
HOW TO MAKE YOUR STUDENT RECRUITMENT EVENTS MEMORABLE

E-BOOK



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HOW TO MAKE YOUR STUDENT RECRUITMENT EVENTS MEMORABLE



"At The Lisbon MBA, we organise Masterclasses, and we also invite our students and alumni to contribute - currently, our most successful events are those where we invite students and alumni to share their experiences."

Marta Andaluz, Director of Marketing & Admissions
at The Lisbon MBA

In a digital age, it's important not to ignore the significance of face-to-face interaction

Targeted advertising, an SEO optimised website and an engaged social media following are all incredibly important when it comes to attracting students to an institution. Without a strong online presence, universities risk losing out to competition in what is - let's face it - an increasingly competitive sector.

Digital omnipresence is mandatory, yes, but events can make a lasting impression on prospective students and they can be the deciding factor when it comes to submitting an application. These events are what arouses a prospect's interest in an authentic way by drawing on the experiences of former student and offer a real insight into what life is really like on campus. Events are an opportunity to forge an emotional connection between students, admissions staff, academics and when necessary, parents. Their aim should be to create a lasting impression!

The key to creating a successful student event is to focus on who you want to attract, how you're going to engage them and ultimately, the actions you want them to take. A memorable event will get people talking about your institution, increase word-of-mouth recommendations and help distinguish you from other competitors who adopt a purely digital approach. How are you going to instil your message and make it really stick?

About this ebook

This ebook aims to equip university admissions and marketing professionals with the tools they need to plan, promote, run and evaluate their student recruitment events successfully. It can also be used as a source of inspiration for those seeking ideas for the types of events and activities they can organise on campus.

The Lisbon MBA, Frankfurt School of Finance and Management and Imperial Business School have contributed commentary and working examples of bespoke student recruitment events that have proven successful for their institutions.

Types of student recruitment events

Most people associate student recruitment events with university open days, but there are many different kinds of event that fall under this category. Universities should consider each as a lucrative way of attracting new students and promoting themselves.

Recruitment fair / Open day

This type of event enables students to explore not only the campus and the different courses on offer, but the university's culture too. It provides them with the opportunity to ask about accommodation and the admissions process itself so they can make an informed decision and resolve any queries.

Universities can also attend national or international recruitment fairs alongside other institutions to give prospects the opportunity to compare the options in one place.



Tip: Schedule a 'teaching showcase' in the day's itinerary to give applicants a chance to meet academics and get taste of course content and what lectures will be like.

On-campus interview

An interview may seem like a personal affair, but when it's coupled with other activities, it becomes an event in itself. It's still important to engage applicants when they've reached this stage in the process, and pairing interviewees with current students or alumni will help cultivate a sense of belonging.



Tip: For group interviews, get students to play a game first to give them an opportunity to get to know each other.

Off-campus interview

People, particularly prospective postgraduate students, lead busy lives, and the idea of taking a whole day off to attend an open day can be unpractical and even impossible for those working full time or with children. Instead, a shorter meetup in a central location may be a better option.



Tip: Meet candidates over a coffee, like Imperial Business School does (click were to see)

Digital events

The digitalisation of the student recruitment process not only saves staff time, but makes the process more inclusive and accessible for candidates. Online open days benefit those who cannot attend a physical event for whatever reason, and webinars enrich the recruitment process - they can be downloaded or revisited at any time.

Marta Andaluz of The Lisbon MBA explains:

"If you're not doing webinars, you should really try it. Nowadays, it's quite affordable to access a good webinar platform, and with it you can reach prospective students everywhere. Use examples while presenting your programs, and share your students/alumni stories."



TIP: For course-focused webinars, make the topic more engaging by exploring things outside the programme's content, like location: "Study a world-renowned MBA in the city ranked 'Europe's best place to live!'"

Examples of successful events

Student recruitment events provide universities with the chance to showcase their strengths and communicate their culture and ethos to prospective students. They can be the deciding factor for candidates who are on the fence about whether or not to apply.

It is important, therefore, to run events that aren't just memorable, but authentic and properly targeted. In order to do this every aspect of the day needs to be planned, from the timing of the event to the speakers chosen.

Design events that will appeal to your audience

Frankfurt School of Finance and Management runs both Masters and MBA programmes. They organise a monthly information evening for their MBA course, whereas they host a bi-yearly Open Day for their Bachelor programmes. Applying to university is a big investment which is why it's important to design events that fit around the applicant's lifestyle and schedule.

Frankfurt School of Finance and Management's Marketing Manager, Niklas Schroder, explains:

"We recently started to run a few monthly Bachelor info evenings as well to see if it works. However, it turns out that our bi-yearly Bachelor recruitment event is better received by our prospects as it takes place on a Saturday and the young high school students most often come with their parents.

With this setup we are able to get a large number of people onto our campus. Our Master and MBA info events are much smaller and serve as an after work and networking event. Moreover the events have established themselves in the market and we follow a consistent marketing strategy for both formats."




Frankfurt School of Finance and Management Masters and MBA info evenings are conducted on the rooftop terrace with view on the Frankfurt skyline.

