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Get the most out of your yearbook project by running it as a small business. This guide will help you with ideas for organizing your staff, creating a book sales plan and selling ads to both businesses and parents.

MARKETING | INTRODUCTION

Think about it; your **yearbook** is a **business!** Yearbook is one of the few classes/clubs that raises money, makes, markets, and sells a product!

YOU SHOULD RUN IT LIKE ONE...

While most of your manpower is going to be dedicated to making a fantastic yearbook, you will need a marketing and sales team as well.

Question: How do I organize the sales and marketing side of my Yearbook Business?

Answer: Create a Team to Focus on these three areas...

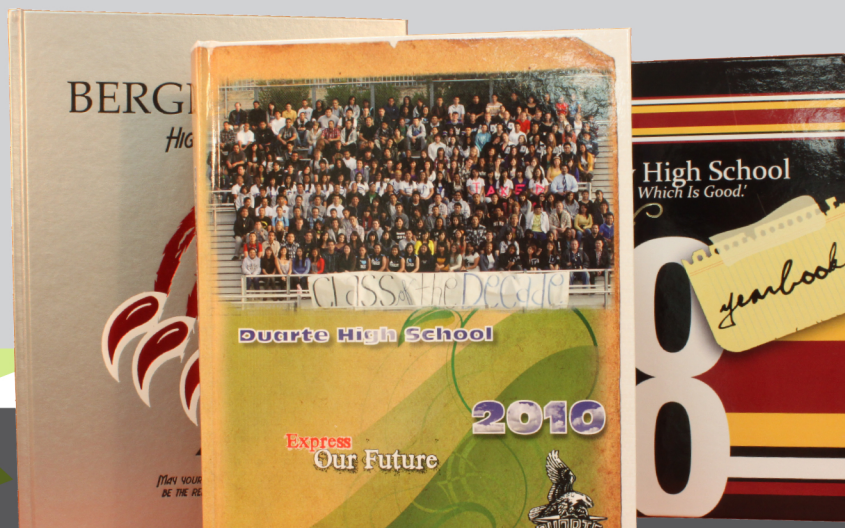
- Marketing and Selling Yearbooks
- Marketing and Selling Business Ads
- Marketing and Selling Personal Ads

Question: How do I run the creative side of Yearbook Class as a small Business?

Answer: The number one thing that you can do to make your whole yearbook project successful is to **Remember your Audience.** You are creating this book to represent the entire school community. As you are creating the book, keep asking yourself...

- What would they want to see in the yearbook?
- What is important to them?
- What would they not want included in the yearbook?

Remember to get out there and actually talk to the students, faculty, and staff. What you think they are looking for, and what they actually want may be totally different. Don't guess, do your research.



TIP

Before you start making or marketing your book, create a survey to pass out at school. Ask for ideas on what would be the ideal yearbook.

No matter how **Amazing** your yearbook is, **it won't sell itself!** Just like any other business, you need a sales and marketing team to promote your product.

APPOINT A BUSINESS MANAGER AND TEAM

Just like you have an editor in charge of the creative side of the yearbook, appoint a very organized staff member to oversee the business side of the yearbook.

Question: What should be the job descriptions of the Business Manager and Team?

Answer: The Business Manager will work with the advisor and editors on planning all of the financial aspects of the publication including book sales and ad sales. The business manager will prepare marketing materials, set goals, plan events, and track sales.

Question: Our staff is too small to have a dedicated business manager. What should we do?

Answer: If you have a small staff, your group will have to double up on some responsibilities. Keep in mind that it's not up to the sales manager alone to sell all of the yearbooks. Their job will be to organize, and make the sales process easy and accessible to all the other staff members.



TIP

Require all staff members to participate in yearbook sales and promotion events. The more people who sell, the more people you'll reach.

The position of Business Manager is instrumental to the success of your book. Make sure your business manager is organized, outgoing, and most of all, excited to take on the challenge of the position!

MARKETING | BOOK SALES PLAN

Before you start **selling** it's very important to establish a sales **plan and goals**.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO ACCOMPLISH?

The Advisor, Business Manager, and Editors should develop goals for ad and book sales and a plan of action for the Business Manager to execute.

Question: How do I determine my goals for sales and marketing?

Answer: Most goals for ad sales are determined by financial need. How much money do you need to raise for your project in addition to book sales? Are you trying to keep the cost of the books down with ad sales? Use the answers to these questions to set ad sale goals. Goals for book sales are often based on sales from the previous year. You should always set a goal higher than last year's to keep your school's year-book tradition growing.

Question: What does a typical sales plan look like?

Answer: Here is an outline of what a typical school year will look like for a business manager:

- Establish goals for book sales and ad sales
- Create forms for selling ads to business and parents
- Train staff members to sell ads and set individual sales goals
- Decide on promotions for yearbook sales for the whole school year
- Create marketing materials for book sales (ask about free personalized marketing)
- Train staff members on book sales and set individual sales goals
- Plan yearbook promoting events and execute throughout the school year
- Continue to track yearbook sales
- Personally follow up with students who have not purchased books



TIP

Set individual sales goals for each staff member

Think about all the **magazine** and **television** ads you see every day and which ones are the most effective. Keep these in mind as you create your yearbook ad campaign.

