

STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT



By : Suriana Binti Norsalim

What is alumni engagement?

Alumni engagement is the word used to describe how institutions retain and develop relationships with prior graduates (or alumni) in order to create a powerful professional network. Strategies for involving alumni should begin long before students graduate. Long-lasting networks and more fruitful interactions are facilitated by this.

Start alumni engagement early

If institutions are offering a mediocre student experience, it will be difficult for them to develop significant interaction with alumni.

The basis of a student's relationship with the institution is established long before they become alumni because students only attend college for a (relatively) brief period of time and are alumni for the rest of their lives. While it's quite simple for students to lose their affection for their college, if they didn't enjoy their experience, it's challenging for it to rekindle once they've graduated.

Create enduring connections by making existing students feel appreciated and by emphasising that the journey doesn't end when they graduate.



ALUMNI IN TOUCH



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1. Be consistent

Engagement of alumni won't happen overnight, thus a consistent strategy is required for long-term success. Create a plan, put it into action in the short term, and ensure the institution is dedicated to the long-term results.

2. Invest in your alumni

There shouldn't be a one-sided relationship between alumni and their alma mater. Effective alumni outreach should give chances for professional and individualised support, such as professional networking events and career services, continuing education options, and usage of campus amenities.

Make an attempt to connect alumni through reunions, directories, and technology. You can also give continuing education in the professions chosen by graduates, as well as additional possibilities for general education like speaking engagements and seminars.

3. Ask for feedback

Always keep the channels of communication open. Alumni should feel free to offer suggestions for improving the university in any area. Accept and value any criticism as a vital component of your commitment to greatness.

Alumni opinions and suggestions should be sought out by alumni engagement programmes as they create their development plans. By regularly asking alumni for comments, the programme can be incrementally modified while measuring the effectiveness of the current approaches.



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4. Reduce direct financial requests

Donations shouldn't be the exclusive goal of outreach. Although the end goal for institutions is financial support, this can't be the only correspondence alumni receive. Give your attention to helping others, and financial contributions will follow.

5. Provide targeted, interesting news

The diversity of the alumni is enormous. A person's background, age, and views can differ greatly. So that messages are directed to the appropriate persons, alumni should be segregated. Are new graduates as interested in the same news as those who graduated fifty years ago? Who is more likely to make a donation? Messaging must convey this. If graduates are all treated equally, it is impossible to create engaging and entertaining content.

6. Connect with alumni through social media

Rich material and interesting conversation facilitated by Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. Create a social media presence and even think about using a service specifically designed to connect your alumni in a private network.

7. Communications should feel personal

Real people are more likely to respond favourably to communications. Do not repeatedly send material to the same person or a generic alumni email.



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8. Maintain relationships

Even though fresh graduates are less inclined to give financially to their old mater, universities shouldn't disregard them.

Engage alumni as soon as possible after graduation to prevent a loss in communication that could result in a lasting break in relationship. Building relationships later on is far harder than keeping them up.

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9. Keep an up to date database

Without an up-to-date alumni database, effective alumni outreach is difficult.

Prior to graduation, try to collect students' contact information; after that, whenever possible, periodically request updates (e.g., by email or at alumni events).

10. Make introductions amongst interested alumni

Making introductions among alumni assists in fostering comradery and a sense of community.

Facilitate introductions during gatherings, through an online community, or even directly by giving members access to the alumni database

11. Involve alumni in campus life

Invite alumni back to school as often as you can to reconnect with current students. You can accomplish this in a variety of ways, such as through seminars, competition panels, lectures, retreats, mentorship, or student body activities.

When alumni interact with students, it fosters meaningful connections that both sides can benefit from as they move through life.



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12. Assign a reasonable budget

To make money, you must first spend money. The budget must ultimately reflect institutions' commitment to making alumni a priority if many of the aforementioned tactics are to be successful. The long-term benefits will be enormous if done effectively.