

# Spending the Marketing Budget Wisely

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# ON-LINE

## Corporate Website

### → Website (Contents / Graphics/Tools)

Enhance School's competitive advantages, increase leads and convert more inquiries into applications. Through the *Content Management System* the Business School Marketing Office adds, improves, updates contents in the website on a daily basis.

### → Website updating (news / events / etc.)

Stale content is a major reason why visitors do not return to a website; a daily activity is required to maintain the website up to date and directly connected with all the ongoing marketing actions.

### → Website Search Engine Optimization – SEO

Strategic process to improve the visibility of the Website in the search engines' "natural" or un-paid ("organic") search results (Google, Yahoo, Bing, etc). This activity is essential to be more visible and reachable on the web. Payment isn't involved, but the activity required a day-to-day check.

### → Website Search Engine Marketing – SEM

Promotion of School's websites by increasing their visibility in search engine worldwide, through paid search advertising (paid placements, contextual advertising and paid inclusions). The most popular tools is *Google AdWords* pay per click system, which is the collector of a large amount of the Business Schools' web marketing budget. To optimize the investment and increase the click-through-rate is usual to turn to Google Adwords Consultants who tune-up the Google Accounts.

# Web Marketing

Business Schools Marketing Offices manage articulated advertising campaigns on the web, through:

- **banners**
- **DEM** (Direct Email Marketing)
- **newsletters**
- **e-mail campaigns**

Web Marketing ties together creative and technical aspects, including design and development of the advertisements.

Often the campaigns are realized by Web Agencies, which develop creativity and technical tools; more infrequently the BS Marketing Offices builds and implements the internet campaigns on its own; in this case internal graphic and technical capabilities are required.

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# Social Media Marketing

Process of gaining traffic and visibility through social media websites (such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google +, YouTube, iTunes), or through Blogs, transferring and sharing information through contents, photos, videos and audios.

Social media marketing is naturally cost-saving in comparison to traditional web marketing (in average 60% lower cost per lead - *HubSpot's 2010 State of Inbound Marketing Report*)

On the Social Networks, Business Schools can:

- Manage their own institutional pages and post on them
- Manage institutional groups and communities and post on them
- Advertise with Display Adv tools
- Foster current Students and Alumni to post experiences on the institutional pages and groups
- Foster current Students and Alumni to build their close-knit communities

Business School can use Social Networks for different reasons:

- student recruitment
- alumni relations
- service current students
- brand reputation
- public relations
- student retention
- community building
- engagement
- events promotion.

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# Mobile Application Marketing

Business Schools Mobile Applications can simply be an extension of the non-mobile school website, or a much more sophisticated stand-alone version that is optimized and designed for the mobile Web experience. Developing Mobile App Schools can increase audience and online presence by catering to new and specific viewer preferences.

Applications can benefit existing students (contents delivering, access Course Work, browse library etc) but also enable prospective students to see what happens at the university (access news and images, walk around campuses, browse events, etc.).

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## Online Presentations and Chats (webinars)

Candidates who are not available to attend information sessions and international events in person, can benefit of virtual online events, where they can get information and chat with admission staff, students and alumni.

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## Online Newsletter/Magazine

Regularly distributed publication that is of interest to its subscribers and represents one of the quickest and easiest way to take contacts update with new initiatives, events and happenings of the School. Usually they are edited by Communications Office, and can be sent on daily, weekly, monthly or other basis. Format can be different (PDF, HTML,...) and can hold multimedia resources too (audio, video,...).

One good practice is splitting database in different clusters of recipients, organizing targeted mailings and alerts where contents and requested actions are personalized.

Sometimes newsletter are also used to raise information rather than seeding it, i.e. polling, suggestions on future events, so it can be a good channel to stay in touch with your audience and listen to their needs.

Software to manage e-mailings can be adopted by Communications Office or given in outsourcing.

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## Information Sessions

Each Business School presents its Programs through Meetings and Presentations on Campus as well as worldwide. These sessions give the opportunity to connect in person with admissions and teaching staff, students and alumni.

→ *Information Meetings*

These events (on campus or worldwide) usually include a presentation from admissions staff, followed by a student/alumni panel and Q&A session.

→ *Open Days on Campus*

Business School open their doors for candidates; usually the day includes sample lectures, presentations on programs and meetings and with students, alumni and staff.

→ *Fairs and Exhibitions*

Worldwide multi-school events, to present programs with admission representatives and often with local Alumni.



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# Advertising in print media and traditional channel (Radio, Tv, etc)

Much more expensive in comparison with the digital advertising. Only the giants of the market are able to support the costs of international long-term press (and traditional media) campaigns.

