Marketing to new segments: part-time postgraduate new courses

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About Birkbeck

- London's evening university
- Ranked in the top 200 of 'global elite' universities in the THE World University Rankings 2010
- Ranked number one in London for student satisfaction (NSS 2005-2009)
- Ranked in the top 25% for research (RAE 2008)
- Courses from entry level to PhD

Birkbeck's 19,000 students

- 99% over 21, average of 34 years old
- 46% male, 54% female
- 75% in full-time employment
- Nearly all live or work in London
- 23% UG, 15% PGT, 2% PGR, 57% Cert HE

So,

Our students are working Londoners, with an average age of 34 years

Understanding the market

- Market research showed common themes, but the need for segmentation of the market
- Developed strong central brand with 3 sub-brands

The segments

Birkbeck
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

The Birkbeck Brand
LONDON'S EVENING UNIVERSITY

The Certificate and Undergraduate Sub - Brand

The Postgraduate Sub-Brand

The Stratford Sub-Brand

Generic: undergraduate/certificate students

This is the core Birkbeck campaign that aims to recruit students to all levels of study by communicating Birkbeck's core brand values:

- reputation
- quality of teaching
- specialist provider of face-to-face, part-time, evening teaching
- prestigious University of London qualifications.

What we know about the audience?

Vast majority are in employment, informed, marketing savvy, urban.

Main motivations:

- personal development/achievement
- career development
- academic qualifications

Average age: 30+, (ranges from 18 – 80+).

Additional attraction: Birkbeck's understanding of the needs of mature students.

Postgraduate – master's (MA/MSc) and research PhD students

This campaign is targeted at those looking for postgraduate study (full-time and part-time, in the evening). The core messaging is focused on:

- building and communicating Birkbeck's profile and reputation as a world-class research and teaching institution
- Prestigious University of London qualifications.

What we know about the audience?

Over 70% are working professionals in full-time employment, are informed, marketing savvy and urban.

Main motivations:

- career development
- career/life change
- presonal development

Average age: 30 – 49 years

Additional attraction: Birkbeck's convenient model of evening, face-to-face teaching which enables them to continue to work during the day.

Stratford

Birkbeck has taken its unique model of part-time, evening teaching to Stratford, east London – one of the lowest HE participation area in the London region. Campaign targets those living and working in east London who are looking for high quality HE offered locally which fits around their work or other commitments. Core messages:

- High quality, face-to-face, evening teaching
- University of London qualifications
- Available locally in Stratford

What do we know about the audience?

Hard-to-reach communities in east London with little or no tradition of higher education.

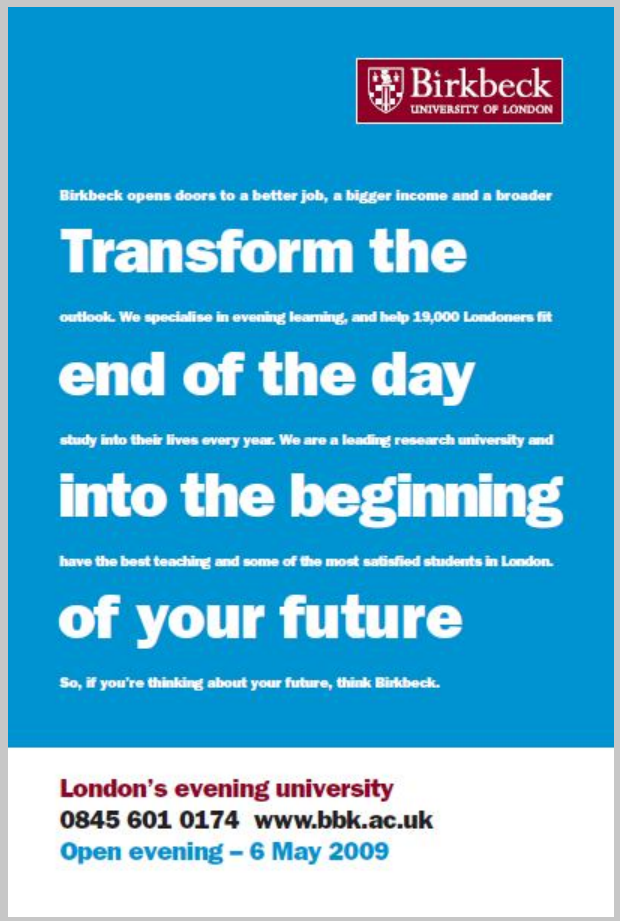
- School leavers (18–20 yr olds)
- more traditional Birkbeck student (typically 25–35)
- 35+ students who wish to develop their professional skills or retrain.

