# Multiplying the Marketplace

Implementing an SEO and location-based marketing plan

△ × TKS

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## OBSTACLE

Due to its poor market targeting and search engine optimization, Acadium's service has a low student population. Only a fraction of university students in need of experience find their way onto the platform.

## SOLUTION

Users will be driven to the platform using two strategies:

1. Geofenced advertisements targeting specific campuses
2. SEO techniques to boost organic website traffic

## RESULT

Over a period of 6 months Acadium can bring an additional estimated 170,341 students onto the marketplace at a total cost of $937,500 with extra cash going towards bonus solutions. This translates to $5.52 per student acquisition.

# OBSTACLES

# WRONG MARKET

Currently, Acadium campaigns focus on targeting university graduates. For example, despite Facebook video ads producing 100% more clicks and 20-30% more conversions than other ad forms, the only Acadium posted within the past 3 months was aimed at recently graduating students. Acadium mainly markets to people with prior experience. By not actively focusing on inexperienced students, Acadium ignores a large potential market.

## 4
### MONTHS
Every user featured on the main site's *Success Stories* section during this period have prior work experience.

## 31%
### DROP OUT RATE
A substantial amount of students never finish, representing a market loss when pursuing graduates only.

## 18-24
### AVERAGE INTERN's AGE
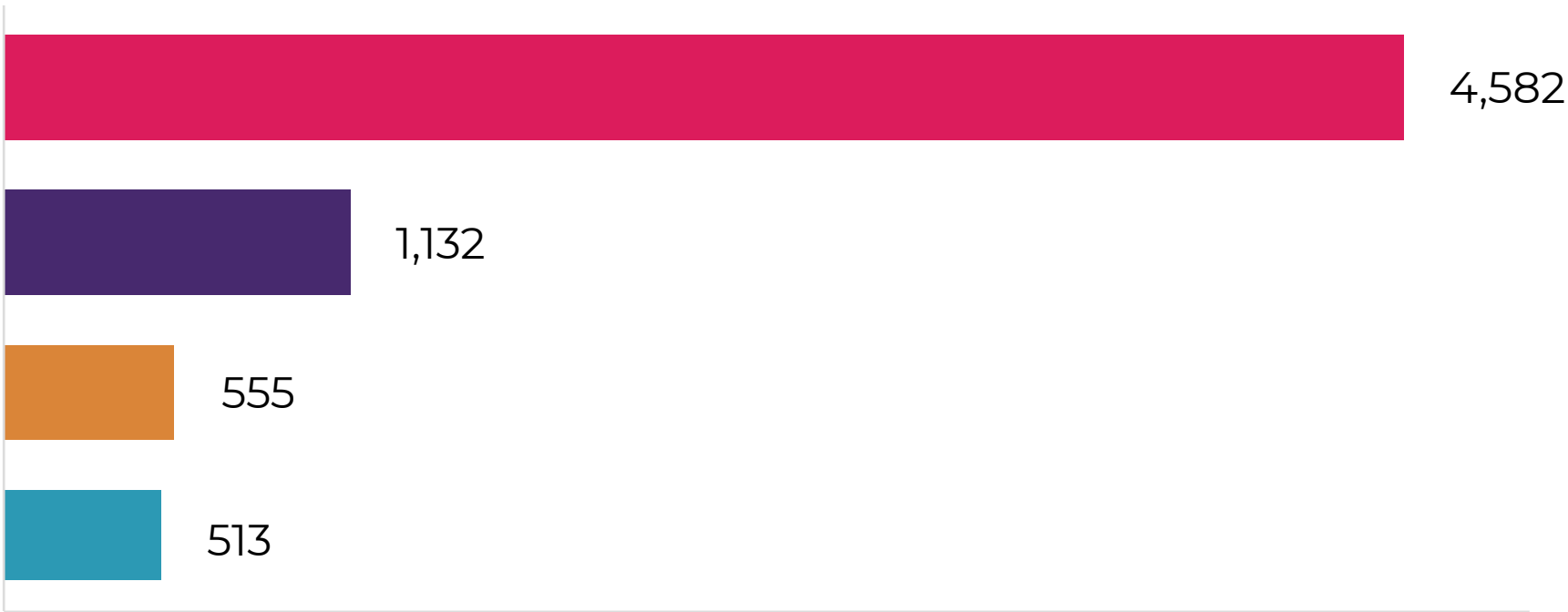Paid and unpaid internships are most likely to be within this age group, the majority of whom have not graduated.

## $29,900
### DEBT POST-GRAD
The average US student graduates with just under $30k dept making them less likely to consider unpaid positions.

