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Many distributors are gaining business by negating the notion that they should be all things to all people. Instead, they're focusing on specific vertical markets. This department focuses on growing sales in those markets.

6 TIPS FOR TARGETING THE EDUCATION MARKET

Universities and other schools crave ways to better connect with their students, staff, alumni and supporters. If you target the education market, trade printer Wilmer has six suggestions to help you become a higher achiever.

The pandemic has made student recruitment and retention even more challenging than usual for educational institutions — and it has made savvy distributors of print and marketing services even more valuable.

Higher-education marketing is about reaching parents and students where they are, when they're most likely to pay attention, with messages that immediately stand out. Those are challenging goals in “normal” times, and now made more difficult because fewer good targets seem to exist — low student enrollment and alumni engagement are major concerns of schools during the COVID age.

Those schools are also realizing that digital marketing isn't enough; those efforts should be created in conjunction with printed materials. Print can invoke emotion in recipients, and often helps

to leave a bigger impression on them than an email, digital banner ad or social media post. Also, when schools use high-quality printed pieces, there's often an ancillary positive effect — people already affiliated with the institution can see the quality and feel a sense of pride in what the institution is doing.

Trade printer Wilmer points out another important truth in one of its educational pieces for distributors: “As digital marketing has exploded, so too have the barriers to reaching audiences... That presents a golden opportunity to stand out with direct marketing.”

Tips for Smarter Outreach

Wilmer, based in Dayton, Ohio, is a leading industry supplier with a top-rated customer service team. The company has continuously evolved, and

prides itself on bringing new solutions and product advances to distributors.

For distributors targeting the education market, Wilmer offers these six tips:

1. **Provide pieces that speak to health and safety.** Schools quickly learned that communication to students and staff is critical for establishing a safe environment. As colleges and universities develop plans to resume on-campus activities, distributors could provide mailers outlining the institution's safety measures along with personal health tips.

“Information is on high as parents have concerns on how the schools are handling students headed back to the classroom, how will graduation go, how are they keeping up with sanitizing high touch areas,” says Jessica Wenz, product marketing manager at Wilmer. “We have many great pressure-seal pieces that can keep the family updated on what is happening on campus, how to attend classes or graduation and more. These pieces allow for an eye-pleasing design that will get attention and not get thrown in the junk-mail pile. We can also save the university time and money by printing and sealing and sending via bulk rate mail.”





Educational institutions are using a wide variety of printed products in an effort to reach their audiences efficiently and effectively. To help distributors sell to this market, trade printer Wilmer provides sell sheets distributors can use as their own, live samples that can be sent directly to prospects, website content and online demos.

2. Use targeted direct mail for donor connection. Now and once the pandemic is over, donor support will be critical as schools work to fill unplanned funding gaps and meet budgets. In the era of social distancing and no high-profile

dinners and events, higher-learning institutions are turning to other tactics to meet their financial goals.

Targeted direct mail is becoming a key component of outreach efforts. A school hosting an online

auction fundraiser could send mailers leading up to the event to showcase auction items, provide bidding instructions and boost participation. They can also use self-mailers as a thank-you follow up to donors.



Ideal for smaller private institutions, Wilmer's PSM3000 processes up to 3,000 documents an hour, making any printing and mailing job quick and easy. Also, its PSM10K folder/sealer system with extended conveyor is designed to handle large-volume mailings, processing up to 10,000 sheets per hour.

3. **Create a marketing mix.** Today's most effective marketing efforts employ a coordinated mix of channels. For example, development departments and Greek chapters in universities around the country are integrating direct mail with social media and email marketing. This marketing mix is helping schools raise funds, recruit members and promote events cohesively. By creating multiple touch points, their success rate for audience participation and response increases greatly.
4. **Communicate critical campus information.** Student support services are a big part of campus life. To ensure students and staff have the information they need to take full advantage of all that is available to them, encourage your client to offer a printed guide that

list hours of operation for offices, libraries, rec centers, cafeterias and more.

5. **Boost school spirit with bookstore promotions.** Schools might not want to admit this, but students love getting physical mail. They also love spirit wear... and anything that saves them money. Wilmer has found that using their PSMailers pressure-seal equipment is a great way to combine all three, to help promote bookstore sales and promotions with printed coupons and coupon scan codes.
6. **Engage in community outreach.** Fraternities and sororities have made community outreach the cornerstone of their service work. The Greek system is the largest network of volunteers in the United States, with members donating over 10 million hours

of volunteer service each year, according to The Fraternity Advisor. Direct mail is a targeted way for chapters to connect with local charitable organizations to develop strong partnerships.

"Universities have a lot going on while campus is open," Wenz says. "Fraternities and sororities have events to raise money, are giving time to charities and more. Schools are constantly recruiting new students to come to their campus and take classes. They may have silent auctions, golf outings or elaborate dinners for benefactors to donate their money to their alma mater, or local university. Universities are in a constant state of communication and it's not only in the classroom. We can help with those communication pieces, and the distributor is how we get it done. They are our livelihood."