

The Main Event - Back to School

By: Travis Holland, Education Business Development Manager - S.P. Richards

Can you believe that it is already Back-to-School time? This is like the Super Bowl for the education category! I want to provide a few tips and ideas to help you capture this business, even if you are just now starting to call on schools and districts.

I was in meeting today and someone asked the question "Is it too late to go after the Back-to-School business. My answer was "No." There are year-round opportunities within the education category and it is never too late to start building relationships.

I ask that you keep these things in mind as you get ready to start making sales calls.

1. A lot of decisions on product and supplies have already been made, however not all of them have already been purchased. This provides an opportunity for you to let the educator know what school products you offer. Also, teachers and administrators always find gaps or additional needs, once they have the students back in the class.
2. PTA/PTO's are just starting to form and schedule meetings. This is a great time to find the PTO President and introduce yourself. Additional resources often are provided through the PTO, so it is important to keep a close working relationship with them. This is also a great time to help with fundraisers and provide samples, while promoting your business and brand.

3. Classroom by Lorell® - Have you seen the new additions to our Classroom by Lorell? Schools do their best to prepare for Back-to-School and most often place their furniture orders ahead of time. However, sometimes manufacturers have long lead times or there is an issue with delivery. Schools cannot afford to wait for their furniture this time of year.

This is a great opportunity to show them the Classroom by Lorell offering and emphasis the quick delivery! We currently stock these items in all DC's, so you can save the day, if a school needs something quickly.

http://www.activepoint.com/SPR_Classroom_Lorell_Broch/

4. Principal Meetings – Most schools have a one day "all hands on deck" meeting. This is a time for the Principal to discuss the vision for the school year, as well as any housekeeping items. Don't miss this opportunity to get in front of the entire staff. It will be impossible to make it to every meeting, so pick a few Title I Schools and reach out to the Principal. Offer to provide donuts and a door prize in exchange for 5 minutes in front of the group. Remember, teachers alone spend \$3.3B a year from their own funds on school supplies.

5. Never stop building relationships and marketing to the education category. This is a marathon race, not a sprint. Although the Back-to-School time is the "Big Show" it is not the only time that educators purchase. Continue building those relationships and market to this category year-round.

6. Enroll in our NEW Integrated Marketing for Education. Keep in mind the Marketing Mantra of 5 "R's" 1. Right Audience 2. Right Message 3. Right Time 4. Right Place 5. Repeatedly

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