# OPM Market Insights

A quarterly update on the Online Program Management (OPM) market in the United States.

VALIDATED INSIGHTS INC

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# About OPM Market Insights

Every month numerous data sources are updated and reports are published that provide key insights into what the future holds for higher education, but the difficult part is mining all of the information.

VI's market research team is now producing quarterly reports focused on different aspects of the higher education market. Our team combs through the most reliable and recently updated information sources, uncovers the most valuable data points, provides historical and comparative context, and ultimately provides actionable insights and recommendations.

This OPM Market Insights curates information most pertinent to those interested in the Online Program Management (OPM) market. The report also leverages proprietary data to provide a deeper look at this evolving market.

One key, distinguishing feature of this recurring report is said proprietary data tracking the OPM market. Our expertly curated and maintained data provides an unparalleled level of access into the activities of colleges and universities and their tools and service providers that are enabling their online efforts.

# Summary

**The $5B OPM industry in the United States has seen partnership activities decline.**

➔ From 2021 to 2024, new OPM partnership activity declined 47.4%. More recently, from 2023 to 2024 alone, new partnership activity declined 42.1%.

**Fee-for-Service is now the norm in the OPM market.**

➔ From 2014 to 2024, the share of new OPM partnerships established that were fee-for-service partnerships grew from 12% to 58%. Furthermore, while new OPM partnership activity in aggregate declined, new partnership activity of the fee-for-service variety actually grew 2.2% from 2023 to 2024.

**There are new market leaders in the OPM market.**

➔ Owing to consolidation efforts and continued growth, Risepoint (formerly Academic Partnerships) is now the largest OPM in the United States, representing 11.9% of active partnerships and 30.5% of active OPM-supported programs.
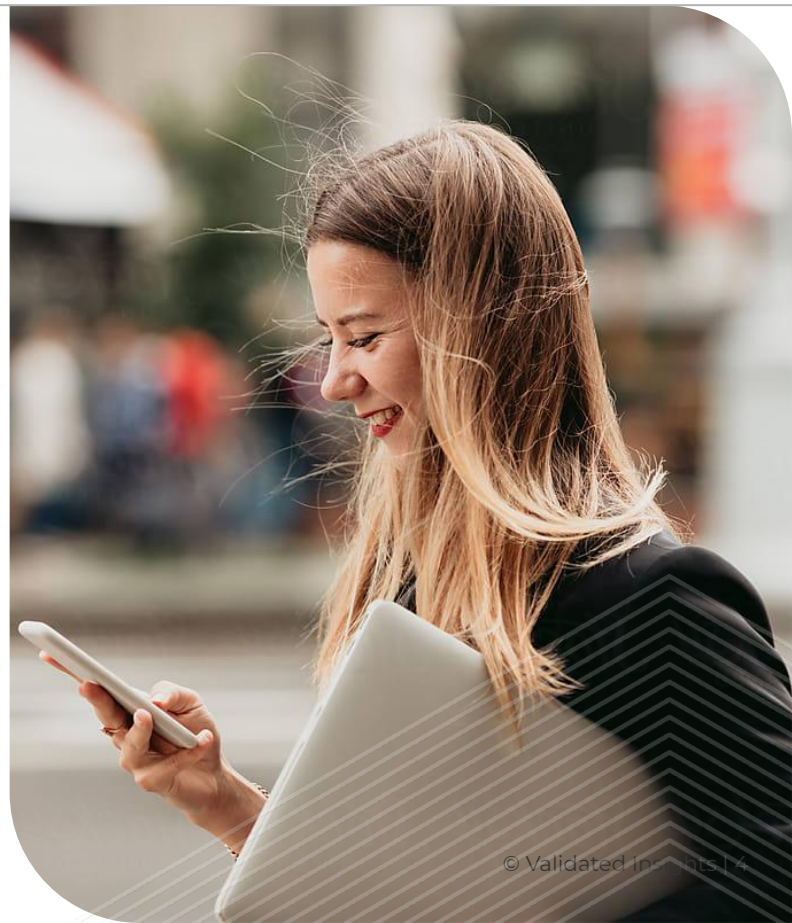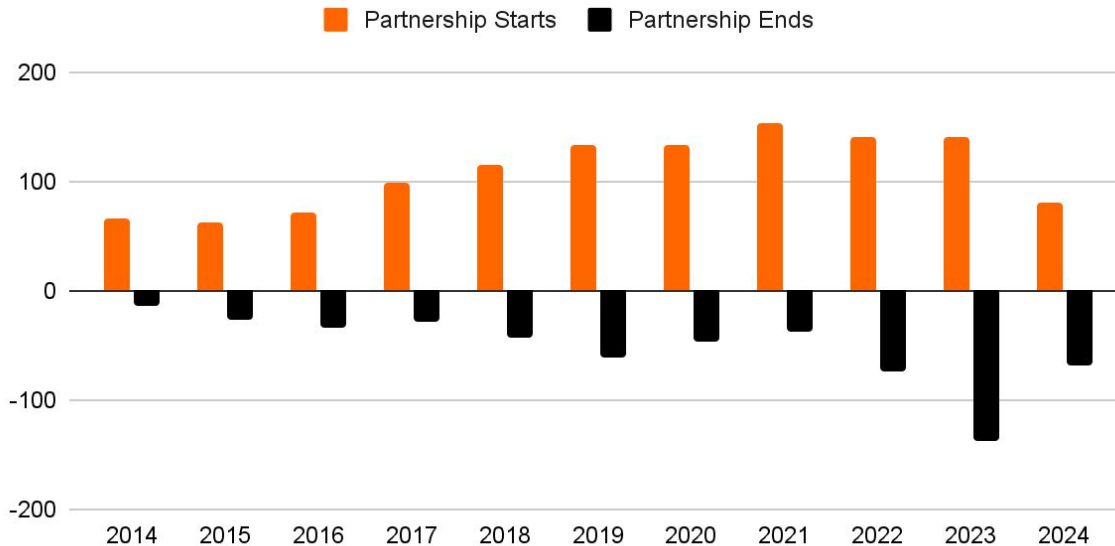
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# Partnership Activity

