

## Background

Marketing mantra: Give your audience what they're looking for when they're looking for it, on the platform they're looking for it on.

Delivering messages in context. Audience members, regardless of their day jobs, callings, roles, are always the same person, but their interest levels, attention, and focus changes by context. A Human Resources Manager on LinkedIn may be looking through possible candidates, but is focused on his/her role, so it open to articles, posts about hiring, culture, resumes, etc. That same HR manager is also an employee, and responds to articles or posts about motivation, or cat videos (everyone always responds to cat videos, regardless of platform.)

When that same HR Manager is at home, on youtube, he or she is not likely as focused on work, but can be intrigued with a message that is phrased to hit a need in language that is less work-formal. Remember, a CFO is still a human being, an individual, whether in the board room or on the golf course. It's just a matter of knowing their needs, and presenting them in the right manner, based on their frame of mind.

Simple, right?

## Know they audience

Marketers often speak of personas, which is essentially taking a 2D data point and name and building that into a 3D character. It helps marketers to understand the nuances inherent in each audience group. Few companies have a single target audience, so multiple personas are needed. There's a science to creating personas, that takes time, research, and often lettered professionals to develop. But at the end of the day, it's a tool to understand your audience to speak to them in their language and based on their needs, understanding their challenges and goals.

Simple, right?

To understand your audiences, you need to know WHO they are, HOW they think, WHAT they need, and what their challenges are, and HOW they engage with content, solutions, ideas. Much of this comes down to understanding them as individuals, to understand their perceptions. (And contrary to the cliché, perceptions are NOT reality, so perceptions are NOT based in facts.)

To be successful, you must understand your primary and secondary (and tertiary) audiences.

## Primary and Secondary Audiences

- **Primary**

The primary audience for most B2B companies are those who influence the ones who control the purse strings. These are the “Champions”. These are the ones who learn of the need, and are the liaisons between the administration and the in-classroom educators.

- Decision Makers
- Superintendents
- Principals
- Reading Specialists

These audiences learn about solutions through conferences, literature, industry events and meetings, trends, and news sources. They also learn through their colleagues. (See Secondary Audience!)

- **Secondary**

Secondary audiences are the ones who influence the influencers, who are needed to support the influencers and urge on the Primary’s. Often times they are the first targets in this selling process, as it’s the one who most recognize the need and value of the solutions offered. They are the ones that often first raise the solution.

- Principals
- Reading Specliasts
- Teachers

Like the Primary audience, they learn of solutions and trends through literature and industry events, but more often through discussions and interactions with peers, associates, or industry news that address solutions to their pain points and needs. They then raise these with the primary audience.

- **Example: Digital Record for Student Tracking**

- **Primary Audience:** provides data tracking and indivudal process, that is easily presented by student, classroom, grade, school, district to report to the administration, district and board. This offers opportunities for streamlined reporting for reimbursements and documentation for decisions around providing additional services.
- **Secondary:** allows for instant feedback on tracking and improvement with the student that can be shared with parents, providing objective, tangible results of otherwise perceived subjective feedback. Can provide class and grade level comparisons for improvement and successes, but most importantly, offers clear insight into the needs of each student to help them achieve their goals and move to the next level.

