

Promotional Pride: Selling Caps on College Campuses



The [education industry](#) is said to be a recession-proof market. In the worst of economic times, after the 2008 crisis, education remained steady and even showed considerable growth, all things considered.

[Over the next few weeks, we're going to provide you with extended knowledge of the education industry as it relates to promotional products, as well as offer tips to help you expand your cap sales into the market.](#)

Today, you will learn how to reach out to common decision makers on college campuses. Next week, we'll look at promotional sales at a [high school level](#). Finally, we'll discuss [elementary schools and preschools as well as educational institutions beyond the classroom](#).

Universities

Among all educational institutions, referrals can act as an in to parents, teachers, administrators, coaches, etc. Flex your networking muscles to maximize your selling potential.

The collegiate retail industry is estimated to be worth an annual \$10 billion. A study during the 2013 football season revealed that college students wear their school's apparel 27% of the time and that number spikes after a winning game.

There are 2,618 colleges and universities in the United States, and they are a gold mine of promotional products. Everywhere you look, people are wearing branded hats or sweatshirts, flip-flops, fanny packs, you name it.

Logoed hats make the perfect addition to swag bags, which are given to incoming freshmen and high school seniors. Hats are also an easy sell to campus bookstores and local businesses in the community that are looking for items to sell or give away while supporting the school and its various campus activities.

Greek Life

If four years of collegiate Panhellenic membership taught me anything, it was this: we will literally buy anything if you put our letters on it.

If you're wondering where the money goes that you put into your daughter's account each week, check out all of the sorority paraphernalia in her dorm next time you visit.

More than 800 college campuses support Greek Life.

Hats are an easy sell to the entire Greek system.

The functionality sells itself. Caps are perfect for bad hair days or running across campus when you're late for class. Nothing pairs better with running shorts, rubber boots, and an oversized t-shirt on a rainy, spring-semester day.



Clubs & Activities

Texas A&M is one of the largest college campuses in the nation with over 64,000 students. Its website boasts over 1,000 student organizations.

Most universities offer a list of campus clubs on their website. Do your research and find out who organizes and runs each activity. You can contact decision makers directly and let them know what branded hats can do to expand the impact their organization makes on campus and the community.

We live in a digital world. College students are online and connected to social media 24/7. Never underestimate the number of doors a little a little online stalking* can open.

*I say that as a joke; please do not stalk college kids. It's illegal.

Athletics

People go crazy for college sports, especially those of us residing in the southern regions (I'm looking at you, SEC). There's nothing like getting up on Saturday morning, putting on your team's cap, and tailgating on college campuses.

Make sure universities are including branded hats in their mix. They're guaranteed to make a profit when sold at or around game time. Students, alumnae, and fans alike will purchase gear to wear to games and show their support.

Don't forget about copyright infringement and licensing laws. The [NCAA](https://www.ncaa.org/) is strict on this, and for good reason. If you can't legally use a logo or likeness, don't.

Don't worry, though; there is still money and sales to be made. Just stick to intramural sports or private schools.



Graduate Schools

When students enter into a prestigious graduate school like Law School, Medical School, or an M.B.A. or Ph.D. program, they typically want to brag about it a little.

A student is going to buy the Harvard Law hat over any other hat at the bookstore because she identifies with it. She probably wasn't planning to buy a hat at all until she saw one she felt connected to.

Use this logic to convince stores on college campuses that these items are a necessary staple. Keep in mind, that baseball caps aren't the only option. Branded beanies and knits are perfect for northern campuses with harsh winters and a lot of snow.

Trade Schools, Academies & Apprenticeships

There are countless alternatives for post-secondary education beyond traditional college coursework. Trade schools (also called vocational schools) are institutions where an individual learns to perform and perfect a skill or trade. We've provided a small sample list below to give you some reference.

[Automotive/Mechanic](#)

- Cosmetology/Barber

[Computer Science/IT](#)

[Culinary](#)

[Electrical](#)

[Fire & Police Academies](#)

- Massage Therapy

[Plumbing](#)

- Tattoo Art

- Welding

These schools will have a much smaller enrollment number compared to conventional colleges. Promotional caps can help recruitment initiatives as well as allow students and alumnae to show pride in what they do and where they learned it.

Check back over the next few weeks as we dive into all levels from [high school](#) down to [preschool](#), and everything in between. If you haven't sold into educational institutions in the past, I think this series will open your eyes to the vast number of opportunities out there.

What other [industries](#) would you like to see covered on Hatswork? Let us know in the comments below. Don't forget to follow us on [Instagram](#) using the hashtag #hatswork.