# New OPM partnership starts and partnership ends declined in 2024

From 2023 to 2024, new OPM partnership activity in the United States declined 42.1% and partnership ends declined 50.7%.

## OPM Partnerships Established and Ended in United States by Year (2014 to 2024)

■ Partnership Starts  ■ Partnership Ends



## Key Takeaways

➔ New OPM partnership activity declined 42.1% in 2024, down to just 81 - roughly in line with 2016/17 levels.

➔ OPM partnership ends/terminations also declined in 2024, declining 50.7%.
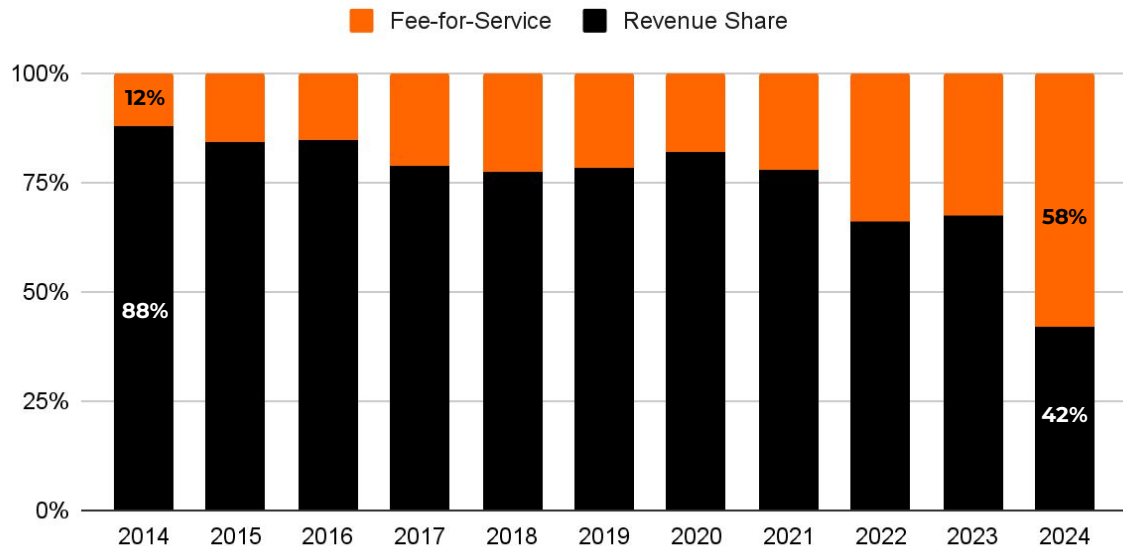
Source(s): Validated Insights

