



THE MAGIC OF PRINT (AND THE SELLING POWER OF A GOOD STORY)

College recruiters combine Print with Persuasive Stories to mesmerize prospective students

I volunteer in the college center at the local high school. At this time of year, college recruiters and admissions officers visit the center. They meet with groups of students and do their best to be memorable.

Print is their main selling tool:

- Fact-filled catalogs for the bookshelf
- Posters for the walls
- Brochures for the racks
- Photo-filled booklets for the students
- Branded surveys and sign-in sheets
- Forms, info sheets and marketing materials for the high school counselors.

Thousands — and sometimes hundreds of thousands — of dollars are riding on the impressions that these recruiters make. Nobody is spouting off web addresses during these presentations. It's all print.

Colorful, classy, clever, compelling print.

In fact, when students inevitably ask about campus life, the recruiters keep the focus tight. No mention of photos, Instagram or Pinterest. No pointing to videos on Periscope, Blab or YouTube. Nope. No digital distractions.

Instead, each recruiter tells a captivating story.

The Columbia University recruiter tells about how, in winter, the trees on campus are wrapped with little white lights. Before the holidays, he explains, there's a huge bonfire that brings everyone together, with hot cocoa all around. He paints a mesmerizing mental picture. Then he hands around printed booklets filled with campus photos.

As he finished his story, one of the volunteers sighs. "It IS beautiful there in wintertime. They leave those twinkle lights up all winter." She flips through the pages of the booklet. "It's really magical," she says wistfully.

Does she mean the lights or the booklet? Are the lights, the story and the print merging into something printastic?

The college admissions officer ends the presentation by passing out thick stacks of business cards. For 25 kids, he produces at least a hundred luscious cards, complete with every possible way to contact him, including text and personal cell numbers. "Take a few," he urges. "Take one for your parents."

The kids head back to class, clutching their piles of print.

I've known these kids since they were in first grade. Soon they'll be heading to college. The decisions they're making are, in some part, based on paper, ink and a powerful impressions. Is there any doubt that print is a powerful selling tool? Print IS magic.

This article by Sandy Hubbard first appeared at www.printmediacentr.com. Sandy Hubbard is a marketing strategist for printing companies that are in transition or extreme growth mode. She helps printers build marketing programs that can be sustained over the long haul, with buy in from employees and the sales team...and without stress! Find Sandy on LinkedIn [here](#).