

How to Overcome Today's Rebellious Buyers: Millennials and beyond.

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October 1, 2018



Who are Millennials and Generation Z?

- Technologically savvy
- “Socially conscious”
- Millennials have higher college debt than previous generations (Business Insider Jul 2018)
- More millennials had summer jobs as teens, fewer Gen Z had summer jobs and preferred side hustles
- Gen Z checks out social media presence of colleges (69% Forbes Apr. 2018)
- Gen Z consider graduate school earlier but are slower to act (Poets & Quants, Aug. 2018)
- Declined interest in traditional MBAs from GMAC study (Aug. 2018) from 64% for Millennials to 34% for Gen Z but desire more flexible and convenient graduate management education programs

Agenda

- **Rebellious Buyers**
- **Different Buying Behavior**
- **Changing Your Marketing Approach**
- **Program Review**
- **Key Findings from Survey**
- **Integrating Insights into Marketing Approach**
- **Website Revision**
- **Leveraging Google Adwords for program characteristics**
- **Testing initial Digital Ads Across Platforms**
- **Conversion videos versus Webinars**
- **Pathway forward with Takeaways**

Rebellious Buyers – Why so Rebellious?



- Are salespersons needed to transact business with these services?
- Do we attempt to strip away the marketing messages with independent search?
- Do we rely on our own observations and data (Yelp reviews)?
- Do we make decisions on more dimensions than just product dimensions?

Source: SmartSellingTools.com

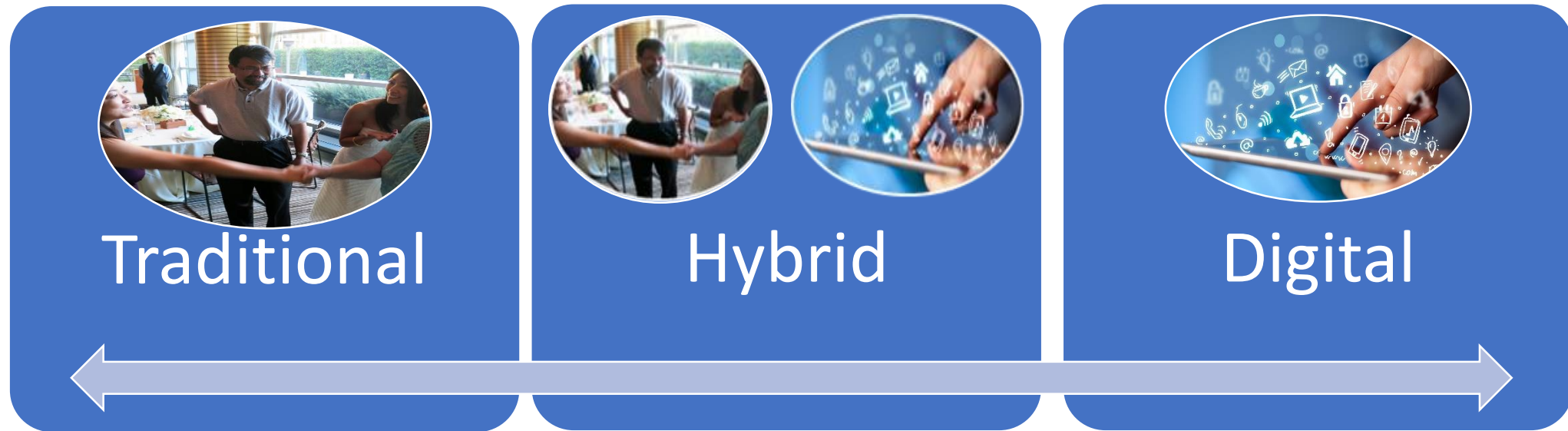
How Different are Rebellious Buyers' Behaviors?

- Don't want to meet face-to-face.
- Don't readily return phone calls.
- Don't read their emails from all sources.
- Don't give complete information on web forms.
- Act as though they don't need/value your help.
- Form opinions and purchase criteria in advance.
- Perform research in advance of entertaining a proposal.
- Can't, won't or don't make lone decisions.
- Interest ebbs and flows in unpredictable ways. (No reliable sales cycle)

Traditional modes of admissions?
Information Sessions?
Typical contact modes?
When and where do we provide
information?