LET THEM KNOW WHY THEY NEED A YEARBOOK.

There are endless ways to promote your yearbook. Create a marketing campaign using a mixture of classic and creative marketing techniques to reach the whole school.

Question: What are the most popular ways to promote yearbook sales?

Answer: Here are some of the tried and true marketing methods

- Order forms/handouts passed out at school to mailed home
- Online Ad Sales
- Posters
- Early discount promotions
- Announcements (tv/loudspeaker)

TIP

Talk up your book. Keep mentioning cool features, funny pictures, and awesome quotes, so the whole school is buzzing with anticipation.

Question: How do we reach more students through more creative marketing?

Answer: Try as many different approaches as you have time and budget for to reach and appeal to the largest group possible.

- Who's Pictured list - create a list of all the students in the school, and highlight their name as they are pictured. Hang the list so everyone in the school can see. If they know they are in the book, they are more likely to buy the book.
- Yearbook pep rally - plan a special pep rally to kick off yearbook sales. Have staff members talk about what their yearbooks mean to them now.
- Don't forget to use social media websites like facebook to advertise your books.



MARKETING | EARLY SALES AND SPECIAL PROMOTIONS

You know how your grandparents love the **early bird special**? So do your classmates! Give them a great reason to buy their books early and watch the sales roll in.

BUY EARLY FOR THE BEST PRICE!

Running an early promotion is very important for creating some start up revenue for your yearbook and gauging the school's current interest level in purchasing the book.

Question: What is an example of an effective early promotion?

Answer:

- Selling the books at a discounted price early in the year is a standard early promotion. For example you can market your book for \$30 until Oct. 31st and \$40 after.
- Another popular early promotion is **bundling your book sales** in with other popular activities or items that will happen through out the year for a savings. For example, buy your yearbook, tickets to homecoming, and your school pictures together and save \$10.

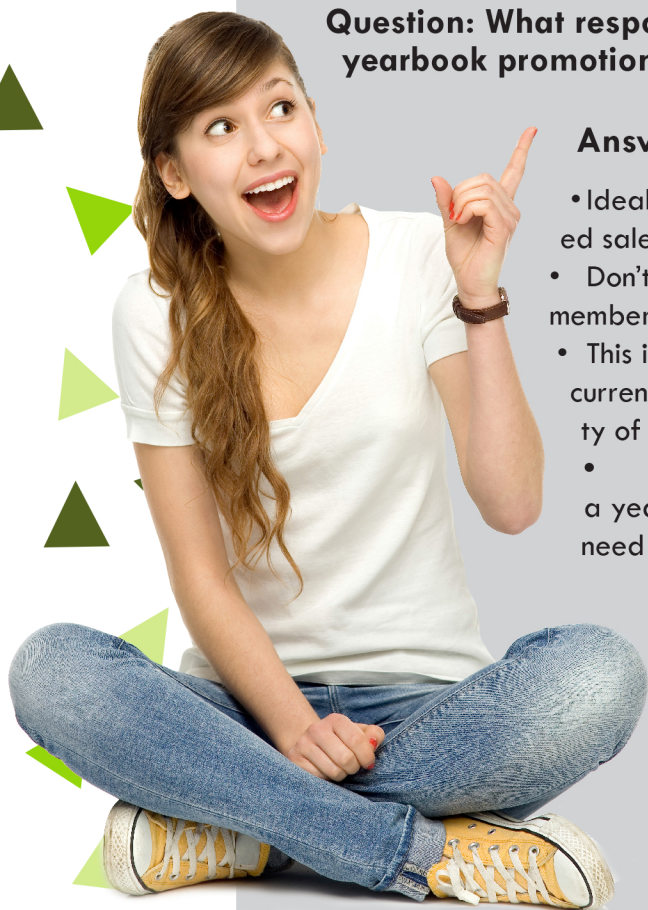
Question: What response should I expect to an early yearbook promotion?

Answer:

- Ideally you will get about **20%** to **30%** of your total expected sales during the first early promotion that you run.
- Don't get discouraged if you don't get a huge response, remember that it's early in the year and there is still plenty of time.
- This is a great time to gauge interest in the yearbook. If your current marketing isn't creating much excitement, you have plenty of time to try something new.
 - **Don't be shy** about asking people why they didn't buy a yearbook even with the great savings. To sell books you need to understand why they aren't buying yet.

TIP

Contact your account manager for custom marketing pieces including posters, handouts, and order forms. Also turn on online sales !



Don't stop now. Even after you launch your yearbook sales campaign and do your first promotion, keep reaching out to the school community to keep excitement high.

FIND NEW WAYS TO ADVERTISE.

After the excitement of the initial yearbook sales day has worn away it's important to continue reaching out to the school community. Sales may not come in as quickly as the first day, but keep selling.

Question: What are some ideas for continuing to reach out?

Answer: Make sure that everyone knows how to order their yearbooks.

- Continue to make sure posters are up around the school.
- Post sales information on the Yearbook Classroom door.
- Continue to talk up the yearbook every opportunity you get.

