

FRANKLIN CUMMINGS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

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01

**ORGANIZATION
& PROBLEM**



MEET FRANKLIN CUMMINGS INSTITUTE OF TECH

1. Franklin Cummings is a higher education institution in Boston focused on providing Technical Trade programs resulting in an Associate's Degree
2. Their student body is primarily made up of individuals in low income areas throughout Boston and Massachusetts, increasing their access to affordable education
3. Emphasis on Job Placement: 85% of Alumni are employed after college in their field of study



THE PROBLEM: HOW DO WE BETTER ENGAGE OUR ALUMNI?



Franklin
Cummings
Tech

LOW ENGAGEMENT

Alumni of Franklin Cummings do not often engage with the college after graduation. This results in dissonance between the Alums & FC; Alumni are unaware of the opportunities available to them through FC

NEW COURSE OFFERING

FC is championing a new bachelor's degree program related to Business Management, but interest in the program has remained low due to poor engagement between FC & Alums

MAIN FOCUS FROM CLIENT:

Revamp the Franklin Cummings Alumni Newsletter to promote a partnership mentality between the two sides, while providing materials related to the new course resulting in a Bachelor's degree in Business Management





02

RESEARCH





Primary Research

PROCEDURE

- Used Mail Merge to email a list, provided by Michael, to 375 alumni.
- The email contained a survey link and a prompt to schedule an interview.
- The questions covered a range of topics: reasons for school selection, alumni engagement, institution expectations and wants, and interest in entrepreneurship.

SURVEY

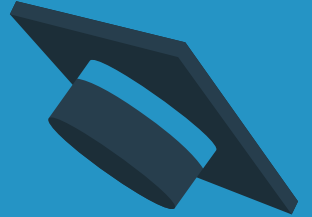
- Made survey using qualtrics
- 13 alumni responded to the survey

INTERVIEWS

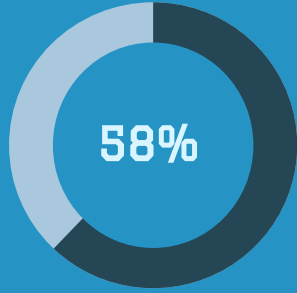
- 9 alumni responded for an interview but we were only able to meet with 4

Why Franklin Cummings?

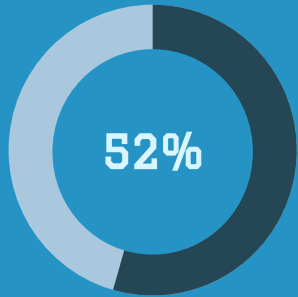
- Small School
- Program Options
 - Optometry, Automotive, Engineering, etc
- Reviews online and word of mouth
- Cater to inner-city kids who are left behind by public schools
- Hands-on experience
- Quick admissions decision
- Affordability
- Confidence



ENGAGEMENT



Of alumni reported that they don't read the newsletter



Of alumni reported that they don't participate in the alumni network

"Got disconnected after left the college, busy with job"

"I generally don't have the time for it"

"I've not seen opportunity"

WHAT DO ALUMNI WANT?

EVENTS

- Reunions
- Events on Zoom
- Unveiling of new campus in Roxbury
- Co-op program
- Career Fair
- Small networking events
- Invite alumni to existing Franklin events
- Women in leadership events

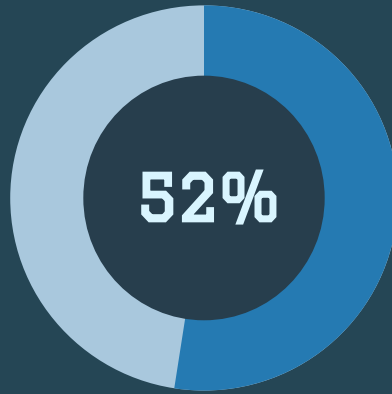
RESOURCES

- Job Opportunities
- Disability Help
- Career Office
- Parking/transportation help
- Resources on financial aid/debt relief
- Business/entrepreneurship help
- Partner with a local optometry school to bridge into an optometry program

NETWORKING

- Mentorship Programs
- Where are they now spotlights
- Reunions for specific school to meet each other
- Alumni Chat Forum
- Engage with new students
- Featured interviews with Alumni

Entrepreneurship Program



52% of alumni reported that they would consider returning to Franklin Cummings for their new entrepreneurship program

People who responded no do not due to factors such as age, time, and financial constraints.

Secondary Research



PROCEDURE

- Preliminary secondary research was done on the Franklin Cummings Tech website to gain an understanding of programs, student life, and alumni relations.
- Research was also done on competitors to compare to Franklin Cummings.
- Research was done to discover barriers mainly trying to understand reasons why alumni might feel hesitant to come back to school.

