

# PSI PARADIGM<sup>®</sup>

A PSI Communiqué for the Educational Community

psi-solutions.org

summer 2011



Photo, E. Rosenberg

## PSI's Newest Pilot...

**WITH SCHOOLS** strapped for cash, those who can do the best job of marketing have been there all along: the parents. That's the case with PSI's Kammy Shuman.

Marketing can be done from the inside out because parents know the problems to target and the strategies to use. They have the insight and knowledge of the school's strengths. It's just a matter of harnessing their energies.

### **Marketing any school can be done from the inside out!**

The job of Marketing Liaison involves the process of finding the unique, competitive character of the school and then getting the word out.

- This relatively inexpensive program helps grow enrollment!
- The principles of *Marketing from the Inside Out* can be applied to any school.
- Parent marketers are the most successful when they have a professional consultant as a resource.

**PSI's Marketing Expert Partners** are resources to fine tune your school's program.

## marketing matters!

### Marketing Your School From the Inside Out

**KAMMY SHUMAN** is PSI's Marketing Liaison at St. Columbkille School in Parma, Ohio. She heads an innovative marketing initiative made up of the parents and the principal, Rita Klement. Harnessing the enthusiasm of parents with the guidance of PSI Marketing Experts increases the value of this program, while minimizing costs.

The first thing that they did was to handle St. Columbkille as a *brand*. Hundreds of choices were created, with the winning theme being: *'A tradition of excellence in spirit, scholarship and service.'*

Kammy was chosen as the PSI Marketing Liaison because of her interest as the mother of children attending the school. 'It makes no sense,' she says, 'paying a big fee to an outside firm that knows nothing and has to start from scratch. Especially in these tough times, why can't parents work as marketers? Just one of the parents has referred ten other families to St. Columbkille.'

Working collaboratively, parents, teachers, the principal, and staff meet regularly to develop marketing ideas and then implement them. They include

applying for grants, monthly and quarterly newsletters, redesigning the web site, open houses, creating a five-year strategy plan, teacher workshops and community outreach to grow the enrollment.

Some of the goals are those that apply to most schools. A Facebook page and an alumni fund have been started. Parents will now be able to start a credit union account to help invest in tuition with interest.

The Marketing Liaison is a PSI pilot program designed for supporting the work of parents who know their school's challenges. With our Expert Marketing Partners challenges can become opportunities for success!



Photo by Emily Rosenberg  
Kammy and Principal Rita Klement

### **The key is the mentoring of the Marketing Liaison with PSI's Expert Partners**

# MARKETING

## Through Professional Development

by Nancy Brewer

**Outreach educational programs** that interest parents (and most importantly, *prospective parents*) are very effective marketing tools. They are professional, inexpensive and appealing—if you choose the right topics, schedule them right and offer them regularly.

Two effective topics are:

### **Engaging the Disengaged Digital Age Student:**

This program focuses on how the brains of today's students have been rewired by technology. Both teacher and parent programs provide tips and techniques about how children think differently in today's world. Strategies are discussed with teachers and parents that focus on strengthening thinking and study skills, cognitive development, and social and emotional growth.

### **Well-publicized programs that meet the new challenges of our digital age help market your school to your target community**

### **Raising Test Scores—It's a No-Brainer:**

This program provides a school and home preparation plan that improves student performance and standardized test scores by offering practical, creative strategies based on the most current research. These tips can have an immediate impact on student achievement. They develop a school and home collaboration that includes strategies from research to study skills for a good nutritional plan which can impact student performance.

Topics that provide appealing content (and are not 'just a sales pitch' for your school) show parents you care and are there to support them. They are a simple and effective way to reach out to parents. Adding the free 'spaghetti dinner' increases participation. To maximize the impact of these programs, offer them regularly throughout the year. Designing them with prospective parents in mind will enhance your program's effectiveness—making it more appealing to your target audience!

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## Get the **CHINALINK**<sup>®</sup> Advantage

**Parents eager for** the best school try to find the ones that not only prepare their children in 'the basics' but also those that offer that extra special 'edge' to help them compete for jobs and college. PSI's **CHINALINK** is one inexpensive way that schools can offer Chinese to students without making a large financial commitment. This program allows elementary and high schools to attract parents seeking something special for their children; a program that will help prepare them for the rapidly changing job and college market of the 21st century.

### **Boost your school's enrollment**

American students who have a basic knowledge of China stand a far better chance of success than those who do not. Imagine what an advantage it would be for a young person in any area of international business to be able to speak Mandarin Chinese or even to 'just' understand Chinese culture.

### **Giving students this competitive edge attracts new parents to your school**

#### **What CHINALINK offers:**

- **Students Can Learn Mandarin Chinese** within a variety of modalities.
- **Academic performance** of the school community is energized when **CHINALINK** instruction is integrated and embedded within the traditional classroom.
- **Face-to-face communication** with Chinese students. Your students can talk with Chinese students about their differences and similarities via real-time computer video hookups. Diversity is a great stimulus for learning.
- **Travel to China:** Administrators, staff and students can travel to China to learn more about the country's education, business, art, and daily life.
- **Professional Development:** Why was the Great Wall built? How did Confucius gain renown? Then, there are the abacus, paper, printing and silk production. The list goes on. Understanding their success will help bolster student achievement.

PSI's **CHINALINK** is a convenient, inexpensive and simple way for schools to add a program that is both extremely timely and practical. Find out what opportunities it offers by contacting Karen McKelvey ([karenmckelvey@psi-solutions.org](mailto:karenmckelvey@psi-solutions.org)).

## Asking: A common mistake

**THE MOST COMMON** mistake we see is the general, mass mailing used as an annual fund appeal letter.

'Dear Donor: Your gift at any amount is appreciated.'

