

5 Tips

To Connect With
Graduate and Adult
Learners Through
Digital Ads

TIP 1

Focus Your Messaging on What Matters Most

Marketing is strongest when your audience can personally relate to your messaging. Rather than invest in ads that promote your institution as a whole, relate to graduate and adult learners by speaking to what matters most to them.

Eduventures Adult Prospect Research™* reveals **prospective adult learners are most often focused on a career change, while prospective graduate students most often are focused on advancing their careers.**

Choose messaging and graphics that **show how your institution can support these specific career goals**—assure these learners that your program is the right next step for them.

**Eduventures Adult Prospect Research examines the current state of the adult prospect landscape and evaluates adult learner perceptions, expectations, and motivations for postsecondary education. Learn more at encoura.org/aps.*

TIP 2

Set One Goal per Digital Ad Campaign

Digital ad campaigns are best when they are optimized for just one specific goal. **Start by identifying your biggest challenge:**

- Do you need to generate more interest in your program?
- Do you need more applications?
- Do you need to convert more admitted students to enrolled?

Then commit to a specific objective like *"generate interest in [program]"* or *"get more applications to [program]"*. With a specific goal for your campaign, you can optimize messaging to meet students where they are in the enrollment process.

Specific goals also inform where you should place ads for the best results. For example, Search Engine Marketing is great for developing interest, but targeting a list of known prospects is better at driving final enrollment.

If you need to accomplish more than one objective, create multiple campaigns with different goals, focused messaging, and ad placement tactics.

TIP 3

Engage an Interested Audience

Without the right targeting, digital advertising can feel like shouting into the wind—but what if you could connect with prospective students who have already indicated they are shopping for a graduate or degree completion program?

With technologies like **Encoura's Adult Prospect Pool**, you can **access a database of 280 million verified consumers** who have indicated interest in continuing education. Targeting those who have already opted-in prevents ad dollars from being wasted on unserious prospects—speak only to those who are interested.

Technologies like Adult Prospect Pool also allow you to narrow your targeting. You can **find the right fit for your program** by selecting backgrounds and interests like military service, occupation, parental status, and more.

TIP 4

Use the Information You Already Have

Your current students provide an invaluable source of data to shape your digital campaign targeting. After all, these students enrolled—*what if you could find similar prospective students?*

With a predictive audience campaign, you can use historical enrollment data to find future students who have similar interests, behaviors, and demographics as your current students.

You can also build predictive audiences based on how students have interacted with your website. For example, you could find prospects similar to those who have visited your program's admissions webpage.

Predictive audience campaigns have a proven record of reaching the right prospects—**driving double the engagement** vs. other branding strategies.

TIP 5

Prioritize Video-Based Ads

Graphic banners and text ads have their place, but no other medium makes your message stand out as much as video.

Combined with the right targeting, Encoura's Digital Solutions team has found **video ads have the highest click-through rates for any digital strategy**, making them a powerful tool for achieving your goals.

Members of Gen Z especially prefer video to other media. **YouTube is now the top platform used in college searches**. As Gen Z begins to enroll in graduate schools, video-based communication will only increase in importance.

About This Resource

These five tips will help your institution strategically choose—and use—the right tactics and data to stand out from your competition while delivering targeted messages to graduate and adult learners wherever they are.

About Encoura

Encoura provides custom technology solutions that combine Eduventures® research, data science, strategic enrollment services, and multichannel marketing to serve over 2,000 higher ed institutions.



Take the Next Step

If you're ready to start building out a strategic digital marketing plan to reach and engage graduate and adult students, **let's talk.**

SCHEDULE A 30 MINUTE INFORMATION SESSION



LEARN MORE ABOUT CONNECTING WITH GRADUATE AND ADULT LEARNERS



"Our digital efforts with Encoura paid off incredibly. I couldn't believe the results; we have not seen this in any other campaign. We validated these results across our data points and can confidently say this is the highest and best-performing campaign I have ever seen in higher education."

— Director of Enrollment Strategy,
USC Rossier School of Education