

THE ULTIMATE COLLEGE MARKETING 7-POINT CHECKLIST

2018 EDITION

Now in its 2nd year, our college marketing checklist will help you jumpstart your Back-to-College marketing planning. With new tips for the 2018-2019 academic year, including detailed profiling of your college target audience (think Gen-Z now!), establishing objectives and metrics, forecasting samples, and planning content topics, this quick checklist will get your college marketing program off the ground stat.

1. Clarify your objectives. Then align them with media channel and venue.

Think about your prospective targets and available assets. Determine your point of market entry strategy, and for best results, consider an omnichannel approach to achieve your objectives, share your message, demo your product, or distribute your samples.

My Objectives:

- To understand how Gen-Z views my brand/product and gain valuable insights for my marketing strategy
- To drive trial and awareness of my brand/product
- To drive sales and brand loyalty
- To drive mobile app downloads
- To gain new customers and build my database
- Other: _____

My Omnichannel Approach:

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Insights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Online Research Panel <input type="checkbox"/> Live Intercepts <input type="checkbox"/> On-Campus Focus Groups <input type="checkbox"/> Distribute samples, premiums, and/or collateral <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Hand-to-Hand <input type="checkbox"/> In Web Order Boxes <input type="checkbox"/> Branded Sample Box/Pack | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Digital <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Videos <input type="checkbox"/> TV Ads <input type="checkbox"/> Dedicated Emails <input type="checkbox"/> Display Ads <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media <input type="checkbox"/> Custom Content <input type="checkbox"/> Sweepstakes <input type="checkbox"/> Print <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Print Ads <input type="checkbox"/> Collateral <input type="checkbox"/> Signage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Experiential Marketing <p>Engage with students in-person at the following key college moments & events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Athletics <input type="checkbox"/> Orientation <input type="checkbox"/> Move-In Weekend <input type="checkbox"/> Homecoming <input type="checkbox"/> Midterms/Finals <input type="checkbox"/> Graduation |
|--|--|---|

2. Drill down to define your audience.

College students are a diverse group and can be micro-targeted based upon demographic, psychographic, and geographic criteria. And now you should be fully geared up for Gen-Z as this cohort is fully in their college years.

I want to reach:

- High school students planning for college
- Freshmen
- Upperclassmen
- Graduating Seniors
- International Students
- Continuing Ed
- Graduate Level
- Alumni

- Males
- Females
- Located in specific region(s)

- Located in specific metro area(s)

Student Status:

- Part-time
- Full-time

Enrolled at:

- 2 year schools
- 4-year private schools
- 4-year public schools

Residing:

- On campus
- Off campus
- Attendees of music, sports, or shopping events

3. Forecast your samples and materials to ensure availability when you need them.

If a sampling program or collateral distribution is part of your plan, don't overlook these details which could cause last minute glitches in execution. Make sure to consider geo-targeting and demo-targeting your giveaways to align with your overall marketing strategy and audience needs.

I plan to use:

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Samples | <input type="checkbox"/> Collateral | <input type="checkbox"/> Premium Items | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| Quantity: ____ | Quantity: ____ | Quantity: ____ | Quantity: ____ |
| Available Ship Date: ____ | Available Ship Date: ____ | Available Ship Date: ____ | Available Ship Date: ____ |

4. Make it special with an offer. Everybody loves a good deal.

What can you offer to excite and incentivize college students to seek out your brand, buy your product, and become loyal customers?

I want to:

- Offer a special student deal or discount
- Drive students to my website or promotional landing page
- Build student engagement on my social media page
- Create excitement with a sweepstakes
- Reward newsletter sign-ups, app downloads, or site registrations
- Promote a gift with purchase

5. Remember that content is king, so craft your message strategically.

Creating content tailored to the college lifestyle opens the door to strong brand-student conversations. Our student blog, The College Juice, as well as campus-specific social pages, are a great way to share editorial about your product and other relevant info. Content should be timed and themed to align with the milestone moments that matter most for college students including, but not limited to, back-to-school, athletic events, midterms/finals, and holidays.

Content topics I will explore:

- How-to's or DIY activities
- Event-themed content: move-in day, orientation, homecoming/alumni weekend, exam time, graduation
- Helpful tips around daily college life: building relationships, study habits, stress management, healthy eating
- Job hunting: looking for internships and jobs, interviewing techniques, dress-for-success, resume building
- Social consciousness programs and volunteering

6. Mind your metrics and adopt a measurement mentality.

Every college program hinges on in-depth market and customer insights, so establishing success metrics and must-have insights is key. Determine what elements should be tested prior to launch, what needs to be monitored in-program, and what will be evaluated after program completion.

Insights I plan to gather:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-program | <input type="checkbox"/> In-program | <input type="checkbox"/> Post-program |
| Objectives: _____ | Objectives: _____ | Objectives: _____ |
| Metrics/Goals: _____ | Metrics/Goals: _____ | Metrics/Goals: _____ |

7. Don't forget the parents!

Parents want to see their college students happy and succeeding at school. Our research shows that parents are most likely to open email offers when they reference their college son or daughter. They are also involved in their student's college purchasing decisions. So, consider a parent email or web ad campaign that will run in tandem with your student campaigns.

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