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How to Create a Successful Email Lead Nurturing Campaign to Reach the Right Candidates

James Kent, Marketing Manager at China Europe International Business School (CEIBS) in Shanghai, is the first person to admit that they didn't take full advantage of GMASS. When he and his team could easily travel pre-pandemic, they'd fly to London, schedule a coffee chat and then invite every London-area lead in GMASS. "Quite predictably," he shared, "it did not yield very good results."

Two years ago, James worked closely with the GMAC team to refine the school's GMASS strategy. Today, CEIBS has a systematic and proactive approach for leveraging the rich data in GMASS to reach international candidates who are interested in earning their MBA in China.

CEIBS developed an eight-email lead nurturing campaign that boasts a 25% open rate for each email. "And each month, we're getting around five good leads that we have quality conversations with," James shared. Last year (the first year they did this), two leads applied and one enrolled.

This is what the CEIBS marketing team learned about creating a successful email lead nurturing campaign for potential candidates.

Define your ideal candidate profile

Once a month, CEIBS purchases targeted individual leads from GMASS that match their international profile. Two key criteria they look at is preferred region of study and some proficiency in Mandarin. "Somebody is not going to quit their job and move across the world if they're not interested in studying and living in Asia," James explained.

Create a lead nurturing strategy

Before creating a campaign that would speak directly to their target audience, James and his team asked themselves:

- What content will international candidates find valuable?
- How can we ensure the design and messaging are consistent so that our emails are instantly recognizable?
- What one call to action will we use in each email?
- What is the right cadence for sending out these emails?

Craft your messaging

The very first question an international candidate asks revolves around job prospects. In the first two emails, CEIBS doesn't even mention the school or program. Instead, they focus on job prospects and career development from international leaders who are working in China at Alibaba, Apple, Budweiser, Deutsche Bank and Google.

Once people are interested in studying in China, the next few emails introduce the MBA program at CEIBS. These emails demonstrate the depth of China knowledge and resources CEIBS has, highlight the program's international roots and reach and share various ways the program provides students with a global experience.

James and his team also spent time on design consistency. "Even if somebody's never heard of CEIBS, they'll recognize the format" of the emails," he noted.

Respond quickly

In the two final emails, candidates are invited to learn more about the MBA program by visiting the website or scheduling a one-on-one chat. "As soon as someone signs up for a one-on-one, we have a hard deadline of responding within 24 hours to set up a video call," James said.

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"Compared to what we were doing before and the results that we're seeing now, we feel confident that we can reach the right international candidate with eight high-impact emails."

To hear James' full 15-minute solution story visit:

<https://www.gmac.com/reach-and-recruit-students/gmac-connect/marketing-advice-and-best-practices>