



Marketing 101:

*Building Blocks
for Clear, Confident,
and Mission-Driven
Messaging*

Speakers



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Welcome & Overview

- Why marketing matters
- Components of a marketing plan
- Impact of messaging
- Understanding your audience
- Marketing tactics
- Tools to help you

Marketing



- Branding
- Advertising
- Online presence
- Community outreach
- Social media
- Events
- Communications
- Advancement
- Donor acquisition
- ...and more!

Why Marketing Matters.

- Families today are overwhelmed by options; marketing makes your school *visible* in a crowded landscape.
- People trust what they see consistently — marketing builds familiarity and credibility.
- When schools don't tell their story, *someone else will* (and it may not be accurate).
- Consistent marketing contributes to:
 - Enrollment stability
 - Staff morale
 - Donor confidence
 - Stronger parish-school relationships

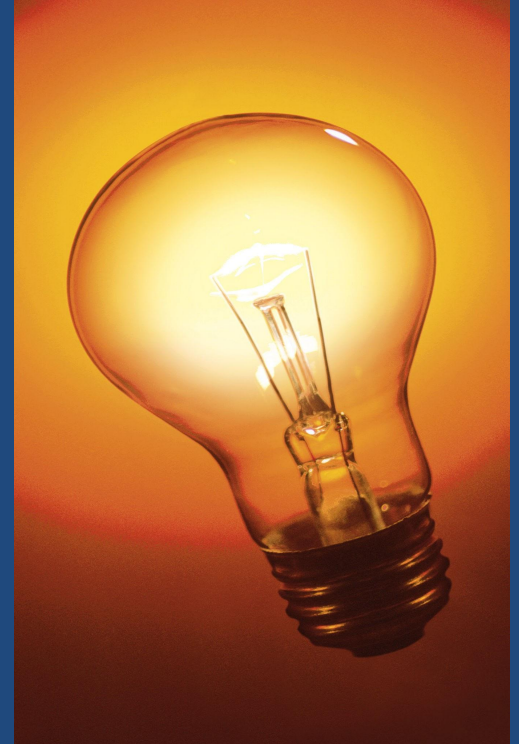


Marketing is storytelling.



What Makes Catholic School Marketing Unique

- Mission + academic excellence working together
- Faith-infused formation
- Community and belonging
- Generational legacy and tradition
- Bilingual + multicultural outreach
- Personalized, relationship-based recruitment





Share the
AMAZING
things
happening at
your school.

Student Recruitment



- **74%** of parents of school-aged children considered sending at least 1 of their children to a different school (NSCAF, 2025)
- **60%** of parents said the school website influenced their enrollment decision (Niche, 2023)

Faculty & Staff Recruitment



- **88%** of job seekers consider employer brand when applying (Amra & Elma, 2025)
- More than **50%** of Millennial teachers say they found their current job via the internet (School CEO, 2025)
- **81%** of new teachers reviewed a school's website before accepting a job (School CEO, 2025)

