



INSTITUTE OF SCHOOL & PARISH DEVELOPMENT

*Bringing People, Process, and Ministry Together to Build the
Kingdom of God.*

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Enrollment Talk Newsletter

By

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The Enrollment Management Budget and More...

By now you are probably well into your school's registration season. We pray that you are enjoying much success. In this month's Enrollment Talk Newsletter, I am going to touch upon a couple different topics.

What should a good enrollment management budget have in it?

This budgetary question was asked recently by an elementary school's enrollment management committee. Before answering the question, I had to ask some questions about size of the school, parish and community. Here are the top things that I think should be funded in an enrollment management budget...

- Human resources – people recruit people. Even if you don't have a paid staff handling day-to-day enrollment efforts, your school should quantify the human resources necessary to complete the necessary tasks. How much in-kind support is your school presently receiving from volunteers? How much of the school secretary's time is spent dealing with enrollment management? There might not be enough hours being spent on managing enrollment, but someone at your school is devoting at least some time to the effort. What if the powers at your school came to you and said, "How many paid hours would we need to fund in order to get the job done more effectively?" What would you say? What would be your rationale?
- Office supplies – include letterhead, envelopes, blue ink pens, post-it notes, computer and work-horse printer. You need enough letterhead and envelopes to stay in frequent communication with your prospective families. You need blue ink pens to personally sign and write messages on everything you send out. You need post-it notes to draw attention to your personalization. Finally, you need a computer and work-horse printer to

produce quality pieces that are personalized. Never again use a label. Print on each address. To spruce up your print materials, make an investment in a color printer and insert pictures relative to the messages that you are conveying.

- The Post Office – your new best friend. Add plenty of postage to your budget. Purchase a business reply permit so that prospects can respond back to you easily and without cost. Expand your market by purchasing names and addresses of families with children.
- E-marketing tools – are cheaper than you might think. You could send 1000 personalized emails a day for just \$29.95 per month. Using an email delivery system, you will know who opens your emails, what links they click on and you can even generate a call list. The system will also manage your opt outs and keep you safe from violating spam laws. Create a YouTube video highlighting aspects of your school. Set up your official Facebook fan page. Begin tweeting on Twitter, all with minimal investment. Utilize a volunteer web designer and create website pages aimed directly at your prospective families.
- If you have anything left – get their attention with some print material that “pop.” The poor economy plus the emergence of online marketing have put a strain on print companies. You can get 3,000, full-color, 6" x 8.5" postcard for around .23 a piece. How about conveying your message boldly by using an 18" by 24" screen-printed poster for \$2.70 a piece?

It took Second Jobs and Selling the Gold in Their Wedding Rings to make it Work!

Unfortunately, the economy and unemployment are not much better than this time last year. Are you highlighting the sacrifices your families are making to afford Catholic education? I recently heard a story that a middle-class mother and father took on second jobs to help cover the cost of their child’s tuition. You often hear this type of story. However, these parents went one step further when they were still short money to cover the tuition. They sold the gold in their wedding rings in order to make ends meet. These stories are in your Catholic school community. Follow the words of Jesus when he says in Matthew 5:14-16, *“Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”*

Is Your High School Reaching the Non-Catholic Elementary School Audience?

The Catholic high school recruitment calendar is very predictable. The cycle of when we approach Catholic elementary school families is well known, if you are part of system. What if

you were a Catholic family that never attended a Catholic elementary school? Maybe, your family has long since moved away from the Church. Even more, what if you were a non-Catholic family who knew very little about the Catholic Church? Maybe, you share the Christian values, but are scared off by the mystery of the Church.

I recently sat down and conducted a focus group with parents and students. The participants in this focus group did not attend a Catholic elementary school prior to enrolling at the Catholic high school. Here are some of the questions, I asked them...

- How many of you are Catholic and didn't choose to attend a Catholic elementary school prior to enrolling at this Catholic high school? How many of you are non-Catholic?
- At what point did you begin considering the high school you would attend? When did you entertain the idea of attending a private high school? Was this Catholic high school the only private high school that you considered? If not, what other private schools did you consider?
- What were the top wants, needs, and desires you had relative to the high school you were looking to attend?
- What were the top concerns you had in considering a Catholic high school?
- What did you feel (not think) about this Catholic high school that made you want to enroll?
- Would have communicating with you regarding this Catholic high school after February and prior to August been too late to impact your decision to attend? If this Catholic high school were going to communicate during that time period, what would be the best thing to communicate? How should it be communicated? What medium should be used?

In a nutshell, what I found was that there is so much more Catholic high schools can be doing to reach the non-Catholic elementary school audience. In order to better penetrate that market, Catholic schools will need to expand the recruitment season well into the summer. Messaging to this market needs to be direct and it must address their particular wants, needs, and desires. Negative stereo-types must be corrected. Lastly, holes need to be poked in the faulty assumptions that are often held about this hard to reach market.

Something for Fun: Take a Test to See How Millennial You Are!

Stop for a moment and take this online quiz to determine how Millennial you are. You can access this Pew Research sponsored quiz at <http://pewresearch.org/millennials/quiz/>. My score was a 29 on a scale of 0 to 100. I felt better when my 17 year old son scored a 38.

Speaking of Generations... Have You heard that the New Generation has been identified?

Move over Millennials, there is a new generation in town. Even more tech-savvy than the previous generation, the iGeneration which includes today's teens and middle-schoolers. The "i" stands for the strongly individualized nature of this new generation. Understanding these iGeneration students and their parents will present us with the marketing, enrollment and pedagogy challenges of the future. You can read all about the iGeneration at http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2010-02-10-igeneration10_CV_N.htm.

Spiritual Thought

You will experience the pain of Good Friday and the joy of Easter before we meet again in this newsletter. We wish you and your school a profound experience of the Paschal mystery. Peace!