When you ask every person for the same gift in the same generic way, you're leaving money on the table. Investing in the mission of a school or non-profit organization is a very thoughtful and personal act. It should be solicited in a very personal way.

### Segment your donor list...and make it personal!

Determine who your Leadership Gift prospects are, your closest friends and supporters, and ask them for their ongoing support face-to-face. Tell them personally what their investment has meant, and what their continued giving will mean.

### Invest in personal relationships with donors and they'll invest in you.

For mid-level supporters, it's OK to send a letter, but *personalize* the letter. Begin by thanking them for the specific amount of their previous gift, and ask them for a specific amount this time around.

Invest in building personal relationships, and they will invest in you. Replace generic letters with personal meetings and watch your annual fund grow.



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## 7 easy steps for fund-raising

by Stacey Picard

Many schools do not have a heavily staffed development office or a large budget for the effort. They need to rely on volunteers to help. Whether you have a highly functioning board development committee, or a small group of dedicated volunteer parents and friends, here are 7 things they can do to help you raise money...and asking for a gift isn't one of them.



Stacey Picard



Sr. Ritamary Welsh

### Tell the story

*Know what sets your school apart* and talk about it. Be able to give the elevator speech that leaves folks wanting to learn more.

### Host a reception in your home

Philanthropic support comes from *building personal relationships*, not from sending a letter. Bring small groups together to start to make connections that last a lifetime.

**Know what it is that sets your school apart.**

### Make a thank-you phone call

Donors who are personally thanked by a board member or volunteer are 93% more likely to make a second, and generally larger gift. *Pick up the phone!*

### Attend the school's special events

*Volunteers are the school's gateway to the community.* The school relies on you to bring newcomers to the table. Be visible, and bring your friends.

### Introduce three people to the head of the school

More often than not, *once a person meets a charismatic leader and tours the school, they're hooked.* Let the staff and the kids do what they do best. Get them in front of people.

### Get teachers and staff involved

Your teachers and staff should be cheerleaders for your school. Potential donors want to hear success stories.

### Seek corporate support

Companies generally direct at least a portion of their corporate philanthropy to organizations where employees are involved. Providing board members, pro bono services, event sponsorships or matching gifts are just a few examples. Find out more about how your company might help.

*Stacey Picard and Sr. Ritamary Welsh, OSU, are partners and co-founders of SDG Advisors, LLC, an organization involved with strengthening and sustaining Catholic education. Contact them at [info@psi-solutions.org](mailto:info@psi-solutions.org).*



# NOTHING is not important in MARKETING

**St. Paschal Baylon School** in Highland Heights, Ohio won the Blue Ribbon National School of Excellence Award in 2009. Only fifty schools in the U.S. are selected to receive this coveted yearly award.

John Bednar, the principal of St. Paschal's, is certain that the key ingredient in marketing is to **sell** your school. It's no easy thing and takes a lot of collaborative work. 'You have to stand out in some important way.' It's a challenging task, but very rewarding. In the case of St. Paschal, a list of innovative programs was described in the Blue Ribbon application.



- A math program called 'Simple Solutions'
- PSI's *Bullies to Buddies* program
- A partnership with a village in India for students to raise money for farm animals
- PSI's Special Education and School Health Services
- A social justice program called 'Everybody Is Somebody'

The Blue Ribbon Award is a huge marketing boost. It highlights your school to those now enrolled and to your *target markets*. As Bednar reflects, 'Winning the Blue Ribbon Award keeps our school in the chase for excellence and continued expansion. It's one of the best things to ever happen to us. I collaborate with PSI to help other schools apply for this prestigious award. It's great for schools to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity!'

## Practical and Affordable School Marketing Techniques

by Jerry Jindra, PSI Expert Partner

**RECENTLY I WAS WALKING** down the hall of a private elementary school as the principal explained some of the amazing things taking place in her institution. Suddenly pointing to the empty seats, she lamented, 'If people only knew what goes on here. I'd love to do marketing but we can't afford it.' That's when I explained some basic, inexpensive techniques that would not only attract new parents, but would also help retain existing students.

**Develop a brand statement**—Define your school in language that speaks to the hopes, dreams, fears, and aspirations of parents. Give them a reason to *invest* their children's future in your school.

**Market, Market, Market!**—Banners, posters and newsletters reinforce what makes your school different. Make yard signs and ask parents to display them at their homes. Accentuate the positive. An open house is news for the community!

**The Internet is your ally**—Your web site is where most people start their research. If not done already, form a committee for this purpose. The home page is your brand. Be clear about contact information.

**Use social media**—Moms are the largest users of social media like Facebook. Make a Facebook page with a link it to your website. Post videos of children in school activities, interviews with parents, even a sample kindergarten lesson.

Learn how your community 'sees' your school by contacting PSI to schedule a one-hour marketing review overview. Contact Karen McKelvey ([karenmckelvey@psi-solutions.org](mailto:karenmckelvey@psi-solutions.org)).



**A clear brand statement can set your school apart from others**



### Marketing Your School Contest

- Who:** Open to all public, private and charter schools. Schools can send more than one submission.
- What:** Present a written description of no more than four pages explaining your marketing initiative/s. Your submission can utilize a combination of social media, PowerPoint, the Internet, traditional media, etc.
- When:** Send to PSI (see page 3) by February 1, 2012. Include the name and contact information of the person responsible for your Marketing Program.
- Awards:** First place will receive \$300 and national recognition. Additional prizes will be given to honorable mentions.
- Contact:** Jerry Jindra ([info@psi-solutions.org](mailto:info@psi-solutions.org)) for more information.