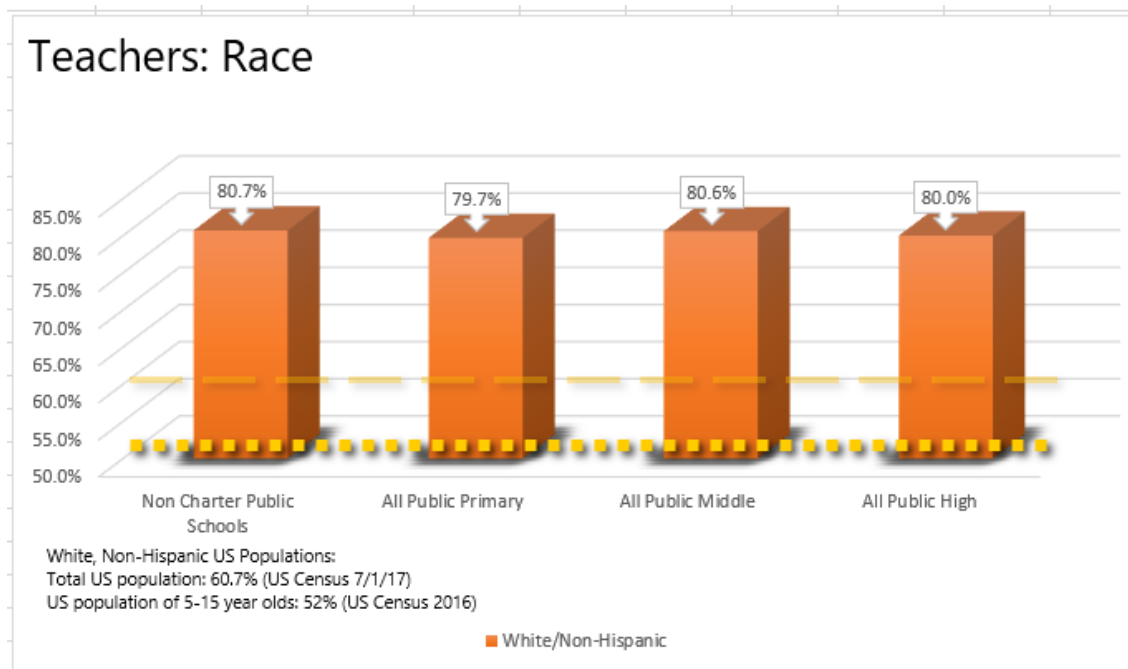
### Tertiary

Who is our tertiary audience? Education enthusiasts, board of ed members, consultants, other administrators, those actually holding the purse strings. It’s important to convey the message of the solution value to all these audiences, and the variations within each one, by addressing their specific language and points they’ll use to assess and qualify the solution options, while addressing their needs up front. (It’s also important to note that each of these audiences will vary by region, state, and possibly even district and school.)

## Diversity & Representation

Understanding the challenge of representation is a familiar concept, one that continues to gain national attention and exposure. It's central to our solutions as well. To understand this we need to recognize the challenge of the balance of diversity and representation, what it poses to the students AND to the educators.

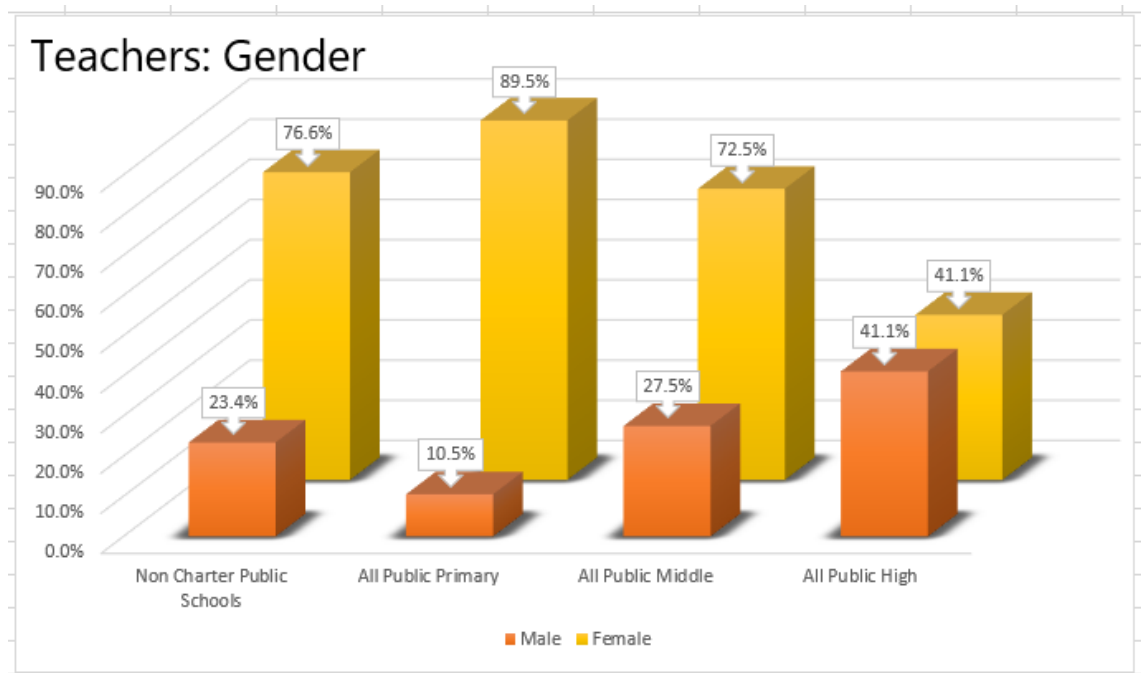
### *80% Of America's Teachers Are White*