The small and medium size schools (even these with an international audience) use the web as worldwide information driver and the press as part of the branding strategy at national or local level.

Local press is frequently used to promote local events.

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## Referral Programs

Alumni referrals are one of the best sources of qualified candidates for Graduates Programs.

According to EMBA Council Report 2009-2010 referrals are the main driver of applicants for executive M.B.A. programs, with 31% of students reporting they applied to a program because of an alumnus.

So Business Schools have begun to formalize a previously casual process and to design “Referral Programs”, encouraging their “evangelist” referrals by offering incentives (gifts, money, free lifelong learning, etc) .

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# Brochure and Promotional Stuff ( + leaflets, posters, etc.)

Institutional Booklets and Product Flyers: still in use in the digital time.

To be used in the information meetings, fairs, exhibitions; to be sent by mail to partners or prospects; crucial in the relations with corporate/institutional stakeholders, partners and sponsors.

Obviously all the material is available and downloadable in digital version through the Schools websites.

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## Press Office

Deal with topics related to Business School by issuing press releases and using other various means.

Besides the communications on events and institutional activities, press offices are the points of access to Business Schools expertise and information. Schools represent intellectual hubs for the business community and BS academic staff is usually sourced by the media for its relevant perspectives on business, economic and management issues.

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## Events Management

Create and develop events, conferences and meetings related to Business School key topics: a strategic marketing tool to promote School activities and products.

In cooperation with the Press Office, events management also pursues the aim of generating wide media coverage to enhance the promotional results.

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# Gadgets

World of gadgets is actually a galaxy. It is possible to space from different kind of gifts, both products and services. They are targeted on different clusters and gadgets offered depend on relationships and goals to achieve with recipients.

As far as products is concerned, usually BS use both branded gadgets and not, or branded only in the packaging.

About services, one of the most used practice is offering educational, training and leisure/ travelling incentives.

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## Publications

Typical examples are books, chapters, insights, articles, cases and working papers. Sometimes they are published with fixed schedule (i.e. quarterly), other in a single output, as on the occasion of special events (i.e. anniversary of foundation).

Publications can be edited both by a private author (usually a Faculty member) with advocacy of the BS, and by BS brand itself.

Very often, especially for shorter editions, it's possible (paying or for free) to download the digital version of the publication.

Content is king! When publications contents are recognized as reference ones, BS has achieved the best result in term of brand promotion.

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### Magazine offline

Publication which can come in two types, internal and external. The typical example is the House Organ, a magazine or periodical published by the School for its customers, employees, stakeholders and institutional contacts.

An internal house organ is meant for consumption by the employees of the company as a channel of communication for the management. An external house organ is meant for consumption by the customers and other contacts of the company, and usually it's a free regular newsletter. Contents focus on events, new products, changes in top management, market trends and can also offer fresh articles by authors inside or outside the School and interviews to opinion leaders.

It's quite expensive, due to print costs and time consuming. One choice could be the outsourcing.



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## Promotional Videos

Promotional videos are marketing and sales tools designed to introduce or educate consumers about a particular product, cause or event. Generally, a promo video is structured to be precise, direct and -if it's delivered by web- no longer then 3-4 minutes. This usually allows a well-produced video to hold the attention of viewers long enough to make the key points necessary to generate additional interest.

*YouTube* is the second most used search engine in the world. This clearly evidences the idea of the intense use of videos that not only BS are doing. Immediacy, engagement, technology, creativity are the key-elements to do a good use of this channel, which can be used to promote both a brand and products-services. A promotional video can also be utilized at a conference or exhibition with great effect.

This adv channel is not too expensive and nowadays technologies let BS teams to easily realize in-house videos too.

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## Sponsorships

While sponsorship can deliver increased awareness, brand building and propensity to purchase, it is different to advertising: sponsorship can't communicate specific product attributes and added values. Consumers decide what a sponsorship means.

Sponsorships can finance education, sport, art, music, culture, charity events and incentives, which can profit both people inside the organization (i.e. Students& Alumni, Team,...) and outside. In the first case the main goal is basically to enhance cohesion and sense of belonging to the organization, in the second one is to impact consumer audiences (in terms of memory and perception).

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# Agents

Attract international students through the promotional activity driven by agencies or professionals involved in the recruitment of students who wish to study in a country other than their own. Education agents are often the first point of contact between Business School and intending students and parents. Therefore, it is important that BS pay particular attention to the education agents they select to represent them.

Usually the requested services include:

- identifying prospective students,
- managing promotional actions on the country of reference,
- giving students information,
- helping students complete enrolment forms,
- preparing and submitting a prospective student's visa application.