



How to Market to College Students: 11 Ways to Attract Co-eds to Your Business



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For businesses in college towns, students represent a significant portion of the population and the potential market. Embrace the student community by making them a meaningful part of your business. There's no need to hit the books to try to figure out how to engage your local students; we have a handy cheat sheet for you!

Here are our top eleven ways to bring college students into your business:

1: Offer student discounts

This one may be obvious, but student discounts are a great way to help get this group in the door. Offering a special discount for students can get them interested in classes or services they wouldn't be able to consider at full-price. Spread the word about your special pricing with flyers on campus bulletin boards. See if there are places to post at the student union, dining hall and athletic facilities on campus as well as any local coffee shops (make sure you don't need special permission to post).

2: Make yourself mobile-friendly

A [study](#) found that college students spend almost nine hours a day on mobile phones. Make sure they spend some of that time booking appointments or classes at your business. MINDBODY helps you promote your business through the MINDBODY app, where you can get the word out about student-friendly intro offers.





3: Focus on Instagram, not Facebook

When catering to college students, know that [most prefer Instagram](#). When students visit your location, offer to take photos of them (for both your posts and theirs). Ask them to tag your studio's location and use any hashtags you have for your business. If you need photos for a campaign, ask students if they'd like to be featured in them.

4: Know when exams are and have a way for students to de-stress

Make sure students know they can take a much-needed study break at your business. Consider offering more restorative classes or relaxing spa treatments around that time for students. This is also a perfect time for "Exam Cram" and "Finals Frenzy" special offers. You could even partner with a local humane society to bring in adorable dogs/cats looking for homes and create a pop-up event to bring in additional traffic during midterms and finals. You can usually find a college's exam schedule online via their Academic Calendar.

5: Introduce your business on campus

During new student orientation, schools usually host a local business night or club fair. Contact the administration to see if you can set up a table and promote your business! Unsurprisingly, students love free things; it's worth an afternoon on the quad to give students a sense of what your business is all about. Hand out samples or a small, branded freebie (stickers, magnets, pins, etc.) so they remember you.

6: Partner with clubs and student organizations

Clubs and other student groups are often looking to host events for members. Building a relationship with a group can give you legitimacy on campus. Suggest working with them to create a pop-up event on campus and allow group members to get a taste of your business. Connect with fraternities or sororities that would be interested in a group workout or salon/spa treatment at their house. Alternatively, invite the club to your storefront for a fun event away from books for the day. Don't know where to start? School websites will usually have a list of campus organizations and contact details for their leaders. Take a look, see if anything is a good fit, and reach out!

7: Hire students for part-time positions

Students are often looking for part-time work, motivated to build their resumes before they graduate. Hiring students ensures you have someone acting as a brand ambassador on campus. They can also advise you on how to bring in more students. Connect with the school's career services team and let them know you're hiring. If your local school has a kinesiology department, this is another great place for fitness businesses to start.

8: Schedule business hours when students are available

College students have to try to book everything around classes, part-time jobs and extracurriculars. Make sure you're available at times that work for them, mainly later in the day. Students, particularly at top schools, [go to bed late](#) (after 1:00 AM). Despite a late bedtime, almost all students in this study reported getting about seven hours of shuteye. If you're trying to capture the college market, you're unlikely to see a lot of interest in a 6 AM class or service. You'll also want to make sure you aren't competing with their social lives. If you're a fitness studio, is there a particular night that students are social? Avoid having class late that night and early the following morning.





9: Help students get to you


Many students don't have cars on campus. Research what public transportation/bike shares/scooter shares are available in your area. Make it clear in social media posts and information distributed on campus exactly how students can get to you. For example, post a photo of students on bikes in workout gear with the caption: "Come work out with us! Grab a rideshare bike in Westwood Village. We're a five-minute ride away, and you're already warmed up!"

10: Join forces with the school's health services and rec center

Colleges are trying to curb unhealthy habits and help students make good choices. They could use your help. Offer to teach a free class as part of the school's health program efforts - and make sure students know where they can find you for another great workout off campus. Some schools even require Physical Education courses to graduate. Occasionally, this course requirement can be taken through a series of classes at a local business. Reach out to the school administration to see if you can help students fulfill PE credits through your studio, or if you can teach on campus. Spa and wellness businesses can provide workshops on stress management.

11: Offer teacher training to college students

Students can also be great teachers at a fitness business. Offering training for them to become instructors is another way to get buy-in from the student population and help them become an important part of your business. Lisa Feellove of [Be Hot Yoga](#) in Southern Utah provided accreditation for teaching through the local college, which allowed students to become licensed practitioners within a semester. This helped increase membership and revenue. If you're a salon or spa, you can also promote training programs to get students more involved in your business.



Use these tips to get students off campus and into your business.
Each semester, just as students are trying out new courses, you can
try new tactics. Stick with what works, and don't forget to have fun!
(The students are, so you should, too!)



For more educational resources, including webinars, guides, conference presentations and online courses, visit www.mindbodyonline.com/resources.

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