The traditional 'recruitment fair' isn't always appropriate

Imperial Business School runs a range of events catering to both 'home grown' and international students, all with the aim of imparting knowledge in an interactive way. The college runs information sessions that involve a taster lecture so that applicants get a taste for what and how they will be learning on the course. These events dedicate networking time at the end so give people the space to interact with staff, ask questions and get a feel for what the environment is like at the institution.

It is also important to cater for international students when scheduling events for the upcoming year too, whether the aim is to encourage them to enroll on an online course or to attract them to the campus. Instead of replying on online forums and Q&As (although these do prove fruitful when it comes to international student recruitment), why not host these events in the places in which you aim to recruit? Imperial Business School runs 'Coffee Chats' and 'MBA World Tours' across the globe, from Sydney to Shanghai, where applicants can interact with faculty and admissions staff in an intimate setting.



Meeting Imperial staff and alumni is a great way to find out if an Imperial course is right for you.

At the information session you will be provided with an introduction to our suite of Business School programmes, an overview of the programme structures and a presentation from each of our wonderful alumni Kevin Elliot and John Trieste at the wonderful James New York Hotel. There will also be a Q&A panel consisting of current students and alumni giving you the opportunity to learn more about the programmes from a first-hand perspective.

Date: 13/09/2018

Time: 18.00 - 22.00

Location: The James New York, NoMad - 22 E 29th St, New York, NY 10016, USA

Audience: Prospective Students

Event Type: Recruitment

Contact: Luis Granja

[Sign up now](#)

SHARE

Candidates can bring their CV along for an in-person profile review or just join for a coffee and an informal chat.

Create a checklist

Innovative and creative ideas will make events memorable, but the backbone of any great event lies in the planning. Thorough planning will ensure everything runs smoothly, not only on the day but in the promotional and reflection phase too.

Use a checklist like this one and share it with everyone involved in the event.

- Establish event KPIs and goals
- Define Logistics Budget
- Define Event Promotion Budget
- Identify & contact speakers/sponsors
- Enable Online Registration
- Venue/logistics planning
- Create Promotional Strategy
- Create event webpage
- Finalise event speech and logistics
- Ensure event signage is in place
- Conduct post-event survey
- Follow-up with participants, speakers and sponsors
- Conduct a feedback survey

Get a comprehensive version of our event checklist.

[DOWNLOAD](#)



Promote your event

Promotion is just as important as execution; it's important to get the message out there to the appropriate people via the right channels. There are a number of ways you can do this.

Create a landing page

Create a landing page dedicated to the event that includes a user-friendly registration form to enable you to track attendance and start building profiles on prospective students.

- Include a brief summary of the event if possible, a timetable of activities so people know what to expect
- At the bottom, include short profiles of the staff who will be leading the event so prospects can identify them on the day
- Obviously, all key information such as time and date should be highlighted
- Optimise the page for SEO by including main search terms and concise tags to get the page ranking on Google
- Don't forget to place social media buttons above the fold so that visitors can share the event with their own followers

Interested?

YES MAYBE NO

FIRST NAME *

LAST NAME *

COUNTRY *
Select an option

EMAIL ADDRESS *

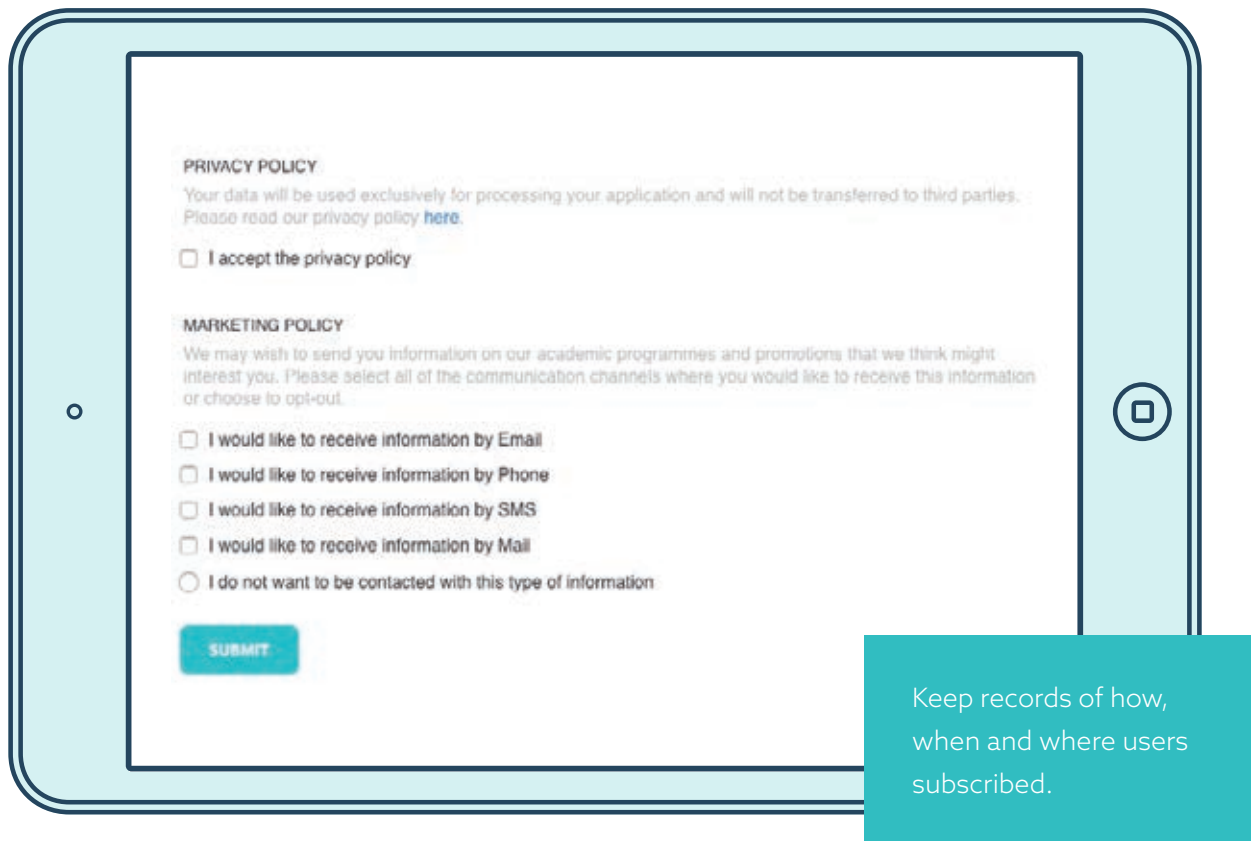
WHEN WOULD YOU LIKE TO START YOUR STUDIES (YEAR)? *
Select an option

