

White Paper For

Alumni Relations / Advancement Professionals

The Alumni Engagement Tool with (near) Universal Appeal

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Finding a tool to attract and engage all of your alumni can be a very tall order. Recent grads, GOLDS and emeritus alumni are all attracted by different types of alumni programs, based upon their needs and stage of life. As alumni professionals you face a constant challenge to develop programs that will engage an alumni audience that is incredibly diverse demographically.

The challenges of engaging alumni and building loyalty are similar to those of the corporate world, whose aim is to engage and build loyalty among their customers. We can learn from these commercial

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loyalty programs by studying their methods, and incorporating these strategies into our own alumni programming.

Loyalty programs are big business. Collectively, corporate America spends billions

of dollars on their customer loyalty programs because they know it's more cost effective to retain a customer than acquire a new one. These companies have perfected methods of engaging their customers and know how to build brand loyalty.



91% of American companies have a customer engagement/loyalty program, and 98.4% of all loyalty programs use some form of

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discounting strategy to attract, engage, and retain their customers. Whether it's reduced airfare, rewards or points that can be redeemed for products, discounts are

a tremendous motivator because they leverage consumers' universal desire to save money. Best of all, discounts are popular with all demographic groups, regardless of age, income, or gender.

Why are discounts such an effective engagement tool? Because we're all consumers. And we all want to pay less for the things we buy every day. According to this source, 96% of US consumers use some form of coupon or discount.

Discounts Offered By Alumni Organizations

Nearly all alumni organizations offer some type of discounts to their constituents, such as discounts at the bookstore, or at campus cultural and athletic events. Some organizations may also offer a handful of discounts at local restaurants and retail shops. Others have built their own discount program, offering discounts on insurance and financial services, as well as negotiating alumni-only deals at local businesses.



Unfortunately, such home-spun discount programs have less impact on alumni engagement because they typically don't offer enough discounts to be relevant to a majority of alumni. A program with thousands of locations nationwide requires a significant time investment, which is

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typically prohibitive, especially for an already understaffed and underpaid alumni office.

Another challenge associated with creating such a program is the inability to attract popular big-box retailers

Target®, for example, has little interest in offering discounts to any type of group with less than a million targeted consumers. It's just not cost effective for them. Individual college alumni organizations simply lack the clout to be noticed by these popular national retailers.

When Alumni Organizations Team Up

So what if many alumni organizations teamed up to create a huge network of alumni consumers? This group of educated consumers with a higher-than-average income could attract the attention of many big retailers. And because alumni organizations don't compete with each other, it makes sense to cooperate in building a juggernaut consumer group that would appeal to retailers of all types, especially big national retailers.



That is where Alumni Access® comes in. Alumni Access has built a network of like-minded organizations who understand the power of using discounts to attract and engage their members/constituents.

When an alum saves money by using an alumni sponsored discount or coupon, they'll remember the organization that helped them save

money. The resulting goodwill encourages repeat usage and further engagement. It will also give your constituents a reason to interact with your organization

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regularly. This kind of repeated, positive engagement opens members' eyes to the greater goals of the association, leading to increased giving over time.

For dues-paying organizations, a discount program can help members offset the cost of their membership dues. That way, they'll see an immediate return that no other member benefit can match.



About Alumni Access

Alumni Access is powered by [Access Development®](#), the nation's largest private discount network with over 350,000 merchant locations nationwide, and over 500 popular national brands.

The Access Discount Network includes:

- Big-box retailers like Target®, Kohl's®, Costco® and Sam's Club®.
- Over 70,000 popular local restaurants & 41,000 shopping locations.
- Most major theme parks, including Walt Disney World®, Universal Studios®, Six Flags® & SeaWorld®.
- Consistent savings that range from 25%, 40%, even 60% off.
- Over 30,000 hotels and 40,000 auto service centers.

Alumni Access has the type of discounts consumers want, at the places they love to shop, in every community and neighborhood from coast to coast.

Alumni organizations are offered a turnkey, white labeled discount program that can be customized with an organization's logo and colors. It also features a show-your-phone mobile coupon app so alumni can find and redeem discounts on their smartphone.

For a brief overview of the program, look at this [video here](#) or [click here](#) to download the mobile app and test-drive the discounts in your neighborhood. Please [contact Alumni Access here](#) or call **888-878-6178**.