

CASE STUDY



ACE ALUMNI & VIRTUAL GRADUATION // 2020

Tactive Supports ACE in Building Impactful Remote Relationships



ACE CASE STUDY

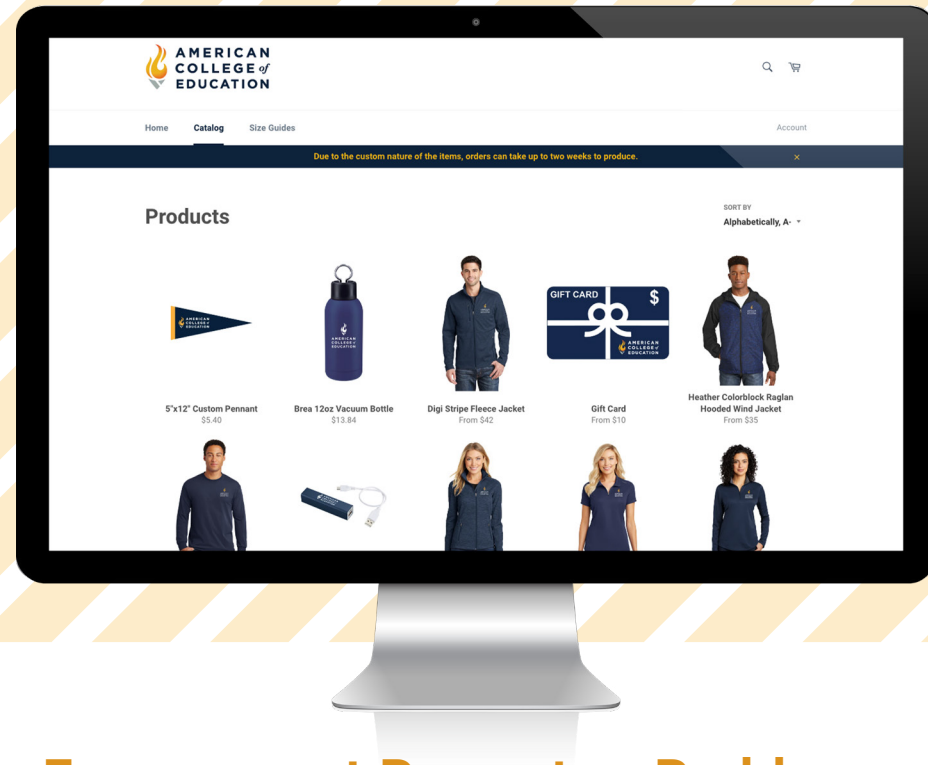
The American College of Education (ACE) is an organization that was founded to help educators advance their careers.

Designed specifically to support professionals looking to learn on a teacher's schedule, ACE is an exclusive online university.

While the remote nature of the college was beneficial for busy educators, there was the challenge of alumni engagement. And when COVID-19 hit, ACE was challenged with pivoting quickly to a virtual graduation ceremony.

Because ACE only employs a small marketing staff, the team needed some support to successfully execute these initiatives.

Their first call was to Tactive.



Remote Engagement Presents a Problem

Online universities are extremely useful for enabling educational success for busy adult learners. But the nature of virtual environments can make it difficult to engage with alumni.

Although ACE had a continually growing base of former students, they had no official alumni outreach program. Because they wanted to offer alumni the opportunity to share pride in their accomplishments, ACE knew they needed a way to support their alumni population.

When the COVID-19 pandemic became a worldwide challenge, ACE was also confronted with the challenge of transitioning a traditional in-person graduation ceremony to a remote event.

This was particularly challenging for an international student base. Under normal circumstances, the graduation ceremony served as a rare personal touchpoint and a way to celebrate successes. Unfortunately, COVID made that impossible in 2020 and ACE was forced to execute a remote ceremony instead.

Scoring a Solution

With only 11 people on their marketing team, ACE turned to Tactive to help develop and execute a winning alumni engagement program. In the early years of the college, ACE was not tracking alumni status, and as a small educational institution, it was difficult to connect with alumni.

Tactive stepped in to help ACE develop a winning alumni program. As a full-service marketing partner, Tactive offered services that included printing, promotional products, fulfillment, ecommerce, and marketing, both digital and traditional.

After the execution of a successful alumni ecommerce program, Tactive showed they were also positioned to develop and execute a successful remote event. Working alongside ACE every step of the way, Tactive supported the online university as they transitioned to a remote graduation ceremony.

The Rewarding Results

Together, ACE and Tactive developed an online shop for alumni to help former students order college gear and showcase their educational pride. Tactive established the ACE Outfitters eCommerce store and enabled tracking to allow for future connecting with alumni. They also enabled gift codes so ACE could effectively tie webinars and other remote events into the online store, which was particularly useful for identifying the success of certain campaigns.

The success of that initiative opened up the possibilities for creating and executing a successful online graduation ceremony. Tactive helped develop a strategy that allowed for the fulfillment of customized items to all graduates, giving it a unique and personal touch. Tactive also handled the design, printing, fulfillment and tracking of all boxes — managing everything from concept to delivery—simplifying the job of ACE significantly.



A LOOK AT THE NUMBERS



440+

Online Orders
in 2-years



11

Countries
Received Kits



+83%

LinkedIn
Engagement



+79%

Twitter
Engagement

SERVICES IN ACTION

PRINTING

PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS

E-SHOPS

3D DIRECT MAIL

FULFILLMENT

Building Remote Relationships with Unique Marketing Strategies

The American College of Education was founded in 2005 to help support educators who were looking for a more convenient way to advance their careers. As a 100% online university, there wasn't much of a pivot needed to accommodate learning conditions during COVID.

