

University and College Physical Plant Resource Priorities and Performance Research: A Data-Driven Multi-Stakeholder Approach

Physical plant operations are critical to the success and vitality of colleges and universities. Prospective students and their parents often make value judgments based on an institution's academic standings and reputation, and on the aesthetics and efficiency of the campus. An effective and visually pleasing campus is also important to other groups, such as alumni, visitors, and corporate partners. Employees also have pride in their work and their surroundings. Diagnostics Plus can help colleges and universities take a data-driven approach to resource and physical plant decisions.

Diagnostics Plus has worked with two clients, Penn State University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, on extensive physical plant stakeholder research which, in turn, has assisted these institutions with better campus-wide decision-making as it pertains to physical plant operations. The research findings provided leadership and management with a better understanding of physical plant resource priorities as defined by multiple stakeholder groups. These stakeholder groups included administrative leadership, academic deans and directors, staff (including physical plant staff), students and others.

Diagnostics Plus' role is not only to help colleges and universities implement and manage the process, but to collect, analyze and make recommendations in the process ... on a long-term basis. For Penn State University, we have conducted this research bi-annually since 1998 and recently finished the fourth effort in 2005.

Our model and experience make it easy to implement. We are a full-service firm in this effort, as we assist with the planning, data collection, and interpretation, analysis, and presentation/communication processes.

Using surveys and interviews, our teams collect data on:

- Stakeholder satisfaction
- Physical plant staff satisfaction
- Attitude and opinion about the campus
- Perception of physical plan staff, their efforts and performance
- Opinion on major construction and renovations and their impact to campus life
- Views on aesthetics, grounds keeping, maintenance, and snow removal
- Customer service ratings and communication
- Performance factors such as turnaround, cleanliness, efficiency and other factors

Our approach analyzes the results by each stakeholder group or segment and produces a comprehensive report on physical plant employee opinion and need, as well as detailed stakeholder reporting.



About Diagnostics Plus

Diagnostics Plus has been providing research services to a wide variety of clients since 1987. The firm conducts market research in the U.S. and internationally, completing over two hundred studies a year.

Our experienced staff of twenty full-time professionals works in project teams with a focus on the timely delivery of accurate data and interpretive reports. In addition, Diagnostics Plus maintains a twenty-five station computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) center and supports technology to conduct web and paper surveys efficiently. The organization supports two experienced focus group moderators with nearly one thousand focus group sessions between them.

Diagnostics Plus provides data processing services including coding, scanning, data entry, data cleaning, cross tabulations (WinCross or SPSS), as well as a wide array of analytic services including choice modeling through a technique called SIMALTO™. Other services include electronic data transfer capabilities, access to a worldwide consulting network and multilingual translations for survey research.

Our current active client list includes such firms as Penn State University, MIT, Duquesne University, University of Cincinnati, Florida International University, Caterpillar, GE Healthcare, McKesson, Danaher Corporation, Thales, Proudfoot Consulting, McKinsey, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and others.

Diagnostics Plus, Inc. has a Dun & Bradstreet rating of 1 [on a five point scale with 1 being good and 5 being poor], which “indicates an overall ‘strong’ credit appraisal.” Diagnostics Plus, Inc. had 2005 revenues of more than three million dollars with no debt.

Diagnostics Plus is a member of the Market Research Association (MRA), Council of American Survey Research Organizations (CASRO), Product Development and Management Association (PDMA), Council for Marketing and Opinion Research (CMOR) and the American Society for Quality (ASQ).