US Department of Education: Characteristics of Public Elementary and Secondary School Teachers in the United States: Results From the 2015–16 National Teacher and Principal Survey: August 15, 2017 - <https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2017072rev>

*"Without question, when the majority of students in public schools are students of color and only 18 percent of our teachers are teachers of color, we have an urgent need to act. We've got to understand that all students benefit from teacher diversity. We have strong evidence that students of color benefit from having teachers and leaders who look like them as role models and also benefit from the classroom dynamics that diversity creates. But it is also important for our white students to see teachers of color in leadership roles in their classrooms and communities. The question for the nation is how do we address this quickly and thoughtfully?"*

Education Secretary John B. King, Jr., Speaking at Howard University, March 8, 2016.



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The gender disparity in teaching is not new; it's been considered a largely a female dominated field for decades. We can see some changes, and the difference is statistically eliminated in high schools. We have seen studies over many years providing insights into the effects of gender disparity in classrooms, and in most instances, the "organic" approaches to overcoming them, often nothing more than overcompensating combined with institutionalized societal gender norms and biases, have proven ineffective at best, disruptive to worse, destructive. (read more here: <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/gender-equity-classroom-rebecca-alber>).

Addressing the diversity and representation challenge is not a single solution, and not a one time change. And it's an issue that is a focus for the students, but need to ensure we also understand the challenges and issues the teachers themselves face, even unknowingly.

## Solutions | Offerings | Approach

Solutions are answers to problems or needs. Focus on that. Focus on the need, problem, gap our solutions solve. Solutions aren't automated, they are complimentary, to allow teachers to spend more time working with the children, making a difference. So you're streamlining the parts of the job that is irritating, not replacing their input.

- Build Empathy

- Recognize their Value
  - This is personal.
  - They've wanted to be teachers their whole lives.
  - They're dedicated.
  - It's a calling.
  - They care about the kids.
  - They care about all their students.
  - They care about their stats.
  - They care about reaching them all.
  - They care about reaching them individually.
  - They spend extra time.
  - They spend extra money.
  - They are nearly always disrespected.
  - They are nearly always underpaid.
  - They are under the thumb of the administration.
  - They begrudge the administration.
  - They teach our children.
  - They teach our future.
  - They save lives.
  - They guide children to becoming people.
- Understand their Psyche and the Hits it takes
  - They get demeaned by the public
  - They get demeaned by students
  - They get demeaned by parents
  - They get demeaned by outcomes
  - They get demeaned by politicians
  - They get demeaned by administrators
  - They get demeaned by boards

- It takes a toll

A study a while ago said it takes 12 positive interactions to overcome the psychological toll of one negative one.

*So be nice.*

*And reward them.*

Recognize you have to **EARN** their trust, respect, time, and energy.

- Recognize What they Need from You
  - They need to trust you.
  - They need to trust you as a protector to their kids.
  - They require their vendors, partners to be like them: honest, ethical, trustworthy, reliable.
  - They have little time, and even less money. You **MUST** provide value to get them to give us their time.
  - Be sincere, be honest, help them do better
  - Give them what they can use ... for thier students, calssrooms
  - Understand their schedules -- help them help their students during those times (test taking -- anxiety tips, holidays, aloneness, sadness, seasonal light issues -- give them relevant of the moment resources)

