special Outreach:

Another factor in the increased application volume was the amount of special outreach a school did. Out of those surveyed in the Application Trends Survey, 68 percent did some form of special outreach. Women and minorities (U.S.) were targeted the most.

Special Outreach	Count	Col %
Did not do any special outreach	24	32%
Minorities (U.S.)	37	71%
Women	28	54%
International applicants	15	29%
Occupational specialists	7	14%
Other	1	2%
Total	52	100.00%

*By Program Type

Number of responses	
Full-time programs	74
Part-time programs	51
Executive programs	48

**Due to rounding not all tables will equal 100%*

Overall, full-time programs were more likely to indicate a greater increase in applications than part-time and executive programs.

Program Type	Up Significantly (+21%)
Full-time	34%
Part-time	16%
Executive	7%

However, applications were up regardless of program type.

Change in Application Volume (Collapsed)		Count	Col %
Change in Full-time Application Volume	Up	62	84%
	Flat	7	10%
	Down	5	7%
Total		74	100%
Change in Part-time Application Volume	Up	27	60%
	Flat	18	40%
	Total	45	100%
Change in Executive Application Volume	Up	20	57%
	Flat	11	31%
	Down	4	11%
Total		35	100%

Application Trends Survey 2002

Change in international application volume for 2001-02	Full-time	Part-time	Executive
Up Significantly (21+)	17%	14%	21%
Up Moderately (20%-11%)	17%	16%	23%
Up Slightly (10%-1%)	24%	26%	21%
Flat	13%	12%	9%
Down Slightly (1%-10%)	15%	16%	13%
Down Moderately (11%-20%)	6%	6%	2%
Down Significantly (21%+)	10%	10%	11%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Change in female application volume for 2001-02	Full-time	Part-time	Executive
Up Significantly (21+)	10%	11%	11%
Up Moderately (20%-11%)	4%	6%	4%
Up Slightly (10%-1%)	32%	28%	33%
Flat	30%	36%	24%
Down Slightly (1%-10%)	15%	15%	13%
Down Moderately (11%-20%)	6%	2%	9%
Down Significantly (21%+)	3%	2%	4%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Full-Time Yield Trends	Historic Yield	This Year's Yield	Variance
More than 80%	4%	6%	2%
79% to 60%	26%	26%	0%
59% to 50%	38%	46%	8%
49% to 40%	30%	19%	-11%
39% to 20%	1%	3%	2%
Total	100%	100%	

Part-Time Yield Trends	Historic Yield	This Year's Yield	Variance
More than 80%	47%	47%	0%
79% to 60%	40%	38%	-2%
59% to 50%	4%	9%	5%
49% to 40%	7%	2%	-5%
39% to 20%	2%	4%	2%
Total	100%	100%	

Application Trends Survey 2002

*Executive Yield Trends	This Year's Yield
More than 80%	61%
79% to 60%	32%
59% to 50%	4%
49% to 40%	4%
39% to 20%	0%
Total	100%

*Because a majority of the Executive programs indicated that they did not have a five-year range to determine historic yield, this is not shown in the table.

Deposits and Deferrals by Program Type		Full-time	Part-time	Executive
Deposits are:	Above the level of last year	51%	52%	54%
	About the same as last year	42%	38%	44%
	Below the level of last year	8%	10%	2%
	Total	100%	100%	100%
Deferral requests are:	Above the level of last year	8%	10%	13%
	About the same as last year	61%	63%	56%
	Below the level of last year	19%	16%	15%
	Do not offer deferrals	12%	12%	17%
	Total	100%	100%	100%

***By School Type**

Private schools indicated higher percentage increase than public schools in their full-time programs. The reverse was true for part-time programs; public school indicated higher percentage increase than private schools. Public schools were more likely to indicate a decrease in their executive programs than private schools. There were few differences between school types with regard to their international applications. Private schools were more likely to indicate a decrease in female applications than public schools.

**Due to rounding not all tables will equal 100%*

Number of full-time program applications received in 2001-02 compare with last year	Private	Public
Up Significantly (21+)	47%	24%
Up Moderately (20%-11%)	19%	29%
Up Slightly (10%-1%)	16%	33%
Flat	3%	2%
Down Slightly (1%-10%)	6%	7%
Down Moderately (11%-20%)	6%	2%
Down Significantly (21%+)	3%	2%
Total	100%	100%

Application Trends Survey 2002

Number of part-time program applications received in 2001-02 compare with last year	Private	Public
Up Significantly (21+)	5%	23%
Up Moderately (20%-11%)	21%	23%
Up Slightly (10%-1%)	26%	19%
Flat	32%	19%
Down Slightly (1%-10%)	16%	15%
Total	100%	100%

Deposits and Deferrals by School Type		Private	Public
Deposits are:	Above the level of last year	45%	50%
	About the same as last year	52%	37%
	Below the level of last year	3%	13%
	Total	100%	100%
Deferral requests are:	Above the level of last year	10%	5%
	About the same as last year	66%	58%
	Below the level of last year	14%	21%
	Do not offer deferrals	10%	16%
Total		100%	100%

Number of Executive MBA program applications received in 2001-02 compare with last year	Private	Public
Up Significantly (21+)	12%	6%
Up Moderately (20%-11%)	6%	11%
Up Slightly (10%-1%)	53%	28%
Flat	24%	22%
Down Slightly (1%-10%)	0%	17%
Down Moderately (11%-20%)	0%	11%
Down Significantly (21%+)	6%	6%
Total	100%	100%

Change in international application volume for 2001-2002	Private	Public
Up Significantly (21+)	12%	20%
Up Moderately (20%-11%)	12%	20%
Up Slightly (10%-1%)	24%	23%
Flat	15%	13%
Down Slightly (1%-10%)	18%	13%
Down Moderately (11%-20%)	6%	8%
Down Significantly (21%+)	15%	5%
Total	100%	100%

Application Trends Survey 2002

What was the change in your female application volume?	Private	Public
Up Significantly (21+)	10%	10%
Up Moderately (20%-11%)	3%	5%
Up Slightly (10%-1%)	30%	32%
Flat	27%	37%
Down Slightly (1%-10%)	23%	7%
Down Moderately (11%-20%)	3%	7%
Down Significantly (21%+)	3%	2%
Total	100%	100%