WHERE DID YOU LEARN ABOUT F5 BACHELOR DAY? *
Select some options

Landing Page example.
Source: Frankfurt School
of Finance & Management

Remember to adhere to GDPR when capturing data on individuals and follow up with well-timed email reminders. Segment your audience and advertise on a variety of different platforms such as Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook and Google AdWords. Rather than investing all the budget into one platform, you can reach a wider audience across many channels.

There are several ways a university can segment an audience; by undergraduate / postgraduate study, location, interests, age and interests.



Integrate online and offline promotion

Use your digital channels to create a buzz around the event in the build up to it - utilise social channels and the blog to do so. Make downloadable material like maps and the schedule for the day easy to print. If you have time and access to the right resources, why not consider developing an app where users can access the timetable, have access to travel information and read up on the profiles of speakers?

Partner with other agencies

Depending on budget, consider placing ads in local publications or industry-related outlets. For instance, you might want to consider sharing news of an MBA open day with startup and career development publications. Get posters printed and approach local institutions like libraries to display them.

Make next year even better!

In order to make the next event even more successful, it's important to think carefully about how the most recent one played out. To calculate a return on investment convert the goals set out in the planning phase into clear key performance indicators that can be measured.

The number of shares and likes on social media pages, an increase in visits to the related pages on the website and number of prospectus downloads are all key success indicators. However, perhaps the clearest and most tangible success indicator is the ability to see who applied following the event.

Marta Andaluz, Director of Marketing & Admissions at The Lisbon MBA describes how her department measures success:

*"We check the number of attendees of course, but we also look for the status of the attendee. We believe an event was a success when it attracted many future students. **Our higher education CRM** makes evaluating the success of events easy."*

In order to cultivate that emotional connection, ensure you collate every valuable piece of data, from enquiries to prospectus downloads to website visits. You can go on to use this data to build a detailed picture of what is important to each visitor and what makes them tick.

Ideas for inspiration

Feel free to use the following ideas to inject a bit of fun into your student recruitment event and make it truly memorable. After all, the average person can only concentrate properly for a very short amount of time - and that's only if they are invested in what they are watching the first place!

Interests

Consider connecting event attendees through their interests and passions rather than the course they are applying to. One way of doing this is to dedicate a portion of the day to exploring what societies people can join - and invite an ambassador from each.

Treasure hunt

Create an engaging treasure hunt-style activity that uses an interactive map - smartphone required - to follow clues and find 'treasure' in the form of fascinating facts about the institution. The incentive? A free meal at a local restaurant or get invited to your Student's Society next LAN Party.

Party bags

So much of our communication happens online but people still appreciate tangible things. Differentiate your university from its competitors by giving out gifts to attendees - branded items that they will find useful, or "Instagrammable"!

Inspirational stories

Use your alumni to inspire prospective students at your event and give them a platform on which to share their story. Think about graduates who have become successful entrepreneurs, or perhaps those who have pursued an unlikely route post-education.



Thank you

We hope you found this ebook useful. FULL FABRIC's event management feature enables you to schedule events and track their success through a student database and inbuilt reporting. For more information, **contact us today**.

About us

We are a group of higher ed professionals, technologists, designers, marketers and entrepreneurs on a mission to improve student relationship management.

We are proud to be helping top institutions around the world deliver a world-class experience to their applicants, students, alumni and staff. The success we have experienced over the last few years inspires us to continue to innovate our thinking and develop technology with a purpose.

We have
perfected
the student
admissions
journey.



SEE IT IN ACTION

FULL FABRIC



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