

SPEC CAMPAIGN

# LEAD WHAT'S NEXT

*A Recruiting Campaign for Senior Marketing & Communications Leaders*

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Client: NYU School of Professional Studies — Executive Master's in Marketing & Strategic Communications

Platforms: Facebook (Primary) | Instagram (Secondary) | Campaign Type: Graduate Program Recruiting

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## CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

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### Campaign at a Glance

Campaign Name: Lead What's Next

Client: NYU School of Professional Studies — Executive MS in Marketing & Strategic Communications (Spec / Conceptual Work)

Platforms: Facebook (Primary), Instagram (Secondary)

Campaign Type: Graduate Program Recruiting

Campaign Duration: 8 Weeks (aligned with application cycle)

Campaign Goal: Drive qualified applications from senior marketing and communications professionals

Primary Hashtag: #LeadWhatsNext

## THE OPPORTUNITY

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The NYU SPS Executive Master's in Marketing and Strategic Communications is a distinctive, rigorous program built for senior professionals — directors and VP-level leaders with 8+ years of experience — who are ready to move into C-Suite roles such as CMO or CCO. Launched with an inaugural cohort in 2024, the program is relatively new and not yet widely known among its ideal applicants.

This is the core challenge: the program's target audience — accomplished, time-pressed senior professionals — are unlikely to be actively searching for graduate programs. They need to be found where they already spend time, reached with messaging that speaks to their specific ambitions, and shown that this program was built for them specifically.

Facebook and Instagram together offer direct access to this audience through professional interest targeting, lookalike audiences, and format flexibility that supports both quick scroll-stopping content and deeper storytelling. This campaign is designed to do exactly that.

### Why This Program Deserves More Attention

It is one of the only executive master's programs in the U.S. specifically designed for senior marketing and communications leaders

The flexible online-plus-residency format is built for working executives — a major differentiator vs. traditional MBA programs

The cohort model creates a peer network of director/VP-level professionals — itself a career asset

NYU's New York City location and industry connections provide unparalleled access to real-world practitioners and companies

The program directly addresses the gap between marketing/comms expertise and C-Suite business fluency

## CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVES & KPIS

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## Primary Objectives

- Generate qualified application inquiries from senior marketing and communications professionals
- Build awareness of the program among director and VP-level audiences on Facebook and Instagram
- Drive traffic to the NYU SPS program landing page with a 2.5%+ CTR from social
- Create a warm retargeting audience of engaged professionals for future application cycles

## Key Performance Indicators

Metric	Facebook Target	Instagram Target
Link Clicks to Program Page	2.5% CTR	2.0% CTR
Inquiry Form Completions	150+ over 8 weeks	60+ over 8 weeks
Post Engagement Rate	+20% vs. NYU SPS baseline	+15% vs. NYU SPS baseline
Video Views (15 sec+)	80,000+	50,000+
Retargeting Audience Built	5,000+ warm leads	2,500+ warm leads
Cost Per Inquiry (Paid)	Under \$35	Under \$45

## TARGET AUDIENCE

Unlike most graduate program recruiting campaigns that target recent undergraduates or early-career professionals, this campaign speaks exclusively to accomplished senior practitioners. The messaging must respect their experience, speak to their specific ambitions, and never condescend.

<p><b>Primary: The Ambitious Director</b></p> <p>Age: 33-45</p> <p>Title: Marketing Director, Director of Communications, Sr. Brand Manager, VP of Marketing</p> <p>Experience: 8-15 years</p> <p>Pain point: Deep expertise in their function, but feeling overlooked for C-Suite roles due to limited business fluency or formal credentials</p> <p>Motivation: Wants the tools, credential, and network to make the leap to CMO/CCO</p> <p>Platform behavior: Active on Facebook for professional groups and news; Instagram for inspiration and industry peers</p>	<p><b>Secondary: The Industry Switcher</b></p> <p>Age: 38-52</p> <p>Title: VP of Marketing, Head of Communications, PR Director</p> <p>Experience: 12-20 years in one industry vertical</p> <p>Pain point: Highly specialized but wants to pivot industries or expand scope without starting over</p> <p>Motivation: Seeks a peer network and executive framework to reposition themselves</p> <p>Platform behavior: Heavy Facebook user; engaged with professional content on Instagram</p>
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## CAMPAIGN CONCEPT

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### The Big Idea: Lead What's Next

The best marketing and communications leaders in the world share one trait: they don't just keep pace with change — they lead it. "Lead What's Next" is a campaign built around the ambition that defines the program's ideal applicant: a senior professional who has mastered their current role and is ready to step into the room where the biggest decisions are made.