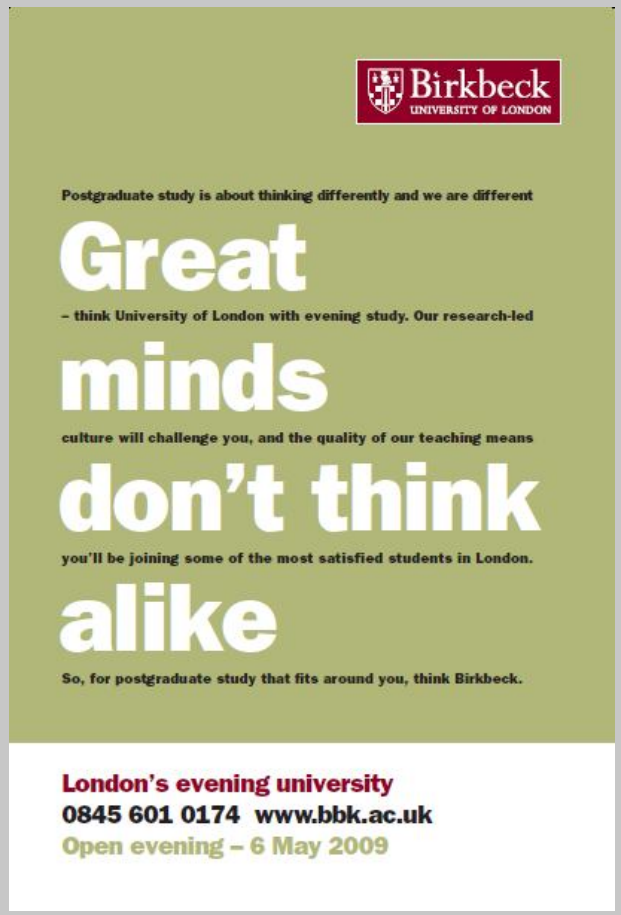
Motivations/attractions:

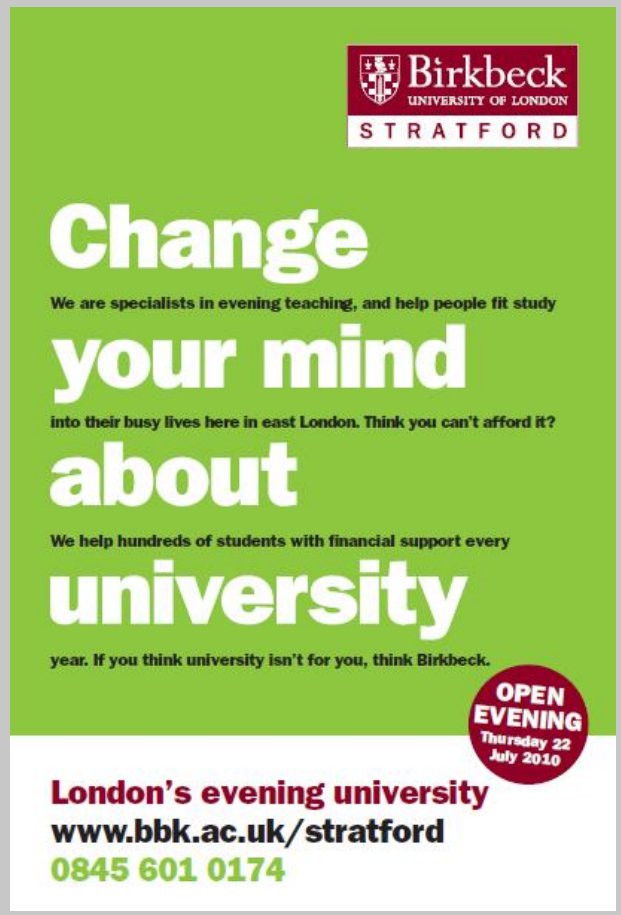
School leavers: attracted by Birkbeck's part-time, 'earn while you learn and graduate without debt' model. Capable of, and interested in, going to university but want to start earning as soon as possible; debt averse.

20s and above in FT/PT employment (or other daytime commitments): may have missed out on university the first time round and Birkbeck provides opportunity to return to formal education to improve prospects.

London’s Evening University







The Campaigns

- Advertising to raise awareness and profile amongst core audiences
- Postcode targeted direct mail campaigns
- Comprehensive CRM campaigns that recognise student decision making processes at different levels
- School and College level events
- Targeted outreach campaigns

Conclusion

- Don’t neglect core brand
- Recognise key segments
- Understand segments and how they complement and work with your brand
- Ensure horizontal and vertical integration

Questions