Developing an Email Communications Plan to Recruit International Students

Presenters

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Communications Plan

Evaluating Current Processes (Part I)

- **What are your current challenges within the email portion of your communication plan?**

Communications Plan

Evaluating Current Processes (Part I)

• List an Issue/ Growth Opportunity

- Example: We have to manually send each email and the first one doesn't get sent until 3 to 4 days after a student signs up.

- Example: We respond to every email within 24 hours and then they go into our CRM and receive emails every month. We rarely get a response from the students

Agenda

- The Need for Leads

- Why Email?

- Developing a Communications Plan
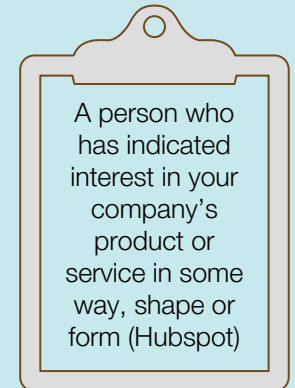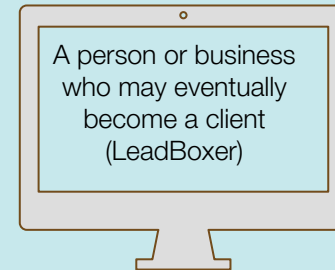
- Questions and Discussion

Leads

What are they?

- Necessary – Without them you don't need a communication plan

Where do they come from?

- Recruiting fairs, list buys, your website, our website……..

A student that has expressed interest in studying at your school

A qualified prospect that is starting to exhibit buying behavior (Marketo)

A person or business who may eventually become a client (LeadBoxer)

A person who has indicated interest in your company's product or service in some way, shape or form (Hubspot)
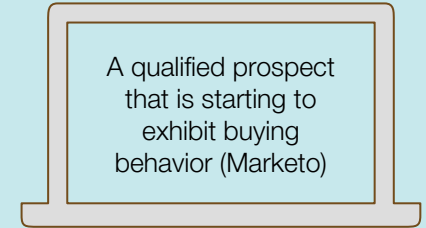
Communications Plan

Why Email?

- Nearly 105 billion emails are sent each day

- Email is 40 times more effective at acquiring new customers than Facebook or Twitter.

- 73% of millennials identify email as their preferred means of business communication.

The single most effective way to engage with and communicate with potential students

Communications Plan

Email Building Blocks

- Subject Line

- Content & Call to Action

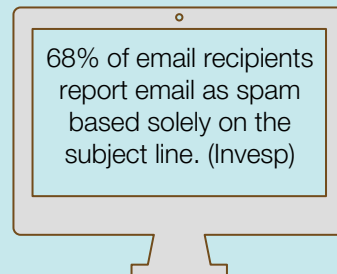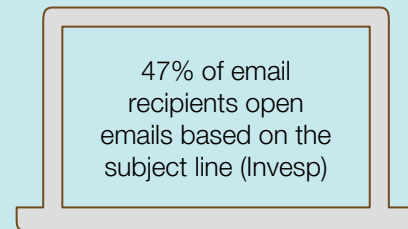- Think Mobile

- Speed and Frequency

- Tracking and Testing

Communications Plan

Building Blocks- Email Content

• Subject Lines:

   - Should be compelling - "Open Me!"

      ■   Urgent

      ■   Mysterious

      ■   Offerings

   - Should be the right length (6-10 words = 21% open)

   - Should be relevant to content

   - Extra points for personalization (22% more likely to be opened)

      ■   Avoid 'no-reply' sender name

"Alijandro, You May Qualify for a Scholarship"
"Don, Register for our Admissions Webinar"

47% of email recipients open emails based on the subject line (Invesp)

68% of email recipients report email as spam based solely on the subject line. (Invesp)

Communications Plan

Building Blocks- Content

- Focus the message and calls to action

- Keep a call-to-action above the fold

- Personalize the email greeting

- Ensure they can contact you

Appalachian

Kim, apply for 2019 now!

The application for admission is open and we want **YOU** to apply! Appalachian is a unique place full of endless opportunity and we're looking for students like you.

Learn more about the **admission process** and **how to apply**. Let us know if you have questions about academic programs, athletics or anything else. You can contact your **admission counselor** with these questions and more! **The deadline to submit your application for early action is November 1 (with all supporting materials submitted by November 15)** in order to receive your admission decision by January 25.

Don't wait – it's time to take the first step to becoming a Mountaineer!

Apply now!