# OVERALL CURRENT TRAFFIC

In October 2020 the Acadium site received around 7,000 organic visits. Extrapolating to 6 months, that provides 42,000 organic visitors. This is inadequate: to obtain 100,000 students under the current rate of 3.75 students in marketplace per 100 site visits, **2.67 million visitors** would be required over 6 months.

| Country | Value |
|---|---|
| United States | 4,582 |
| Canada | 1,132 |
| India | 555 |
| United Kingdom | 513 |

**Top-Visiting Countries**

- UNITED STATES
- CANADA
- INDIA
- UNITED KINGDOM

# PRIMARY WEBSITE OPTIMIZATION ISSUES

Site optimization refers to aspects related to the main website, from conversion rates to search engine ranking. Acadium's current website requires much improvement to be able to drive home traffic.

## LOW VISIBILITY

Acadium's website has a weak Search Engine Results Pages (SERP) presence, rarely appearing on the first Google search page. This means it is missing out on the majority of organic traffic, as 92% of Google traffic goes to websites on the first page.

## LACK OF CLARITY

Acadium's website in overall unclear in its intent. While it does have an FAQ section, it is hidden away at the bottom of another page. 48.9% of people say that it is very important for a website to quickly answer their questions.

## UNOPTIMIZED KEYWORDS

Acadium ranks highly for only a handful of keywords, most of which are inferior in terms of search volume metrics. Because of this, the website receives very little in organic traffic.

# SOLUTIONS

# SOLUTION BREAKDOWN

**FINDING THE RIGHT MARKET**

Widening Acadium's scope to include university students alongside recent graduates will increase the potential user base tenfold.

**SEO IMPROVEMENTS**

A company is an association or collection of individuals, whether natural persons, legal persons,.

**TARGETED ADVERTISING**

Geofencing can be used to selectively advertise to university students. Strategically posting our advertisement at key times will increase CTR dramatically.

**WEBSITE IMPROVEMENTS**

Improving Acadium's website will will help improve clarity and make it more user friendly. Help to increase organic traffic as well as increasing the sign - up to-marketplace rate.
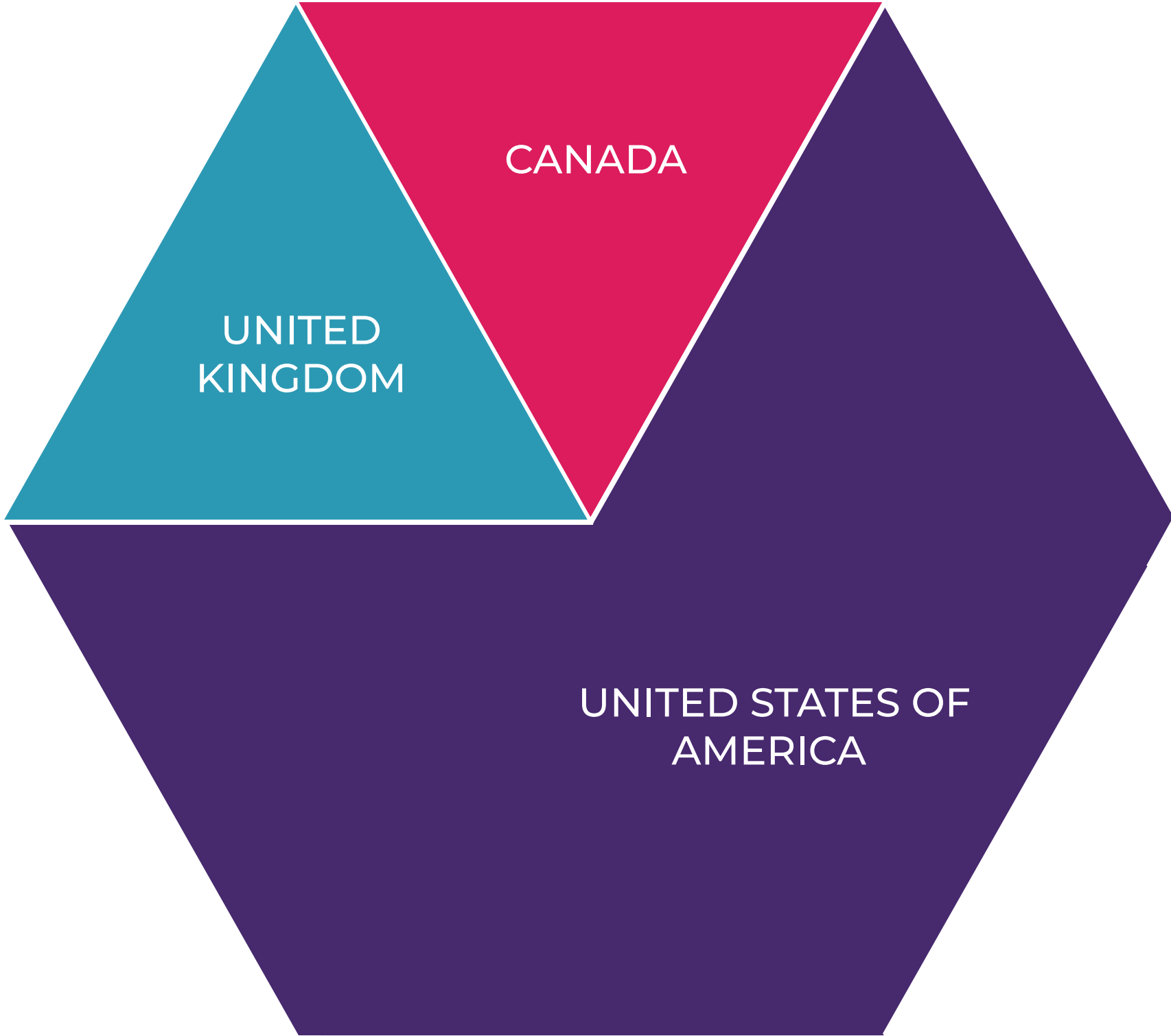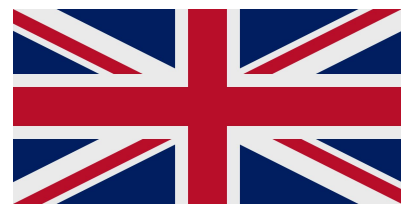
THE RIGHT MARKET

