
9 TIPS FOR MARKETING TO TEACHERS

When it comes to creating and marketing a teacher discount, there are a few things you should know to develop an effective campaign that this very specialized group of consumers will respond to.

Teachers make up a consumer group 6.7 million strong who spend an average \$1.5 billion per year. This is also a group that spends money out of their own pockets to fund their classroom needs (\$490 on average). As a result, offering a teacher discount is not only a great way to show your support for teachers, but is also a smart way to grow your business, reach new customers, and improve your brand image.

Here is what we found when asking teachers about brands that offer teacher discounts:

- 94.3% of teachers go out of their way to shop at a company who offers a teacher discount
- 81% seek out companies that offer teacher discounts
- 80% are more loyal to brands that offer teacher discounts
- 97.4% feel valued by companies that offer discount programs for teachers
- 89.6% would recommend retailers who offer discount programs for teachers to friends and family even if they weren't teachers

After working with hundreds of brands, including Spotify and Tommy Hilfiger, to engage their brands with the teacher community, we've put together our top 8 tips for successfully marketing to teachers:

1. Know your audience

As with any targeted campaign, it's vitally important to understand who you are trying to reach. Key demographics of teachers, which are comprised of 4 million k-12 teachers, 1.7 million post-secondary educators, and over 1 million administrators include:

- 56% are over the age of 40
- 80% are women
- The average public school teacher's base salary is \$53,100
- The average teacher stays at their job 2.5 times longer than the average American

With this knowledge, you can work on pricing, messaging, and discount strategies that would appeal to those that fit this demographic.

2. Timing is everything

While you absolutely can and should market to teachers year around, there are a few specific times during the year that are primed to get the best attention from the teacher community. According to Google Trends, Teacher Appreciation Month, which occurs each year in May, and Back-to-School season at the end of the summer, are two of the best times to market your teacher discounts to the teacher community as there is a major spike in search activity for “teacher discounts” and “teacher appreciation”. As you prepare your strategy for reaching the teacher community, make sure that you make these months the cornerstone for your teacher discount strategy.

3. Don't discount the power of email

Email can be an incredibly effective tool to market your teacher discount. 3 out of 5 teachers find out about teacher appreciation programs from brands' emails. For every \$1 spent on email marketing, the average return on investment is \$44.25 according to a study done by EmailExpert. However, data from Litmus shows that you have just 3-4 seconds to grab your readers' attention and interest them enough to open and read your email. This means you have to get personal.

SheerID can help, as our marketing partner can reach 4.5 million educators' email addresses within 322,000 education institutions including Early Childhood Centers, K-12 public, private and catholic schools and districts, and colleges and universities. They can also access over 3.3 million personnel records within K-12 and over 1.1 million higher education records, which house over 200 data variables that can be used for targeted marketing and segmented as needed. This includes but is not limited to: Name, Title, Address, Institution, Institution type, Enrollment, Title 1 Dollars, Instructional Expenditures, Presence of Tablets in Classroom, Median Household Income, Geo, and Subject Taught.

Contact SheerID at sales@sheerid.com for more information.

4. Up your SEO game

While it may not have been true 10 years ago, teachers are incredibly active online, especially when it comes to shopping.

- Teachers shop twice as often online than the general population
- 99% of teachers and administrators have internet access at school
- 88% have internet at home

Our research shows that 81% of teachers actively search for teacher discounts when shopping, which means that SEO is incredibly important to get your offers seen. Do some keyword research and optimize your branded content to ensure that your name comes up in searches.

5. Invest in social media

While SEO can take a while to get going, social media can be a quick solution to get the word out about your teacher discount. In our “Tips Sheet for Reaching Teachers on Social Media”, you can find all of the hashtags and accounts that can help you to generate social buzz for your discount.

Taking it one step further, consider investing in Facebook ads. As of Q1 this year, there are nearly 1.6 billion Facebook users on the platform today. As a result, Facebook ads can be an incredibly effective way to reach teachers. With this ads, you can target by demographics, interests, etc., giving you the tools you need to get your target teachers to click.

6. Language and messaging are key

For all of your communications to teachers, you should ensure that you’re messaging is appropriate for the audience. As seen in the demographics of this group, most educators are women and more than half are over 40. Therefore, messages using high school slang and trending language may fall flat.

Keep your messages simple and genuine, and speak to the many challenges that teachers may be facing. Is it the end of term near finals? Show that you understand the stress they’re under. Showing you get it will go far, and don’t forget, a whopping 97.4% feel valued by companies that offer discount programs for teachers.

7. Be familiar with what promotions they care about

In our annual teacher survey partnering with Agile Education Marketing, we ask teachers what type of promotions typically get their attention. Here’s what they had to say:

- 83% like a free gift with purchase
- 35% like free shipping
- 34% like a small discount off the whole purchase
- 25% like BOGO
- 21% like a larger discount

When creating your discount and promotions, think about what works best within your business model and how you can include these in your offer.

8. Offer a big enough discount

In our annual survey, we found that a 25% discount will get 78% of teachers attention. This is the sweet spot, though some may be enticed with 20%. However, offering a 10% discount just won’t do the trick. A few teachers noted that:

“If the discount is 20% then I think it's honorable. If it's 10%, then I see it as free advertising. “

“It depends on the discount. If it's just a measly 10% I actually think it is so little as to be insulting to the financial stresses teachers are under. Anything less than 25% doesn't impress me.”

Price your items and your discount competitively, showing that you genuinely want to save this group money.

9. Don't forget the importance of word-of-mouth

As you create your program, remember that 81% of teachers find out about discounts from a friend or co-worker and 90% would recommend retailers who offer discount programs for teachers to friends and family even if they weren't teachers. Considering that teachers and educators represent over 2.3% of the population, positive word of mouth can make all the difference in seeing your teacher discount program take off.

To get the word of mouth mill moving, put your offer on your website and email it out to all of your subscribers. If you've followed the tips above, you'll see the chatter start and the purchases roll in.

While these are just a few of our favorite best practices for marketing to teachers, we have an entire bank of knowledge and case studies available to see teacher marketing programs in action. Contact us today at sales@sheerid.com.

