

A Word From Your Sponsors: Making Guidebook Pay

The University of Alabama cracks the code on selling in-app sponsorships



Meet the client

Jenny Russell is the Assistant Director of New Student Orientation at The University of Alabama in Huntsville. Jenny works with her team at Student Affairs and the Office of Student Life to plan top notch orientation and welcome events that connect students with the community while bringing in money for student programs at the same time—efficiency at its finest.

"We're a small university, so we try to be efficient with products to help meet our needs."

Jenny Russell
Assistant Director of
New Student Orientation

About UAH



6,800 undergrad
students



Home to \$97 million
federally financed
R&D funding

Challenges

- Attract sponsors at orientation
- Foster app adoption
- Reduce printing

Solutions

- In-app banner ads increase sponsorship by 75%
- Aggressive promotion leads to 115% adoption
- Reduced printing by 50%

The University of Alabama in Huntsville serves 6,800 undergrads, which means that community and connection are important. Being in a technology-rich corridor, this premier research university describes itself as “not so big that you’ll get lost in the crowd and not so small that you’ll feel limited.”

What's the best way to welcome?

Jenny helps to create an environment for new students during orientation that will allow them to feel a connection to the campus community. Once New Student Orientation gets students acclimated to college, they return to campus for a “Week of Welcome” hosted by Student Life.



At Week of Welcome, a vendor fair called “Taste of Huntsville” allows local businesses to introduce themselves to the new students. The fair came about when the Student Life team noticed that the locals seemed to be missing a prime opportunity.

“Because we’re not really a college town a lot of people aren’t soliciting our students to come and buy their products.”

The fair had maxed out around 40 vendors in previous years, and endless amounts of paper were being printed to supplement Week of Welcome events.

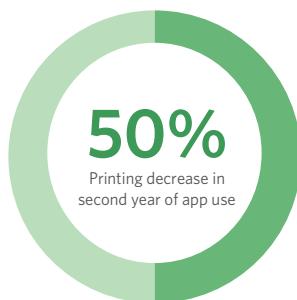
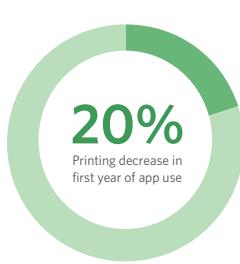
Giving the students a guide

Jenny had been introduced to Guidebook at educational conferences she attended. She loved how it was able to reduce the amount of paper waste created at an event as well as support deep social integration and foster a sense of community. It seemed like a perfect tool for UAH's new students.

Soon UAH had its own branded app in the app store and the Office of Student Affairs and Office of Student Life had found themselves building guides for New Student Orientation, Week of Welcome, Homecoming and a yearly leadership conference. In the meantime, booklet and schedule printing went down 20% in the first year of their app's use and over 50% the following year.



School spirit? With UAH's brand this app fits right in.



If you promote it, they will come

One of the ways that UAH was able to begin reducing paper was by building in app adoption as an essential part of the orientation process. Since students will continue to download guides during their careers at UAH, Jenny has helped to foster what she calls “a culture of downloading guides” during orientation.



Group leaders encouraged app downloads during small group sessions.

Students are greeted with a big poster that displays the Guidebook-supplied QR code, and Jenny even personally asks students to download the app when she addresses the group as a whole. UAH also divides students into smaller groups at orientation, and the upperclassmen

group leaders are instructed to promote app adoption in their meetings. All of this led to a 115% adoption rate last year.

“Every step of the way we’re promoting it.”

An offer they can’t refuse

But what Student Life was able to do with Guidebook’s sponsorship capabilities truly makes UAH’s app a success story. In order to encourage vendors to take advantage of sponsorship during the Taste of Huntsville event, the office started including mobile app banner ads as a package incentive. They soon found that with download insights from the dashboard, they were easily able to increase interest in sponsorships.

“You can’t tell how many people looked at a flyer, but we can tell sponsors that 1,200 people downloaded our app.”

UAH has found that by offering sponsorship perks like social media mentions, logos on tshirts, prime booth placement, and mobile app banner ads the vendors feel more engaged in the event itself. In the first year of using Guidebook there were 40 vendors taking advantage of Taste of Huntsville. Since then, they've attracted over 30 new vendors—a 75% increase in participation.

75%

Increase in vendor participation since going mobile with Guidebook.

Exceptional results

What's resulted is a fantastic event that benefits both Huntsville and UAH's students. Business in Huntsville is booming and students have a better idea of where to find what they're looking for. "Banks, restaurants, apartments anything you would need outside of campus is represented there," Jenny says. With Guidebook, UAH has helped to create a warm welcome for incoming students while also generating additional revenue for programs.

Since its introduction, UAH's Guidebook has grown to include an entire Student Life guide that encompasses Homecoming, as well as a transitional guide to supplement First Year and Second Year Experience coursework.

"We want to be innovative and appeal to our students and that's why we went with Guidebook."

About Guidebook

Guidebook gives you the ability to easily and inexpensively make a high-quality mobile guide to your event, campus, or community center. We are the largest provider of mobile event and location apps, with over a million unique users (and growing). We take pride in the guides that we create, and our mobile experts will work with you to make sure your goals are achieved.



Want to learn more? Schedule a demo today!

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