

# HAVE A PLAN...

## *Organization is key to the success of a yearbook sales campaign*

Yearbook sales don't just happen. Your team needs to think about the school calendar and plot out some logical times to approach parents about buying the yearbook. Most yearbook companies provide support materials that can be used to help market the book — and often instructional guides, tracking charts and even messaging for ads via email and automated dialing systems.

Sitting down to chart out specific efforts, deadlines affiliated with price changes and the holiday calendar will allow you to think through — and plan for — highest efficiency. While it's a great idea to have a shorter window for your back-to-school discount, make sure that you give parents enough notice that they have time to buy. And doing a follow-up sale that provides parents with a way to make a yearbook a stocking stuffer or holiday gift is a great idea, but you'd want to have that sale completed before they get too far into their other shopping.

Mapping out the whole plan is just one of three important aspects here. Sometimes follow-up sales fall to the wayside when other tasks seem more urgent. But if you originally scheduled four distinct sales events because you thought that would bring you the best results, then that's a pretty strong sign that you need to do whatever it takes to make those four sales happen.

Regular assessment is important as well. If you have a good sales history available, you may be able to see how far ahead of last year you are date-to-date. If not, begin building those records now so you will have that information going forward. And review results compared to expectations after each major sales push. You may find that it's necessary to make some changes as you execute future sales.

- Check any available records to measure success of sales efforts in previous years.
- Plan distinct sales pushes so you'll be able to measure the results of each.
- Create a separate checklist for the on-campus and to-parent promotion of each effort.
- Communicate clearly to the school community all the important information about how to buy a yearbook.
- Decide when on-campus sales make sense or whether all purchases will be made through a yearbook order center so parents can use credit cards.

It's often said that failure to plan is planning to fail — and that's really true in the world of yearbook. In a best-case scenario, you'd sell lots of books at the best (fair) price as school began. Then you'd have time to execute some audience-specific sales that would bolster your numbers. It's always best to be "sold out" before the books arrive on campus, even though the plant might send some overruns you could sell at a premium.

And, as you attempt to get yearbooks in the hands of as many students as possible, there's nothing like a true sell-out (when there literally are no more books available for sale) to help with sales the next year.

