

EBOOK by  edlio®

How to Define your Brand & Market your School or District



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Increasing Student Success

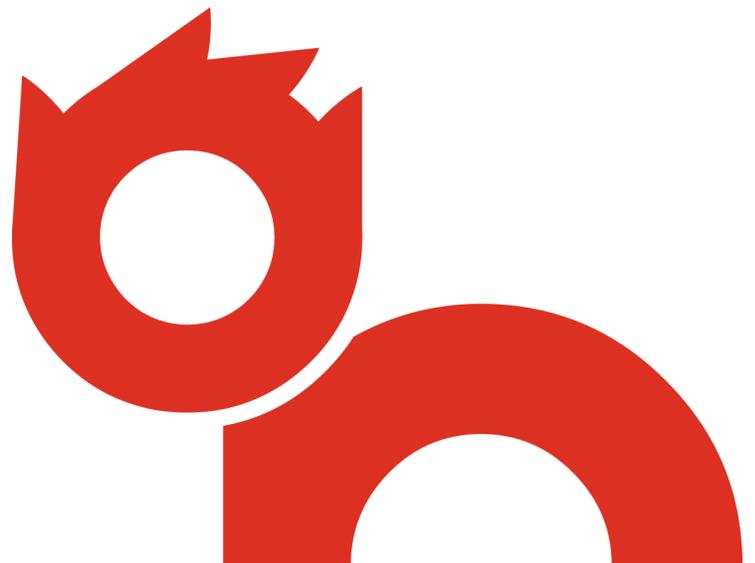
Everyone who works in the world of education has one goal in mind: increase student success.

With a clear voice and communication strategy, your school or district can not only attract the best students and staff, but also engage the community in your mission. After working with thousands of schools and districts, we've learned which marketing methods are most effective in K-12 education. In this e-book, we're sharing our best tips to help your school or district community thrive.

About Edlio

Edlio is a team of engineers, designers, project managers and support staff. We work together to create the best school-to-home tools for schools and school districts in the US and Latin America. With over 16 years of expertise and thousands of supported websites, we know what schools and districts need to keep their communities connected and thriving.

This is Spike, Edlio's lion mascot!



Tip 1:

Define your brand &
purpose



TIP 1: DEFINE YOUR BRAND AND PURPOSE

What makes you unique?

Your story should clearly convey why your school or district is one-of-a-kind. How did your school or district get started? What specific traits or features differentiate your school? Is your school focused on a certain area like the arts or STEM, or does your district consistently perform well on standardized tests or athletics? Do prospective parents love the Chromebooks each student has access to, the Student-Led Conferences or your nationally recognized dance program?

What's your school's culture?

What is it like stepping into the halls of your school? Are there any traditions or legacies that have been adopted by your staff and students? Show your current and prospective families and staff what makes your school or district the perfect fit for their children to flourish. Convey your school as not only a place for learning, but also a community of friendly colleagues, attentive administrators and appreciative families.

USE THE BRANDING WORKSHEET TO DEFINE YOUR BRAND.

Bring it all together

Try to write a unique value proposition, or a one-to-two sentence statement that makes your school stand out from the rest. Use this as the guide for all of your marketing efforts. Your brand defines what kind of copy you write and the look and feel of your website, brochures and banners.

TIP 1: DEFINE YOUR BRAND AND PURPOSE

Branding Worksheet

Our school's culture is...

Try envisioning your school as a person. List some of their personality traits.

Example: If you think of the Nike brand as a person, you may think of a very enthusiastic athletic trainer in yoga pants or exercise shorts, ready to take on her next challenge. Or maybe you can envision Harvard as a shrewd and well-spoken man with dark-rimmed glasses, hair slicked back, wearing a tailored suit and tie.

We're great at...

What are you known for? Why do students choose your school?

Only our school has...

What makes your school or district stand out?

Tip 2:

Create a beautiful website



TIP 2: CREATE A BEAUTIFUL WEBSITE

Your greatest marketing tool...

is your website. It often serves as your first point of contact with prospective families and staff and is integral to making a good first impression. So put your best foot forward with a beautiful, intuitive website!

Highlight unique benefits.

Is your school big on the arts? Create a slideshow gallery with the images of your students' work. Is your district great at sports? Have a video on your homepage displaying some of your teams' highlights. Present statistical information such as college acceptances, teacher-to-student ratio and other key features of your school or district with infographics. Get creative with it!

Make it easy to find information.