Donor Engagement

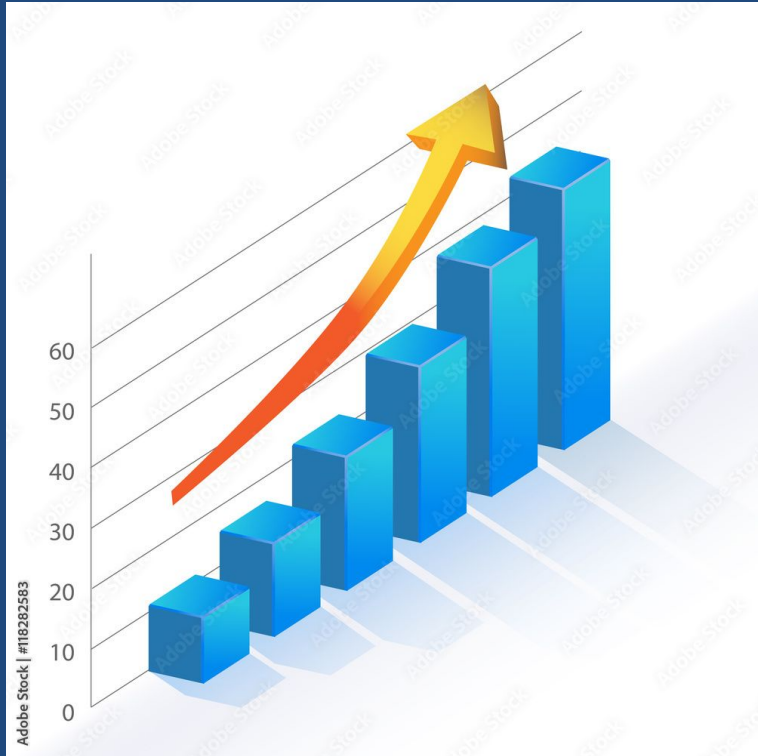


- **32%** of donors say they were most inspired to give via social media (Double the Donation, 2025)
- Online giving grew by ~12.1% in 2024, and an estimated **28%** of all nonprofit revenue now comes through digital channels (LICERA, 2025)

Importance of a Marketing Plan

Purpose of a Marketing Plan

- Strategically plan out efforts
- Opportunity to reflect on impact / return
- Take lessons learned and apply to next year
- Cohesive branding
- Team continuity

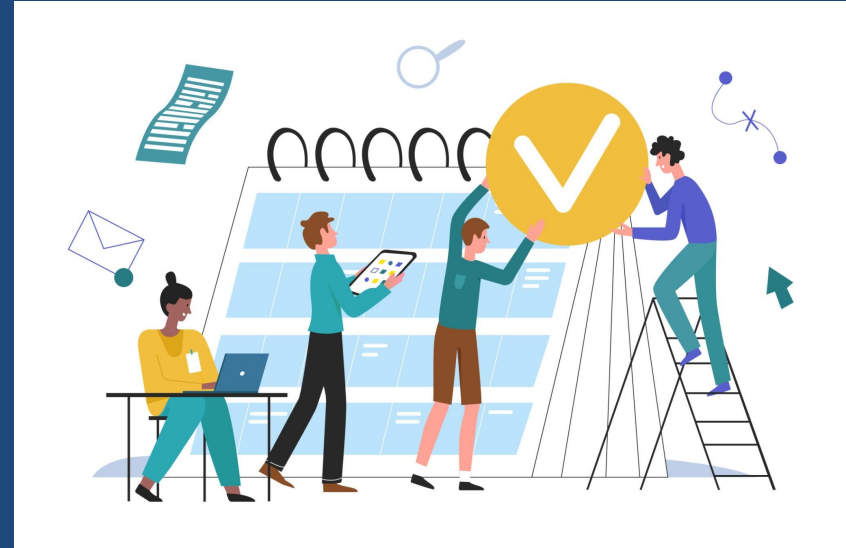


Plan Impact

- Schools with strategic branding see an increase of **25-40%** in inquiries and **15-30%** in inquiry-to-enrollment conversions (School Branding Agency, 2025)
- Online giving grew by ~**12.1%** in 2024, and an estimated **28%** of all nonprofit revenue now comes through digital channels (LICERA, 2025)

Key Parts

- Goals
- Timeline
- Budget
- Audience (race, ethnicity, age, generation, religion, language, culture, background, life experience)
- Accountability
- Example



Don't know where to start?

Do a SWOT Analysis

Marketing Tactics & Channels

Impact Of Messaging

What is one thing your school can say that no other school can say?

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Examples of Weak Messaging

- We're a small school.
- We're affordable.
- We offer religion classes.
- We provide academic excellence.
- We're a family.

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Examples of Strong, Mission-Aligned Messaging

- We form saints and scholars.
- Every child is known, valued, and loved.
- A safe, joyful, academically rigorous environment rooted in Catholic identity.
- Where faith and future grow together.

Print Materials



- Something that can be printed
- **Examples:** Brochures, newsletters, cards / letters, invitations and save the dates, annual report, flyers, postcards, posters

Print Materials



- Audience: All ages; most impactful for the 45-54 age group, ~14% response rate (Amra and Elma, 2025)
- Overall response rate of ~4.4% (greater than email)

Social Media

- Platforms: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter/X, LinkedIn, TikTok, Snapchat, Pinterest, Youtube, Reddit, WhatsApp
- 4.9 billion people (61% of the population, 82% of Americans) use social media worldwide (Data Report, 2025)
 - 81% of Americans use Youtube (Pew Research, 2025)
 - 69% of Americans use Facebook (Pew Research, 2025)
- Can be very *time* consuming
- Businesses see up to 30% higher conversion rates IF approached strategically



