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DIGITAL**

# **ENGAGING STUDENTS AND PARENTS WITH MISSION-DRIVEN CAMPAIGNS AND MESSAGES**

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Mission-driven campaigns **offer an opportunity** for schools and universities **to connect with** students and parents in a deep, meaningful way. **Here are 5 ideas.**

As students look for the ideal school or university for them, they're looking to make a connection. One way of connecting with students is to run mission-driven campaigns.

Explaining your mission and values can help build that connection that students and parents want to feel. Remember that emotion heavily influences the education industry. And one way to generate that emotion is to appeal to parents and students using storytelling and connecting on shared beliefs and values.

Not sure **how to put your mission and values** front and center in your marketing? **Here are some ideas** for mission-driven campaigns and messages that **will resonate with your target audience.**



# Mission-driven Campaigns for Schools and Universities

All these ideas will not be right for your school or university. And running a mission-driven campaign that doesn't accurately reflect your school will do more harm than good. So don't come out saying you have invested in sustainability just because you have recycling bins on campus. Mission-driven campaigns should highlight aspects of your school that are interwoven into the very fabric of who you are. So choose from these options wisely.





# Sustainability



Schools and universities have a unique opportunity with sustainability. Because they educate youth and young adults, they can highlight ways in which they are walking the walk with sustainability but also showcase how they are educating students about sustainability.

Sustainability modules can be relevant for various coursework based on the field of work or industry a student is preparing to enter. By showing students how to make sustainability a regular part of business, schools and universities can build dynamic leaders.

But you don't want to highlight sustainability if it is only in your coursework. Consider other ways to run a more sustainable campus.

- Rooftop solar panels

- Encouraging alternate modes of transportation with electric car charging stations, bike racks, electric scooters or carpooling
- Reducing cafeteria food waste
- Water conservation
- LEED-certified buildings
- Recycling and composting
- Reusable water bottle refill stations
- Meal plan reimbursements for students who bring reusable utensils and cups to cafes and other to-go food stations
- Organic farming
- Less packaging or biodegradable packaging on products in campus stores and cafes
- Offering organic and fair-trade products on campus

- Encouraging second-hand sales, including textbooks and clothing, through fairs and events

- Supporting students in eating less meat

You don't have to be involved with each of these initiatives to state that you're a school focused on sustainability. But you should have several sustainability initiatives before engaging in mission-driven campaigns on the topic.

In your marketing, help highlight students who put forth effort in these various areas when it comes to sustainability. Putting faces to the initiatives can help prospective students connect with your mission.