The campaign avoids the tired language of traditional graduate school marketing ("advance your career," "invest in your future") in favor of language that treats the target audience as the high achievers they already are. The message is not "you need this program" — it is "this program was built for people like you."

### Why This Concept Works for Recruiting

It speaks to identity, not insecurity — meeting senior professionals where they are, not implying they are lacking

It positions the program as selective and prestigious, which resonates with a VP-level audience

The cohort model becomes a selling point: 'Your next C-Suite network is already forming'

The NYU brand carries instant credibility — the campaign amplifies rather than explains it

The flexibility message (mostly online, two short residencies) directly addresses the #1 barrier: time

## PLATFORM STRATEGY

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### Facebook (Primary)

Facebook is the campaign's engine for reach, targeting precision, and lead generation. The 35-52 professional demographic that makes up the program's core audience remains highly active on Facebook, particularly in professional groups and via the News Feed. Facebook's ad targeting capabilities — including job title targeting, employer targeting, and custom/lookalike audiences — allow for highly precise reach to qualified prospects.

- Feed Posts: 3x/week — student spotlights, program explainer content, thought leadership from faculty, application deadline reminders
- Facebook Video: 1x/week — 60-90 second mini-documentaries featuring current students or alumni sharing their 'why'
- Facebook Events: Promote virtual info sessions and Q&As with program directors
- Paid: Lead gen ads targeting by job title (Director, VP, Head of), industry, education level, and interests in professional development
- Facebook Groups: Organic engagement in marketing professional communities (e.g., AMA groups, CMO Network communities)

### Instagram (Secondary)

Instagram extends the campaign's reach to a slightly younger segment of the target audience (early-to-mid directors, 30-38) and provides a visual storytelling platform for NYU's New York

City prestige. Instagram is used for brand-building and aspiration — it sells the lifestyle and community of the program, while Facebook handles the direct-response work.

- Feed Posts: 2x/week — visually striking quote graphics, NYU campus imagery, 'day in the life' student content
- Reels: 1-2x/week — short, high-energy clips: NYC residency week highlights, student testimonial snippets, 'What I Learned This Week' series
- Stories: 3-4x/week — polls ('What's holding you back from the C-Suite?'), countdown to application deadline, DM-to-learn-more CTAs
- Paid: Boosted Reels and Story ads targeting by profession, age, education, and behavior

## 8-WEEK CONTENT CALENDAR

The campaign runs over 8 weeks, structured to mirror a typical graduate program application cycle. The four phases move prospects from awareness through consideration to action.

Weeks	Phase	Facebook Focus	Instagram Focus	Key Hook
1-2	<b>Awareness</b>	Program overview video, 'Is this you?' targeting post, faculty intro content	NYU campus Reels, aspirational quote graphics, 'What does your next role look like?' Story poll	Paid reach campaign launches — job title and interest targeting
3-4	<b>Consideration</b>	Student spotlight video series ('Why I chose NYU'), program differentiator posts (flexibility, cohort, C-Suite focus)	Behind-the-scenes of NYC immersion week, 'A Week in the Program' Reel, student Q&A Stories	Retargeting pixel fires — warm audience begins building for lead gen
5-6	<b>Engagement</b>	Faculty thought leadership posts, virtual info session event promotion, 'Ask Me Anything' with program director	Application deadline countdown Stories, 'What's in the curriculum' carousel, alumni achievement posts	Lead gen ad campaign launches — inquiry form CTA
7-8	<b>Conversion</b>	Application deadline urgency posts, cohort 'seats remaining' social proof, final testimonial video	Final countdown Stories, 'Your cohort is waiting' Reel, DM campaign for late inquiries	Retargeting campaign hits all warm leads with direct apply CTA

## SAMPLE POST COPY

The following posts demonstrate range across platforms, tones, and funnel stages — from brand awareness to direct conversion.

## Post 1 — Facebook Feed Video Post (Week 1 Awareness Launch)

**Format: Facebook Video Post (60-90 sec) | Tone: Aspirational, Respectful | Phase: Awareness**

Caption:

You've spent a decade or more becoming exceptionally good at what you do.

You've led campaigns that moved the needle. You've built teams. You've earned the trust of rooms full of senior leaders.