# FINDING THE RIGHT MARKET

By targeting the right market Acadium can increases their customer retention, their market to sign-up rate and their sign-up to market rate

CANADA

UNITED KINGDOM

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
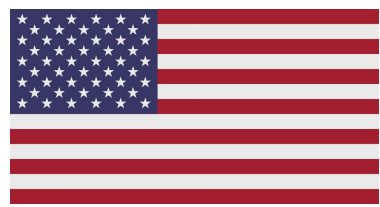
14.0 million university students in the United States

2.4 million university students in the United Kingdom

2.3 million university students in Canada
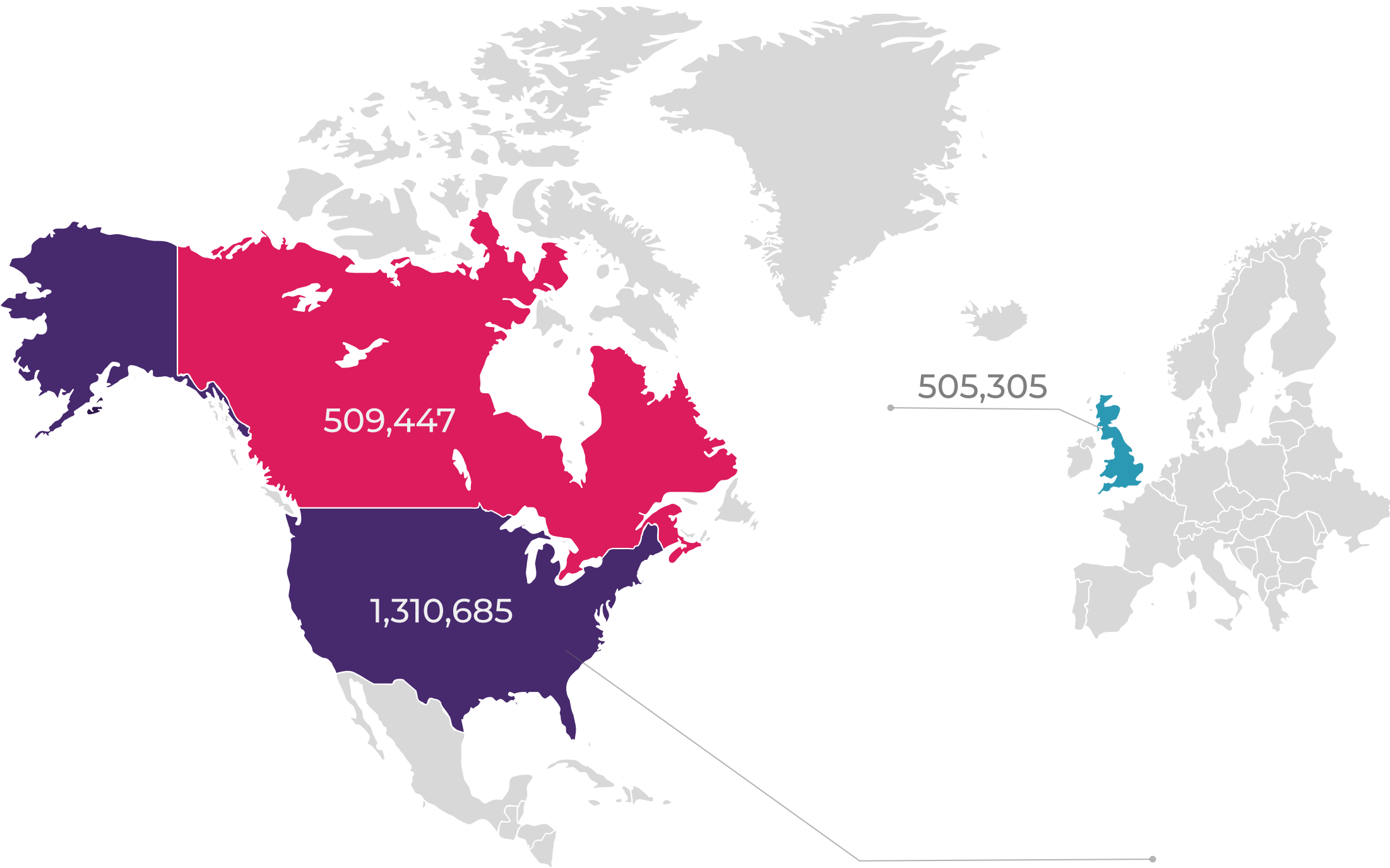
## WHY TARGET THESE PEOPLE?