# MARKETING TO EDUCATORS

Don't Market by the Numbers  
Chart Your Own Course



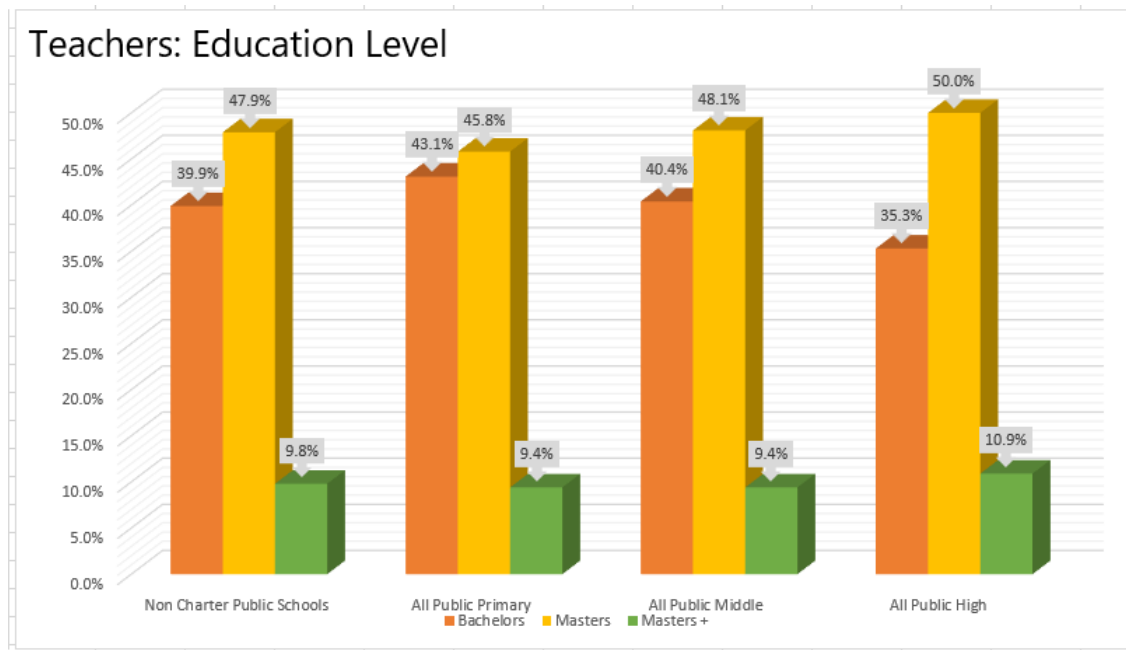
- They need to laugh -- but tread lightly, they don't like the stereotypes, and are protective, so you have to be an insider to tell a teacher joke
- **Speak Their Language – Build the Relationship**  
To reach educators, you have to speak their language. You cannot claim to be a partner, to understand them, if you're not one of them, or at least if you don't speak like them
  - Don't use impersonal language -- educators follow a calling, and see themselves as individuals, protect individuality, of their own and their students. This isn't a business to them.
  - Tell stories, personal stories of classroom or student success, but it has to be real. They want to relate, but don't have time, so make it valuable to them, and connect with them.
  - Don't use stats ... use children as the numbers. Make it personal
  - Don't use jargon, don't use elitist language

Keep It Simple. Educators aren't marketers, and they're not following the same news, information, programs you are. Don't expect them to speak the same language, just as you don't speak the same language they do. But keep it simple. Make it easy for them to understand what your point is.

Typically we provide marketing content written at different grade levels per different audiences.

- 5<sup>th</sup> grade for general/mass audience
- 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade for higher end general audience
- 10<sup>th</sup> grade for corporate executives (never EVER higher than 11<sup>th</sup>)
- 12<sup>th</sup> grade or lower, with for general wording/phrasing, for medical professionals, depending on the platform/context.

Educators are by far, one of the most consistently highly and broadly educated and aware audience. They have the vocabulary and abilities to connect dots, understand words and nuances, and absorb, process information quicker than most other audiences.



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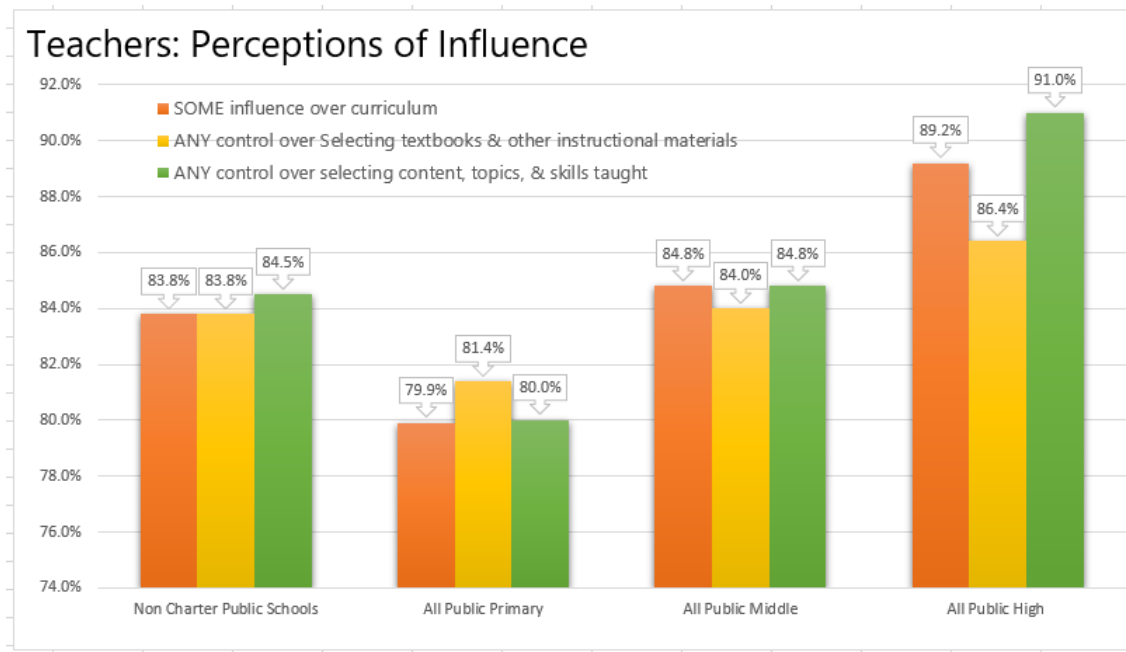
## But ...