And yet — somehow — the C-Suite still feels like the next step, not where you already are.

That gap has a name. And NYU's Executive Master's in Marketing and Strategic Communications was built to close it.

Designed exclusively for senior marketing and communications professionals (directors, VPs, and heads of function), this is not a program for people just starting out. It's for the leaders who are ready to lead what's next.

→ 30 credits. 5 semesters. Mostly online, with two short in-person residencies in New York City.

→ A cohort of your professional peers — directors and VPs from across industries.

→ A curriculum built around the C-Suite: business fluency, strategic communication, and executive leadership.

Applications are open. Your cohort is forming. → [Link to program page]

#LeadWhatsNext #NYUSPSMarketing #ExecutiveMasters #MarketingLeadership #CMO

Video concept: Opens on a quiet, confident montage of NYC skyline and professional settings. Cut to 3 brief student interviews (10-15 seconds each) answering: 'What made you apply?' Closes on NYU branding with program URL.

## Post 2 — Facebook Student Spotlight (Week 3 Consideration)

**Format: Facebook Feed Post + Photo | Tone: Authentic, Peer-to-Peer | Phase: Consideration**

Caption:

Meet [Student Name], VP of Brand Marketing at [Company].

After 14 years in consumer goods marketing, [Name] knew she had the experience to lead at the C-Suite level. What she felt she was missing was the business vocabulary — the ability to walk into a board room and speak as fluently about revenue drivers and financial strategy as she could about brand positioning and consumer insights.

'I wasn't looking for a traditional MBA. I'd spent my whole career in marketing and I didn't want to start from scratch. I wanted a program that met me where I was and took me further. NYU SPS did exactly that.'

The Executive Master's in Marketing and Strategic Communications is built for professionals who are already exceptional at what they do — and are ready to do more.

Learn more → [link in bio / program URL]

#LeadWhatsNext #NYUSPSMarketing #MarketingLeadership #ExecutiveMasters  
#WomenInMarketing

Photo: Professional headshot of student in a workplace setting. Clean, confident, not staged.

### Post 3 — Instagram Reel (Week 2 Consideration)

**Format: Instagram Reel (30-45 sec) | Tone: High-energy, Aspirational | Phase: Awareness/Consideration**

Caption:

One week in New York City. A cohort of marketing and communications leaders. And the start of something career-defining.

This is what the NYU SPS Executive Master's immersion week looks like — and why our students say it was the moment they knew this program was different.

Link in bio to learn more about the program designed for directors and VPs ready for the C-Suite.

#LeadWhatsNext #NYUSPS #ExecutiveMasters #MarketingLeaders #NYCLife

Reel concept: Fast-cut montage of NYC immersion week. Show: students arriving at NYU campus, collaborative workshop scenes, small-group discussions with faculty, evening networking dinner, exterior shots of Washington Square Park. Upbeat but professional instrumental track. Text overlays: 'Week 1.' / '30 marketing and communications leaders.' / 'One cohort.' / 'NYU Executive Master's in Marketing & Strategic Communications.' Final frame: program URL + 'Applications Open'

### Post 4 — Instagram Story Sequence (Week 6 Engagement)

**Format: Instagram Stories (4-slide sequence) | Tone: Direct, Urgent | Phase: Engagement**

Slide 1 — Poll:

Image: Bold NYU purple background, white text  
Text: 'Honest question: What's standing between you and the C-Suite?'  
Poll options: 'I need the credential' vs. 'I need the network'  
(Note: Both answers feed into the same follow-up — the program addresses both)

Slide 2 — Response:  
Text: 'Whichever you picked — this program was built for that.'  
Sub-text: 'The NYU Executive Master's gives you both: the credential from one of the world's top universities, and a cohort of director and VP-level peers who become your professional network for life.'

Slide 3 — Urgency:  
Text: 'Applications close [Date]. A new cohort forms once a year.'  
CTA: 'Swipe up / Tap link to learn more →'

Slide 4 — Info Session CTA:  
Text: 'Still have questions? Join our next virtual info session.'  
CTA: 'RSVP →' [link sticker to event registration]

## Post 5 — Facebook Lead Gen Ad (Week 7 Conversion)

**Format: Facebook Lead Gen Ad (single image) | Tone: Direct, Confident | Phase: Conversion**

Headline: The Executive Master's Built for Marketing & Communications Leaders

Body: You've earned your seat at the table. NYU SPS will help you claim it.

