

# Marketing Self-Assessment

## Step 1: Laying the Foundation

Before you can begin marketing your program, you need to assess what you have to offer, what makes you different than your competitors, and be able to clearly articulate what you are offering and how it's part of the church's mission.

**Focus:** Internal church population    **Estimated Current Enrollment:** 0-25

### Action Items:

#### Develop your Enrollment Strategy

- Set enrollment goals
- Identify your Unique Selling Proposition (USP)  
*What sets your experience apart from other college experiences? Who are students learning from? What opportunities do they have?*
- Identify your ideal student (see Student Avatar Exercise)  
*Who are you targeting? What age range? What needs are you filling?*
- Identify populations within your church that would be a good fit for your program & can function as funnels for your program (i.e. youth group, young adults ministry, conferences, etc.)

#### Develop your Marketing Strategy

- Identify existing marketing channels within your church & maximize promotions through those channels
  - Church email/text lists
  - Church newsletter
  - Social channels
  - Weekly announcements
  - Pre & post service loop
  - Lobby presence (\$)
  - Physical signage/branding for your site
  - Student events for church already puts on (i.e. youth group, young adult night, youth conferences) – you should be highlighting your college program through these avenues on a weekly basis (\$)
  - Site student participation in church services
- Focus on building a strong relationship with your pastor & key leaders/influencers within your church  
*These should be the biggest champions for your site & should be talking about it every week organically.*
- Create a marketing plan/calendar for the year (see Annual Marketing Planning Calendar)

## Develop Marketing Collateral

- Develop your site's branding
- Create a website for your site (\$)
- Create social media channels for your site & focus on creating shareable & engaging content that showcases your student experience
- Create a simple informational piece that gives prospective students an overview of your site
- Utilize existing creative resources in your church to create branding, announcements, content for social (i.e. creative teams, student in youth group), etc.

*If you do not have access to a creative team, invest in a photo shoot/launch video for your site; this will give you content to use on social, marketing materials, and the various internal channels identified above.*

## Develop Systems

- Create opportunities for students to learn about your site (i.e. info sessions after church service or weekly tours)
- Create a system for capturing inquiries & communication with leads
- Create a set process for lead conversion (i.e. communication flow, staff training, etc.)

*It doesn't matter how many leads (interested students) you have if you don't know how to convert them into an applicant and enrolled student*

**End Goal:** You should be utilizing all of the available internal channels to ensure that everyone at your church knows about your college program.

**Budget Required:** \$0 - \$5,000

**Do not move on to Step 2 until you've completed these items.**

## Step 2: Expanding Your Reach

You can now clearly communicate the value of your site's unique experience and have proven you can convert inquiries into enrolled students. Everyone in your church knows about what you offer. Now it's time to connect with those in your community.

**Focus:** Close Network

**Estimated Current Enrollment:** 25-50

### Action Items:

All of Step 1, plus:

- Build relationships with local churches, youth pastors, & guidance counselors at Christian schools that are already in your network.
  - Invite them to preview events
  - Host info sessions at their church/school
  - Invite guidance counselors to visit your site & showcase your unique student experience
  - Utilize students in your program to create organic content for social (i.e. create a practicum track for marketing/creative to systematize this)
- Build relationships with local churches, youth pastors, & guidance counselors at Christian schools that are already in your network.

**Budget Required:** \$5,000 - \$15,000

**Do not move on to Step 3 until you've completed these items.**

## Step 3: Get Loud

Your marketing works, now it's time to scale and get your message in front of a larger audience. This phase will require a larger marketing budget.

**Focus:** External Marketing

**Estimated Current Enrollment:** 50+

### Action Items:

All of Step 1 & 2, plus:

- Ramp up content creation with a focus on shareable content to expand your reach
- Digital Marketing – this will only work if your site's message & value is clean (see step 1)
- Local College Fairs

**Budget Required:** \$15,000 – \$30,000