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Make your marketing SMART

Creating aims for your school marketing and PR can not only help focus your efforts, but also give you something to mark against in the future.

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What are SMART objectives?

Traditionally, they are used guide to objectives when managing short-term projects. The acronym outlines the 5 areas each objective should cover, in order to become effective.

SMART objectives are more measurable, and can also be used to demonstrate the effectiveness of PR to governors and members of your senior management team.

SMART objectives can be outlined at any point through the academic year, but choosing to define them at the start of the academic year, or at the start of each term can give you an overview before the term begins.

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SMART Objectives

Specific
Use real numbers and figures, and create realistic deadlines.

Measurable
Stay well clear of buzzwords like 'reach' and 'engagement'. Use a method that ensures you can easily track your goal.

Attainable
Don't make your goal too easy to reach. Make it challenging, but possible.

Realistic
Be honest with yourself – does this project have hurdles? Acknowledging these can help make your expected date of competition much more realistic.

Time Sensitive
How long will it take to complete? Are there various steps that need to be considered? Your deadline may need to be reconsidered throughout execution, if things are moving at a different speed than first anticipated.

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Measuring SMART objectives

In order to measure your SMART objectives, they need to be quantifiable. Below, we've highlighted some examples of objectives, and how they can be measured and tracked.

"To increase visits to your school open days by 10% in the next school year, following successful school PR and marketing."

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In order to track the objective above, you would need to have figures from previous open days in order to compare. Your school may record the names of attendees in order to send further information following the open day. This objective requires a marked increase on attendance, so comparing the two figures from consecutive years could easily determine the difference.

Grow visits to the school website by 20% in one school year, compared to the previous academic year.

Utilising a web analytics system which easily integrates into your website, like Google analytics, can help track website visits among other metrics. Identifying a date, or collective visits over several months can make this objective easy to measure.