



Developing an Aggressive Marketing Program

Redeemer Christian School, Mesa, AZ

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Project Summary

Background

Our school was in dire need of a comprehensive marketing program. While charter schools flourish in the Phoenix area, local Christian school enrollments suffer. An additional complication is the minimal support from area church leaders to encourage church members to raise their children in Christian school. Previous years' shot-gun marketing efforts at RCS had been ineffective, yielding little result.

Purpose

The purpose of our project was to create an aggressive marketing plan that reflected our passion and zeal for Christian education and the vision and mission of Redeemer Christian School.

About Redeemer Christian School

RCS is a classical Christian school located in Mesa, Arizona, and was founded in 1980. The school is a ministry of Church of the Redeemer, a reformed, evangelical fellowship, also in Mesa. The school serves students K through 12. Current enrollment is 70 students.



Project Results

Surveyed research of best practices in Christian school marketing

- Resources included: Collin's *Good to Great*, ACSI's seminars on "Rebranding and Marketing the Christian School," Spector's *The Nordstrom Way*, Krause and Rogalski's *Marketing Christian Schools: The Definitive Guide*, and others.

Established a marketing task force

- A task force was formed of parents and staff who had experience or vision for marketing the school (parent promoters, entrepreneurs, businessmen, teachers, principal).

School board provided an expense line from the school budget.

- The RCS Board appropriated \$1500 annually for marketing expenses.

Key Features of our Marketing Plan:

- Annual Marketing Calendar was developed to time the action of specific annual tasks.
- RCS "customer service" was standardized in policy and procedures.
- Administrative Calendar was developed.
- All staff job descriptions were modified to include an aspect of marketing the school.
- Visually appealing, user-friendly website upgrade is in progress.

What We Have Learned

Successes

- A school marketing plan was developed. We finally have a plan based upon wise counsel and pray that God will bless our steps.
- Other aspects of our school improved as we focused on developing the marketing plan: improved administrative and office organization, expanded role of marketing to include all staff, improved parent relations and school communications, improved facilities, developed vision for new school programs.

Difficulties

- Change is difficult for stagnant systems. New ways of serving the school were resisted. We had to develop or die.
- Old marketing methods were not fruitful with modern day families. Administrators were reluctant to try new ideas and spend money. Parents and committee members were frustrated.
- Enrollment growth was slow and results were not immediate. We doubted our progress.

Wisdom to Share

- In comparison to past groups of parents, Generation X parents pose some very different changes in the Christian school's service and in marketing to them.
- A commonly overseen but instrumental aspect in marketing: Customer service that the school office provides parents and visitors.

