EFFECTIVE PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES
Attract students to your events
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ABOUT THE SURVEY

This one-question survey was emailed to a 1824 student activities, 6045 career services, and 8704 student government professionals across the country from all different size institutions on May 5, 2006. It received 541 responses.

GIVE US FEEDBACK

Due to the tremendous success of this first survey, we will be launching more surveys. Please email mds269@stern.nyu.edu if you have suggestions on how to improve the report’s format or if you’d like to recommend a question. If you find the report helpful, it would be very much appreciated if you could email me a 1-2 sentence testimonial.

ABOUT EXTREME ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION (EEEC)

The Extreme Entrepreneurship Education Corporation (EEEC) is a New York based, media and education company dedicated to helping college students plan, prioritize, and pursue their own vision in life by utilizing the entrepreneurial mindset. Our books, online community, and speaking all focus on the objective of providing students the tools and inspiration they need to create a life of passion, purpose, and prosperity.

To learn about bringing a speaker to your school, using our online community, or purchasing our books, visit http://www.extremee.org/.
ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Michael Simmons (24), co-founder of Extreme Entrepreneurship Education and bestselling author of *The Student Success Manifesto*, has been a keynote speaker on the topics of student success and youth entrepreneurship at events and conferences from California to Washington D.C. As a 2005 graduate of New York University, an author, a teacher, a speaker, and an award-winning entrepreneur, he is able to deliver a unique perspective that connects with college audiences.

Michael co-founded his first business, Princeton WebSolutions (PWS), when he was sixteen years old. PWS was later rated the #1 youth-run web development company in the nation by Youngbiz Magazine. In addition, Michael has been the winner of three entrepreneur of the year awards from the National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship, Fleet, and the National Coalition for Empowering Youth Entrepreneurship. Furthermore, as president of the Entrepreneurial Exchange Group (EEG) at NYU, the club received NYU’s most prestigious student activities recognition, the President's Service Award.

Patricia Hudak (22) is a 2006 graduate of New York University and is the co-author of the soon to be launched *Student Success Manifesto Life Planning Guide*. While serving as Vice President of the Entrepreneurial Exchange Group (EEG), in her senior year of college, she founded and managed a student-operated café. From the success of the café, EEG was awarded with The Best New Initiative Award from the Inter-Club Council at NYU’s Stern School of Business. Currently, she is starting an educational non-profit for children in the Lower East Side of New York called Iluminar.
A few weeks ago, I sent out an email to student affairs professionals asking one simple question, "What is your single most effective practice for attracting students to your events?" I remember saying to myself that if I received 20 responses, I would call the report a success. Now, a few weeks later, over 540 responses have come in!

Patricia and I have spent over 80 hours organizing the data into the report you are now reading. To my knowledge, there is no other document in existence with so many creative ideas for promoting events on your campus! Consider the possibility that if you use a few or even just one powerful idea, you could save yourself a lot of time, and dramatically increase your attendance!

The submissions you will read in this document come from colleges and universities of different types, sizes, and locations. Furthermore, rather than include every single response, we only included the best representative entry for each idea. Each bullet point in the report is an actual submission from a contributor.

Directly below this letter, you will see a summary pie chart and frequency table that summarizes all of the data we received. Please note that many people gave more than one idea, and we did include each idea as part of the tally.

I hope you find the report helpful and I wish you success on your upcoming school year.

Sincerely,

Michael Simmons
Category Percentages

Frequency Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Giveaways</td>
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<td>Programming</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing Tips</td>
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</tr>
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</table>
FACULTY PROMOTION

The contributors to this report look at faculty as a crucial component of their event promotion. As such, many of you have deep partnerships with faculty that not only include promotion, but also planning. The two most common ways that faculty promote their events to students are:

1. Offering extra credit
2. Making the event(s) mandatory

Report Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty Promotion</th>
<th>Extra Credit</th>
<th>Mandatory</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extra Credit

- Getting our professors to offer extra credit gets students to our events. We have a lot of support from the staff and faculty on our campus. When we have an event that relates to classes, we contact those professors and they encourage their students to come out and participate often by offering extra credit.

- That's easy - In addition to all the usual things, like advertising in school publications, putting posters in the hallways, sending emails to students, writing on the white boards in key classrooms, if we really need to ensure attendance at a particular event, etc., we find classes for which the event is most appropriate and ask the teachers of those classes to offer extra credit for showing up. It works like a charm!

- Enlist faculty members teaching selected courses to award 2 points of extra credit on the next test for student attendance at an event. This assures that the faculty member will promote the event in class, when students are paying attention. Many faculty members will include the information in their course syllabus as well. An attendance list is then entered into an excel spreadsheet and made available to the professors.
• Working with faculty to encourage students to attend the events. For example, some faculty members will let students out of class to attend a career fair or make a workshop part of their homework assignment.

• The single most effective practice for attracting students to our events has been my collaboration with faculty members. Initially I worked with one professor who offered students extra credit points for attending our seminars - and that response has been phenomenal. Granted some students are only there for the "points" but most take something away from each of the seminars that they attend - many have told me that just one workshop has changed their entire career focus. I've also noticed that other faculty and programs have begun offering this as an option as well. I worked closely with the faculty to devise a method for tracking attendance and dealing with other issues which arose but overall it has been amazing. One semester we had over 800 attendees to our seminars.

• Our most effective tool is persuading a faculty member to give extra credit toward a class (or 1 point on the final exam) if the class participants attends the specific Career event. It is amazing what students will do for even one point or class credit – and many admit they realize the programs are helpful to them anyway – but the extra incentive really gets them there.

**Mandatory**

• The best practice is something I never had anything to do with, but it increased attendance at career services events 3- to 4-fold. I work only with graduate-level social work students. The faculty instituted a system of "professional development hours," where students are expected to accumulate at least 30 such hours per academic year, on the honor system. I questioned the rise in attendance and found out that a number of students were counting our workshops toward those hours, so I inquired and was able to formalize our programs as counting toward those hours.

• The single most effective practice we use for attracting students to our events is to have faculty require attendance as part of a class.

• For us here at a community college, the best way to attract students to an event is to outline the benefits for them and to get the faculty to buy into the program. I work well in advance so that I can get certain faculty to include the events that are pertinent to their
curriculum in their respective class syllabi.

Other

- My single most effective practice is working in conjunction with faculty and academic affairs administrators to ensure my events are embedded within their curriculum. If my area programs events that explicitly support learning taking place within the classroom, this greatly impacts the number of students who attend. After having strategically done this for three years now, I am in a great position where faculty actually contacts me to initiate campus programs, knowing that our area has funding to host events that support their students' learning.

- Without a doubt the times I get the best turnout to events is when I can get the professors on campus to push the event. We are a small campus; ~2300 undergrad and grads. In March, we had a Career and Lay Vocations Fair with 58 employers participating. We had 400 students attend. From what I hear from other schools our size that is a great turnout. I truly give the credit to the professors. They encourage the students to attend and they LISTEN! Wow!