Appalachian State University, 287 Rivers Street, Boone, NC 28608
828-262-2120

Communications Plan

Building Blocks- Think Mobile

- 48% of the traffic to InternationalStudent.com is from a mobile device (Google Analytics)

- 80% of users delete emails that are not optimized for mobile. (Bluehornet)

- By the end of 2018, worldwide mobile email users are expected to total over 2.2 billion. (Radicati)
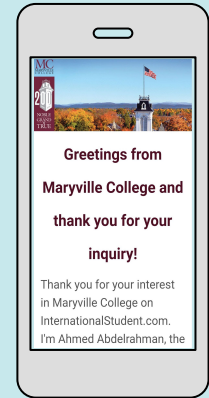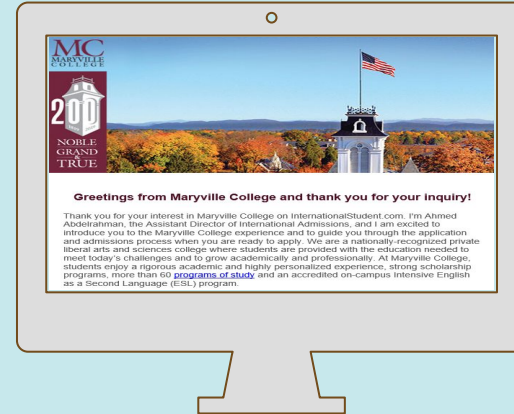
Communications Plan

Building Blocks- Response Time

• You have to have a solution in place to respond ASAP

• Speed-to-lead (VanillaSoft)

    - One Hour - 38% engagement success

    - Twenty-four hours - 8% engagement success
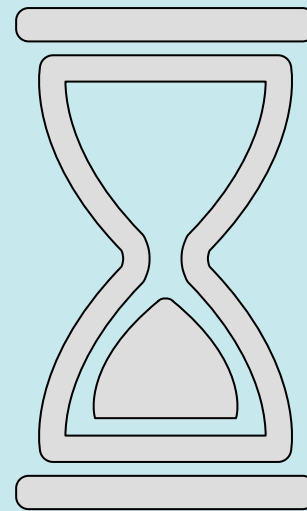
    - More than twenty-four hours - 5% engagement success

Welcome emails have on average 4x the open rate and 5x the click-through rate of a standard email marketing campaign. (InboxArmy)

Communications Plan

Building Blocks- Frequency of Contact

- How often:

  - Share relevant information

  - Time it around your admissions cycle

  - Determine frequency that works for you

  - Monitor the campaign, opens, clicks and unsubscribes

  - Adjust your frequency and messaging based upon results

Email Message	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9	Month 10	Month 11	Month 12
Welcome Undergrad	X											
Send Viewbook		X										
College application process			X									
Introduction to College/Majors				X								
Checklist for college search					X							
Schedule a visit						X						
"major" that will take you places							X					
"Dean X" has a message for you								X				
Student Life									X			
Residence Life										X		
Unique School information											X	
Apply today												X
Text check in	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
School monthly newsletter	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Communications Plan

Building Blocks- Frequency of Contact, Examples

Messaging depends on where the student is in the funnel.

- Enquiried student Communication Track (leads)
- Applicant Communication Track (students who have applied to the institution)
- Accepted or admitted Communication Track (students who have been accepted to the institution)
- Deposits Communication Track (students who have made the enrollment deposit)

Consider messaging plans for students who have decided not to attend our institution.

Communications Plan

Choosing an Email Program

MailChimp

Price = $0-$199/mo

12,000 Emails/mo

2,000 subscribers

Easy to use templates

Basic tracking

Great place to start - Ease of use - A bit buggy at times

Constant Contact

Price = $20-$125/mo

Unlimited

500-2500 subscribers

Easy to use templates

Decent tracking

Great place to start - Free trial - Price increases as subscribers increase

HubSpot

Price = $0-$199/mo

12,000 Emails/mo

2,000 subscribers

Easy to create workflows

Good tracking

Marketing automation solution - Also offer a CRM

salesforce pardot

Price = $1,250 -$4000/mo

Unlimited emails/mo

10,000 subscribers

Known for ease of use and for automated emails

Good tracking

Marketing automation - Integrates into Salesforce - a bit pricey

Communications Plan

Tracking

- Delivered
- Opens
- Clicks
- Unsubscribes
- Bounces

Testing (A/B)

- Subject line
- Call to action
- Day and time
- Personalization
  - Name
  - Country
  - Nationality
  - Program

Communications Plan

Establishing Goals & Strategy (Part II)

Using your established growth opportunity, what are you trying to accomplish and how are you going to accomplish these goal(s)?

Example 1

Issue- Growth Opportunity: We have to manually send each email and the first one doesn't get sent until 3/4 days after a students contact us.

Goal: Develop a comprehensive communication plan

Strategy: Compile all needs, research options that will meet your criteria and budget.

Example 2

Issue- Growth Opportunity: We have no idea where students drop off in our communications plan.

Goal: To track where students are dropping off so we can further evaluate and improve.

Strategy: Gather and compare data within your communication plan (or start getting data in general) and see where students stop opening, clicking, or unsubscribing.

Questions

Communications Plan

Best Practices
- Response Time
- Frequency of contact
    - Adapting message based on school calendar
- Email Content
    - Subject Lines
    - Think mobile
    - Focus the message and calls to action
    - Keep call-to-action above the fold
    - Personalize the email greeting -
- Tracking and Testing
    - Test your emails - send test emails to colleagues for second opinions

Communications Plan

Why Email?

- A Comfort Zone

- Options for Every Budget

- It can be Instantaneous and Automated

- It is Measurable and Trackable (Analytics! Yea!)

- Conversation Starter

- It is Customizable

- It Allows for Multiple Touch Points

- It's Effective