Source: SmartSellingTools.com

What are we to do?



Changing your Marketing Approach

1. Traditional – Face-to-face interaction, brochures, Open House events, MBA roadshows
2. Hybrid – Varying degrees of face-to-face to digital interaction, varying degrees of face-to-face events to virtual events, varying degrees of traditional to digital marketing approaches
3. Digital – Online and digital approach with aspects available on applicant's time schedule

Initial Steps for Successfully Changing your Marketing Approach

- Creating support among faculty and review committees
- Build collaborative approach with staff – create buy-in
- Identify a concrete plan for development with timelines and specific tasks
- Share plan within the organization – up, down and across (RACI chart)
- Exploratory Research – Focus Group

Program Review Survey

- Development of Survey and Methodology
- Survey Analysis Part II
 - Prospective RCB MBA students who chose a competing MBA program
 - Current RCB MBAs
 - RCB Alumni
- Survey Analysis Part II
 - Current RCB MBAs
 - RCB Alumni

Key Findings from Survey

We asked respondents to rate their familiarity with Atlanta-metro Universities and their familiarities with Atlanta-metro Business Schools (we merely listed the B-school name to see if they recognized it).

- familiarity was defined as knowing about the University's (b-school's) reputation, schools (programs), student-profiles, relative cost, etc.

Familiarity with the University	Scale 1-7 (7= very familiar)	Familiarity with the associated business school	Scale 1-7 (7= very familiar)
C1	2.64	C1	2.4
C2	5.11	C2	4.65
C3	5.54	C3	3.92
C4	3.09	C4	2.37
C5	6.10	C5	2.99
GSU	4.19	RCB	6.01
C6	3.31	C6	2.47
C7	4.93	C7	4.55
C8	2.76	C8	2.22

*RCB Prospectives and current MBAs/alumni are the respondent pool

Key Findings from Survey

We asked them to select from a list of entities (choose all that apply). Here are the percentages chosen for each entity.

Entity	%
Family	35%
Friend	33%
Colleague at work	27%
Role Model	18%
Digital Ad	4%
Physical Ad	1%
Employer/Supervisor	26%
Former Professor	8%
Self	80%

Interpretation: clearly individuals' tight-knit social circles dictate their decision to pursue an MBA. Family, friends, and colleagues are a critical source. Employers are a key source that we could tap into as well. Professors might be an underutilized resource. We can encourage our Faculty to heavily promote our programs and continue to reach out to former students. Self is conflated with other sources as self is influenced by social circles. Advertising effects are usually indirect so no surprise that the effects are low.

Integrating Program Review Insights into Marketing Approach

- Step 1: explore effects of social influence and aspirational goals - Does **a prospect's interest in the program (i.e., engagement with the ad)** depend on the goal a prospective is trying to achieve **and social influence**?
- Goal: examine how social influences affect degree to which personal goals lead prospective applicants to engage.
 - The top sources of social influence (other than the self) are **family members, friends, colleagues, employers**. We can also test the effect of a Professor to see if that is a route we should encourage.



- The top aspirational goals are: become a **leader**, **earn a grad degree**, **network**, and **higher earning potential**.



Integrating Program Review Insights into Marketing Approach

- Step 2: Explore effects of social influence and platform effects
- Goal: to examine how the type of digital platform (Facebook, LinkedIn, RCB Website) influences the degree to which social influences lead prospective to learn more about our MBA program.
 - For example, should we featured an employer in an Ad on LinkedIn but a family member in an Ad on Facebook?
 - The top sources of social influence (other than the self) are **family members, friends, colleagues, employers**. Platforms to test: **RCB Website, Facebook Paid and RCB's Facebook Page, LinkedIn**, and others?

Website Revision

- Embedding student success stories
- Changing back-office processes to present options on page
- Incorporate Quick Action buttons
 - Apply Now
 - Attend an Information Session
 - Request additional Information
- Simultaneous interdisciplinary “Career Pathways” created to address the most pressing business problems
- Emphasize placement outcomes prominently

Leveraging Google Adwords with Program Key Characteristics

- Flexible MBA
- Test Score Alternatives
- Top 50 MBA program
- Working Professional MBA



Sample Test Ads provided to Marketing & Communications Department

- 4 conditions of Social Influence (Employer vs Family) and Short vs Long-term goals

Short-term



Listen to your boss and get that RCB MBA. That way you **get that big upcoming promotion**.