BARRIERS

- Alumni who volunteer may feel that their efforts are **not recognized** or **appreciated** enough by the institution or their peers.
- If alumni opportunities remain **unchanged** or **lack variety**, they might lose interest or become bored. (Vaave, 2023)
- Alumni are less likely to be active if there are **no incentives** for them to gain in return.
- Alumni engagement is a **long-term** process. Constant **engagement** and **communication** is key to building a great alumni community. (Edersheim, 2023)



03

COMPETITIVE
ANALYSIS



COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

UMass Global:

- Offers two flexible online coursework options: instructor-led, session-based courses and competency-based, self-paced courses.
- The program is online and there is an option to be asynchronous
- Offers support services and job-searching for alumni.

University of Arizona:

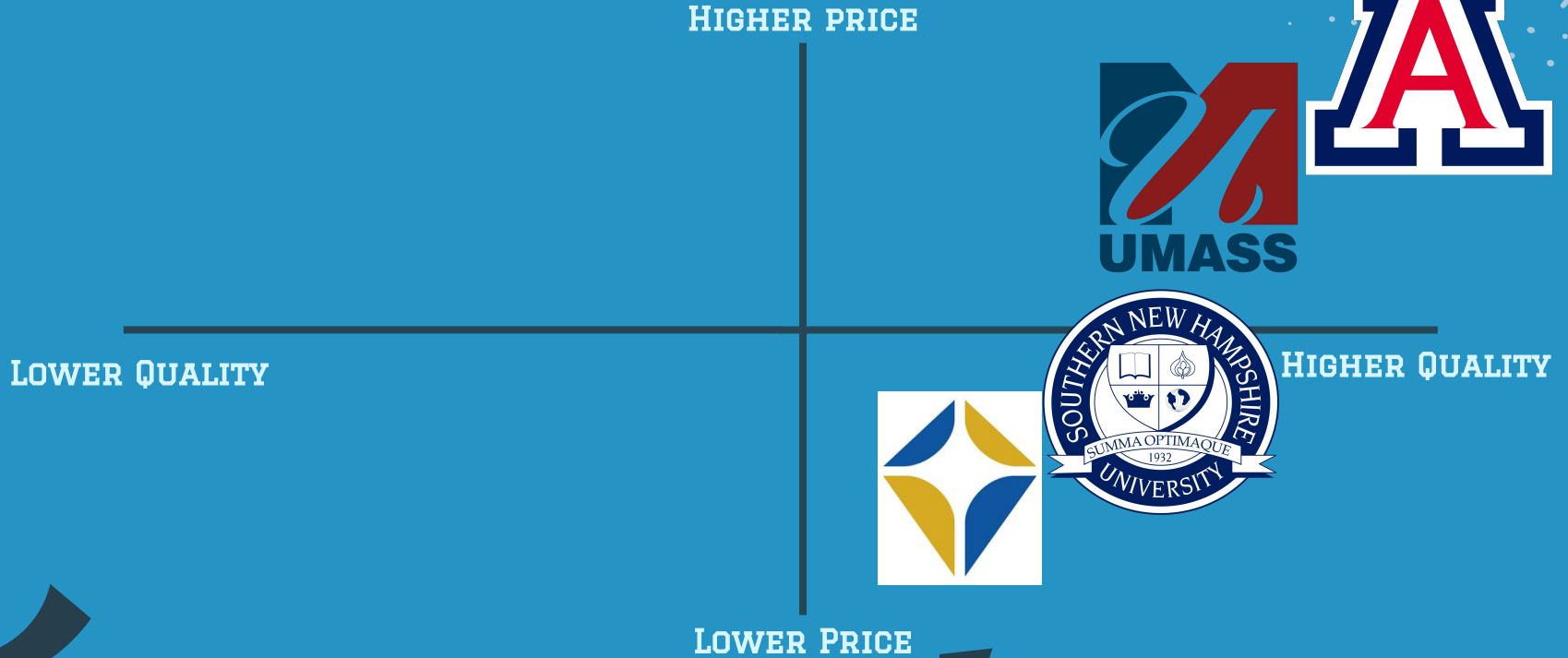
- Alumni and established entrepreneurs are vouching for this program.
- The program is online and asynchronous
- The program curriculum is 30 credits.
- Strong alumni portal with communication.

Southern New Hampshire University:

- The program is online, asynchronous, and option for in-person as well.
- Renowned for all programs being transfer-friendly. Built business around it.
- Offer support services and career advisors for current students and alumni.



PERCEPTUAL MAP



HIGHER PRICE



LOWER QUALITY

HIGHER QUALITY



LOWER PRICE

FIRM-LEVEL ANALYSIS

Core Competency: Flexible trade and technical education at an affordable cost. Specializes in hands-on learning in the technical fields but mostly offers Associates Degrees.

Competitor Comparison: Flexible class environments with prioritization on online asynchronous learning. Very strong alumni communities.