Because university students are not yet trying to find jobs urgently to pay off their debt, currently enrolled students are the perfect demographic to target for apprenticeships. They lie within the age range most likely to take on paid and unpaid internships.

# TARGETED LOCATIONS

We have established Acadium's target market consists of all students attending post-secondary institutions. This group is easy to locate because the majority is very concentrated around physical campuses. Selecting a set of specific universities from the UK, US and Canada, the total target market size by country is as follows:

509,447    CANADA

1,310,685    UNITED STATES

505,305    UNITED KINGDOM
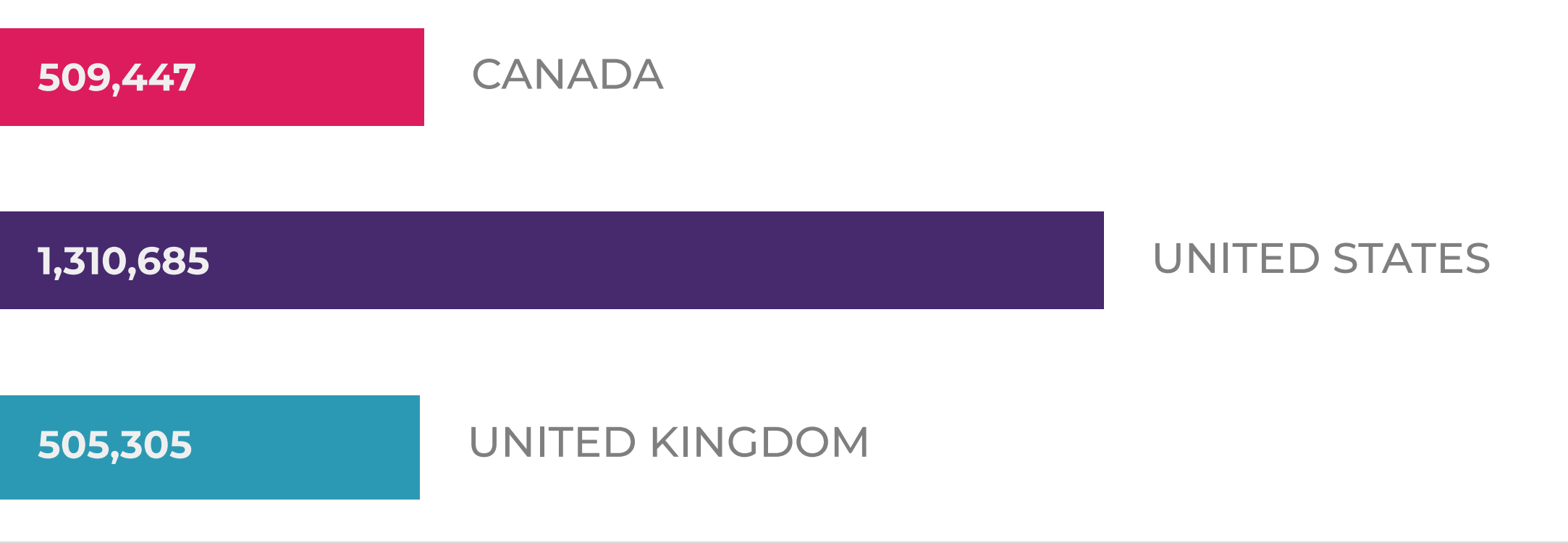
**2,325,437** target students
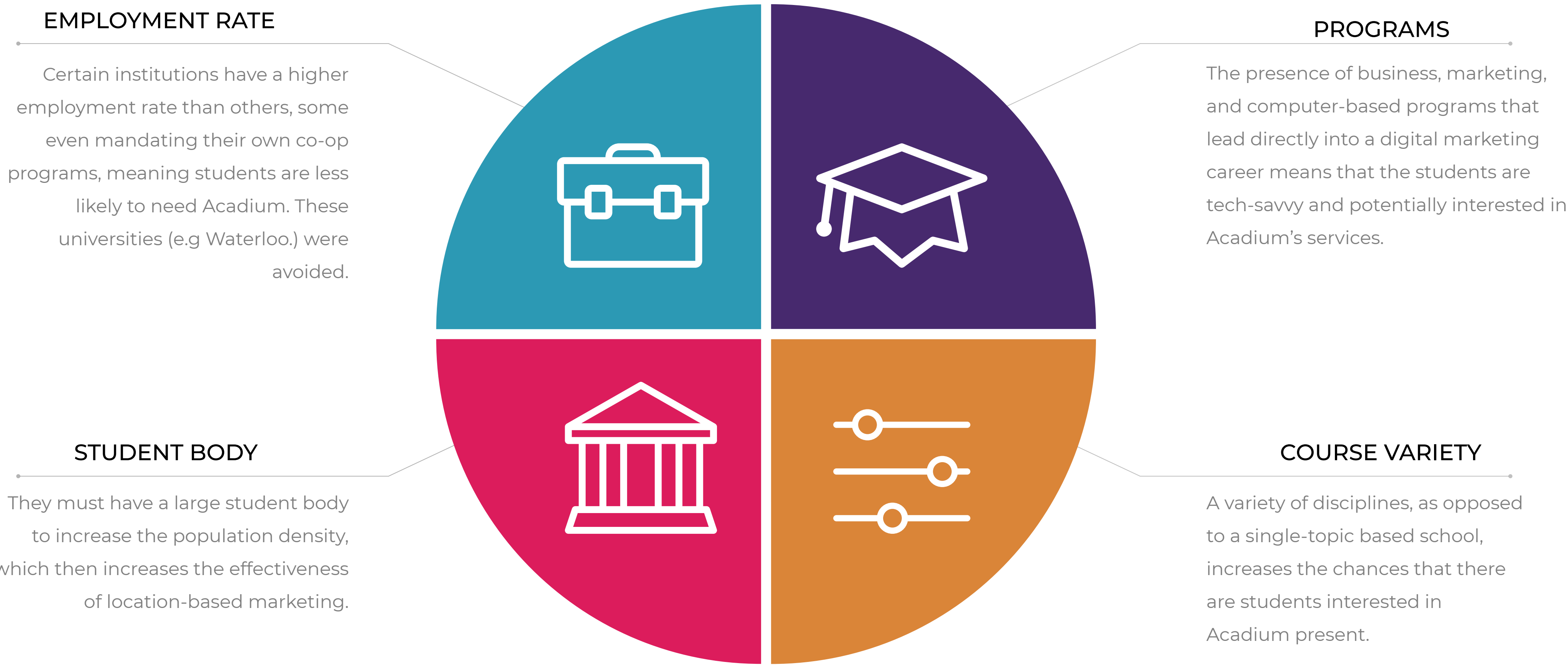


505,305

509,447

1,310,685

EXAMPLE: TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Chosen because of its large enrollment numbers and population size. Also offers many different marketing and computer-based programs.

# UNIVERSITY SELECTION CRITERIA

To allow for location-based targeting, a list of university campuses is needed. The following criteria help narrow down the potential possibilities.

## EMPLOYMENT RATE

Certain institutions have a higher employment rate than others, some even mandating their own co-op programs, meaning students are less likely to need Acadium. These universities (e.g Waterloo.) were avoided.

## PROGRAMS

The presence of business, marketing, and computer-based programs that lead directly into a digital marketing career means that the students are tech-savvy and potentially interested in Acadium's services.

## STUDENT BODY

They must have a large student body to increase the population density, which then increases the effectiveness of location-based marketing.

## COURSE VARIETY

A variety of disciplines, as opposed to a single-topic based school, increases the chances that there are students interested in Acadium present.

# CHOOSING THE RIGHT TIME TO ADVERTISE

There are specific times of year at which it is best to advertise. These would be times when students are most stressed and are considering dropping out, or when students are out job-hunting. Consider the coming winter semester as an example:

### LATE JANUARY

January, being the start of a new semester, means it is the month with the highest amount of students present, as none have dropped out. In addition, with the coming exam results, it is important to plant the idea of alternative pathways into the students' minds. **This period is analogous to the fall semester September.**

### EARLY MARCH

March is when most universities let their students out on break. As many students will be returning home during this period, they are more likely to consider dropping out, hence the importance of advertising Acadium before the break begins. **This is analogous to the fall semester Thanksgiving season**, which according to a former dropout interviewed is the prime time for quitting.

