

MEMBERSHIP DUES RESTRUCTURING CAMPAIGN

2018 Winner: American Society of Interior Designers

Entry Title: Student Membership: Pay Once for the Experience of a Lifetime

Project Overview/Elevator Pitch:

The American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) student dues structure did not support the programmatic goals of student membership. Student membership dues were \$50.00 per year, with the choice to pay for multiple years upfront for a percentage savings. Most students chose the one-year option. Rather than focusing students on the ASID mission and our value proposition, we spent time and money trying to collect a small dues amount. ASID made the change to a flat dues structure, covering students through graduation, up to six years.

Project Goals/Objectives:

The ASID student program is a critical pipeline for both ASID membership and ASID philosophy. ASID has over 200 active student chapters and nearly 5000 student members. Student numbers were consistently dropping over the last five years. As a part of operationalizing a large-scale strategy to manage student membership that includes roadshows and targeted educator outreach, we had to address the student dues structure.

ASID HQ recommended to its board a change to the student membership dues structure. Student dues would be reduced to \$0.00 with a one-time \$85.00 application fee until graduation, or up to six years. Submitting an anticipated graduation date would continue to be a mandatory requirement of student membership. Charging the one-time application fee would allow us to book the revenue up front, without deferring it over the life of a membership.

ASID would save significant time and resources by eliminating students from the annual billing cycle. With the change, recruitment and retention (impact of design) messaging can shift to focus on the benefits of ASID membership, rather than reminders to pay for it. The change would stabilize student membership numbers in the short term and begin to grow ASID student programming and overall membership numbers as a whole.

Strategy/Tactics:

The rollout of the dues change happened under a tight timeframe. We needed to have a communications strategy outlined, designed, and deployed by late August or we would miss our major recruitment period for the beginning of the fall semester.

Campaign

The concept and messaging around the campaign stressed to students that ASID membership enabled them to write their ticket to a successful future. We edited student brochures, welcome kits, student chapter materials, existing onboarding messages, retention messaging, and the ASID website to reinforce this message.

Audiences

The audiences for the roll-out were diverse and included prospective student members, current student members, student chapter leaders, educator members, faculty advisers who were non-members, university program managers, and professional chapter leadership. Each message was tailored specifically to each audience. Prospective students needed to know what a great deal they were getting. We needed to collect data from existing students so we could grandfather them into the new dues structure. University staff and professors needed to know

how this would help their students. Students and professional chapter leaders needed to understand how to talk about the change if they received questions from prospective or existing members.

Channels

First, ASID mailed updated Student Chapter Kickoff kits to Student Chapter leaders. These not only included hard copy applications and brochures, but a guide to help students talk to their peers about membership.

Secondly, each audience received an email with content specifically addressing the needs of that particular audience. This included contact information for the appropriate staff person at ASID HQ to talk through any questions, and the link to download free research.

Lastly, ASID used targeted social posts on both the main ASID Facebook page and the Student ASID Facebook page to ensure the message was reaching audiences that weren't necessarily checking their email regularly.

Success Metrics:

The campaign resulted in over 700 new student memberships in Q4 2017.

Email open rates for each audience were very high, between 30.6 percent at the lowest up to 47.32% at the highest.

We also grandfathered 70 percent of our student membership into the program, which is a major cost savings. In FY2016, of the 1692 student suspensions, 837 were in their first year of membership – 49.5 percent. The majority of the suspensions were due to non-payment. Students move addresses almost every year. Generally, they take immediate action on an email message, or ignore it. We send five paper bills and five emails to every student member during a renewal cycle. The renewal cycle costs \$1.47 per mailed piece. \$1.47 x 1692 student suspensions is \$2,487.27. We send five paper notices, so that is 5 x \$2,487.27, totaling \$12,436.20 in savings in renewal notices alone.

Learn More:

<https://www.asid.org/belong/apply/students>

<https://www.asid.org/belong/student/chapter-leader-resources>

[2017 New Dues Student App](#)

[StdntPrcng_EmlBnr_F](#)

[Student Dues Change - Existing Students](#)

[Student Dues Change - Educators](#)

[Student Dues Change - Student Leaders](#)

[Student Dues Change - Suspended Students](#)

Association Website:

www.asid.org