# Fee-for-Service is now the norm for OPM partnerships

From 2014 to 2024, the share of new OPM partnerships established in a given year that were fee-for-service partnerships grew from 12% to 58%.

## Share of New OPM Partnerships in United States by Revenue Strategy and Year (2014 to 2024)

Legend: ■ Fee-for-Service ■ Revenue Share



Chart data:
- 2014: Revenue Share 88%, Fee-for-Service 12%
- 2015: ~84% / ~16%
- 2016: ~85% / ~15%
- 2017: ~79% / ~21%
- 2018: ~77% / ~23%
- 2019: ~78% / ~22%
- 2020: ~82% / ~18%
- 2021: ~78% / ~22%
- 2022: ~66% / ~34%
- 2023: ~67% / ~33%
- 2024: Revenue Share 42%, Fee-for-Service 58%

## Key Takeaways

→ It appeared as if the fee-for-service model had levelled-off in terms of saturation at about 25% (roughly the rate observed from 2017 to 2023).

→ 2024 saw a drastic change, however, and the fee-for-service model grew to 58% of new partnership activity in the United States.

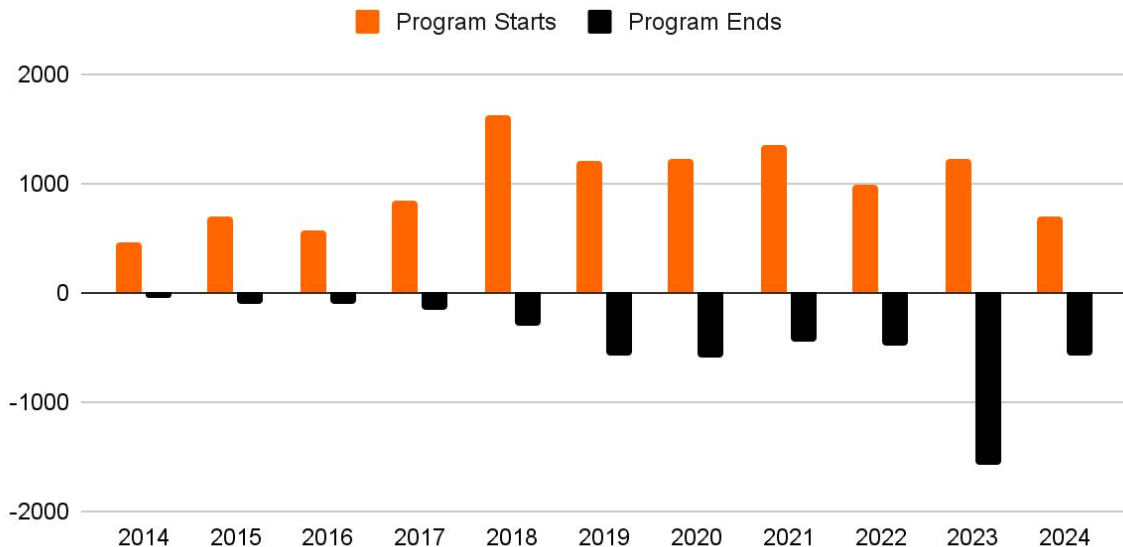Source(s): Validated Insights

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# Partnership Activity

# New OPM-supported program launches declined 43.4% in 2024

New OPM-supported partnership starts declined 43.4% in 2024, but OPM-supported program ends declined 64.1%.