- Buy-in from faculty! For Career Expos and Networking Receptions, my best turnout occurs when faculty encourage their students to attend and even bring their classes to the events. Because we are relatively small school (approximately 1,000 students), this is easier for me than at a large institution.

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Top 7 Ways to Make Faculty Connections

1. Offer to speak in their class to promote the event
2. Take a food basket to all faculty loungers the first day of class in the fall with a note.
3. Send a bright colored, laminated calendar of events to each faculty member before they print their syllabi
4. Email the faculty about upcoming events and ask them to announce it in their classes
5. Host departmental luncheons and have your office’s staff provide information and answer questions
6. Invite the faculty to come eat (no charge) with the employers participating at your job fairs and students at your events
7. Get the Dean of Faculty’s support
PERSONAL PROMOTION FROM YOUR OFFICE

In order to gain the attention of college students in this media saturated world, you must separate yourself from the clutter. Personally promoting your events is one particularly effective way to do this. Through personally connecting with students, you will not only get better attendance at your events, but also, a deeper understanding of their needs, wants and concerns.

Report Data

**Personal Promotion**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tabling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Excited Programmers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mascot/Costume</td>
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**Personal Promotion Frequency Table**

<table>
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<th>Frequency</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tabling</td>
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<td>Excited Programmers</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mascot/Costume</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Talking to Students

- In my experience the most effective practice for attracting students to various events is a personal (meaning in-person), one-on-one invitation to the event. This method has much better results than the ordinary 'flyer in the mailbox' or email invitation since you get an automatic confirmation or rejection to event.

- Excellent customer service! Without this rapport already being established, beginning at Orientation, we would draw far less. Students know from the get go that they can rely on me and my staff for accurate and timely information. We recognize their needs and make sure they are being met.

- When I see students on campus, I tell them about a specific event and why I think they might be interested and then say, “Hope to see you there”.

- Talking to them one on one. Letting them know what the value of the event will be to them and what they should expect from it.

- Now, if what you are asking is, why do they attend at all? I believe it's because I am in touch with students and alumni on a
daily basis and ask them and know about their concerns; when they are available to attend events, etc. and that information is the basis of what services, events and topics I cover/offer for the particular student population that I serve.

- I personally feel that advertisement and PR of an event is important and the most effective way to do this is not to put up poster or flyers, but rather make face-to-face contact. Even if it only for two hours a day, having someone walk around handing out information and talking to students about the event will do more than blanketing the school with posters and chalking. There are generally so many of the normal forms of advertising that no one even pays attention to them anymore. Unless you can get them to stop their normal routine for a second and open up a dialogue with you, there is only a very small chance that they will even think about going to the event.

- My most effective method for attracting students to events is to personally invite those I know through individual interactions, and ask them to invite friends. They are personally invested in a relationship with me and trust me to provide relevant, beneficial programs for them. They are also able to offer advice and assistance to their friends and colleagues by including them. Related, it is also effective to ask student leaders from various student groups to invest in the event by volunteering. They are the best advocates for getting other students to attend, which is part of what makes them leaders, involvement and influence.

**Tabling**

- We utilize our student assistants to sit at a table in the cafeteria to discuss and encourage students to participate.

- My single most effective practice for attracting students to events is to play loud music in the quad and have free food for passer bys.

- We have booths in the University Center concourse and the dining center and talk about events with passerby.

**Excited Programmers**

- Make sure that the people planning the event are enthusiastic about it. If they are unable to sell it via word of mouth, then no one will attend. However, if the people planning it are enthusiastic and tell all of their friends, the word will spread.
Showing the students how much I care about that specific program. Sometimes that works in getting them to programs!

I have found that the single most effective practice for attracting students to our events is programmers being excited for the event and promoting via word of mouth.

Get out of the career center and meet faculty and staff and students. Attend their events, classes and meetings. Get to know the student club leaders. Build relationships with them. Then, when you send them an email, it belongs to someone they know. There is a face with the name. Flyers and posters for events are then perceived as events in their world and relevant to their interests. A well timed, energetic stand up about your next event to an "inter club council" meeting for instance, will be much more interesting to the student if they know you from a presentation you have done for their club or in their classroom already.

In a sense, it's something like "lifestyle marketing" or creating a word of mouth reputation for your service/dept. If you get into their activities a little bit, they will buy your "product" when you ask them to, because they will perceive it as being more relevant and credible. Get out to their events and they will come out to get to yours! It really works for me. In addition to just building relationships for when you have an event, I have found that getting out and talking about the event is also very effective. An in person, live promotion directly to an audience that already knows you works magic.

My best practice is very simple - I should be there for the event, too! I am amazed at how this simple rule gets violated...

Mascot/Costumes

Our mascot walks around on campus before the event handing out quarter sheet flyers. Typically the mascot is wearing an article of clothing dealing with the event, i.e.: an apron and chef's hat when we have a barbeque or a red shirt that says donate blood for the blood drives. Our mascot walks from office to office the morning before the event carrying a picket sign advertising whatever is going on that day.

We put up a GIANT banner in the entrance to the building and conduct our event in the foyer of the business school, complete with themed costumes. In resume training events where we dressed up as resume doctors and conducted a “Resume Emergency Room” in
the foyer. Doing this we went from 3-10 people coming to resume workshops, to about 100 people/day participating.

- Wearing t-shirts the day of activities with the phrase “EVENT TODAY, ASK ME” on the front and back.

- Utilizing students to perform 'staged' stunts on the plaza during our peak hours (MWF, 12-1p) to get the attention of our students.
GENERAL STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

As several contributors have pointed out, college students not only should be in your audience, they also should be your collaborator. Many of you found ways to involve students in the planning and promoting of your events.

Report Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Student Involvement</th>
<th>28%</th>
<th>34%</th>
<th>38%</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Leadership Involvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-Sponsorship</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Students Running the Programs

- I have been in my profession since 1971, and I feel that the best way to get students to events is to apply common sense to the process. First, I ALWAYS listen to my students. They are the "experts" when it comes to programming. They know what they want, and they know how to make events successful. For example, our student program group recently had a very successful concert, over 3,000 students attended. How did this happen?? Simply the students put a web event page on FACEBOOK and integrated regard the event with students months prior to the show. We need to LISTEN to our students and “Give Them the Ball". They know how to make things happen.

- My single best simple practice for attracting students to my events – is student involvement in the planning and execution of the event. If student clubs, organizations, or Greeks are involved and responsible for some aspect of the event – they will want it to succeed. Therefore they will be sure that all their members attend and they spread the word via student to student – which is much more effective than any banner, flyer, or poster I put up.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Involvement Frequency Table</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students Running Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Leadership Involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-Sponsorship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• If I’m having a carnival and I get the Greek community to sponsor certain parts of it - a couple fraternities to set up, some sororities to provide the manpower needed to run the games, and the service fraternity or organization to help clean up – then I know these folks have an investment in getting folks there. So they will be sure their members come and participate, plus they will spread the word to others! Or if I’m doing a bonfire/music night – maybe I get the outdoor Adventure Club to help build the bonfire, the Residence Life Staff to bring food and snacks (can’t have a bon fire without s’mores), and maybe the Student Government Association to oversee the advertising and hosting the band – or even providing their own student DJ!