Think about who is visiting your site and what their objectives are. Potential families may be looking for admission deadlines. Students and parents want to sign up for the newsletter and easily locate the school calendar. Create quick links to key pages like About Us, Classes and Staff Directory to make your site's information easily accessible.

Set up a clear path for admissions. Put everything prospective families need to know on your admissions page. Outline the enrollment cycle, requirements, dates and deadlines for your potential new families. And make sure to include a button or link to the page in your main navigation.

Keep all websites within a district consistent.

School districts: ensure a consistent look and feel between the different schools within your district. Keep it cohesive! Try using similar fonts, color schemes, or website layouts among schools.

Tip 3:

Drive traffic to your website



TIP 3: DRIVE TRAFFIC TO YOUR WEBSITE

Meet prospective families and faculty halfway.

It's no surprise that a large majority of families and faculty start their search online, so helping them discover your site should be a top priority. Consider reaching out to prospective families and faculty where they're already looking by utilizing online advertisement methods. Target families near you on social media channels with the date and time of your Open House in a promoted or sponsored post on Facebook or Twitter. If your site is lagging behind other schools or districts in Google search rankings, consider using Google Adwords, especially if you are a newer school.

Expand your efforts offline.

Use signs, local newspaper advertisements and mailing flyers. Design a creative flyer to announce your school is hosting an event to attract families in a wider range. Don't forget to include links to your website for those that want to read more about your school!

Centralized your online presence.

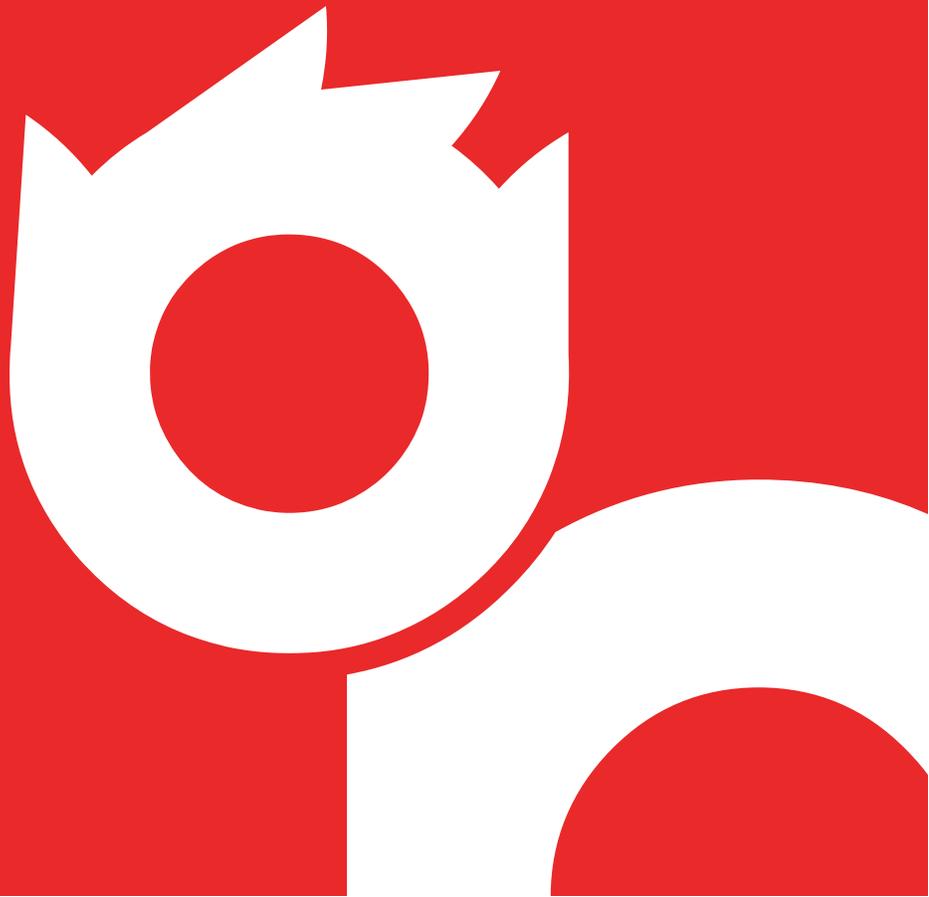
Write up interesting content for the visitors of your site; announce special events happening at your school or feature publications written by students. Unique content will make it easier for your website to be found in search results. Linking your social media posts back to your website will also help increase traffic to your site.

