



CHECKLIST FOR APPEALING TO EMOTIONS IN CONTENT MARKETING FOR SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES

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Selecting a school or university is a highly emotional decision.

The right education can set a person on a path to success. Reputation and emotional appeal need to take center stage in content marketing for schools and universities looking to increase enrollment and build meaningful relationships with friends and alumni.

If you're struggling to make your messaging resonate with your customers and turn website visitors into students, review this content marketing checklist for the education industry to find opportunities to improve your messaging and earn more students.



Content Marketing Checklist for Schools and Universities

Review this checklist for connecting with your **audience emotionally**. The idea of rewriting webpages and changing how you present your school can be challenging. But once you take the leap, the impact can be immense.

1

Appeal to the Right Emotions



Many marketers don't consider the emotions they want to appeal to before putting together content. Their focus is on a marketing strategy where they outline goals and objectives with a roadmap for how to get there.

While the marketing strategy might outline tone, that doesn't always correlate with an emotional response. Take time to review Robert Plutchik's Wheel of Emotion and consider what you want your reader to walk away with.

Many schools appeal to interest and anticipation as well as trust and acceptance. The stronger positive emotions your content evokes, the more likely you'll get a response from your reader. Most marketing appeals to joy and laughter. And while that sells many consumer goods, joy and laughter might not create as much of an emotional response for schools as it does for other brands.



2

Know Your Audience



Schools and universities tend to write education marketing content as if they were writing it for their teachers and professors. Jargon and complicated words fill the page. If your reader can't understand or has to work too hard to understand the content, they certainly won't feel an emotional connection to you.

Most schools will be appealing to parents first and students second. And while many parents looking for a high-quality education for their child will be college educated, that doesn't mean they want to feel like they're taking a college exam when they read your website and other content.

Be real and write no higher than an eighth-grade level. Put your content through a Flesch-Kincaid Readability Calculator.



3

Make the Reader the Center of the Content



Changing the focus of your content from “students” to “you” can put the reader in your classrooms and walking your campus. Take for example this statement:

“Students graduate with the skills necessary to succeed at work, home and in their communities.”



Now let's focus the sentence on the reader to turn the success of students into the success of the reader.

“Graduate with the skills necessary to succeed at work, home and in your community.”

It's a small change that can help the reader connect with the content and envision themselves attending your school. In the first sentence, you've set the scene for arbitrary people to be the students. But in the second, you've made it clear who will be succeeding: the reader.

4

Engage the Reader with Visuals



Content marketing isn't all about written words on a screen or piece of paper. You also need to consider how you'll bring your reader in with visuals and photography.

You want to set the scene and leave room for the reader to insert themselves or their children



into the scene. Just as important as the content on your website are the images, illustrations, graphs and videos.

Visuals can evoke emotion even more so than written words. That's because they tell a story in milliseconds for the viewer. Without visuals, your content will fall flat. And with cheesy stock visuals, you likely won't get the emotional response you want.

Investing in high-quality photos of your students and campus will have a massive impact on the emotion you garner from prospective students and their families.

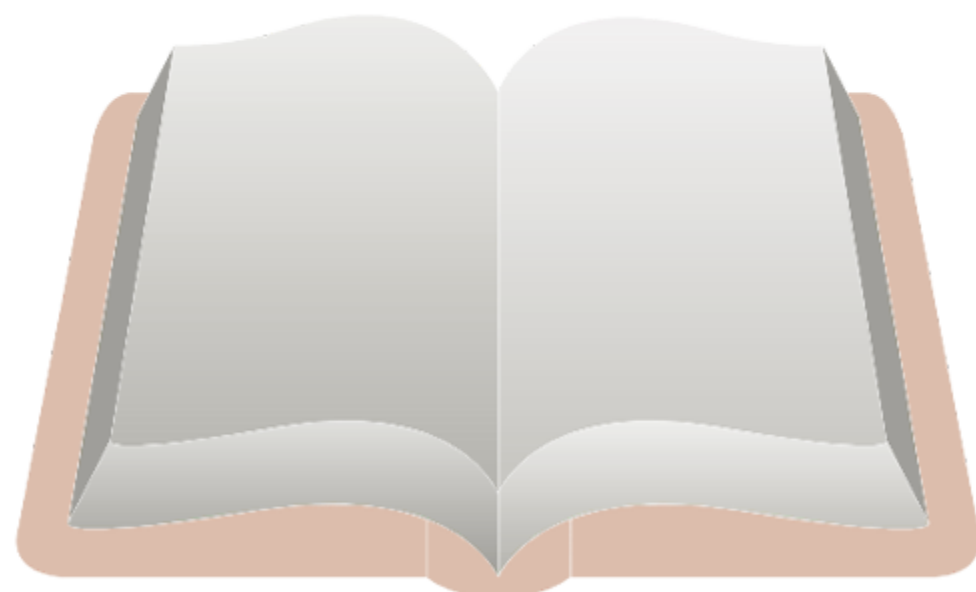
5

Tell Stories



Storytelling is a powerful way to help the reader engage with your content and feel the emotions you want them to.

A story can bring your school or campus to life. Now your students have faces, backgrounds, and relatable experiences that prospective families can relate to. “Their success can be my success” is what the prospective family might feel.



You can't just tell alumni stories though. For prospects, the phase of completing their education and becoming an alumnus might be too far off. You want to tell stories of current students and what they're able to do because they are enrolled at your school.

And when writing staff and faculty bios, focus less on all the impressive awards, degrees and certifications and more on telling a story. This will make them feel more approachable while still positioning them as experts in their field. If you want an emotional response, a listing of accolades and accomplishments is less likely to create that feeling within your reader than telling their story.

6

Help Students/Parents Find Solutions



Choosing a school feels like a daunting and crucial decision that could change the course of a young person's life. Parents put so much pressure on themselves to make the perfect choice that they dig deep looking for any information they can find about a school.

Make it simple to get answers to questions or interact with a school representative in the way

that works best for them. Post FAQs on your website but also make it clear who to go to for answers to more questions.

Empower your admissions team to answer questions and make decisions to put forth the right front for impressing parents and catering to their concerns and emotions. No question should make a parent feel silly or overprotective.

Prospective families might want to talk to others within your school and not just the admissions counselor. Make that possible for them by posting more contact information to help build emotional connections to your school as a whole.



7

Mind Your Online Reputation



Content marketing is far-reaching. It's not just what you put on your website and the materials you hand out during campus visits. When considering your content, you have to think about what's out there that a prospective family can find and read about.

You need to address your reputation on third-party websites.



This means responding to reviews both good and bad. While you can't control what others are saying about you online, you can help reframe those messages and show that you care about the student experience at your school.

Negative comments without a response leave the reader feeling the anger and frustration that the writer felt. And frankly, that isn't the emotion you're going for in your marketing.

Acknowledge the frustration and take the conversation out of the public view by asking the reviewer to share their thoughts with you via email or phone.

Increasing School and University Enrollment Through Digital Marketing

The education industry certainly faces unique challenges in content marketing and digital marketing. Emotional appeal differs greatly from consumer goods and you need a team that understands that on a deep level.

New Light Digital recognizes the nuances of marketing schools and universities and is poised to help you increase enrollment through messages that resonate with your audience and appeal to their emotions.

Schedule a free consultation

now to learn more about how you can grow your enrollment this coming school year.



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