Matching Social Media to Your Audiences

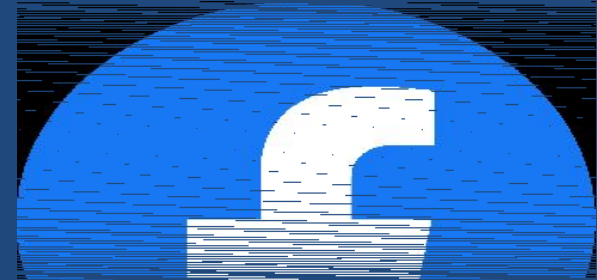
FACEBOOK— Parents (Especially Moms 30–55), Grandparents, Parishioners

Best for:

- School updates
- Event promotions
- Photo albums
- Parish partnerships
- Bilingual posts (higher Hispanic engagement)

Why they prefer it:

- It's where parents already spend time
- Easy to share posts to parish and community groups
- Grandparents are heavy users and love photos



Matching Social Media to Your Audiences

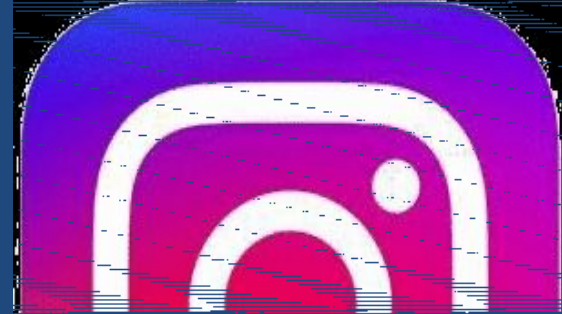
INSTAGRAM— Millennial Parents, Students (Middle–High School), Young Alumni

Best for:

- Photos & videos of student life
- Reels
- Stories
- Celebrations, faith moments, sports highlights

Why they prefer it:

- Visual, quick, mobile-friendly
- Reels receive high engagement
- Great for showcasing campus culture & joy



Matching Social Media to Your Audiences

TIKTOK— Teens, Young Alumni, Prospective Teachers
Under 30

Best for:

- Fun, quick videos
- Student-generated content
- Trends & challenges
- Behind-the-scenes

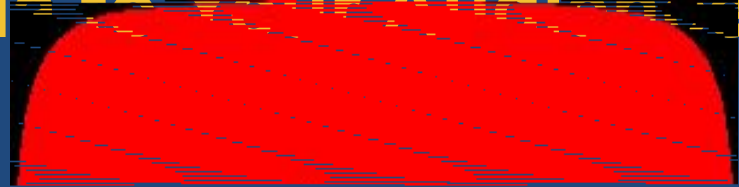
Why they prefer it:

- Authentic and less formal
- High virality potential
- Builds brand awareness with younger audiences



Matching Social Media to Your Audiences

YOUTUBE— Parents Researching Schools, Students, Prospective Teachers



Best for:

- Virtual tours
- School culture highlight videos
- Teacher spotlights
- Testimonials
- Feast day celebrations and major events

Why they prefer it:

- YouTube is the #2 search engine after Google
- Parents trust videos when deciding on schools
- Great for SEO and long-form content

Matching Social Media to Your Audiences

LINKEDIN— Teachers, Prospective Job Candidates,
Donors, Partners

Best for:

- Faculty recruitment
- Professional achievements
- Leadership messages
- Alumni success stories
- Community partners & donors

Why they prefer it:

- Professional and mission-driven tone
- Showcases credibility and academic excellence
- Great for strengthening employer brand



Matching Social Media to Your Audiences

WHATSAPP— Hispanic/Latino Parents, Immigrant Families, Bilingual Communities

Best for:

- Quick updates
- Reminders
- Small group communication
- Bilingual messaging

Why they prefer it:

- Most-used messaging platform among Hispanic families
- Easy, familiar, and highly responsive
- Perfect for invitations, reminders, and parish partnerships

X (TWITTER)— Media, Diocese/Archdiocese Communications, Community Partners

Best for:

- Quick announcements
- Academic wins
- Athletic victories
- Crisis communication
- Sharing diocesan initiatives

Why they prefer it:

- Fast-paced information
- Journalists monitor it
- Great for amplifying Catholic Schools Week and major wins

Do's and Don't of Social Media

- **What to post**

- Student life
- Teacher spotlights
- Faith formation moments
- Quick testimonials
- Behind the scenes
- Celebrations & traditions
- Alumni stories

- **What performs best**

- Faces
- Children learning
- Short videos
- Candid moments
- Bilingual posts (higher engagement in Hispanic communities)



Do's and Don't of Social Media

- Don't post blurry, dark, or outdated photos
- Don't post flyers as your only content
- Don't use too much text
- Don't argue in comments
- Don't post only during crisis moments





How many hours do you spend on your school's social media?

