



BEST PRACTICES FOR MARKETING THE VIRTUAL CAMPUS

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF THE ONLINE ADMISSIONS PROCESS

TRANSLATING ADMISSIONS ONLINE

Consider the purpose, desired experience, and outcome of the interaction to determine what virtual functions are needed.

NYU's Senior Vice President for Enrollment Management, MJ Knoll-Finn, provides several high-level tips for translating admissions and enrollment events into virtual engagements:



MAKE THE VIRTUAL PERSONAL

In addition to general admissions information and online events, NYU also holds "individual and small meetings with students, faculty, deans and alumni in the NYU community."



PROVIDE STRUCTURE, CONSISTENCY, AND COMPASSION

NYU maintains its standard schedule for decisions, deposit deadlines, and registration to provide consistency; however, the institution is willing to be flexible for individual families who cannot meet the schedule or require extra assistance.

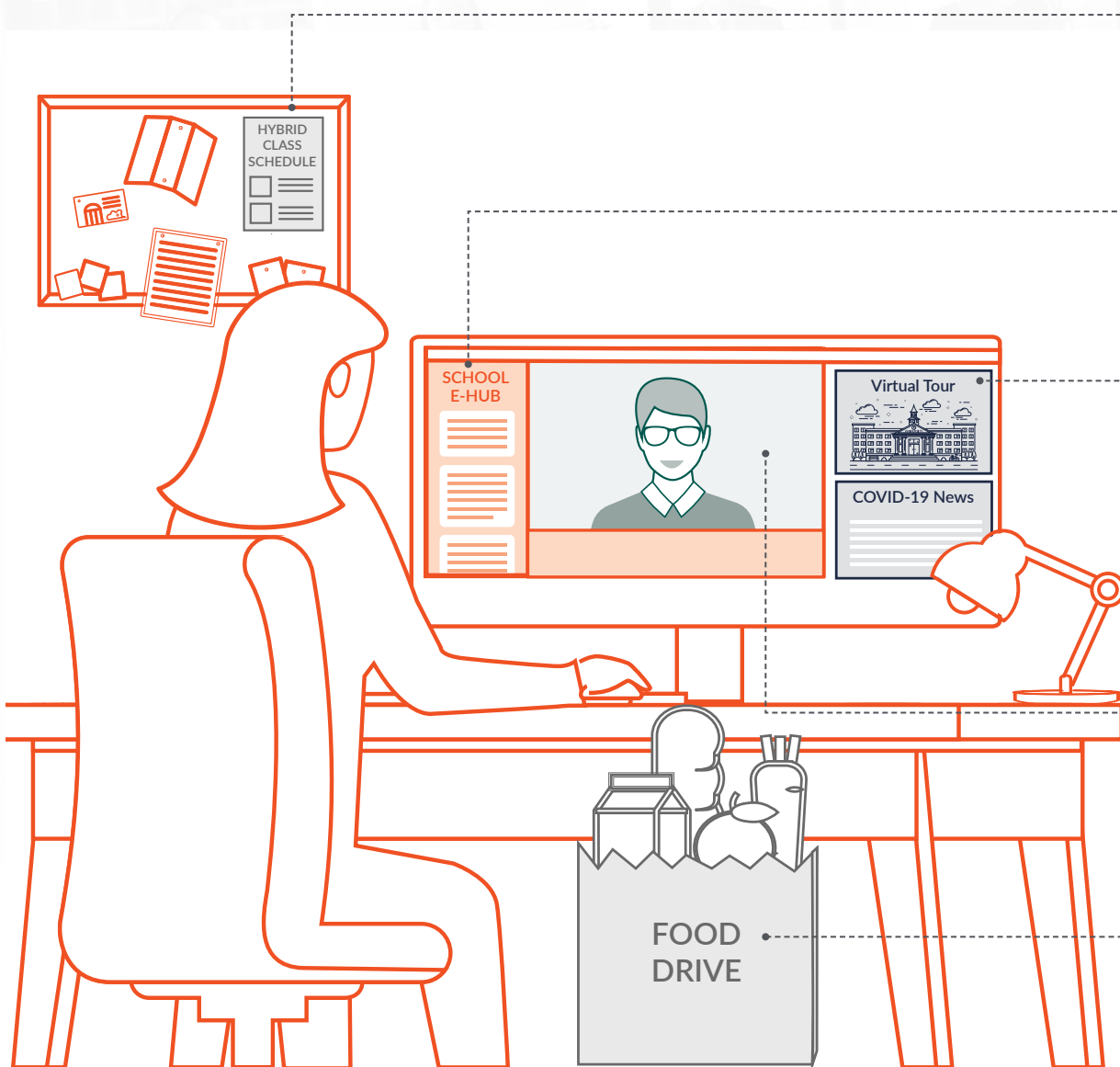


BE BOLDLY CREATIVE

Find "creative ways to bring [your] campus to each student [you] admit," by leveraging media and multiple methods of online interaction between prospects, admitted students, and parents and members of the campus community.

ENGAGING PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS VIRTUALLY

Attract and retain interest by following these tactics for your next virtual admissions event:



BE FLEXIBLE WHERE POSSIBLE

Be open to accommodating individuals. Flexibility may be through overall schedule or policy adjustments, as well as listening and responding to individual student and family needs or concerns.

CREATE A HUB

Provide a central location for all resources and events. This is typically the existing admissions website, but sub-pages for different groups (e.g., transfer students) or virtual resources may be a useful way to organize (e.g., a COVID-19 resource page).

USE A VARIETY OF CONTENT

Incorporate a mix of delivery methods and types of content such as self-directed campus tours or webinars. As part of marketing to prospective students, also leverage inbound marketing via public-facing content such as resources for parents or general COVID-19 resources.

PUT A HUMAN IN FRONT

Make sure virtual admissions have a face. Consider a top-of-page or pop-up outreach message from the admissions director, such as an introduction video or a letter about COVID-19 and its impact on students and admissions.

DEMONSTRATE VALUES

Embody the institution's values and mission in virtual admissions materials. Make sure communications and events align with core institutional values and mission to communicate how students will fit in with and benefit from choosing your institution.

Key solutions being adopted during COVID-19:



Video introductions and letters from admissions directors



Free online resources (e.g., eBooks, blog posts)



Virtual campus tours



Applicant-submitted video essays and statements



Pop-up live chats



Student-run social media accounts or posts



Webinars, Facebook Live events, and video conference Q&As



Participation in virtual admissions fairs or information sessions coordinated by third parties

Follow these guidelines for a successful virtual event:



Don't try to duplicate campus events. Recreate the feeling.



Build events based on prospective student and parent needs. For example, having financial aid experts discuss how to submit the FAFSA and apply for loans.



Offer natural integration between online channels, such as including buttons that allow viewers to share content from your website to social media.



Leverage external partners to build tools and media.

BEST PRACTICES FOR YOUR ONLINE ADMISSIONS PERFORMANCE

- ✓ Respond to prospective student inquiries within 24 hours during the admissions process
- ✓ Provide virtual campus tours
- ✓ Allow documents required for admission to be submitted online
- ✓ Provide onboarding service support for online students

Sources: Inside Higher Ed, Enrollment Management Association, Chronicle of Higher Education, BizEd, Strive Scan