• I think that no amount of press and posting can compete with some effective word-of-mouth and hype among students. If students are part of planning the event, take advantage of their connections and highlight them as contributors. Students respond the most when they see that their peers have really dedicated some time and effort to the event because they can trust more in the quality of the event.

• Student input is critical for at least three reasons: 1) If the event is planned for students, we need to do our best to ensure we are planning what they want and need 2) Successful promotion of programs and events on campus is not always an easy task. Quite often word-of-mouth advertising becomes the single greatest method of transmitting information quickly around campus. 3) The campus is much more likely to buy into the overall programmatic efforts if the students are involved (or leading) the process.

• Single most effective: “Students support what they help to create.” Get the students involved in the planning, choosing, etc. and build on that. If they made the decisions, and the event is student driven and something they want to see, they’ll be there. This piece of advice was given to me by my father who retired as Director of Student Activities in 1982. It was his motto then, and it continues to serve me well today.

Student Leadership Involvement – Club Executive Boards and Student Leaders

• I think one of the key elements to attract students to events is to get the e-board and general members excited and knowledgeable about the event. This gets the word out with
enthusiasm, and they get others excited about coming. However, if they don't know the details (date, time, place, tickets? free?) then they can't sound like they are a part of the group who is bringing the event.

- I can't say that what I do is unique, but part of my responsibilities includes coordinating the clubs for the College of Business & Economics. One of the things I do is have a monthly breakfast with the club presidents and the Dean of the College, so I am very close to each group. When I have a program or event, I both target a major professional business fraternity and ask them to sponsor it, or talk to the club presidents and ask them to help with publicity. The helps me get the buy-in of the entire group. With over 1000 students in the CB&E, I am almost assured of a great turnout every time.

- Using students/student leaders (all of them from elected to influential non-office holders, org leaders, etc.) to attract their peers!

- My single most effective practice for attracting students is other students. During the last week of each month a calendar of the upcoming month’s activities is given to each club/organization's leader with the offer of a cash stipend for their organization for the most student participation and promotion.

- I contact faculty, staff, student leaders, and student affairs professionals and ask them to send two to three students in which they see leadership potential. I then send each student a letter congratulating them for being nominated and inviting them to one of the information sessions.

- Invite Connectors. If you invite student leaders who know lots of students, they will invite those students and help them get excited about your event. With student participation to begin with, you will have an idea about which student leaders are good at getting the word out.

**Co-Sponsorship**

- What has worked for our area is partnering with a student group. I work with students in the College of Business Administration at Winthrop University. The Business fraternity Alpha Kappa Psi requires all of their pledges to have a resume and cover letter critiqued, schedule a mock interview, and attend all events that are scheduled during the pledge semester. The programming committee also co-sponsors Career Development events. Having students involved in the planning and
advertising tremendously enhances attendance.

- The single most effective practice for attracting students to participate in an event on campus is to partner with professional or social organizations on campus.

- Partner with student clubs and organizations. Regardless of what we are hosting, we ask a club to co-sponsor it. It helps us to create an event that the students really want and guarantees the attendance of good part of the club. It helps the club meet a professional development requirement and get their name out through our advertising. As an example, for our Dress for Success program next year, we have already received commitments from one relatively large women’s and one men’s fraternity. The groups will provide models, help with planning and publicity, and attend. Last year, the program had approximately 100 people in attendance.

- We had been having trouble getting students to attend career related workshops! So we tried co-branding with a program entitled Starbucks Careers & Caffeine Professional Programs. We approached the area Starbucks store to provide the coffee and cups and brought in career professionals in various fields to come in to discuss their profession and trends in the market. The program took off from there.

- Target marketing and collaboration with student groups over the last year has increased attendance to various programs I have hosted. For instance, a bulk email to the student body at large about an environmental career fair will get a quick glance but working with the university’s Campus Energy Group to co-host and promote the event whose title we changed to “Vermont Green Job & Internship Fair” will certainly have a good attendance, like over 300 students this semester. Why? Because peers are promoting and talking up the event and the content speaks directly to my target audience.
ONLINE/ELECTRONIC MARKETING

College students have their fingers on the pulse of new, quickly-change communication and internet technologies (i.e. Facebook, Instant Messaging, text messages, podcasts, etc.). Several of you have been able to capitalize on this to increase the attendance to your events.

Report Data

<table>
<thead>
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</thead>
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<td>Online Social Groups</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emails</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Website/Intranet</td>
<td>9%</td>
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<td>Listserv</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our students spend more time on the Internet and in their rooms watching DVDs on flat panel TV, and playing video games, that facebook groups and myspace postings are becoming more effective. What will really be interesting are online calendars and schedulers become more prevalent in the next several years. Students who opt in could have events automatically "pushed" to their daily schedules.

- Have it publicized on facebook. This is a guaranteed show!

- It is amazing to see how pockets of friends are formed with those living on campus, in student organizations, through Facebook, and myspace. They all talk about what is going on at school and how well the events and advertisements went.

- I know this requires one answer but I have two. With the new wave of technology and things on the internet, I've found that Facebook has come in quite handy. You have to get to the students where they are.

- Our students have had better success with Facebook than all the flyers, e-bulletin boards and posters combined!

Student Involvement Frequency Table

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Online Social Groups</td>
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<td>School Websites/Intranet</td>
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<td>Listserv</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Online Social Groups

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Email

- Send out day-of event emails. Nothing else comes close.

- Our best method is sending email messages to the groups we want to target for the specific event. We send messages to the same group (the target group) several times before the event - sending a different message each time. This does seem to work.

- Mailing lists are also very helpful in promoting events, but they are especially prone to the risk of over-advertising, because if you overuse them, especially if the event doesn't fully apply will begin to disregard your emails and treat them as less important. It’s very difficult to regain their trust in the importance of your emails once you lose it.

- Targeted emails. They work well IF they are short and come from me (name recognition results in more messages being read if I send them, versus having them sent from our office account).

- We have many forms of communicating upcoming events to students. However they one that we have consistently used is emailing various populations of students to their main email address. This is great when recruiting for Who’s Who, the honor societies, certain majors or GPAs, and classifications. We also attach the web links to the applications/paperwork they need to complete as well. Students do read their emails when they know there is something in it for them or there is something free. We also find that in the email we have to tell them all the pertinent information, give them the opportunity to respond to us by email, voice, or walk-in because inevitably they have just one more question, and let them know what tangible item they will get by coming to the event. More importantly we make sure how whole staff is well versed in what went out via email so that we can all be helpful to the students.