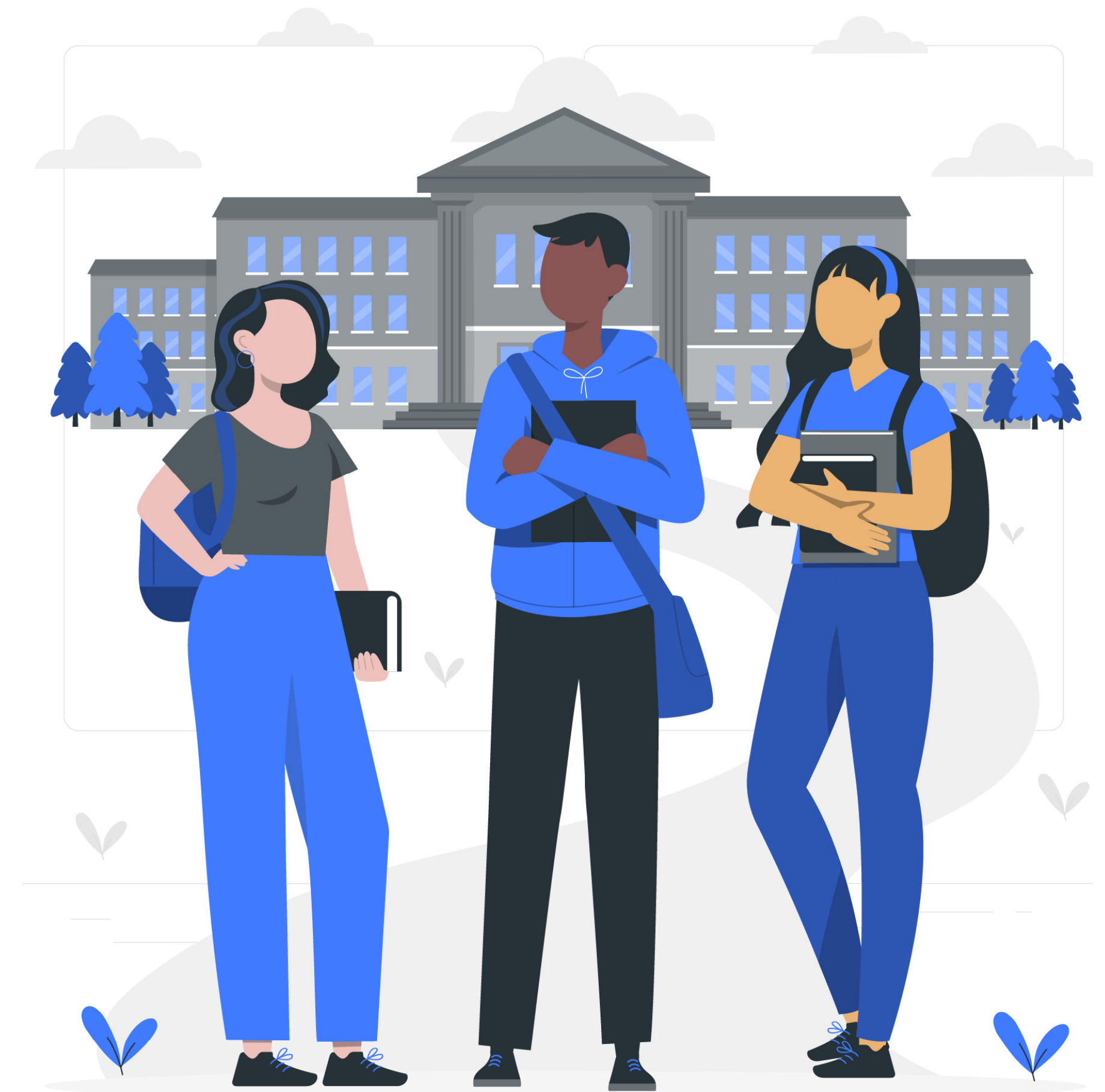
# 2

## Values

School values should be apparent when someone steps foot on your campus or walks through your halls. They can't be another mantra. Your students, faculty and staff must live and embody them in every interaction.

And once you have a campus that lives and breathes those values, you can highlight them in your marketing campaigns. Some examples of values you might select include:

- Accountability
- Community-focused
- Compassionate
- Cooperative
- Courageous
- Critical thinking
- Embracing change





# 3

## Nonprofit Involvement

The organizations that your school aligns with make a big difference in how students perceive you. For example, if you had a prominent women's studies major, you might partner with nonprofits that advance women's rights. It offers an opportunity for students to get involved in nonprofits that mean something to them. And



it helps you demonstrate and embody your mission.

When selecting nonprofit involvement at a school or university level, be selective. The nonprofits that students and student organizations support or advocate for can be separate from the ones you openly support and get involved with.

In some cases, nonprofit involvement might serve students, such as nonprofits that provide mentoring programs. Other cases might involve opportunities for students to get involved with the nonprofits, such as nonprofits that reflect or reinforce your values of caring for your community by volunteering at a local food bank. Consider what organizations share similar missions and values with you and align your school with those organizations to help students and provide meaningful experiences for them.

# 4

## Diversity and Inclusion

Education is often an area with inequities for students of color and those with low income. Schools and universities have an opportunity to close this gap by making education more attainable for students of all backgrounds.

And like all other items on this list, you have to be careful promoting too much about diversity and inclusion before putting forth ample effort on this front since it is a touchy subject.

One way of committing to serving underserved students is setting up a scholarship fund for low-income students or students of color. Bringing awareness to the problem can be another way of including diversity and inclusion in your mission-driven campaigns.



# 5

## Research

Students might aspire to be at the forefront of a certain type of research. Highlighting the projects that your students and faculty are working on could build meaningful connections between you and a prospective student or parent.

Include information about research projects on the relevant area of study pages. But also put together one-pagers highlighting that research and send information to prospective students as part of your marketing automation or lead nurturing series. Place information in folders you hand out to prospective students who visit your school to highlight what sets you apart.

Shoot marketing videos that show the research in action. Post those videos to your social media profiles to help bring the research to life and demonstrate what makes you unique.

Highlighting your school's research might not only appeal to students. It might also resonate with alumni and friends who donate to the school, which could further support your research giving this campaign multi-faceted benefits.



# Marketing Support for Mission-driven Campaigns

Mission-driven marketing campaigns offer a unique opportunity for schools and universities to connect with prospective students and their parents. But executing these campaigns effectively still requires marketing expertise.

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