

HIT THE TARGET...

Aim your yearbook sales to specific groups on specific dates

All buyers are different. They all have different needs and different expectations, so your team must take this into consideration. Consider who your buyers are and how you can effectively target them separately. Simply put, your buyers are the students and their parents and are most easily classified by their grade level. Many schools have found success by targeting each individual class.

So consider how to individually target the different grade levels and strategize about how to sell to each one. Think about how a yearbook means different things to each grade level. For freshmen, a yearbook could be a way to learn the school better and preserve memories of their very first year of high school. Selling to them is important in beginning an ongoing tradition of buying the yearbook. For a senior, a yearbook is a much more nostalgic and sentimental book. It's their last year of high school, a culmination of everything they've done to get to this point and this is their last chance to own the volume that celebrates them and their classmates.

You and the yearbook staff know your school better than anyone else, so really think about how to relate to the different classes and create campaigns for each of them in order to sell more yearbooks. Create and plan separate events to attract students from each group. Decide when to hold the events and how long they will last — a day, a week? Each one should be on a different date and don't forget to create a sense of urgency for each event. Maybe you could offer a discounted price at this time, but emphasize how it will go up as soon as the event ends.

- Sell to a specific grade level on a specific date as a way to generate interest of buyers and also as a way for the yearbook staff to really focus on that specific audience. By targeting seniors on one or two days, then all the promotional efforts are directed to that grade. Each grade level would have its own sales dates and focus.
- Some yearbook staffs have had great success by focusing sales to the entire school, but for a short time period — such as one week. Yearbooks may only be purchased during that one-week time period. If there are any extra books after regular distribution at the end of the year, they would be sold at an increased price on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Some staffs have been successful with an even shorter sales period, such as one day. Starting and continuing a successful short sales program requires detailed communication and promotion.
- Be sure to also target community groups and businesses who may want to have a yearbook for historical and display purposes.

By targeting different groups of buyers, you can zero in on the needs and expectations of your customers. They will feel as if the buying process is more personal and that will likely result in more sales. The different grade levels are not the only groups to target, however. Take into consideration sports teams, clubs, school organizations, other community groups and businesses who will potentially purchase a yearbook. Their needs and your persuasive techniques will vary from that of the individual students you target.