- I have found our single most effective practice for attracting students to events is through a combination of mass & targeted emails to students AND faculty & staff. We send mass emails to both the university announcement options (it’s called Stetson TODAY), and through the Career Services listserv of students who have self-registered to use our services. For the larger events (career fairs, senior symposium), we’ll send emails to faculty either directly or to the Academic Dean’s or department chairs and to staff (Res
Life, Greek advisors, Students Activities, etc.). If an event is geared toward a targeted audience (pre-law, public service, accounting, internationally-focused) we’ll do a more intensive email marketing campaign to specific faculty and students leaders and student org. advisors.) We’ll send the first email a week or two in advance and we’ll usually send one or two out the week of the event.

- Time and again mass & targeted emailing proves to be the most effective and most cost-efficient means of advertising. We don’t even do worry very much about incentives (door prizes, etc.) because if the information is relevant we find that the students come, especially if their faculty encourage them to take advantage of the opportunities.

- I believe our single most attractive method for attracting students to events is repeated e-mail announcements/flyers, especially the week of any event. Students tend to make up their mind to attend or not at the last minute. I guess that it depends what ends up to be going on that week during the time of the event, such as a paper due, a test coming up, something better to attend!

- The single most effective practice for attracting students our Career Services events is through succinct, well crafted broadcast email messages sent at very strategic times prior to the event date...with the initial broadcast email message sent one month in advance as a "hold the date" message. The most important rule of thumb for these broadcast email messages is know the audience you are looking to attract for the seminar and targeting this audience in your email message. You cannot send too many messages either - they have to be the right number at the right time.

- More emails- Students stated in surveys that they wanted to receive targeted and multiple emails about events. These emails were sent to students from email list from registrar, not just those registered with the Career Center. Attendance at most workshops/events doubled (from an average of 10-15 students to 30-60 students.) When we skipped sending the email for a few events the attendance dipped back into the 10-15 range.

- To attract students to an on-campus career fair I send emails: one asking them to save the date, another with the directory attached and a reminder on the event 24 hours in advance. The directory includes the name of
the recruiting organization, their website, majors required and positions available.

**School Website / Intranet**
- Our campus intranet system...students seem to really read postings on our internal campus intranet system.

- My single most effective practice for attracting students to my events is advertising on the college's webpage.

- Targeted e-mails through our campus “portal”. These e-mails can be specific by student major, class standing, etc. For instance rather than advertise to the entire campus that there is an event for Engineering majors seeking Cooperative Education opportunities, we can email specific event details to only sophomores and juniors with any of the engineering majors. These e-mails can have links to all kinds of information including up to date list of employers planning to attend and more - which is certainly much more information that you could ever get on a poster - plus the information behind the link can be updated daily.

### Listserv

- One page, colorful Listserv announcements, targeted according to student class, major, etc., with catchy titles.

- At The University of Kansas, University Career Center worked with our IT department to develop email distribution lists of students by class (juniors and seniors) and school/college (in our case, liberal arts and sciences, education, and social welfare). We try not to overuse these, but send information about events and job search resources periodically. When we survey attending students on how they learned of the events, “email” is almost always the most-cited method.

- We compile and e-mail affinity group list serves twice-- first: when we schedule a program then: once again on the day of- as a reminder.

- Our hands down way of informing and therefore attracting students to our events is a subscription only listserv that we promote as a “passive” way to receive our programming information and vitals for our career-related events.

  Example: Our department sponsored a Marines helicopter ride event. At 9
...the listserv message went out...by noon the list of 22 spaces was filled.

- There is nothing like the Career Services listserv. The listserv has proven to be the best method for regular/daily contact with students and alumni. The listserv has been an extremely popular method for advertising job and internship opportunities. Students and Alumni receive email blasts on a daily basis with these opportunities, and can unsubscribe to the listserv at any time—so it is totally voluntary. In addition to job information, I also advertise career events and services. I can easily advertise one event repeatedly as we get closer to the date, asking for RSVPs, etc. This has been a great method to reach many people at one time with little resources.

**Television**

- We have found that student-made video promos shown in the dining commons during meal times has been our most effective practicing for attracting students to our events.

- We use our plasma screens that are located in strategic positions around campus to attract students to the events. Once the initial costs of the plasma screens are covered, it is relatively cheap to send video, picture, and sound advertisements all around our campus. We have a group of 3 to 5 people on campus that are paid to be in charge of advertising for events.

- We run a looping power-point slide show in our University Dining Hall over meal hours a couple of days a week. It is modeled after the slide shows that movie theaters run before movie showings. Organizations submit slides regarding upcoming events/activities and they are incorporated into the show weekly. Weekly slide shows have pictures of students at events, varying themes of interest to students, use humor, and interesting quotes to liven it up.

- Use your events to attract attendance at other events. If you’re having a program that you know will have a large audience, why not take advantage of the opportunity to tell that audience about upcoming events. We used PowerPoint to put together a basic slide show of all the upcoming events and then let the slide show loop through while students filled into the theater. Don’t let your students leave an event without knowing about the next event your organization is sponsoring.
TRADITIONAL MARKETING

Traditional marketing tactics were still the bread & butter for many contributors. Many of you found new spins on traditional marketing to attract students to events.

Report Data

Posters / Large Signs

- Students tell us our most effective advertising is our sandwich boards. These are large, wood boards with hinges on top so that they stand up. We have a wide-format printer in the Career Center, and our design team creates the posters that we put on the sandwich boards. We place them just off the sidewalk in the most heavily-walked areas of campus. We recently added Plexiglas to the boards so that the posters have some protection.

- As crazy as it sounds, posters garner a lot of attention if they are located correctly. The BEST locations seem to be above urinals in men's rest rooms and on the inside of stall doors in the women's rest rooms.

- We put dry erase boards outside of the cafeteria and outside of the post office. Most students pass one of these locations during the week.
Our most effective practice has been using our 10-foot display that we purchased for Career Fair and scheduling lobby time in each of the various colleges. We man the display with our Career Peers and student workers so any questions can be answered. Along with our display we take all flyers and important handout packets, for example the resume/cover letter and interview packets that generate great interest. In addition to students’ awareness, faculty members are also alerted that we have important events coming up. Our display is very impressive - we’ve taken to using it for table information sessions, as well as Career Fairs and College displays. It never fails to attract attention.

Our campus allows us to place table toppers in the students’ eating facilities for one week, 3 times per year. We use oversized paper and print them in full color. This works well for us because this is a residential campus, and most students eat in the campus dining facilities at some point during the week. It's easy for students to pull out their planners and enter our programs in.

Printing large 4’x8’ posters mounted on plywood and displaying them along the fences or street entrances to the campus really helps!

Our best communication device has been some large yellow sign boards that look like giant “wet floor” signs, about 4ft tall and 3 ft wide. They fold out and can be weighted with water, and we just attach our posters to these and set them out all over campus during strategic times.

**Flyers**
- Creating simple, informative and attractive quarter sheet handouts and standing outside the dining hall and handing the sheets out can be quite effective. You're also able to give the people a quick gist of what's going on at the event and why they should come. Additionally, it's a great time for people to ask you questions that they might otherwise not have had the chance to.