04

SWOT & SMART FRAMEWORKS



SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

Affordability, size, experiential education, catering to unique target population, have an existing alumni newsletter

WEAKNESSES

Lack of alumni engagement, no existing business program, lack of awareness about opportunities

OPPORTUNITIES

Provide alumni with events, resources, and networking opportunities, majority of alumni surveyed would be interested in returning for an entrepreneurship program

THREATS

Behavior could potentially not change, many other competing entrepreneurship programs in area

SMART GOAL

By the **end of July**, increase alumni newsletter engagement rates by at least **10%** and identify 50 people potentially interested in the entrepreneurship program by creating **opportunity-focused resources and events** to be specifically highlighted



SMART GOAL

SPECIFIC

Addresses specifically providing events and messaging centered around the *opportunities* (like this program) the school has to offer alumni

MEASURABLE

Can measure engagement through opening rates and event attendance; able to track number of interested alumni

ACHIEVABLE

Out of a newsletter readership of 2,500, only need 2% to demonstrate interest in program; 10% increase provides a lower benchmark to track initial progress

TIMELY

End-of-July deadline allows time for new practices to be implemented while giving some buffer time before the program is slated to start in September

RELEVANT

Gathering alumni insights will allow Franklin Cummings to better understand what alumni would want in terms of both engagement and the new business program



05

STRATEGIC &
TACTICAL
RECOMMENDATIONS



TACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS - ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

Product

- Personalized Content
- Use Visuals Wisely
- Consistent Sending Schedule
- Craft Attention-Grabbing Subject Lines
- Include Clear Call-to-Actions
- Encourage Interaction

Place

- Canva
- Mail Merge
- Constant Contact
- Mailchimp

Price

Newsletter Design:

- **Canva** (*Free*)
- **Constant Contact** (*Premium Plan \$80 month x depending on no. contacts*)
- **MailChimp** (*Premium Plan \$350 month x unlimited contacts*)

Email:

- Outlook, Gmail (*Free*)

Promotion

- **Highlight Social Proof** - Encourage engaged alumni to share their testimonials to inspire others.
- Utilize **social media** to enhance the campaign's outreach.
- Implement **marketing strategies** to create excitement e.g. Giveaways, Exclusive Sneak Peeks & Collaborations with industry experts or media partners.

TACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Feedback Mechanisms: Conduct **alumni interviews** or surveys at least **twice a year** to **collect feedback** from alumni regarding the content, layout, and overall experience of the newsletter. Utilize these recommendations to **enhance and customize upcoming newsletters** to align more closely with alumni preferences and interests.

Analytics and Measurement: Consistently **monitor essential metrics** like open rates, click-through rates, and engagement levels to **gauge newsletter effectiveness**. Utilize **analytics** insights to **refine content strategy**, enhance performance, and **consistently boost alumni engagement**.

Integration with Alumni Network: **Integrate the newsletter** with Franklin Cummings' **alumni network platform**, for **streamlined communication** and enhanced alumni engagement. This may involve direct links to alumni profiles, event registrations, and networking opportunities within the newsletter.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Segmentation - Enhance alumni engagement by **segmenting audience** based on engagement level, communication preferences, demographics, professional interests, and affinity groups, which could help foster stronger connections and increase overall engagement.

Tailored Content & Activities: Boost alumni engagement in newsletters by mixing **alumni success stories**, **career advice**, **event updates**, and **exclusive offers**, while **interactive features** like polls and surveys encourage participation, fostering a **sense of pride** and **community**.

Partnerships: Partnering with **technology companies**, **alumni associations**, **specialized networking platforms**, and **media partners** could significantly amplify Franklin Cummings' alumni engagement efforts by providing access to **innovative tools**, **valuable knowledge**, and **broader outreach opportunities**.



06

RCT



RANDOMIZED CONTROL TRIAL

Hypothesis

Implementing a digital newsletter based on **alumni feedback** will result in **higher levels of engagement** and satisfaction among recipients **compared to current newsletters.**

Target Audience

Franklin Cummings Alumni Network (2,500 sample size)

RANDOMIZED CONTROL TRIAL

Control & Interventions

Control: The standard alumni newsletter template and design sent out by Franklin Cummings IT to alumni monthly.

Intervention 1: An updated newsletter template & design that is based on our group's recommendations & existing marketing knowledge.

Intervention 2: An updated newsletter template and design that is based on alumni feedback from interviews & survey results.

RANDOMIZED CONTROL TRIAL

Procedure & Setting

- **Setting:** Email newsletter using Franklin Cummings IT Constant Contact database
- **Procedure:** Mail Merge

Measurable Outcomes between Intervention & Control

- Email Open Rates & Clicks.
- Responses to events, surveys, etc.
- Interest in the new business program or enrollment



RANDOMIZED CONTROL TRIAL

Barriers

- **Low Alumni Engagement:** Difficult to get alumni to open both control and interventions.
- **Setting:** Unclear as to whether or not Franklin Cummings have most up to date contact emails on file.