## OPM-Supported Program Starts and Ends in the United States by Year (2014 to 2024)



■ Program Starts  ■ Program Ends

## Key Takeaways

→ In 2024, the number of programs that were started or became part of an OPM partnership declined to 697, almost exactly the same amount as in 2015.

→ Due to industry consolidation, businesses exiting the market, regulatory risks, and the end of emergency remote learning-related partnerships, the number of OPM-supported program ends peaked in 2023 at 1,575.

Source(s): Validated Insights

# The MBA is the leading program supported by OPMs

3.1% of all OPM-supported programs in the United States are master's-level Business Administration programs (including MBAs).

## Top Ten Most Popular OPM Supported Programs in the United States (2024)
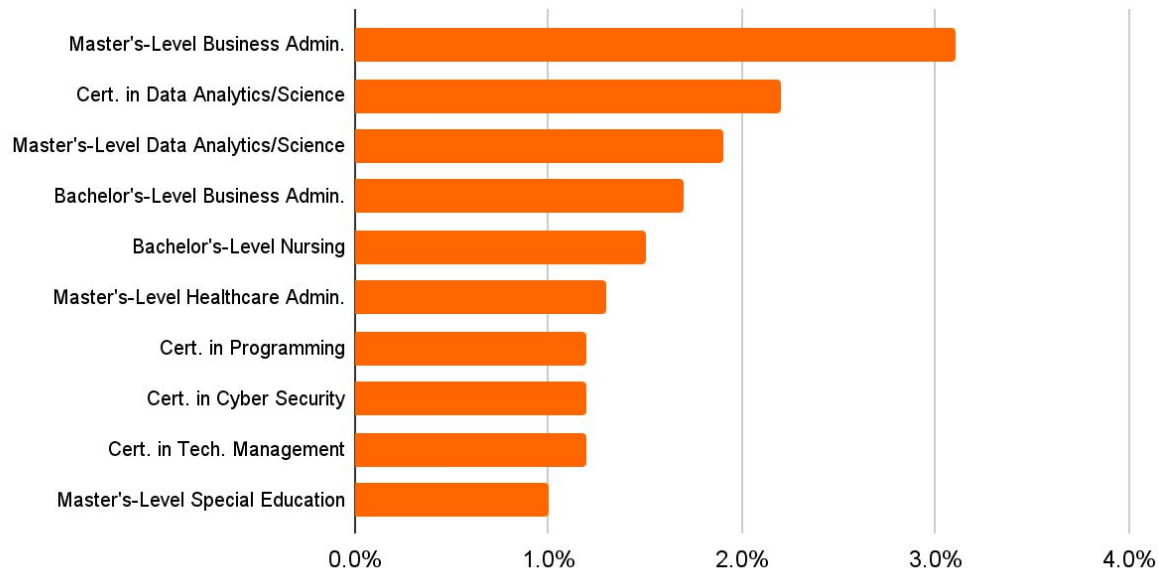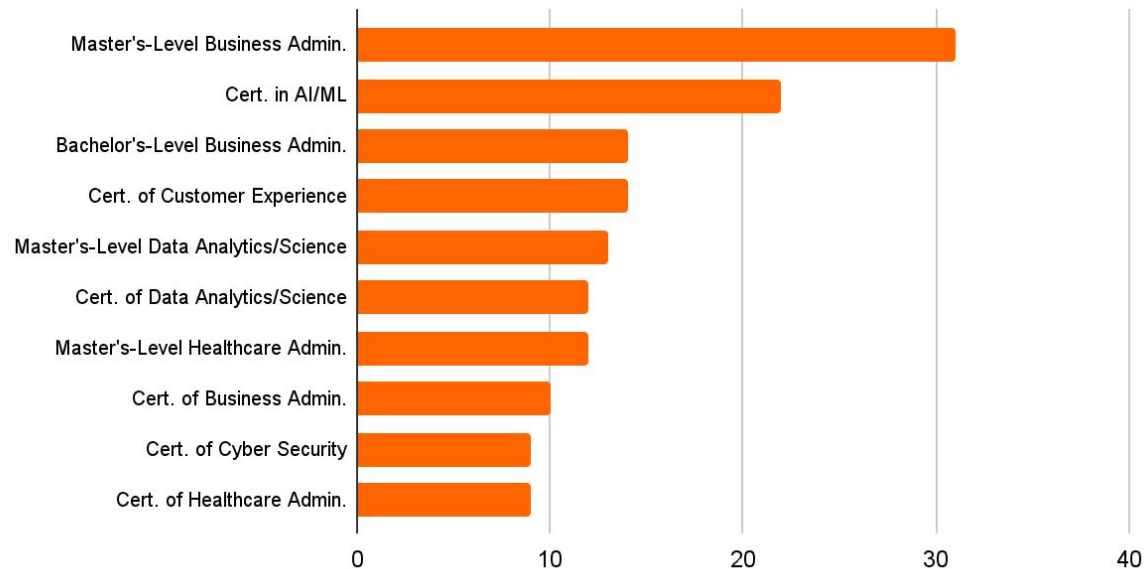