- Another tool is to tape flyers to the ground in the quad with bright colors. Everyone has to go through the quad here at least once a day, and flyers on the sidewalk are usually innovative enough that they pay attention.

- The single most effective practice for attracting students to our events is to produce palm cards (1/4 the size of a flyer) in addition to flyers and have our “street team” hand them out on campus. It fits right in the
student’s hand.

**Word of Mouth**

- Structured “WoM” (Word of Mouth) having a student tell another and so on and so on. “WoM” can be structured by giving out invite cards to students who then pass them out to friends...at the program they are turned in and the student who had the most “WoM”s returned gets a prize.

- We use posters, flyers, sidewalk chalk, and email messages, however I believe, without a doubt, the most effective way to get students to know about, and attend events, is by word of mouth. If we can get one student excited about attending an event, they will tell their friends about it, and the spider web begins. The key is finding the right people to get excited about it, and then use the other marketing strategies as support. Students are more receptive to other students – and it’s that personal connection that pulls students to the event.

- What I meant by word-of-mouth is that our staff encourages other students (friends, classmates, etc) to come to a program. Then those people tell other students (friends, classmates, etc.). Before you know it, there are 200+ people at an event simply because of word-of-mouth. We also have booths in the University Center concourse and the dining center and talk about events with passerby.

- I think “word of mouth’ is more effective than any poster we’ve been able to come up with. We do voice mails to the students in the residence halls about once a week to tell them what events we have planned. Also, our Campus Activities Board students wear the striped ref shirts on the days we have events. Many faculty members will call on the CAB members with the ref shirt and ask them “what event is going on today?” This has been very effective.

- What I meant by word of mouth is conversing with other students either face to face or on IM (or one of its derivatives). 99% of the programming that happens on our campus is student group driven, so the majority of the advertising is done by them. What that means is that their friends are almost always in the audience, as well as less familiar
classmates who had heard about the event from them personally. Basically, we encourage students to work discussion of their events into the conversations they have, with whomever they speak, in the days leading up to the event.

• Face-to-face word of mouth: discussing directly with students during appointments and going in person to classes to announce.

**Sidewalk Chalk**

• A non-traditional tool that is used on our campus is that we actually 'chalk' our advertisements on the sidewalks and commons areas around campus. We have a lot of artists who are looking for something to create. We utilize the skills and abilities of students on campus to create our chalk-ads. They are bright, exciting and eye catching. They are places in strategic - high traffic - areas and they are very effective.

• We don’t know why the chalk advertising works the best, but at the U of I it is our most effective tool for attracting students to events.

• If I had to pick one thing (that also has little or no cost) it would be the chalking of sidewalks advertising the event.

**Brochure/List**

• Short Checklist for Freshman- during freshman orientation events, we gave students a checklist of things they needed to do to find internships and research opportunities. As a result, before school started, freshman had filled all the about slots for the first 2 weeks of class. (This trend continued for student appointments through all of the fall and spring semester. It was late April before a student could schedule an appointment for that same week.)

• Having your major event dates set and posted far in advance so that you can create semester calendars is very helpful. At the beginning of the semester, you want to have some sort of comprehensive student event calendar to distribute to the students at your institution. I have found that students (especially those in residence halls) will keep these calendars and post them in their residence hall rooms. However, you can also put those calendars on magnets, cups, t-shirts, banners, etc... the point is get your event dates out to the students in a format that they will want to keep. This is excellent advice, especially if you have any sort of music, movie, or lecture series on your campus.
Postcards/Mailings

- Interestingly, we have found old-media methods, such as postcards in student mailboxes, to be effective lately. They are so bombarded with electronic communication, that our advertising and PR is lost in the “noise.” So, we’re going back to basics, and having good luck with it.

- Send a post card to the home address over a school vacation to advertise an upcoming event, that way mom and dad could see it and encourage student to attend

- The most effective practice I’ve found for attracting students to our events is some sort of build-up. For our biggest and best events, we leak word out to students early - things like “guess what prizes we’re going to have?” or “guess who’s performing?” just to get people excited through word of mouth. Then we do at least two rounds of publicity, trying to stay away from the boring old flyer stuck up in a residence hall or in a campus mailbox. We make sure any mailings we use stand out. For example, for a Vegas Night, we printed the title and date of the event on poker chips and glued those to giant playing cards to put in people’s mailboxes. Building excitement over time seems to guarantee a crowd because word of mouth makes such a huge difference. A series of publicity shots will definitely get people talking!

- With this generation, our single most effective practice (and I want to make clear that there really is no SINGLE effective practice) is mailing print information home in a way that parents can view it. We mail newsletters home at the beginning of each semester and address it to the student and family. When we are doing large events, we send postcards home to advertise them. We will then get students coming in or calling to register for an event saying “my dad saw this and said I need to go to it…” With this generation, parents are now student’s partners in life planning so we have made them our partners, too. They enjoy knowing what services and programs are being offered to their children and we are thrilled to have the parent’s support.

Personal / Formal Invitations

- One of the most effective strategies that we use is sending a formal invitation by mail to students that have already registered with Career Services, offering them a special giveaway (given to us by employers) just for attending the fair. We congratulate them for being motivated to begin their job search
early and let them have two chances in our raffle to win the larger prizes at the end of the event. This seems simple, but it was pretty successful.

- A personalized invitation has been our best means of attracting students to our events.
- Going outside of the venue and telling students about it one-on-one. Grabbing people and personally inviting them.
- I would say that the single most effective practice for attracting students to my events is to offer them a personal invitation to get involved!
- My colleagues and I look for opportunities (i.e. summer orientation, move-in, and traditional programs throughout the year) to discuss the different types of involvement available at Mason. It is also important that incoming students hear this message articulated from different perspectives. Establishing partnerships between departments, (i.e. Orientation, Greek Life, and Disability Resource Center) and student groups (i.e. Greeks, Athletes, International and other Academic, Social, Educational and Religious student groups) creates stronger messages about the importance of involvement.

Students are able to hear about involvement and see the benefits though experiences shared by student leaders. The best part of the personal invitation strategy is that you are able to reach some of the more introverted students who may not have gotten involved until later on in their college career.

**Student Publications**
- I think for us the most effective strategy is placing ads in the campus newspaper on the days that most students tend to read it.
- Another strategy is to post an advertisement or write an article about the event for submission into the campus student newspaper.
- We advertise our career fairs in our widely-read student newspaper. We purchase a full-page ad (with color!) the week before the event and promote coming to the event. It includes date, location, time, Web site, benefits, etc. The week of the event we use a double-page spread in the center of the paper. In this larger ad we list all 160+ employers and indicate which organizations will participate in the interview day following the fair.
RSVP/Online Signup System

▪ For company information sessions students are required to RSVP. Any student that does not show can no longer use the office's services unless the reason is approved by the director. No second chance. Students are told the importance of attending in the announcement with examples of what has happen in other interviews to students that did not attend a company's session, e.g., did not do well; were not pushed forward in the interview process.

