

Marketing Checklist & Tips for Schools

I. Marketing/Development Plan

___ Mission/Vision of Marketing developed

i. Set Your Goals:

___ Marketing Plan outlined with specific goals and timeline for each

- a. Publications
- b. Website maintenance/updates
- c. Social Media updates
- d. Parent/Community Outreach
- e. Student Outreach

___ Goals for Enrollment

- a. By grade level
- b. Total Enrollment

___ Goals for Retention

- a. By transition grade
- b. Grade level

___ Goals for Admission of New Students

- a. Inquiries
- b. Campus Visits
- c. Applications
- d. Deposits
- e. New Students

___ Goals for Enrollment Activities

- a. Phone calls
- b. Emails
- c. Campus visits
- d. Networking contacts
- e. Parents contacts
- f. Feeder school and church contacts

*Tools to assist in goal achievement:

- a. Data management system (or in-house system) to track your progress with each goal

**Tracking your data for each goal will be your greatest asset in determining what is working and what needs to change. Follow-up systems should be put in place and consistently implemented and updated for all events that involve parents and students (current or prospective).

II. Marketing Tips

*Top two ways of marketing:

1. Word of Mouth
2. Website

i. Word of Mouth: People to Involve

- a. Staff committed to student recruitment
- b. Parent Ambassador Program (include in your admissions package a list of your parent ambassadors with their child's grade level and phone number for testimonials and questions)
 1. Have parents or students present tours of campus
 2. Have parents of enrolled students calling and/or writing personal notes to prospective parents and welcoming them to your school
 3. Have parents of enrolled students calling enrolled families and asking them to provide names and addresses of those who may be interested in your school.
 4. Have a parent of enrolled students run a school blog
 - a) Share student, faculty and alumni stories
 - b) Share how your school is achieving its mission
 - c) Provide educational expertise on important and timely issues
- c. Real Estate Agents
 1. Promote their business in exchange for them to promote your school and community

ii. Website

a. Key Elements of Website Design

1. Brand: It is important to convey a strong brand for your school – including your logo, colors, and tagline
2. Photos: Large, professional photos on the homepage will draw the visitor to your school.
3. Content: Dynamic content and a compelling message is important to keep users returning to your school's website.

*Make sure your site has a mobile version

b. SEO Strategies

1. Where does your school come up on a web search?

III. Enrollment marketing ideas:

- i. **Friend Day:** Host a special "friends" day for current students to invite their friends to spend the day with them at your school.
- ii. **Social Media Contest:** Challenge your students to create a one-minute video to "sell" your school; winners are posted on website/social media and reward given
- iii. **Info Night:**
Invite families in the community to learn more about your school and what it offers
Record who attended:
 - Info night survey cards: detailing the attendee information and how they heard about your school and the info night

- iv. **Target Feeder Schools Flyer:** Locate the schools in your area that would be listed as a feeder school. Send marketing flyers to those schools, informing them of shadow days, info nights, coffee days, etc. to experience the community at your school first-hand.
- v. **Student Shadowing:** Prospective students are able to shadow currently enrolled students in their grade level for a day/part of a day to experience the culture and model of the school.
 - a. Be sure to have the prospective student fill out a shadow day survey. This should address:
 1. The grade they are currently in
 2. School they currently attend
 3. How they heard about the shadow program
 4. Where they are in the application process
 5. Rate their shadow day experience
 6. Suggestions for improving shadow day
 7. What they enjoyed most about shadow day
 8. Would they recommend shadow day to other prospective students?
 9. If they do not plan on attending (the school), please indicate why

IV. Retention Marketing Ideas:

- i. **Student shadowing:** lower grades will shadow the upper grades for better understanding of upcoming transition.
- ii. **Volunteer student Leaders:** Older students participate in younger students classes (PE, Art, etc.) bringing some of their own pieces or ideas to interact with younger students. Time for questions is allotted.
- iii. **Dollar Days:** Offered to those families not attending the school, dollar sports games (coupons) to check out athletic teams and school spirit.
- iv. **Student highlights bulletin board/wall:** Placed in the hallway or office of school building, where a school tour would walk by, spotlighting achievements of students, promoting the schools character education.
- v. **Teacher Swap:** Having teachers from one grade above swap with one grade below to allow the younger grades a chance to make connections with higher grade level teachers. The teachers who come in will make sure to have a “wow” presentation of the days’ subject matter—like a cool science demo, etc.
- vi. **Share your stories:** School Leader, Administrators, Teachers, Parents, Students: online, newsletter, blog, website, email blast, video, meetings, in-person etc.

V. Things to Consider

- i. **Social Media:** what are your goals for posting
- ii. **Ratings:** How are your ratings/reviews on google/yelp/other online review sites and is your information at least listed on the US News and Newsweek America’s Best High Schools?

<http://www.usnews.com/education/best-high-schools>

<http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/features/2012/americas-best-high-schools.html>