Listen to family and get that RCB MBA. That way you **get that big upcoming promotion**.

Long-Term



Listen to your boss and get an RCB MBA. That way you **become the leader you are meant to be in the future**.



Listen to your family and get an RCB MBA. That way you **become the leader you are meant to be in the future**.

Sample Test Ads provided to Marketing & Communications Department

- 4 conditions of Social Influence (Employer vs Family) and Prevention vs Promotion Goals

Prevention



Listen to your boss and get that RCB MBA. That way you **keep your competitive advantage and won't lose your earning potential.**



Listen to family and get that RCB MBA. That way you **keep your competitive advantage and won't lose your earning potential.**

Promotion



Listen to your boss and get an RCB MBA. That way you **enhance your competitive advantage while increasing your earning potential.**



Listen to your family and get an RCB MBA. That way you **enhance your competitive advantage while increasing your earning potential.**

Sample Test Ads provided to Marketing & Communications Department

- 4 conditions of Social Influence (Employer vs Family) and Personal vs Professional Goals

Personal



Listen to your boss and get that RCB MBA. That way you **achieve your personal goal of gaining knowledge and confidence.**



Listen to family and get that RCB MBA. That way you **achieve your personal goal of gaining knowledge and increasing your confidence**

Professional



Listen to your boss and get an RCB MBA. That way you **achieve your professional goal of climbing up the ladder and reaching new heights.**



Listen to your family and get an RCB MBA. That way you **achieve your professional goal of climbing up the ladder and reaching new heights.**

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Testing Initial Ads with Marketing & Communications Department (Mechanical Turk through Facebook)

Earn Your Robinson MBA

**Your colleagues think you should get an MBA.
Become an expert in your field and strengthen
your professional network.**



Learn More

Earn Your Robinson MBA

**Your colleagues think you should get an MBA.
Increase your confidence and invest in
personal development.**



Learn More

Testing Initial Ads with Marketing & Communications Department (Mechanical Turk through Facebook)

Earn Your Robinson MBA

**Your family thinks you should get an MBA.
Increase your confidence and invest in
personal development.**



Learn More

Earn Your Robinson MBA

**Your family thinks you should get an MBA.
Become an expert in your field and strengthen
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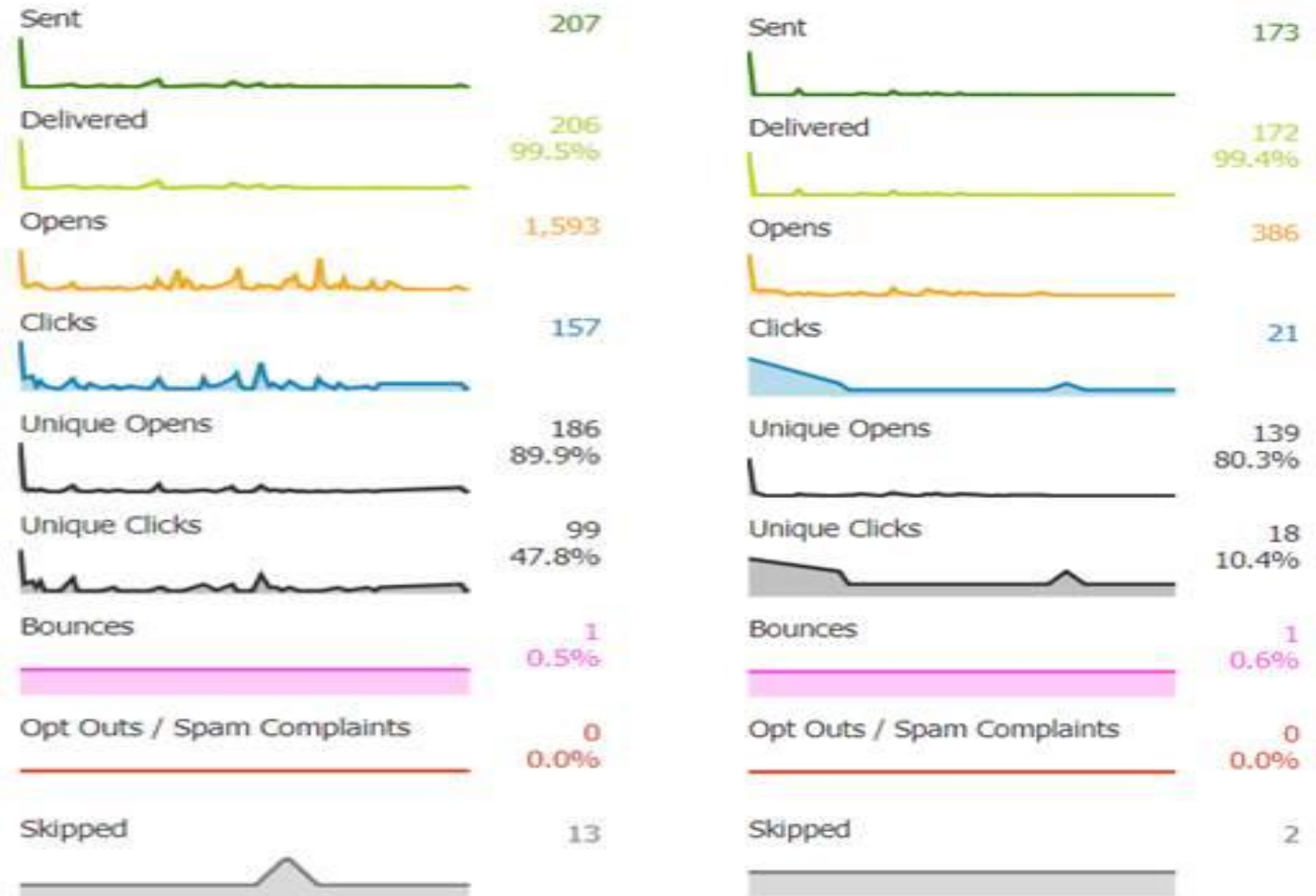
Learn More