### MID TO LATE MAY

May is the winter semester exam season, **much as how December is for the fall semester**. Again, it is important to advertise during this season, as students will be seeking other routes towards their desired careers if they feel that they cannot handle the academic path.
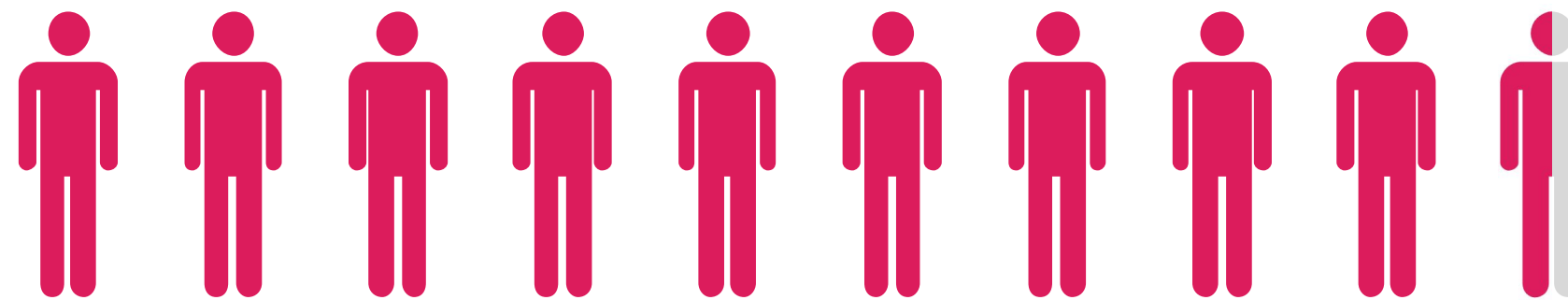
# GEOFENCING

# WHAT IS GEOFENCING?

Geofencing is the distribution of mobile ads within a specific geographic range and time frame. This is achieved using locational technologies such as Wifi, GPS, RFID, and Bluetooth.

**92%**

Geofencing is compatible with 92% of smartphones. Once a user has been tagged they will receive ads for the next 15-30 days.

**95%**

95% of university students own a smartphone, and the average consumer spends 5 hours a day on a mobile device.

**71%**

71% of consumers prefer personalized ads, such as through locational and occupational personalization.

# ADVERTISEMENT PIPELINE

Geofencing focuses on the first two steps of the pipeline: impressions and CTR. More impressions and higher CTR are acquired in a shorter period of time by targeting locations with high densities of the desired demographic. In Acadium's case, this means fencing the physical campuses listed previously.

### IMPRESSIONS

Impressions are the number of views the Acadium ad gets.
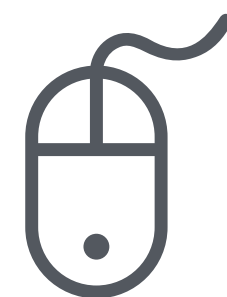
### CLICK-THROUGH RATE

CTR is what percent of people click on the Acadium ad after seeing it.

### SIGN-UP CONVERSION RATE

This is the percentage of people who viewed the website and actually signed up.

### MARKETPLACE CONVERSION RATE

This is the percentage of people that signed up and were accepted to enter the marketplace.

### NEW USERS

After multiplying the number of impressions by the CTR and conversion rates, you get the total number of new users on the Acadium marketplace.

# GEOFENCING RESULTS

The US Army targeted 13 colleges in a 3 month recruitment campaign and got 2.5 million impressions through the display ad network.

Geofencing does not come at any extra cost above regular ads. Most advertisement platforms, such as Google, Instagram, and Facebook, provide the option to activate location-based targeting.
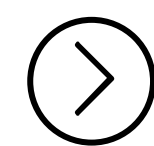
## DOUBLES AVERAGE CTR

Geofencing strategies have historically doubled average CTR across all industries. On the Google display ad network, the education industry has an average CTR of 0.53%, which geofencing can bring up to 1.06%. Combined with further ad design and A/B testing choices (see case studies), a **1.50%** is expected.
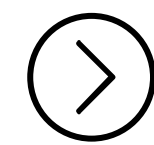
## CAMPAIGN IMPRESSIONS

For a the average geofenced campaign, the cost per thousand impressions (CPM) is $4. Therefore, using a budget of $900,000 we can expect **225 million** impressions, distributed across the 2.3 million targeted students.
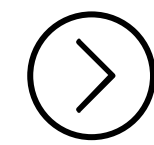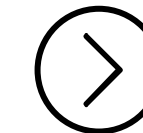
## PREDICTED VISITORS

Given the expected CTR of 1.50%, this campaign will provide Acadium with **3.38 million** visitors within 6 months.