▪ Our single most effective practice for attracting students to our events is the request for an RSVP. When our students respond, we add their name to a list we use for sending reminders. Thus, our actual student participation is usually 85% or better.

▪ We have found that having students RSVP for events tends to make them take the event more seriously and increases attendance.

Class Announcements

▪ The single most effective practice that we use to attract students to our (major) events is what we call “infomercials.” We ask faculty for 5 minutes of their time to give students info about upcoming events (we target the student population that we need for that particular event). We pass out information about the event and answer questions. Most importantly, we make sure that we are in and out in 5 minutes!!

▪ Our career services office of 11 full-time staff was hard pressed to serve the needs of the over 23,000 enrolled students. We solved this problem in part, by switching from putting our emphasis in one-on-one coaching sessions and offering workshops to small audiences, to providing career services during class time to captive audiences of students. We started by identifying teachers who offered some type of career-related topic as a part of their normal subject matter. For example, we would approach a professor who taught technical writing and convince the teacher to let us teach the class on writing resumes. While we were there we talked about the many other outstanding services we provide. Each workshop was tailor-made to provide the latest information and techniques applicable to those students. That professor would tell other professors about the high quality of our workshops and soon we would be teaching resume writing to several classes a week. Another way we were invited to take valuable class time for career topics was to let the faculty know that if they were suddenly called out of town,
instead of canceling class they should call us. We would come in with only one day’s notice and teach the class any of a menu of career topics. As a result of changing the way we approached student outreach from a one-on-one focus to a class-by-class focus, this year we presented 366 talks to over 11,000 ECU community members.
Giveaways
The most popular promotional strategy is giveaways, with food being the most popular. For many, this strategy may seem too costly. Fortunately, many of you mentioned cost-saving methods, which we have shared below.

Report Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Giveaways</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raffle/Prizes</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Food
- I’m sure you will get this response many times, but the single best method I have found over the years to attract students to programs is to bribe them with free food and/or gifts. Students are usually “poor” and always up for a free meal and everybody loves to receive a gift.

- Our best practice for gathering student participation is to always include free food of some sort at our events. In the past we have provided students with snacks, lunches, snow-balls, fast food, and gumbo! Our students are mostly non-traditional students, so they must be able to fit school activities into their busy schedules. By providing them with a meal, we are assisting them in their multi-tasking endeavor as a non-traditional student.

- The single most effective practice for attracting students to our events is the most basic need that any human needs, especially college students, free food. I know it is nothing special but we have student feeds every month for two days a week that are scheduled to catch all of our students. By doing this we have a 60-70% turn out for elections, which is phenomenal compared to many other colleges.

- I would have to say that our single most effective practice for attracting students to our events would be free food. Serving something
other than “cafeteria” food is what they will come out for time and time again.

- I would have to say in a word "FOOD". Feed them and they shall come!!!!!

- I get a great crowd of students when I do “Monday Munchies” or “Tasty Tuesdays”. Our office orders breakfast type food in the AM and in the PM I put out cookies. Students love to grab free food in between class. This is where I hand out fliers about upcoming events. I honestly don’t know how many of them actually attend the event, but I reach 100+ students each time on each food day.

- Any time we offer free food. I have a company that comes in and has an entertaining way of making pancakes. He tosses them across the room and flips them all over the place. This is a big draw. Since we are a commuter campus and students don’t hang around much (jobs, families, etc.) this gives them an opportunity to eat and run.

- My single most effective practice for attracting students to my events is offering refreshments and food at the important events. I know this probably sounds bad, but with our students, they do not have the drive to do something voluntarily. Free food is a major drive for our students and if filling the seats at my events means putting out a plate of cookies and some refreshments, then I will take the cost and enjoy the event with a packed crowd.

- The one thing that works for us time and again is food. If we have food at an event, regardless of the type of event, students will show up. To fund this, we look for employer sponsorships.

- In a word, my answer is- FOOD. It is amazing to see the crowds drawn in when an event takes place, and there’s food given out to enjoy as students partake of the activity. Food is a critical socialization tool in that it is used for so many social environments both for business and pleasure. Most substantial meetings and decisions are made while breaking bread. Likewise, when food is offered it not only feeds a hungry, and often impecunious, student but it also allows for networking and socialization amongst peers and campus staff.

- Students always show up if they are guaranteed free food. Local businesses commonly donate the food for free, assuming that you can guarantee them free publicity, including banners at the event,
announcements sent out by Public Relations, etc.

- Offer food or something offering inexpensive food. Each summer I would plan the “$1.00 Meal Deal.” This included a hamburger with all the toppings, a bag of chips and a can of soda or bottle of water (iced down in a kiddie pool). We would decorate using a beach theme; I even set up a “beach shop” where folks could buy some inexpensive trinkets. Our ice cream/banana split socials also brought in lots of students.

- One of the best ways is by having trendy but affordable food. Don’t fall into the temptation to get Pizza because its way too over used, you need to cut through the static and use something like Mexican or Indian food that can actually be very affordable. If I’m student going to your event and there food I actually like, such as Tacos from my favorite local Mexican restaurant I’ll be much more inclined to stay and listen, while enjoying my food.

### Top 10 Food Giveaways

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Pizza</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Wings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Barbeque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Subway Sandwiches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Ice Cream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Wendy’s (Value Menu)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Dunkin Doughnuts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Mexican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Indian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Vegetarian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Raffles/Prizes

- The best way for me is to give out free t-shirts with publicity about the event on the shirt a couple days in advance. Handing out free stuff, especially t-shirts, is always a great way to get your name out to people and to guarantee return attendance at events. Advertising about handing out free stuff at the events helps get students there as well.

- I think one of the single most effective ways to attract students to our events is by offering door prizes and free giveaways. For several of our student services/career services events in the past, we have solicited donations from local companies and organizations (restaurants, businesses, retail establishments, etc.) for gift certificates and promotional items. For example, we had
created a choosing-a-major program in the Career Services Office titled Coffee and Careers. We contacted local coffee houses as well as chains to ask for donations. Most places were very receptive since our students frequent many of their establishments on a regular basis. We obtained gift certificates, coffee-items, assorted chocolate baskets, and many more items. In addition to the donations, we also purchased coffee mugs with the Coffee and Careers and our office contact information on them to give to students. All of these items were a big hit and definitely increased the traffic of our event! We have also offered free food (cookies, candy, refreshments, pizza, etc.) at our events, which has increased the number of students participating. I really think this works because almost all college students love freebies!

- To guarantee an audience at my events, I strive to make the event interactive and/or have student participation. When the event is interactive, the student audience is able to be a part of the performance and may be able to walk away with a prize (i.e. grocery bingo) or at least a great story (i.e. hypnotist). When an event is has student participation (i.e. lip sync contest or talent show), students come out to support their peers.

- Sometimes, (depending on the event), we have the employers bring door prizes for the students to win. Usually, employers have shirts or hats lying around...or they may even donate an IPod or something like that. This way the employer feels like they are becoming more visible and the student has to participate in the event for a chance to win.