Implementation Plan

Platform	Budget	Reach	Targeting Criteria	Segmentation Plan	Duration	Unique Landing Pages
Google Ad Words	\$XXX	20-30,000 people	Bachelor's degree, Southeast USA, Business inclination	None	3 weeks	5
Facebook	\$XXX	50,000 people	Bachelor's degree, Southeast USA, Business inclination	Test 5 Ads with women for the first half, then switch to men.	4 weeks	5
LinkedIn	\$XXX	50,000 people	Bachelor's degree, Southeast USA, Business inclination	Test 5 Ads with men for the first half, then switch to women.	4 weeks	5

Conversion Videos versus Webinars

- Conversion Video 1 (MBA Essentials) – Sent to in-play applicants
 - 200 applicants (90% open rate)
 - 1593 views (7+ views per applicant)
- Conversion Video 2 (MBA Placements) – Sent to in-play applicants
 - 173 applicants (80% open rate)
 - 386 views (2+ views per applicant)



Conversion Videos versus Webinars

- Dean's webinars for Graduate Programs – Technology enabled but one-time specific time access
 - 7/18 – 48/29 – (14 MBA Registrants)
 - 4/10 – 57/29 (0 MBA)
 - 3/06 – 66/38 (0 MBA)
- Admitted Student Reception:
 - 3/08 – 61/49 (Not set up to track program)
 - 4/17 – 63/60 (17/16 MBA)
 - 6/19 – 97/71 (40/27 MBA)

Additional Steps in process

- NEW - Call campaign to all In-play applicants in early 2018
- NEW - Interview all MBA applicants by our recruiter (face-to-face, by phone or WebEx)
- Continued with class visit invites
- Continued with event invites



Results of Marketing Change

- Started apps increased 26%
- Completed apps increased by 90%
- Accepted apps increased by 207%
- Deposits increased by 293%
- Fall Enrollment exceeded 130 for first time in 5 years

Pathway forward with Takeaways

- Thorough Program Review is an essential starting point
 - Support by faculty (if committee vote is needed)
 - Faculty champion is needed – Marketing faculty expertise
 - Focus Groups is an easy first step
- Leverage current resources
 - Current marketing approach/resources
 - Marketing department may welcome data driven marketing approach
 - Current students and alumni already have a vested interest in your program
- Map out a plan with desired but realistic timelines
 - Used to communicate up the organization
 - Enables engagement and follow-up with marketing department