# CASE STUDY - INSTITUTIONS

A collection of case studies from different universities.



## > MCMURRY UNIVERSITY

By targeting specifically the geographic areas of Texan high schools, McMurry University was able to boost its mobile display network ad CTR to **1.35%**.

## > NAZARENE UNIVERSITY

By targeting high schools, churches, malls, and community colleges in the area, Northwest Nazarene University boosted its CTR by **1033%** compared to non-geofencing methods (estimated 5.47% compared to 0.53% industry average).

## > ACADIUM APPLICATIONS

According to consulted marketing specialist **Stori Daniels**, sub-demographics within the student demographic for which heavily targeted ads could be delivered include:

- The students who want to get ahead of their peers.
- The students who want to drop out but are afraid they will lack experience.
- The students looking for more financially viable ways to learn.

# TROY SANDIGE

troy@findtroy.com

> " Geofencing is a new way to campaign your ads, but as long as you're targeting the right people, you're golden. "

## SERVICES PROVIDED

Lead Generation · Digital Marketing · Public Speaking · Marketing Strategy · Brand Marketing · Content Strategy · Marketing Consulting · Social Media Marketing · Growth Marketing · Brand Consulting

WEBSITE IMPROVEMENTS

# UNDERSTANDING AND IMPROVING LINK AUTHORITY

Improving link authority is a matter of increasing the quality and quantity of external sites linking to the Acadium site. This can be accomplished in several ways, such as hiring bloggers or increasing site shareability. We recommend either working with an agency to handle all SEO-related tasks, or taking the following 3 steps to improve it independently.

## AVERAGE SERP RANK

On average, Acadium holds rank 40: it shows up last on the fourth page of Google search results.

## TRAFFIC AND RANK

92% of all the search engine traffic on Google goes to the first page of results. Of that 92%, the first result of the first page gets 43.32%.

## LOW ACADIUM TRAFFIC

Acadium's low average position means that it will regularly get under 0.5% of total traffic.

## LINK AUTHORITY IMPORTANCE

According to SEO specialists, link authority is the third most important factor in search optimization.

## BLOG POSTS

Either posting on a more frequent basis or paying external blogs for content increases the amount of links Acadium's site has, and the amount of links that point towards it. Both metrics are factors in a site's SERP.

## LANDING PAGES

Having more landing pages increases both the chances of a user randomly finding one, and the chances that the site's keywords match the user's search.

