

## Language School Marketing Essentials

Every language school struggles to strike a balance between finding students itself, if possible; and supporting agencies that are established in-market. Word-of-mouth referrals aside, very few schools can generate significant new enrolments without supporting an agent network.

Here is a quick guide to the more common marketing strategies / initiatives in our industry.

**Direct Marketing:** Advertising is designed to produce enquiries and enrolments for the sales team in the school. Costs are high but the income is not shared with agencies. The most famous language school to have grown using this strategy is EF. These days chain schools with the necessary marketing budget and brand recognition will have a direct sales team with a marketing/advertising budget to feed them; however they still rely on agents around the world to provide regular business and nationality mix. Even where schools can maintain a student pipeline with direct sales, they still rely on agents for a large part or majority of their business.

**Digital Marketing Agency:** will provide dedicated campaigns using Google etc, and work with you on the translated or locally-generated keywords and monitoring, providing access to the analytics and adwords accounts, and directing clicks to your own landing page. Payment is in advance, and the agency keeps a % of the budget as a commission for the work it carries out. Follow up / conversion is up to you.

**Traditional Advertising Agency:** Will place adverts Outdoors, in transport networks etc collecting a commission % on top of the advertising spend.

**Study Abroad Agency:** Most language schools do not have the resources or brand recognition to maintain a direct sales operation. An agency provides an in-market sales team *at no up-front cost to the school* that will convert enquiries to sales for the schools it is contracted to represent. The agency will invest in a variety of marketing to attract customers for courses abroad, usually asking its partners schools to share in the costs of the marketing

(magazine production, exhibition costs, radio ads, social media, Google ads, etc). The agency is only paid when students arrive at the partner school, in the form of a commission on the student fees. If the agency were to rely on commissions alone, these would usually only cover the costs of marketing (sourcing the enquiries) leaving no revenue for rent, salaries or profit. The agency would not stay in business for long.

**Exhibitions (£2000-£3000 per 2 days):** All schools contributions (exhibition fees) are pooled to pay for the venue and the marketing. The organiser (usually the agent) makes a profit on the event. There is no guarantee that the attendance will be suitable (quality) or that enrolments will follow.

**Magazines (£500-1500):** All school contributions (advertising fees) are pooled to cover the costs of production and distribution. Readership is hard to quantify or track, and there is no guarantee enrolments will be affected. Usually produced by an agent to raise income.

**Supported PPC Advertising (var):** The agency pools partner school contributions in order to construct competitive Google PPC campaigns in the local language. The agency will provide reports on Impressions, Clicks, Click Through rates, enquiries and (essentially) will provide a sales team to convert the enquiries either on the phone or face-to-face. Campaign structures will be guarded to protect sensitive data (keywords, keyword chains, campaign strategies). Ultimately conversions should be higher than unsupported Direct campaigns, due to the in-market support and expertise.

Levant Education is able to provide direct advertising services (such as PPC advertising) as a **Digital Marketing Agency**. We can also provide **traditional advertising services**.

More usually, however, we work with select partner schools to provide an in-market sales office – a **Study Abroad Agency**.

In **Turkey**, fairs or magazines are not effective ways to recruit students – although they make good money for the agents that run them. We request support from our school partners to help us market online, where people are actually searching for international study abroad information. This means we make no money from the campaign – unless we recruit students as a result.

**So we believe that a Supported PPC Advertising campaign is the most effective way to advertise in Turkey.**