



Identify and market your district’s “wow” factor

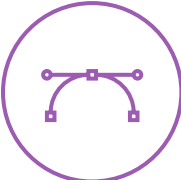
What’s your district’s “wow” factor? What makes you unique, different, and special? Why should a parent allow you to educate their child instead of a neighboring school?

Marketing can have a big impact on your student enrollment. If you don’t think it’s necessary, think again! In fact, the above questions are marketing in it’s simplest form. Check out these seven tips to kick start or refresh your marketing strategy.



TIP 1
EMBRACE A MARKETING MINDSET

The term “marketing” may sound more corporate and less K-12 education. However, you’re probably already conducting some level of marketing at your district, and you don’t even know it. Advertising a new learning program, promoting an event, or telling student success stories all fall under the marketing umbrella. By embracing marketing as part of your initiatives, you will open your mind to new ways to showcase your district.



TIP 2
BUILD ON YOUR DISTRICT’S BRANDING AND COMMUNICATION EFFORTS

Your brand is a big part of what makes you stand out from other districts, schools, and educational institutions. Having a consistent look—including colors and logo—is just the tip of the iceberg. Round out your brand consistency with a unique tone, communication cadence, and prompt responses on two-way channels like social media.



TIP 3
IDENTIFY YOUR TARGET MARKET

Think broad. Parents, staff, students, community members, business owners, club leaders, realtors, etc. Every person that lives in your district boundary is someone who can be an advocate for your schools. Afterall—word of mouth is the best marketing trick in the book.

**TIP 4****FINE TUNE YOUR MESSAGES**

Always think about what is most relevant to your target market. Expand upon regular updates about events and testing schedules by sharing good news, inspirational stories, and student successes.

**TIP 5****CHOOSE TARGETED TACTICS**

Talk to your parents and community members to find out how they want to receive messages. Parents may want to receive push notifications through your mobile app, while community members may prefer to check social media. Understanding their preferences will allow you to target where you send certain information, which will ultimately increase your engagement.

**TIP 6****EMPOWER STAFF WITH MARKETING INFORMATION/TOOLS**

Your employees should be your biggest brand ambassadors and strongest sales people. In this case, selling isn't about an exchange of money, but rather an exchange of positive stories that promote your district. Your staff members see students succeed on a daily basis and can be an invaluable asset to your marketing initiatives. Encourage them to get on social media, for example, and share the good news.

**TIP 7****IMPROVE THE “CUSTOMER” EXPERIENCE**

Your customers are your parents and students. Ask yourself how you can enhance their interaction and relationship with your district. Set up parent focus groups to uncover their expectations. Conduct graduation interviews with your senior students to learn what you did well throughout their K-12 career and where you can improve. Both parent and student support is crucial to building a bright future for your district.

These seven tips were originally presented by Teri Wilson, Chief of Staff at Grand Prairie ISD (TX) during a branding webinar. To hear her full set of branding and marketing tips, watch the video recording.

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