How Much To Post?

- **Post frequency**
 - Facebook: 3–5x per week
 - Instagram: 2–4x per week
 - Reels/TikTok: 1–2x per week
- **Content mix**
 - 40% mission
 - 30% academics
 - 20% culture & community
 - 10% invitations (events, tours)



Website

Critical elements every Catholic school website must include

- Clear Schedule a Tour button on the homepage
- Tuition information (transparent & easy to find)
- Financial aid explanation
- Updated photos (within the last 12 months)
- Bilingual page or toggle when serving Hispanic/Latino communities
- Curriculum & faith formation pages
- Student life (athletic, extracurricular, alumni, and student services, etc.)
- Faculty/staff directory with photos
- Why choose Catholic education? section
- Career page with open positions and/or employment application

Website Mistakes

Top website mistakes

- Too much text
- Hard-to-find admissions button
- Outdated calendars or newsletters
- Stock photos or blurry
- Broken links
- No link to the parish, archdiocese, high school (if elementary school), and other ministries.

Radio, Podcast, Television



- Audio-first that drives engagement, reaching audiences through *passive consumption*
- **Radio:**
 - 82% of U.S. (ages 18+) listen to AM/FM radio in a week (Pew Research, 2023)
 - Audience is 15-54 years old

Radio, Podcast, Television



- Podcast (can include video):
 - 44% of U.S. population listens (Triton Digital, 2024)
 - Audience is 18-34 years old
- Television:
 - streaming and live; 56% of Americans watch 3+ hours of TV per day (Attest, 2023)
 - Audience is 35-64+ years old



Podcast

Knight Cast by Mater Dei

Andrea



KANSAS CITY'S SPANISH RADIO!!



HOLY FAMILY SCHOOL OF FAITH





Events

- Event marketing is **experiential** - attendees interact directly with the brand and representatives
- Builds **memory** and recall
- Engagement-focused, encouraging **participation** and **emotional** connection



Events

- **Examples:** Open Houses, tours, information nights, galas, festivals, summer camps, alumni dinner
- **Audiences:**
 - Curious and social
 - Enjoy hands-on, immersive, or multi-sensory experiences
 - Motivated by authenticity and personalization
- **Feeds other channels** (e.g. photos from event are used in social media)



Events Best Practices

- Use student ambassadors
- Use a *trackable* QR code
- Collect contact info
- Follow up within 48 hours
- Use multilingual signage & tap into volunteers' gifts
- Create photo opportunities
- Keep staff visible and smiling

Tools to Help You

Digital Tools

If you only started with 5 tools...

- **Design:** Canva ([Design School](#))- graphics, templates, branding
- **Scheduling:** [Buffer](#) / [Hootsuite](#) account/ Meta- scheduling & insights
- **Creation:** Chatgpt (check out [SchneiderB Media](#) for ideas)- copywriting, idea generation
- **Collecting:** Google Forms – inquiries, event RSVP
- **Research:** [Mission Insites](#)- demographic targeting

Digital Tools

Additional Resources

- NCEA ([NCSW](#), [Enrollment](#), [Hispanic & Latino Engagement](#), [Marketing Kit](#))
- [ArchKCK Hub](#)
- [Proprio](#)
- #SocialSchoolforEDU ([free resources](#))
- Branding Guide ([example](#))



What tools do you use?

5 Best Practices

1. **Align messaging** with your school's mission and goals
2. **Connect emotionally** with your audience (e.g. testimonials, legacy)
3. Keep messages **simple**, clear, and actionable
4. Regularly evaluate and **adjust messaging** based on feedback and engagement
5. Use **consistent** branding: logo, colors, fonts, tone (create a brand guideline)

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Questions?

Contact Us



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