



**£92,600,000,000**

HOW TO SELL MORE TO SCHOOLS & ACADEMIES  
WHEN THEIR BUDGETS ARE RELEASED

*Sprint Education* 

# Sprint Education...

is an award winning digital agency that has pioneered digital and inbound marketing to the UK education sector since 2007. We create over 48 million teacher connections for our clients every year through delightful digital marketing plans and our education marketing software (Campus); attracting teachers, school staff and educational establishments to our clients' brands.

This whitepaper was created by John.

*"I'm John, Lead Strategist at Sprint Education. Since 2013 I have managed over 2,000 marketing strategies for Sprint Education's clients including the likes of Comic Relief, BBC, Manchester United, the NHS, and pretty much any type of education focused business you can think of."*



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## ROLL YOUR SLEEVES UP...

And let's see if I can help you earn some of this huge education budget that state schools have just received by whipping up a frenzy amongst schools about your products/services.

If you embrace your education marketing this summer term and create a buzz within the education sector, particularly from May-July when schools are at their wealthiest, and September-November for Academies, then you will give yourself every chance to sell more to schools and win some of the £92.6 billion budget.

This report will shed some light on school budgets, and importantly **uncover the 3 killer secrets** to launching a winning marketing strategy at this pivotal point in the school marketing calendar.

# 1. Survive the Flood!

## IT'S SINK OR SWIM TIME

Most companies believe that just because state schools have got their new budget in the bank it's as simple as dropping a quick email or posting a letter to a teacher and the sales will start flooding in.

This general attitude means that when schools are at their richest (RIGHT NOW!) the education marketing world becomes flooded with every John, Mick, and Sally trying to get noticed.

Most believe that by shouting the loudest or offering the juiciest discount they will outdo their competitors and make more sales.

**CRITICAL ERROR ALERT!** Why would you even consider worrying about what your competitors are doing? Your sole focus should always be about your customer (e.g. the teacher/school) as it's not always about the cheapest price when teachers are purchasing.

If you can truly understand how teachers think, act, purchase, and ultimately what they need, and you can communicate how your product/service can satisfy this need, only then will you stand a chance of winning a slice of the budget.



*"Before I started Sprint Education I was a Head of Department at a secondary school. I controlled a budget every year, and my ethos was to only buy products/services that improve my department's teaching and learning standards. It was those special diamonds in the rough that would get the sale from me. If you could solve a big problem for my department, and I could understand the benefit of buying, then the cheque would be in the post!"*

*Guy (Director, Sprint Education & Ex. Teacher)*

# 2. Think Microscopic

## SEGMENT TO THE MICRO LEVEL

Gone are the days when you can blast to every contact in your send list and expect to get responses let alone sales. It's just not that simple anymore!

If you've got something to say about your product or service ask yourself if that message will whet the appetite of every contact you are sending to. I bet it won't. You see the marketing world is evolving rapidly to suit the growing expectations of teachers. Each teacher has their own needs and agenda for purchasing anything, so you must recognise these groups and then differentiate your message to suit their unique requirements.

I call this **micro-marketing**.

For example, we've harped on in the past about the difference between a purchasing decision maker in a school compared with a purchasing influencer (check out this blog post from January: <http://blog.sprint-media.co.uk/?p=199>), but why would you send the same marketing material, highlighting the same key benefits to two distinctly different target markets?

A purchasing decision maker is driven by **3 key principles**:

- 1) Do my staff want this to make their job easy?
- 2) Will it improve the learning experience of the pupils?
- 3) Is it value for money?

Whilst a purchasing influencer's **3 step cognitive process** is:

- 1) Will this help me deliver a better learning experience?
- 2) Will it make my life as a teacher easier/better/more efficient?
- 3) Is it worth hassling the purchasing decision maker to buy it?

These are just two areas of micro-marketing in schools, but a recipients' thought process will vary depending on other variables as well. E.g. subjects, time of year, school age range, etc.

You could go on and change your message slightly until every single recipient receives your marketing which speaks to them on an individual basis. Now I'm not suggesting that's what you do, instead **break your targets down into key sub-sectors** and make their message relevant.

That way you achieve the following:

- 1) A more *specific offer and message* to an individual teacher (or sub-sector).
- 2) You will appear *sensitive and socially conscious* to your prospects' needs.
- 3) *Trust* in your company *will grow* as you will appear to be able to satisfy focused needs of the individual and not offer a half-hearted generic attempt to please everyone.
- 4) *They will love you more!* You've bothered to try and offer something special and different to each sub-sector so why wouldn't they appreciate it?



*"Our emailing service to teachers' inboxes offers several techniques to do just this. For example, dynamic email content - where we vary key elements of your marketing content depending on the profile of the recipient receiving the email. Call me if you want to find out more about these services - 01684 297374."*

*Ben (Director, Sprint Education)*



# 3. Decentralisation

## A LONG WORD THAT IS MUSIC TO YOUR EARS

It's something that's been in the pipeline for a while now and like Academies, schools are gradually becoming decentralised from Local Authorities and are drifting away from their iron clad grip on purchasing decisions and the rigmarole that comes with being bossed around on how a budget should be spent.

Thankfully now it seems some bright spark has realised that the best people to decide what a school needs most is the very people running it, the senior management team and teachers.

This is great news for you as the people receiving your marketing are more than likely those in control of the decision, so they are the ones asking themselves the key question – to buy or not to buy?

My advice here would be to take this opportunity and run with it, but one hit to a teacher isn't enough! Research shows it can take 6 hits to get a response. So use every marketing weapon in your armoury (or Sprint Education's armoury if you want our support) to prompt, remind, and entice those teachers with their new purchasing powers to buy from you now.

This doesn't mean you should necessarily email or post to them every single time you want to make contact. Be creative, connect with the school through Facebook or Twitter (many schools now have accounts), or link with a teacher on LinkedIn, write interesting blogs that will encourage a core following from your target market.

This is called inbound marketing and it works tremendously when supported by direct marketing methods (email/postal), and also supports the micro-marketing ethos we discussed.



*"If you would like to know more about the benefits of inbound marketing drop me a line, I'd be more than happy to let you into some of the secrets of this new approach to selling to schools."*

*Jackie (Campaign Manager, Sprint Education)*

So what are you waiting for...

# Go for it!

Your timing couldn't be better. As you are reading this schools and budget holders will be counting their pennies (well £92.6 billion to be precise) and 'umming' and 'arring' over what to spend it on. Don't get me wrong, they can't afford to be frivolous as a large portion of their budgets will already be ear marked (e.g. over 50% will be spent on staff wages), but they will now be ready to decide what their school needs to survive and thrive over the next 12 months.

I really hope you take some of my advice on board and your school marketing dramatically improves in doing so. Now go get em' you schools marketing Ninja you!

Good luck!

**John Smith**

*Lead Strategist – Sprint Education*