Gain a deeper understanding of the impact of your advertisements.

For the more advanced marketers out there, use Google Analytics and tracking links in your campaigns to measure traffic and better understand the effects of your specific marketing efforts.

Tip 4:

Leverage your existing
community



TIP 4: LEVERAGE YOUR EXISTING COMMUNITY

The best form of advertising is through word of mouth.

The most impactful advertisements are organic, genuine endorsements from those who are happy with your school or district. Encourage your families to share their experiences with others and to post to your social media pages and other online communities.

Give your community a voice.

Feature testimonials from parents, students and faculty throughout your site. Talk about a student who has been excelling thanks to an influential teacher or how a class has taken up a cause close to their hearts as their class project. Through these real stories, potential families can get to know more about what makes you unique.

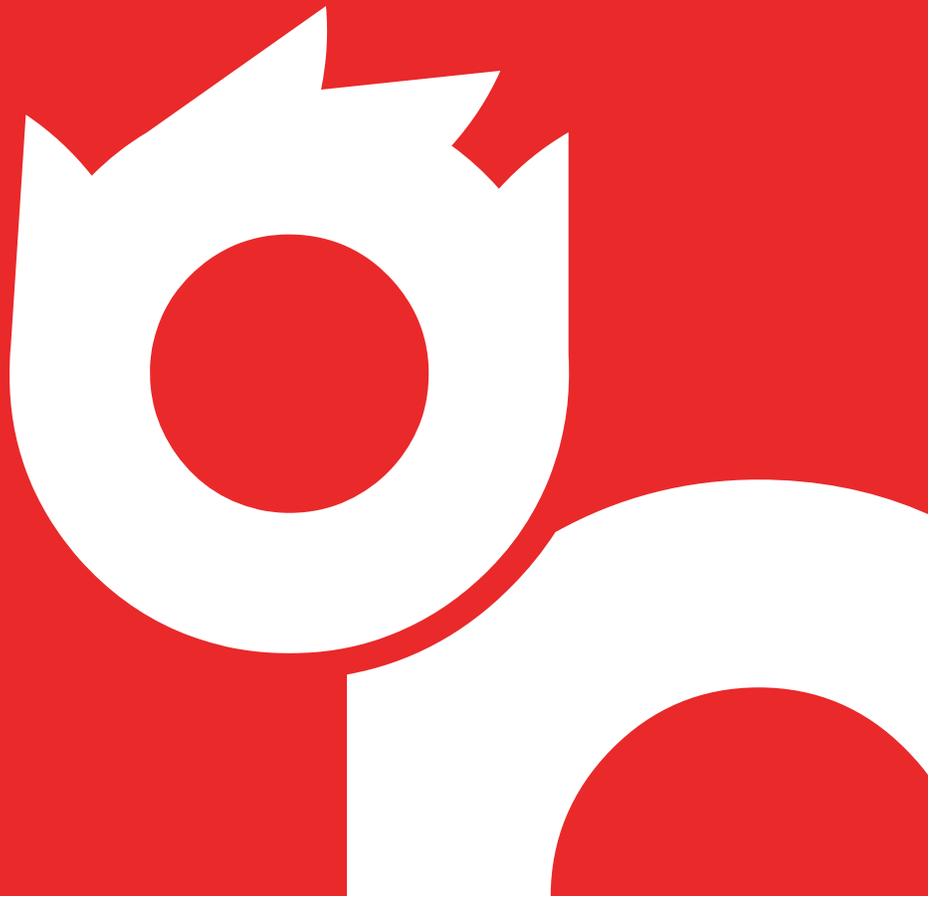
Keep your community connected.

Create a stronger community by providing the option to subscribe to a monthly school newsletter. Posting about upcoming events every month like performances, bonding activities, and charity events will help nurture established relationship and build new ones.



Tip 5:

Keep it consistent!



TIP 5: KEEP IT CONSISTENT

Keep your content consistent with your brand's unique personality.

Give your copy a voice that reflects your brand's personality. Maybe an elementary school would be inclined to use informal vocabulary and a welcoming tone, whereas a college prep would be will likely to use formal vernacular and a sophisticated tone. Colors, fonts, and other aesthetic elements of your school's content should also be consistent with your brand. Lighter, brighter color schemes and quirky fonts may be seen as friendly, and more minimalistic color schemes and clean fonts may come off as more refined.

If you're a district, make sure to keep your message uniform between schools.

