

CASE STUDY

SMS case study – Columbia College

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Name and city and state of marketer

Columbia College, Jacksonville, FL

Name and city and state of agency or marketing services firm

Ballyhoo Mobile Marketing Inc., Jacksonville, FL

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Campaign/program name

SMS Leveraging of Traditional Mediums

Duration

Three weeks

Common short code and keywords used

DEGREE to 72239

Objective(s)

1. Generate leads from traditional media (specifically radio),
2. Immediately reach interested parties regarding Columbia College and opportunities offered. A goal of 10 leads was set.
3. Differentiation. All similar universities run similar ads, a mobile element would help the spot stand out amongst the competition.

Target audience

The target audience was adults, ages 25-plus, who are interested in returning to school to finish a 4-year degree or a Masters degree.

Strategy

Utilize a "text-for-info" tag in all current radio.

Call to action

Text-to-win tags were added to current radio spots. Consumers were encouraged to text DEGREE to 72239.

Tactics

Eight radio stations in the Jacksonville market were bought for three weeks. The ads were tagged at the end with a 10 second mobile call to action. Listeners were invited to text in for more information. No other incentive was given. This was in hopes of getting the most interested respondents.

Results

After all the campaigns were completed, a total of 32 mobile opt-ins were generated (130 percent of the set goal). Using the email forwarding feature of the mobile software, numbers were immediately sent to the admissions department for follow-up. All numbers were contacted within 24 hours.

From the 32 interested leads, two registered for spring classes.

Due to the limited amount of time between the radio campaign and the start of classes, it was estimated that an additional 10-15 students would be ready to start in the summer semester.

Based on the investment levels for the campaign execution, the level of ROI was tremendous.

What next

The college is looking to implement marketing-specific mobile calls to action throughout all its campuses nationwide. The mobile call to action is being expanded to other methods of marketing beyond radio, including printed cards at career fairs.

Lessons learned

For a target audience, no prize or fun incentive needs to be given for qualified leads to

respond. At the average student's tuition, only a small response is needed for a great ROI.

Surprise finding

All parties were excited to find how motivated these interested students were to start schooling as soon as they could.

The college was able to immediately reach out to each interested party, set a follow-up appointment and sign the student up for classes.

A very high percentage of respondents were hungry for information and ready to act.

Executive's name, title and company for response attribution

Jennifer McCoy, chief financial officer, Ballyhoo Mobile Marketing Inc.

Strategy quote from brand executive

"I wanted the advertisements for Columbia College to stand out from the competitors and enable prospective students to respond immediately to receive additional information," said Greg Harker campus admissions manager, Columbia College, Jacksonville, FL.

What challenge did mobile address?

"The challenge addressed by mobile was the ability to get an instant response by prospective students and contact them immediately or at least within the same day," Mr. Harker said.

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