## Key Takeaways

➔ Unsurprisingly, the general MBA (and related) is the leading program supported by OPMs in the United States.

➔ OPMs have a clear affinity for supporting Data Analytics/Data Science programs, particularly at the certificate and master's degree level.

# The MBA was the most launched program by OPMs in 2024

Unsurprisingly, the MBA (and related) was the most launched program within university-OPM partnerships in the United States in 2024.

## Top Ten Online Programs Launched within OPM Partnerships in the United States (2024)



### Key Takeaways

➔ On top of already being the most frequently supported online program by OPMs, the MBA was also the most launched online program within university-OPM partnerships in the United States in 2024.

➔ The second most popular program launched within university-OPM partnerships in the United States in 2024 was a certificate of AI/ML.

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# Partnership Activity

# OPM Market Map, February 2025

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## Traditional Market Leaders

2U · Risepoint · Keypath EDUCATION

## University-as-OPMs

GCE GRAND CANYON EDUCATION · KAPLAN · ASU EdPlus Arizona State University

## OPMs for International Expansion

BEACON EDUCATION 彼岸教育 · AVENU · UNICAF
scala LEARNING · GLX GLOBAL LEARNING EXCHANGE · 至道教育 ZHIDAO EDUCATION

## Global Platform-Based Providers

coursera · Great Learning · upGrad · EMERITUS
Future Learn · edX · getsmarter · simplilearn · NORTHWEST EXECUTIVE EDUCATION

## Middle Market and Beyond

BOUNDLESS LEARNING · everspring · wisewire · CapEd · Relearnit · Elsmere Education
NOODLE · BISK · allcampus · EMERGE EDUCATION · INTERLEARN · APOLLIDON LEARNING

## Education-as-a-Benefit (EaaB Providers)

GOEducate The Opportunity Marketplace · Bright Horizons
Unmudl Skills-to-Jobs Marketplace · SKILLSWAVE
Guild · InStride

## Technology/Instruction Specialists

iDesign · Anthology · insendi A StudyGroup Company
Collegis EDUCATION · NovoEd · ALCHEMY
Studion · amesite · the babb group edusity
sixredmarbles

## Marketing and Enrollment Specialists

CARNEGIE · EDUCATION DYNAMICS
archer · mindmax
RUFFALO NOEL LEVITZ · EAB

## Vertical-Specific Providers

CAP LAW ONLINE · YELLOWBRICK
smashcut · OpusVi Healthcare Workforce Development
ORBIS EDUCATION · EIM Evidence In Motion
BloomBoard