They're busy. Be cognitive of their bandwidth, and don't use phrases like "be cognitive of", ... respect their time. Do not talk down to educators. They are well educated, view themselves as intelligent, critical thinkers, smart, creative. Make sure your message is respectful of them, and present as learning. Educators love to learn, so they can help others more. But respect their time and don't chance them stumbling over your message. And when possible, SHOW them, don't TELL them.

## Engage them.

Get their input. They have ideas, they are the front lines, we are not. They see the outcomes, challenges, needs, gaps. ASK them, engage them, value their input, answer their questions with examples, stories, not (just) data. Surveys, keep them short, easy, simple ... ask for feedback, how can we do better, what do you like about us, what do you wish you had?

- Understand How they View their Influence



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**Example:** teachers believe they have influence over curriculum selection, and choices within the classroom. It is immaterial whether this is true or not, but the overwhelming majority of teachers believe this to be true. A curriculum company received varying reactions to our program, ranging from there is too much freedom to there is little to no freedom. (example of perceptions!). Given the perception that teachers hold, that they DO have influence over the curriculum and content, it is important to clearly present the solutions as including the opportunity, flexibility, of choice.

- **Timing - Understand the K-12 buying cycle**
  - When are budgets filed
  - When are decisions made
  - When must budget excess be spent
  - What are regional, state, local impacts?
  - Will they have time to read your message?

**Example:** a dog groomer supply company shuts down nearly all marketing to groomers in November and December, focusing only on flash refill emails, quick turnaround/delivery. Why? Because per groomers are their absolute busiest leading up to Thanksgiving and Christmas. Their only air time is based on immediate product needs. They're either grooming or sleeping. AFTER Christmas they are exclusively sent emails and ads for resupplying, tool replacements, etc.

*Recognize the value of referrals.*



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At the end of the day, referrals are key. With budgets, reports, reviews, and education of our children at stake, schools and districts rely heavily on referrals. But so do teachers, often the first line of awareness and eventual champions for our solutions. They need to know our solutions are effective, worth their time, effort, and money. Change is never smooth, so they need to hear the process, and that it was worth it over all.

So go where they go, listen to what they say, answer questions honestly, openly. Do not hide who you are on social platforms, be authentic about it. Don't sell to them, talk to them, answer their questions, ask them their challenges and needs. Develop the actual partnerships we claim to offer.

Provide content from others – videos, testimonials, actual referrals and review. Provide interviews with initially reluctant participants who became champions. Show results, show the stories, show the kids.



It all starts and ends with the educators. So go where they are.

## We are teachers

This is where teachers go for information, content, inspiration ... learn how they talk, what they respond to

- visit: <https://www.weareteachers.com/>
- Find them on social media platforms (FB is a big group for them!)

**One last note:** Understand the power and influence of Google in the Education Industry. By providing tools and solutions at little or no cost, Google has ingratiated, and integrated themselves into the daily existence, cognition, and behavior of those in the industry. Beyond offering office suite like tools, email, they also offer applications, hangouts, curriculum, and even offer a customized suite for K-12 educators. This is important to understand their behavior, available solutions, integrations, and platforms they frequent (including Google+).