



WORK ON YOUR BUDGET AND NEXT YEAR'S SALES NOW

IT ALL ADDS UP

WORK YOUR PLAN NOW

Though spring delivery books are done, now is not really a time to relax. The staff has worked hard and probably doesn't need to put in lots of extra hours in ensuing weeks, but the fiscal success of the yearbook can be determined by what you do before distribution and the end of the school year.

First, analyze your budget. You should have access to most financial figures for this year, so creating the big picture should be easy. You need to calculate all income (book sales, ad revenue, activities funding, photo commissions and fund-raisers) and all expenses (your printing bill, plus workshops/conventions, camera and computer equipment and supplies, contests and critiques, and other costs incurred by the program). Remember that the standard deposits total 90% of your original agreement; your final bill includes the remaining 10%, charges for any additions or changes, tax if applicable and shipping.

You want to operate in the black, so when you subtract the expenses from the income, the balance needs to be positive. Be aware of what happens to your profits. If your school lets you carry funds over from year to year, there's no need to worry. But if you're in a "use it or lose it" situation, make sure those profits are used for the yearbook, not to cover some other activity's financial needs. If your surplus rolls into the general fund at the end of the fiscal year, you should order any new software, computers or equipment now that you'll need for next year. Two other possibilities for utilizing remaining funds include pre-paying summer workshop expenses (if the staff underwrites part of the expense) and making arrangements to pre-pay a portion of the deposit for your yearbook.

Use these figures (and next year's agreement) to calculate income and expenses for the book as well. This will tell you how much you need to raise the book price or ad prices to maintain your desired profit margin.

The reason it's so important to do this now is that the best time to sell the yearbook is as parents are starting to think about the new school year in July or August. When they get that first packet with information about fees and schedules and school pictures, they need to be reminded to buy a yearbook. If the yearbook can be added to the form listing all fees, parents can just include the cost of the yearbook when they pay book, lab and activities fees.

Using the full color **YEARBOOK ORDER STATIONERY** and the template from Plan the Work/Work the Plan in the yearbook kit, you can create an attention-grabbing flier to be included in the back-to-school mailing. The stationery can be ordered at no charge, and the school is already paying postage for the packets so your first message into every home in your

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school costs you absolutely nothing – other than a little time to customize the flier and get it into the hands of the person coordinating the mailing. This mailing sometimes happens before the school officially re-opens, so it's wise to order the stationery to arrive before the end of the year and to confirm arrangements and deadlines for copying and inclusion.

CREATING A BUYING ROUTINE is one trait of a successful sales strategy. You want the students and their parents to know that the best time to buy a yearbook is as school starts. That's when you sell for the lowest price too. Set a date for the first price increase and make sure everyone knows that the book will cost more after that date. Send reminders, hang posters, post notices on the school Web site and use the phone or e-mail messaging system that the school has in place to remind the entire school community of the impending deadline.



YEARBOOK ORDER STATIONERY

THE HERFF JONES ORDER CENTER offers two programs for book sales assistance. **BUY THE BOOK** allows parents to purchase yearbooks at the HJ Order Center Web site (yearbookordercenter.com) or by calling a toll-free number and pay using a credit card; the staff still publicizes the sale and there is no charge to the school. Buyers pay a convenience fee/service charge of \$3.50 per order, like they would if they were ordering other merchandise online. Staff can monitor sales via eBusiness. When it's time to do final copy counts, a staff simply totals the books sold by the Order Center and those sold on campus for a grand total of books sold.

If you want the Order Center to do all of the work, **DIRECT PAY** is the program for you. You provide a database with names and home addresses of all students and the Order Center designs and mails brochures to the parents. The school's investment is \$2.25 per student name included in the first mailing. Those who don't respond to the first mailer receive another reminder about a month later (at no additional charge to the school.) As with Buy The Book, parents can use credit cards to pay for their purchases. Staff can monitor sales and determine final copy counts via eBusiness.

GETTING A JUMP START ON SELLING BUSINESS AND PERSONAL ADS is also a logical springtime activity. Financially successful schools often have students work on the next year's ad sales materials during spring months. If your school sells business ads, you can update contracts and pricing information and create a database for dividing local businesses among summer selling teams. Some staffs teach incoming and younger staffers to use their page design software and have them practice by designing ads for local businesses. Selling business ads in the spring and summer can help the new staff bond, might mean that you have the advantage of asking for the sale before other schools do, and means that the ads pages (which are often easier to produce) can be done to meet early deadline requirements. The staff can get lots of ideas and helpful templates from Plan the Work/Work the Plan.



Parent ads of congratulations outnumber business ads in many books, so Herff Jones created a printed piece (below) and a template to make selling grad ads even easier. The full color 11" x 17" form is available at no charge and the accompanying template is found in Plan the Work/Work the Plan in the yearbook kit. The staff can simply select their choices for ad formats, modify the contact, pricing and deadline information and run the free paper through any printer or copier on campus to create a full-color brochure which will entice even more parents to buy personal ads.



ONLINE AD CREATION is another service available from Herff Jones and the Yearbook Order Center. Parents can visit the Yearbook Order Center website to design, proof, submit and purchase their ad. When parents sign on, they'll be able to choose an ad size, select a template, upload images and input copy. Once they create and proof their ad, the finalized ad will be saved as a jpg and uploaded to the school's eShare library. The yearbook staff downloads the ads, places them on the pages and everything is ready to go! Staff can monitor ad sales via eBusiness.

By investing some thought and planning now, you can build a strong financial foundation for your yearbook. Remember that neither your yearbooks nor the ads in them will "sell themselves." Planning a logical sales schedule with plenty of opportunities to buy begins now.

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