

## School is Out, Now What?

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Many see the education category as an opportunity with only a nine month selling window. However, did you know that many schools have twelve month employees and you can still meet with these educators during the summer? The summer months are also a great time to visit school districts and meet with decision makers.

As the days get longer and temperatures rise, our thoughts turn to well-deserved vacation time. Educators are planning and recharging for back-to-school all year. This doesn't start and end while school is in session. Our perception is that educators are relaxing and taking the summer off, but actually many are still working and preparing for the next school year.

### What about selling beyond schools?

There are several opportunities within the education category beyond the K-12 school market. Below are a few that you can call on during the summer months.

- Head Starts
- Child Care Centers
- Summer School Programs
- Healthcare – Children's
- Churches
- YMCA's
- and more...

It is important to stay engaged with educators during the summer months, so you don't miss any opportunities.

There is a mantra in marketing: Reach the right audience with the right message at the right time, in the right places and repeatedly. If you asked someone "where do you go to get an online degree?" they will have one school in mind. That's not

because that is necessarily the best or only school offering online degrees, but because that brand came out everywhere, loudly and repeatedly, to create that association in our minds. In a noisy marketing world, speaking to your audience in the right places and repeatedly is extremely important.

- Right Audience
- Right Message
- Right Time
- Right Place
- Repeatedly



**Summer Vacation Perception**



**Summer Vacation Reality**

# Marketing to Educators



Web and social advertising should be viewed as one integral component of a marketing campaign. All marketers need a foundation, and digital advertising helps establish that base. Targeted digital advertising allows you to reach educators online over the summer wherever they are, even if they're not on education-oriented sites. Branding ads that appear wherever your target audience surfs can keep your name and message top of mind with educators even when they are off-duty.



Keep communicating through all of your social channels throughout the summer so that you're maintaining a constant presence. Social attention is precious, and you don't want to lose it by going radio silent. This applies to both outbound posting on all the channels you normally use, as well as to responding to audience posts. Unanswered posts—whether they are good, bad, or indifferent in tone—tell your audience that your brand doesn't care and are a fast way to lose interest and followers. A response is imperative and creates opportunities to convert mild interest into brand advocacy. 50% of teachers use social media in some way.

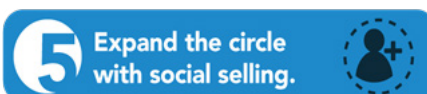


Educators are sophisticated consumers of media who are beginning to tune out strictly promotional messaging. Relevant, useful content does capture their attention (i.e., "ways to use games to increase math student engagement" versus "25% OFF, ORDER NOW!"). The summer is also a great time to explore new ways of generating content, in-

cluding user-generated content like testimonials, or other interactive content like videos and info-graphics.



At the beginning of the school year, educators spend a lot of time putting together their curriculum for the year. Free resources that help that and make their job easier are always welcome and help to build brand appreciation and loyalty. Teachers are one of the "sharingest" online populations, so a good turn in the form of free resources will get their attention, and they will happily spread the word. A teacher's endorsement holds a lot of credibility with other teachers and has shown spikes in conversions through referrals, especially for one professional development client.



Even in the education world, marketing is a year-round job. 50% of teachers today are digital natives—with that percentage only increasing—meaning they are much more accessible on their devices throughout the full calendar year. Goodwill and a sense of community have built an ever growing group of online teachers, through multiple communities.

Remember, you are not out there alone. You have a dedicated education team here at S.P. Richards ready to help you be successful! Let us know how we can help. Now is the time to strategize and plan for next year, but don't forget those other summer opportunities!

\*Schooldata.com

\*Ednetinsight.com