Consistency is key, both in content and aesthetics. Using the same website and communications solution throughout a district can ensure consistency, and having multi-admin capabilities can make it easier for districts to keep a tab on its schools' communications to ensure they're in line with the district's image.

Keep it Consistent with a Branding Style Guide

Name

Mission Statement

Motto

Logo Renditions

Color Schemes

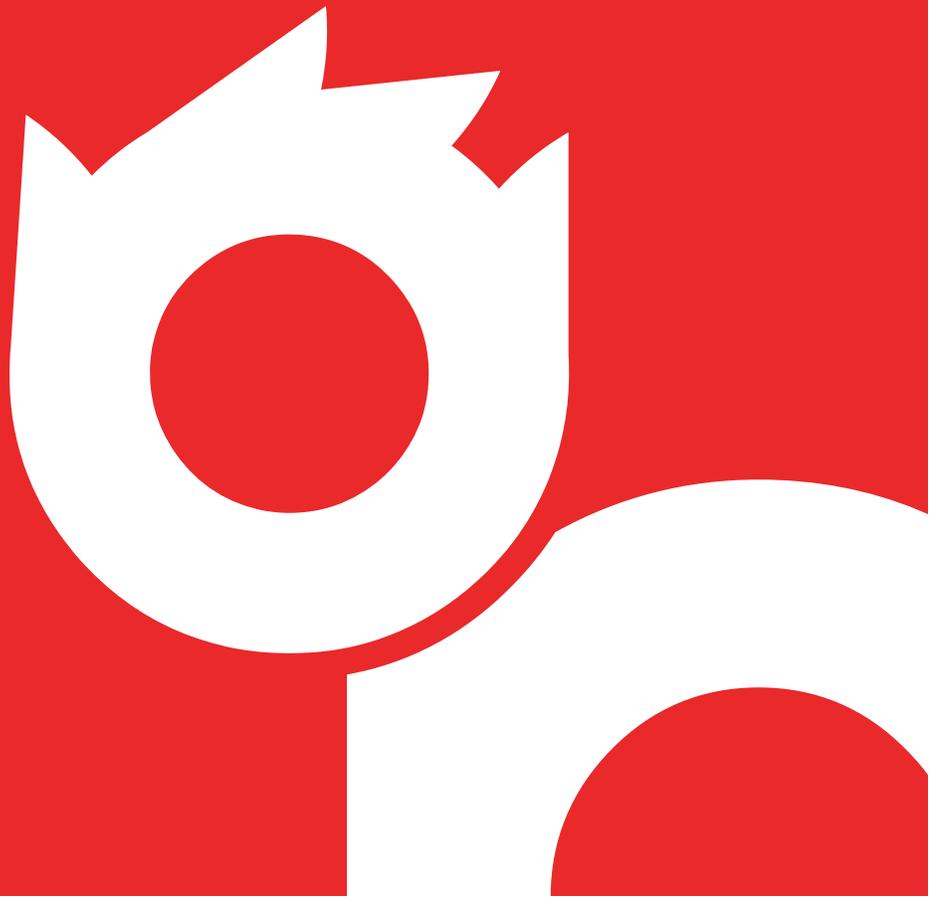
Typography

Graphics

Copy Aesthetics & Tone

Tip 6:

Formulate a plan



TIP 6: FORMULATE A PLAN

The key is to keep at it!

Formulate a plan to define your school or district's personality and consistently update your website and social media to foster relationships among families and faculty. With time and persistence, your efforts will be rewarded.

What's in a week?

Prepare a school week's worth of social media, blog, and newsletter posts. Keep in mind that there are better times to post. For example, social media posts tend to have the most traction on Thursday afternoons.

M

T

W

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F

Marketing Glossary

Analytics: analyzing data trends in marketing efforts to better inform future marketing decisions

Copy: written text, as opposed to visual elements

Content: information that is meant to be digested and engaged in, such as social media posts, blog posts, videos, photos, or slideshows

Infographic: a graphic that visualizes numerical or statistical information in an easy-to-understand way

Multi-admin capabilities: a software that allows for multiple administrator users

Responsive Design: a website that optimizes itself based on the screen dimensions of a viewer

Search Engine Optimization: increasing the chances of a webpage ranking high on search engine results

Typography: the art and technique pertaining to text style and arrangement

Unique value proposition: also known as a unique selling proposition, this is a few sentence statement that describes what differentiates your brand from your competitors' brands

Word-of-mouth advertising: the passing of information between people, refers to both in-person and online communications