- Probably the second best is to provide some kind of competition among the campus organizations and then reward the winning clubs with cash prizes to go into their campus funds so that they may provide more activities for their club members.

- One of the most effective tools I use to get students to my center is to give away free CDs, DVDs, movie tickets, gift cards, and scholarship dollars (in the form of bookstore vouchers). The way I secure dollars and gifts is to solicit donations and sponsorships from area vendors - coca cola (who services our vending machines on campus), the discount Ms. Bairds Bakery, AMC and Movie theaters in the area, Blockbuster stores, grocery chains, banks, retail stores, hotel chains, and radio stations. I send out letters and make calls to keep current on what's going on in my neighborhood and community. I've found that
managers, retail stores, and area employers are always willing to contribute 'giveaways' to students when they can recruit on-campus for events that they have (or part-time jobs) like fashion shows, media blitzes, grand openings, taste tests, trade shows, etc. I have great responses just because I ask! Maybe it's because people know me because I invite them onto my campus for a networking breakfast once during the spring semester.

- We offer door prizes to the students. It is simple, yet effective. We have sign in sheets at all activities. We decide before the event on a number, let's say 16 is the number is the number for the day. So, what that means is every sixteenth person will receive a door prize that day. We use stuff found in the campus bookstore--shirts, coffee cups & mug, koozies, key chains, gift certificates, etc. At other times we will give away gift cards to Target, Wal-Mart, Publix. Another thing we try to do is get gift certificates from local establishments for free food--Denny's, Ale House, Hooters, Ice Cream Shop.

- Thoughtful/strategic prizes, rewards or incentives are often our best tool for getting students to attend our career services events. Some examples of rewards/incentives that have been hugely successful for us include: a guaranteed interview at the firm of the students' choice for our “Ace the Interview” workshop, or free haircuts for men and free makeovers for women at our “Extreme Makeover: Bentley Edition” workshop which was designed to illustrate the importance of professionalism and business attire.

- We have found the combination of free food, and prize money - for costumes, or contests are great ways to get people to events. This is not rocket science stuff but if you have free food and money it usually draws a crowd. Our first ever dodge-ball tournament had prizes for the best costumed teams - it was great!! Our bachelor auction was also a great hit this year. Along with "splash for cash" where we put $1000 cash in the pool that students dove for.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top 8 Giveaways</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. T-Shirts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. IPods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. DVDs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. CDs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Gift Certificates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Cash Prizes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. TVs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Dinner for two</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Programming**

A key to high attendance is not only promotion, but having a good program for students to attend. Good programming involves an interesting topic and possibly big name speakers and entertainment. In addition, proper planning and consistent scheduling make a good program even better. Below are a few techniques which have been proven successful.

**Report Data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programming</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good and Consistent Scheduling</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figurative People</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interesting Topic</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Well-Planned</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interesting Ideas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
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**Traditional Marketing Frequency Table**

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good and Consistent Scheduling</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figurative People</td>
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<td>Interesting Topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Well-Planned</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interesting Ideas</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Good and Consistent Scheduling**

- I believe that the most effective practice for attracting students to university-sponsored events is consistency. At my institution the programming board has weekly events which are consistent throughout the semester. While we do publish a comprehensive semester events brochure, in my opinion I believe the students attend the events because they know there is always a live event every Tuesday or a movie every Wednesday and not because they saw a flyer or read it in a publication.

- Schedule the event during an already established “activity hour”, typically 11:30am - 1:30pm.

- Our most effective practice for attracting students to our events is scheduling and reminding. If it’s a really important event that we want a good turnout for, we have to be aware of the students schedules and plan accordingly, then send a fair amount of email reminders.

**Figurative People**

- Have well-known professionals or alumni who are coming from well-known companies or organizations come to a presentation.
- Having the employers be at the forefront of the event (because it seems what they say is listened to more closely than what we, career services professionals, say)
- We find that big names of bands or comedians attract a larger venue.
- In terms of what lures the students in, they say "a well-known and respected speaker (i.e. Bill Gates, Meg Whitman) and food" will usually do the trick.
- Big brand name that usually does not come to campus as presenter, panelist etc... (McKinsey, Goldman...)
- Bring in a "big" name to speak. Ask someone who is well known in your area perhaps with a profession that will attract attention. i.e., we asked Dr. William Bass the famous forensic pathologist who started “the Body Farm” in Tennessee to speak. We had more than 600 folks attend the program. This included faculty/staff, students and community members. And the best thing, we did not have to pay a penny! Everyone loved it!!!
- If you want students who are seriously seeking employment or seeking career knowledge having well-known employers participate in the event draws them.
- Utilizing alumni currently working in different industries and job function areas. We, as career professionals, seem to become more like a parent to the current students. They don't really want to hear from us but they do want to hear from the employer. Students consider the employer to be the expert and if the employer happens to be an alumnus it makes it easier for them to approach because they already have something in common. We now utilize the alumni to present our workshops, meet with students in drop-in appointments, review resumes and conduct mock interviews. Attendance has been great as long as they're involved.
- I have found one of the most successful practices to get students to attend a workshop is to have an employer as part of the workshop. Maybe this says something about students wanting a “primary source” or someone has an invited guest whom they think can really help them with their immediate career needs.
- Whenever possible, I try to get employers involved in our events/presentations. When it comes to the job search, students seem to
listen closely to the recruiters/those making hiring decisions (even though we tell students the same exact things as the recruiters, students seem to “hear” it better from them).

**Interesting Ideas**

- We spray the event on a bed sheet and tie in between 2 trees on campus...it gets their attention.

- Print the title, date, time, etc on napkins and fill the cafeteria dispensers with the printed napkins

- "Potty-notes" are flyers that the house board (student governing boards in each of our student residences) put up on the inside of the bathroom stall doors in the residences to advertise campus events.

- A good program is a stamp system where when you get so many stamps then you are rewarded with a prize.

**Entertainment**

- At my institution what we have found that works best is "Music" and "Food". Our students show up most when there is music (popular such as reggae or the latest in R&B) and when we offer free snacks/food. This has worked best for Club and organization events as well as with intramural sports.

- We use the music to attract them, do an activity and intersperse music throughout.....Our students are more kinesthetic and like to move to the sound of music.

- To guarantee an audience at my events, I strive to make the event interactive and/or have student participation. When the event is interactive, the student audience is able to be a part of the performance and may be able to walk away with a prize (i.e. grocery bingo) or at least a great story (i.e. hypnotist). When an event is has student participation (i.e. lip sync contest or talent show), students come out to support their peers.

- Several performers have agreed to come for teasers during lunchtime hours which are a big draw for evening events.

**Well-Planned**

- Within the Career Resource Center, our most effective practice for attracting students to our events is to ensure that, for its initial inception, we have strategically and carefully done the work that needs to be done upfront. We engage in lengthy discussions to identify
who our target market is, what issues / challenges this event is intended to address and what the intended outcomes will be. Then we evaluate the event and debrief with the planning group as to whether or not our intended goals were met. The last part of our process is to continually seek ways to improve the program's impact. In short, we plan, offer, evaluate, improve and start the process all over again. We feel that if the program has been skillfully, proactively and strategically well-planned, the success of the program itself would be our most effective means of attracting students.