"We didn't scramble with COVID because we were already prepped for online learning," says Mike Cook, Senior Marketing Manager for ACE. Although they were positioned for online education without any changes, ACE was grappling with other problems that involved

engaging their community under remote conditions.

What began as a small homegrown university quickly expanded to boast more than 23,000 alumni across the globe. ACE felt it was time to level up their engagement with former students.

"We knew that one of the ways we can connect with alumni is by offering them the opportunity to share their excitement and celebrate receiving a doctorate or master's degree with us." ACE partnered with Tactive to launch an online store targeted at alumni.

Tactive was able to set up a robust online store very quickly to help ACE reach its alumni audience.

"When Tactive demoed some of the other work they'd done, I was really impressed," comments Mike. "What was very useful for us was the reporting



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and analytics side of things. Other companies claimed to offer that in their pitch, but it would have required a full-time employee just to manage it."

With a small marketing team of only 11 people, ACE needed a plug-and-play option that could be easily managed with their existing team. With Tactive's solution, ACE can easily see which products are trending, tie campaigns to former students, market their college more effectively, and more easily connect with alumni.

The success of the alumni campaign sparked a follow-up project for the pair which became necessary due to COVID.

As an exclusive online university, ACE's end-of-year graduation ceremony was particularly



Kyle and the team at Tactive really knocked it out of the park.





the interior and exterior of every box. Each box contained a personalized letter for each recipient. Additionally, the boxes contained confetti, crinkle paper, confetti poppers, caps, customized tassels (class of 2020), and recognition cords for any special designations.

important, bringing together students from around the world to celebrate their accomplishments.

"In-person commencement is a big deal for us. We secure a hotel block, we handle a full weekend of itineraries and events, to make sure they're able to celebrate," says Mike. "With the impact of COVID and having to make the call of a virtual ceremony on fairly short notice, we had to pivot quickly and make some big decisions."

Mike's first call was to Tactive and his customer success manager was full of ideas to help make the event a success, even given a tight turnaround.

"They pitched the idea of a graduate box," notes Mike. "Kyle and the team at Tactive really knocked it out of the park."

Tactive sourced boxes that could be designed and completely branded on



Working with Tactive has been one of the best decisions that we've made.

"We sent those out to every one of the thousands of graduates who would have normally been in person," he notes. "Tactive took care of everything, the printing, the boxes, the kitting and fulfillment, everything..."

Tactive sent out more than 1000 boxes with a less than 1% error margin. ACE was able to hold an impactful ceremony for graduates.

Because of these successes, ACE continues to turn to Tactive when they're in need of a marketing partner.

"They're definitely the vendor I reach out to the most," says Mike. "Working with Tactive has been one of the best decisions that we've made. The ability to be in contact with a rep at just about any time of day has paid off in droves."

ABOUT TACTIVE

At Tactive, everything we do, every single day, serves a larger goal:

To help our clients engage with their audiences in an increasingly distracted world.

We help busy marketers develop and deploy tactile marketing materials that delights audiences, drives leads, and delivers ROI.



We call it ‘paying attention’ for a reason. It’s worth quite a bit, and ought to be cherished.

SETH GODIN



National and global companies trust us with their brands because they know we will meet their high standards every time, no matter what.

Our customers love us because of our fierce commitment to client service and "do whatever it takes" credo.

We are, above all else, a human brand. (Except for the dog...)



DIMENSIONAL DIRECT MAIL

Packages that feature height, breadth, and depth consistently outperform old-fashioned “flat” mailers. We customize winning 3D direct mail campaigns, and then assemble and ship it so you can focus on the fun stuff—namely, following up on leads.

Our diverse suite of services aims to help busy marketers meet their most ambitious goals. Combined with our client-first approach, we bring your wildest marketing ideas to (real) life... and then pack, ship, and deliver it, too.



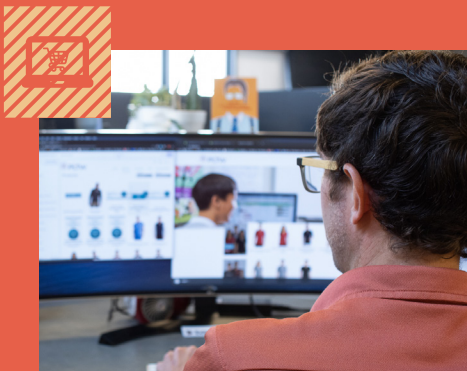
PRINTING SERVICES

Our printing services combine the latest technology with an expert creative staff who obsesses over stylish finishes and fancy paper stock. The result? A print experience that goes above and beyond to delight your audience.



PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS

Promotional products are an incredibly powerful way to promote your brand—but it's not as simple as slapping your logo on some coffee mugs and calling it a day. At Tactive, we help clients shape strategic swag programs that get results.



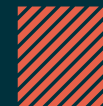
BRANDED E-SHOPS

We've helped everyone from national brands to regional nonprofits promote their brands and causes with stylish, user-friendly e-Shops that streamline ordering and fulfillment—and we can do it for you, too.



FULFILLMENT SERVICES

With a state-of-the-art bindery, 25,000 square feet of storage space, and variable data and mail printing capabilities, we'll save you money and hassle by keeping your fulfillment services under one roof.



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**Bring
your brand
to (real) life**