07

**MARKETING
MATERIALS**



CONTROL: ORIGINAL ALUM NEWSLETTER



Alumni Newsletter

Meet Tongzheng Deng, '18



Tong ('18 Automotive Management) shared the following story: "I came to America from China for a better education and a better job. It was harder than I expected. My English wasn't good, and I wasn't a great student. I was also really shy. I didn't talk to anyone. After a few other schools, I decided to try Benjamin Franklin and study automotive technology. If this school didn't work out for me, that would be it. I'd have to go back to China. Benjamin Franklin changed my life. I knew I'd learn a lot about cars. But what I really learned was communications. The professors were really friendly, really engaged. They brought me out of my shell. The other students also loved cars like me. I found I had a lot to say. We talked about cars ALL the time. The school also helped me prepare for our job fair, which was in the shop basement. I got my first job thanks to that job fair, at a Honda dealership. That job was the happiest time of my life. I discovered I could do more than fix cars. I could sell them too. My dealership also paid me to learn how to speak with customers. I sold 26 cars in my first month. Most of my clients were not Chinese. I'm ready to go back home to Beijing to be back with my family. I am so much more marketable now to get a great job."

Tell Your Story, Get an Alumni T-Shirt



You have an amazing story to share too, and you're probably eyeing the stylish t-shirts above that volunteers received at the alumni event on Saturday. You can earn one as well! Just fill out the form on our website: franklincummings.edu/success-story/share-your-story by August 15, and we'll send you your own shirt in just your size.

INTERVENTION 1 : RECENT NEWSLETTER

March 2024

Hello Matthew, Welcome to our Alumni Newsletter. Here's some news we hope you find helpful.

Admissions Counselor wanted!



If you refer someone who joins the team (or if you join the team), you'll receive a \$250 referral bonus.

[Click to learn more or apply](#)

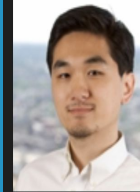
Psst! Want a Franklin Cummings Jacket?



If you refer someone to the college who enrolls in the fall, you get \$100 and a free jacket.

[Click for more info or to submit a referral](#)

Meet Roger Pao (new Business Management program chair)



Professor Pao wants to hear what you'd like to see in our new bachelor's entrepreneurship program.

[Email Prof. Pao](#)

EV Charger Installation Course



Ready to boost your career while helping the environment? (Course designed especially for electricians.)

[Click here to learn more and enroll](#)

Advised changes:

- Less Text
- More Images
- Clickable CTA's
- Personalized Messaging

INTERVENTION 2: NEWSLETTER BASED ON ALUMNI FEEDBACK

Newsletter Content

Alumni Newsletter: Week of April 8

What's on the Docket for This Week?

- [Upcoming Alumni Events](#)
- [A New Course Just for You!](#)
- [Opportunities Available to FT Alums in the Greater Boston Area](#)



Upcoming Alumni Events



Join your fellow Franklin Cummings Alums in celebrating your success Post Graduation! A little on what to expect:

Network with your favorite professors and employers on our [Industrial Advisory Board](#)


Hear the latest from President Alisha Francis about our [new campus in Nubian Square](#)

Gather with other alumni and celebrate together.

Spots limited

[Register Now](#)


***New* Business BS Course Available Now**



Our Business Management Bachelor's degree program teaches generalist business skills with a unique focus on specialized technical and trade skills. It is specially designed for those who want to move into management roles or to expand their managerial responsibilities.

[I'd Like to Learn More](#)

Job Opportunities for Boston Alums



Looking for Jobs within your field? Access our community on Handshake today to see what options are available to you

Business	Engineering	Comp Sci	Trade
Explore Now	Explore Now	Explore Now	Explore Now

[Join our Handshake Community](#)

Put your best Future Forward.

We Want to Hear From You

Have feedback on your experience with Franklin Cummings? Specific events you'd like to see us sponsor for our Alums? We want your feedback. Fill out the form below to help us better curate your experience as a Franklin Cummings Alumni.

[Help us Help You](#)

Impact Measurement:

- Open Rate
- Ind. CTA Button Clicks
- CTR
- BS Course Sign Ups
- Survey Responses

WHICH SUBJECT LINE IS MORE ENGAGING?



Exercise: Try and put yourself in the shoes of a recent Franklin Cummings Institute Graduate. What subject line would make you want to review the newsletter?

OPTION 1:

Alumni referral
programs / meet Prof Pao

OPTION 2:

Don't Miss Out! Relevant
Opportunities for You,
from Us.



**ANY
QUESTIONS?**



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