- The success of any event begins with a good process for event planning and event management. Regardless of the campus, big public flag-ship university, small private liberal arts institution or a community college, successful events always have high quality event planning process and high quality event management. Student recognize successful events and its because the event is successful they want to attend and participate. Students recognize high quality, good organization and good results.

**Interesting Topic**

- Making any event relevant to the students needs in the moment. Creating and clearly articulating a compelling value proposition for the event. No magic just content, less bun and more beef, it works wonders.

- I’ve observed that good programs with poor publicity are much more successful than poor programs with good publicity.

- We had a variety of events which I coordinated and we always had a waiting list for them. I believe if the student knows about your office, what is in it for them, and are treated with respect and helpfulness from that office, they will attend the event. I had it very easy because I was helping students in the business school get jobs, so this is something they really wanted, of course they would go to the event. I think if a student knows about the benefits to them they’ll go, e-mail is the best.

- Targeted Programs and Outreach- Many of the events presented were well attended because they were targeted at a specific audience/student organization. Our staff did some simple outreach by introducing themselves to the student leaders and then were invited back to do presentations. Those presentations were extremely well attended. Therefore, the best practice would be to target programming and outreach to specific groups/audiences on campus. The group
then thinks the program was designed specifically to them and was tailored to their needs.

- My answer for attracting students is offering events that their families can attend since I work at a community college.

- Our most effective practice in getting students involved starts with our programmers assessing the needs. It’s all about catering to the audience. Green River Community College, for example, has a large international student base that we program for. The need for them is to get the FULL American experience which will enhance their studies abroad. This means local attractions (like the Space Needle and downtown Seattle) are very popular among the internationals. It’s all about fulfilling the needs of students (and community).

- The single most effective practice for attracting students to our events is having events that are targeted to specific audiences, at specific times. For example, a workshop entitled "Job Search for Graduating Seniors," land at the end of the school year, will be much more successful than a generic job search workshop. Some other examples of targeted workshops are "Planning a January Term Internship", "Internships in the Entertainment Industry", and "Applying to Medical School."
MARKETING TIPS

Knowing your market is key. Marketing research helps you get that insight. Once the marketing research has been completed, you can create targeted messages to promote your events and design better programming. Below are a few practices and questions that can aide you.

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Survey

- I meet with students to see what their interests are and use that as my guide to decide on events (of course the events have to meet our college standard). At the end of each event we provide everybody with a small survey.

- I remind our staff daily, making certain we take time to survey our students and assess the type of events they are willing to support and participate in. That’s absolutely critical, especially in these tight budgetary times when funds for programming are limited.

- We survey students (using Survey Monkey) regarding all potential events during our planning to get their feedback on possible event topics and speakers, determine their level of interest in the events and subtly market our services and events well ahead of time. This gives the students some ownership of the event and makes them feel a part of the planning process. More importantly, it’s not about what we want, it's about what they want. Our attendance numbers are triple the previous Career Services office's (we've been here a year).

For all off campus events, we provide transportation to and from the event as well.
The one thing, I am truly confident that we do well, is responding to the wants and desires of our students. We attempt to respond to the surveys in a fast and very public way. When students say they want more comedy acts - we attempt to deliver right away. So the students actually recognize that the feedback that is given is heard, and acted on right away. So to sum it up, our best practice is giving them the entertainment that they are asking for. Naturally we dress it up in Theme nights, the better the theme the greater the attendance.

Marketing Research

I have found that there is no substitute for market research in the planning phase. In order for an event to be successful, although marketing is important, the most important thing is targeting an audience and creating an event that they would want to go to. If you create an event that people will not want to go to, no amount of marketing can yield a good result. Also, if you create an event that isn't interesting to your target audience, but you manage to pull off amazing marketing that gets them there anyway, you will make it even more difficult to attract that same audience a second time. Because they will feel disappointed by the gap between expected satisfaction (product of planning and execution of the event), it will raise the bar for what it will take to attract them in the future. This is a bad pattern to get into. Therefore, one has to look at two things: What you want to do for a program, and what your audience would want you to do, and by extension, what they would want to see. After you have those two concepts clearly defined (might require market research, formal or informal), you have to bridge the gap between them, and tailor the event such that it accomplishes your goals, but uses the methods that they would like to see.

I would have to say, what has always worked for me is trying to put myself in the position of the student and then asking the question..."What would make me want to attend this event?" Additionally, due to the fact that I understand that as time goes by the generation gap increases, I factor in how it may be different for the particular "target" generation...i.e. how to program for Baby Boomers, generation X, gen. Y/ dot com. or millennials will all vary. For example, while I might text message a millennial, to convey information to a baby boomer I might invite him/her to attend an event in person.
Simply waiting for students to pop up and tell you what they want and how they want it is not enough. Administrators absolutely need to leave their offices, meet with students, and just ask questions. What are you missing in your life on this campus? What gifts do you bring to the table? What frustrates you about the opportunities on this campus? What excites you? These simple questions can bring forth a wealth of information, while at the same time invigorate a base of student leaders who can make things happen on campus. It is important to intentionally reach out to traditionally under-represented students, Greek students, residence hall students, freshmen, seniors, commuter students, part-time students...all groups need to be able to have a voice.

**Message**

- In today's fast-paced society, many people do not have the time to gather all the information from their environment. I believe students gather enough information to make an immediate decision, regardless of the fact that it may not be a wholly informed one. Our messages do not necessarily have to cost a lot to be effective as long as we can convince students that this program or that event was crafted especially for them to address their specific and immediate felt needs.

- Market the events as a discussion rather than a just presentation or program.

- Advertise the event in a sexy risqué way the students will be intrigued and will come to find out what it's all about. For example – we hosted an event called “Sex in an Envelope”. The event was an educational event to bring awareness to sexually transmitted diseases and the dangers of casual sex. On our flyer all we advertised was the event name, date and time. We also advertised free condoms. For a dorm of only 160 students we had approximately 60 students attend. We didn’t even have to advertise the free food!

- I’d say one of the biggest things is that it has some kind of gimmick advertising. Now you may think this is an immature way of advertising, a catchy line is a great way to attract people. As marketing major I try to examine what does and doesn't work with people. If you look at the average student they're going to walk right by your advertisement if it doesn't immediately catch their attention. One can see it all the time on campus near the kiosks, 90% of the advertisements are directly to the point, but lack the attention grabbing factor to attract the viewer to actually reading it
RESOURCES

**Email Marketing Software.** We use Intellicontact for all of our email marketing needs and are very happy with the product. It allows you to send as many emails as you want to as many lists as you want and receive statistics on who opens it and who clicks through. To learn more, visit [http://www.intellicontact.com/](http://www.intellicontact.com/).

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