

Tool #10: Anatomy of a WOM-Building Gift

The University of Alabama's College of Continuing Studies has developed a strong word-of-mouth campaign, "Build on Bama," by providing recent online graduates with a gift as well as transferrable next-course-free vouchers, provided the student is admitted to another Distance Learning program. In addition, alumni can pass the vouchers on to friends, who can use it to help kick start their own distance learning program. This tool provides a replica of the contents of that graduation gift including the free course vouchers.

Implementation Note: As you consider the University of Alabama's word-of-mouth campaign, think about the kinds of gifts that would be easy and inexpensive to assemble and deliver. One of the keys to Alabama's success is that the administrative and fulfillment costs for the gifts are very low. The gifts are entirely fulfilled by the on-campus print shop and, once mailed, the only administrative workload comes from those alumni or prospective students who want to "cash in" the free course voucher. Also give thought to the groups of students and/or alumni who would react most positively to the campaign. The University of Alabama's campaign was successful in part because they targeted their gifts to online graduates, a group of students that didn't get to develop as strong a tie with campus.

Recent Alumni Graduation Gifts

Received via mail shortly after graduation