Question: What are some alternative advertising methods?

Answer: Continue to remember your audience as you sell your books. Try advertising methods that will stand out to different groups of students in the school.

- Try hanging life size photos of different groups, (car team, chorus, etc) around the school with a page number. Students are more likely to buy a book if they are in it.
- Do a yearbook preview at a school wide assembly or pep rally. Prepare a slide show of some pictures, spreads, and really interesting concepts that you are including in your book. Make sure you have something to interest everyone.
- Use the internet to reach more people. Make sure you have a link on the school website to purchase the book. Also advertise through facebook and other social networking sites that the students are already members of.
- Don't forget about parents. Send a handout home, or print an ad in as many of the school sports bulletin's as you can.

TIP

The more effort you put into making the yearbook available to every student, the higher your sales will be.

MARKETING | SELL, SELL, SELL

You don't have to be a used car salesman to **sell yearbooks**. It's as easy as planning fun events, talking up the book, and creating plenty of opportunities for students to buy.

MAKE SURE EVERYONE HAS A CHANCE TO BUY.

Whether you are offering online sales or cash only, make sure that every student at your school knows how to purchase their yearbook, what the promotions are, and what the deadlines are.

Question: How do I maximize the sales opportunity?

Answer:

- Make sure that your staff members are available to sell books at several different times during the day. Have sales tables set up before school, during lunch, after school, and during big school events.
- Offer different methods for sales including online sales, having a sales table set up at school, sales available at the yearbook classroom etc.

Question: Is it better to spread sales out over the whole year or have specific sales weeks?

Answer:

- For selling larger amounts of books all at once, having certain sale days and weeks advertised and promoted certainly works better.
- Parents and students often prefer to purchase their book online and this works best with open sales over the whole school year.
- In the end, both methods generally result in about the same total sales.

TIP

Sell your books online. Create a link on your school website to your online book sales site so that parents can purchase books easily.

REMEMBER TO KEEP THE EXCITEMENT LEVEL HIGH TO KEEP BOOK SALES FLOWING IN.



Even if your sales are going great, there is no reason to slow down now. Make sure you continue to follow up with all students who have yet to order a book.

CONTINUE TO FOLLOW UP...

The marketing manager should be tracking sales and always have a running list of who has not purchased their yearbook yet. This is your target group for following up personally.

Question: What are some good strategies for following up?

Answer: Follow up on two levels. Have members of your sales team speak to the students individually about ordering a yearbook, and find out why they haven't ordered one yet. Continue to market to large groups too. Make announcements and let everyone know that the final deadline for ordering is approaching quickly.

Question: What can I say if they are not interested in ordering a book?

Answer:

- Find out why they don't want to order one.
- If it's a money issue, maybe you can offer a payment plan.
- If they don't think they will be pictured, show them how much coverage of them and their friends will be included in the book. Let them know that the staff is doing their best to make sure that everyone is covered in the book.
- If they say they aren't interested in having a yearbook and they would never look at it, be ready with some stories from faculty and staff members about what their yearbooks mean to them now.



TIP

Approaching students one-on-one and asking why they haven't ordered their yearbook yet makes them consider, why haven't I ordered yet?

MARKETING | SELLING TO BUSINESSES

Local businesses and yearbooks are a **great match**. When local businesses support the schools, the school community is more likely to support them!

SELLING BUSINESS ADS.

Business ads usually consist of a business card or a logo with a little bit of text. These can be designed online, or the business can email or mail you their content for you to format.

Question: How should I price Business Ads?

Answer: These ads usually cost a little bit more because you are asking businesses to sponsor your book, not individuals.

Question: How do I approach businesses about buying ads?

Answer:

- Staff members usually split up areas of the community and basically go door to door selling ads. (Make sure you get permission from parents and school administrators before you start this.)
- It's a great idea to bring last year's yearbook with you in order to show examples of what the ad section looks like.
- It's also a great idea to bring statistics of how many people your book reaches, and a testimony from a business owner who advertised with you last year about how the ad sales helped their business.
- Finally, it's a great way for businesses to show their support for their community. Remind them that families in the school like to support businesses that support the school.



TIP

Mail or email ad sale information to local businesses and let them pay for and design their ad online on our website!

Reaching parents by mail or email is generally the best way to sell personal ads. Most parents want to submit their ad directly to the yearbook staff as a surprise for their student.

Question: How should I price Personal Ads?

Answer: Personal ads generally run a little less to purchase than business ads so that it's not a major investment for parents to participate (keep in mind they are most likely the ones paying for the yearbook purchase too).

Question: What should Personal Ads include?

Answer: The format for Personal Ads is usually a few lines saying congratulations or a quote, a picture or 2 (setting a limit on the number of pictures allowed per ad size is a good idea), and who the ad is from.

Question: How should Personal Ads be submitted?

Answer: If you choose to use our Online Ad sales and design then the parents can build their ads online and submit them electronically.



TIP
Decide your stance on naked baby pictures and other potentially embarrassing content before sending the info out to parents.

¼ page ad - \$50

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Full page ad - \$100

½ page ad - \$75