## Alternative Models

CINTANA EDUCATION · MINERVA · HBCUv · STUDIO ENTERPRISE · core education

## Other Short Course Providers

Focus EduSolutions Revolutionizing Workforce-Readiness · execonline · Z school · global alumni -excellence or nothing-
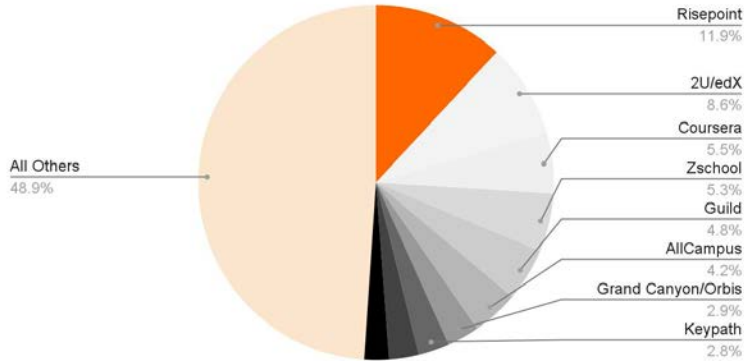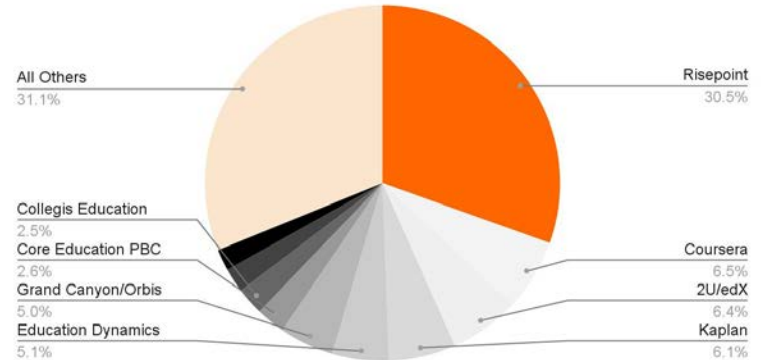
# The ten largest OPMs have 51% of partnerships

In addition to having comprising 51% of partnerships, the ten largest OPMs comprise 69% of OPM-supported programs.

## Top Ten OPMs in the United States by Number of Partnerships



| | |
|---|---|
| Risepoint | 11.9% |
| 2U/edX | 8.6% |
| Coursera | 5.5% |
| Zschool | 5.3% |
| Guild | 4.8% |
| AllCampus | 4.2% |
| Grand Canyon/Orbis | 2.9% |
| Keypath | 2.8% |
| All Others | 48.9% |

## Top Ten OPMs in the United States by Number of Programs Supported



| | |
|---|---|
| Risepoint | 30.5% |
| Coursera | 6.5% |
| 2U/edX | 6.4% |
| Kaplan | 6.1% |
| All Others | 31.1% |
| Collegis Education | 2.5% |
| Core Education PBC | 2.6% |
| Grand Canyon/Orbis | 5.0% |
| Education Dynamics | 5.1% |

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# Regulatory Landscape

## OPMs now "in the clear"

After years of facing existential threats in the form of regulations, the OPM industry in the United States has emerged largely unscathed.

After a few years of facing potential regulations that could either completely dismantle or significantly hamper OPM providers, it appears that the industry is now clear from that threat.

On January 14, 2025, the Department of Education released a "Dear Colleague" letter noting that universities could be subject to penalties if their external service providers mislead students. In the letter, the Department of Education elucidated on what it meant by "mislead students," specifically mentioning:

- Admissions representatives employed by third-party service providers cannot state that they are employed by the institution when they are indeed employed by the service provider,
- Admissions representatives employed by third-party service providers cannot position themselves as "academic advisors" or "counselors"
- Institutions cannot position their online program as "the same as" their campus-based program.

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# Appendix and Sources

# Sources

[1] Schwartz, Natalie. "Misrepresentations by OPMs Could Land Colleges in Trouble, Education Department Says". Higher Ed Dive. January 16, 2025. https://www.highereddive.com/news/opm-misrepresentations-education-department-guidance/737637/

[2] "Notice of Interpretation Regarding Misrepresentations by Third-Party Service Providers Engaged by an Institution of Higher Education". U.S. Department of Education - Office of Postsecondary Education. January 14, 2025. https://www.ed.gov/media/document/notice-of-interpretation-misrepresentation