The Executive Master's in Marketing and Strategic Communications is a 30-credit, mostly-online program for directors and VPs ready to move into CMO and CCO roles.

Applications close [Date].

Primary Text (above image):  
Senior marketing and communications leaders: your program exists.  
30 credits. Mostly online. A cohort of your professional peers. NYU.

CTA Button: 'Learn More' → leads to landing page with inquiry form

Targeting: Job titles: Marketing Director, VP of Marketing, Director of Communications, Head of Brand, VP of Communications, Chief Marketing Officer | Education: Bachelor's degree or higher | Age: 32-52 | Interests: American Marketing Association, professional development, marketing strategy | Lookalike: 1% lookalike of program inquirers

## MESSAGING FRAMEWORK

All campaign content operates within a consistent messaging hierarchy to ensure cohesion across posts, ads, and platforms.

Message Level	Message	Where It Appears
<b>Overarching Theme</b>	Lead What's Next	All content, always
<b>Program Promise</b>	Built exclusively for senior marketing and communications professionals ready for the C-Suite	Awareness posts, video scripts, ad headlines
<b>Key Differentiator 1</b>	Flexible format: mostly online, two short NYC residencies	Consideration posts, FAQ Stories, ad body copy
<b>Key Differentiator 2</b>	Cohort model: your peers are directors and VPs	Student spotlights, video content, social proof posts
<b>Key Differentiator 3</b>	NYU credential + New York City access	Visual content, campus imagery, brand posts
<b>Urgency/CTA</b>	Applications open. Cohort forms once a year. Seats are limited.	Conversion posts, deadline reminders, lead gen ads

## PAID SOCIAL STRATEGY

Because the target audience is highly specific and not actively seeking graduate programs, paid social is essential — not optional — for this campaign. Organic posts alone will not reach a sufficient volume of qualified prospects. The paid strategy is designed in two phases.

### Phase 1 (Weeks 1-4): Awareness & Retargeting Pixel Build

- Objective: Reach — maximize impressions among qualified audiences
- Format: Video ads (60-90 sec student/alumni testimonials) and single-image awareness posts
- Targeting: Job title + interest targeting on Facebook; interest + behavioral targeting on Instagram
- Budget allocation: 60% Facebook, 40% Instagram
- Key action: All ad traffic pixelated to build warm retargeting audience for Phase 2

### Phase 2 (Weeks 5-8): Lead Generation & Conversion

- Objective: Lead generation — drive inquiry form completions
- Format: Facebook Lead Gen Ads (native form) and Instagram Story link ads
- Targeting: Retargeting all Phase 1 engagers + lookalike audiences of form completers
- Budget allocation: 70% Facebook Lead Gen, 30% Instagram Story ads
- Key optimization: A/B test two headline variants — credential-focused vs. network-focused — in Weeks 5-6, then scale the winner

## STRATEGIC RATIONALE

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### 1. Facebook as Primary (Not Secondary)

Most graduate programs default to Instagram as their primary platform. For this program's specific audience — senior professionals ages 35-52 — Facebook's targeting capabilities, professional user base, and native lead generation tools make it the stronger primary channel. Instagram serves brand-building and a younger director cohort, but Facebook is where qualified applications will come from.

### 2. Identity-First Messaging

Marketing to senior professionals requires a fundamentally different tone than marketing to early-career students. This campaign leads with identity recognition ('you've already earned this') rather than aspiration-from-below ('imagine your future self'). This approach respects the audience's experience and creates immediate relevance.

### 3. Two-Phase Paid Strategy

Running awareness and conversion campaigns simultaneously wastes budget on cold audiences that aren't ready to apply. The two-phase approach first builds a warm, qualified audience through awareness content, then hits that specific group with direct-response conversion ads — dramatically improving cost-per-inquiry.

### 4. Cohort Urgency as a Differentiator

Unlike undergraduate programs that accept rolling applications, the cohort model creates natural scarcity: this group forms once a year. This is a legitimate urgency driver (not manufactured pressure) and a genuine program differentiator that the campaign leans into throughout the conversion phase.

## A NOTE ON THIS WORK

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### Spec Campaign Disclosure

This is a conceptual campaign created as portfolio spec work. It is not affiliated with, endorsed by, commissioned by, or produced for New York University or NYU School of Professional Studies.

All strategy, copy, and campaign concepts are original work. Program details are sourced from publicly available information on the NYU SPS website. Student quotes in sample posts are fictional and for illustrative purposes only.