## SHAREABILITY

Allow users to easily share webpages on social media. Each post containing a link to Acadium increases link authority. At the moment, signed-in users have no easy way to access the blog content from the main dashboard.
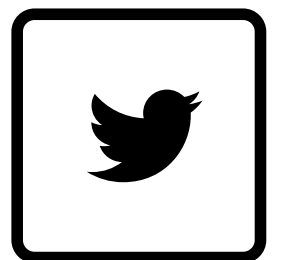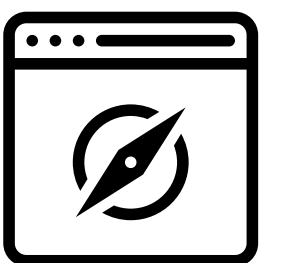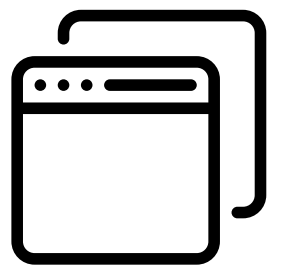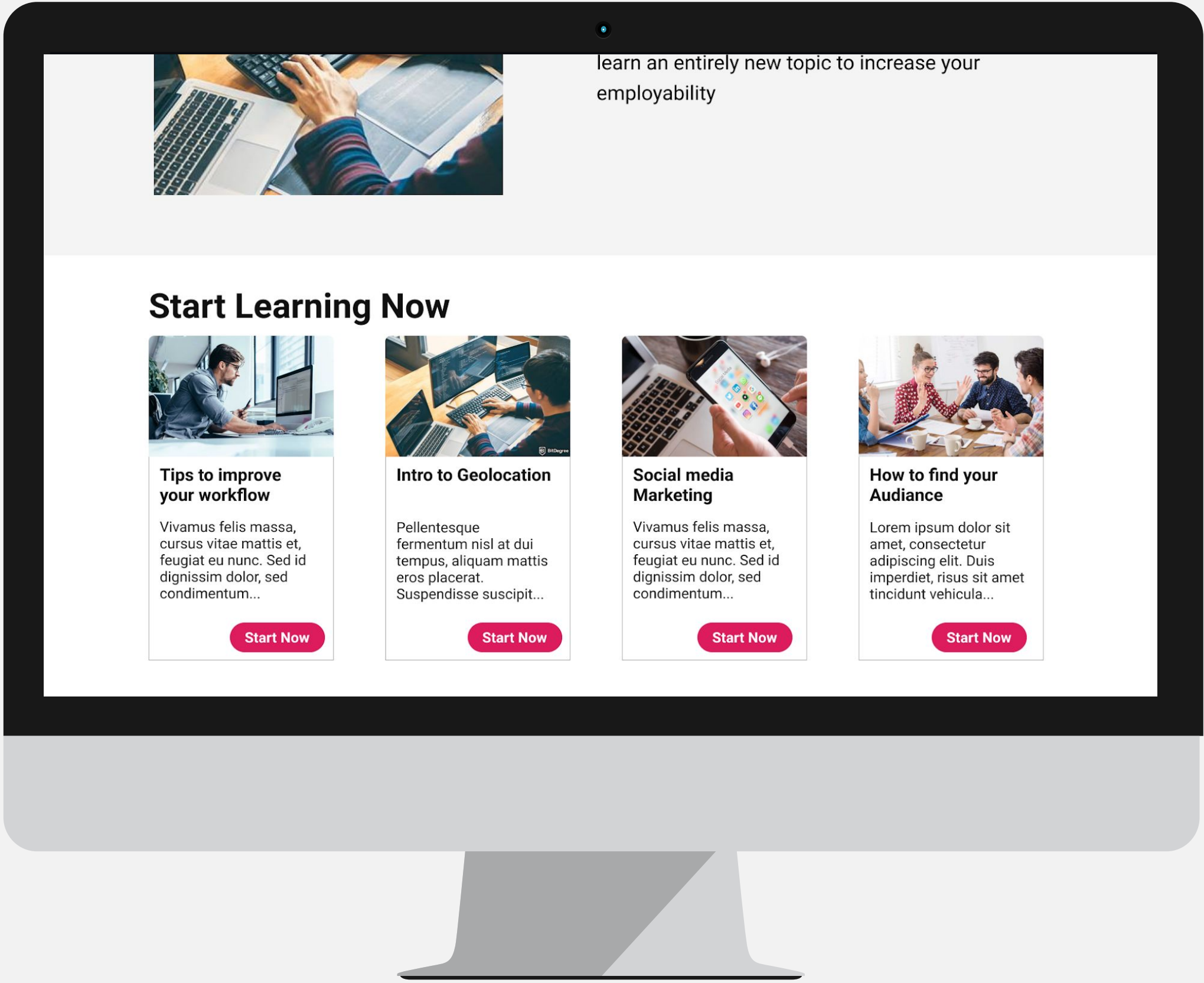
# INCREASE NUMBER OF LANDING PAGES

## 55%

### ORGANIC TRAFFIC INCREASE

Going to 15-20 landing pages from none at all, websites see on average this level of growth in organic traffic.

Currently, Acadium has no specialized landing pages that show up in a Google search. Landing pages offer very specific and repeated call to actions to incite the user to perform a particular task. Furthermore, a front-page redesign can grow Acadium's 15% conversion rate to the education industry's standard rate of **18%**. For a visualisation of what a proper landing page with a strong and repeated CTA looks like, to the left is an example mockup.

**EXAMPLE LAYOUTS**

learn an entirely new topic to increase your employability

## Start Learning Now

### Tips to improve your workflow
Vivamus felis massa, cursus vitae mattis et, feugiat eu nunc. Sed id dignissim dolor, sed condimentum...

Start Now

### Intro to Geolocation
Pellentesque fermentum nisl at dui tempus, aliquam mattis eros placerat. Suspendisse suscipit...

Start Now

### Social media Marketing
Vivamus felis massa, cursus vitae mattis et, feugiat eu nunc. Sed id dignissim dolor, sed condimentum...

Start Now

### How to find your Audiance
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Duis imperdiet, risus sit amet tincidunt vehicula...

Start Now

# INCREASED BLOG CONTENT TO PROMOTE ORGANIC TRAFFIC

## 50%

### ORGANIC TRAFFIC INCREASE

Going from around a blog post every second day to daily blog posts will net Acadium this result.

At the moment, Acadium writes around 17 blogs per month. As recommended by marketing specialist **Stori Daniels**, this should be bumped up to daily blog posts, which have been proven to boost traffic by 50%, in addition to helping with link building and casting a wider keyword net.

# CASE STUDY - EXTREAMIST

A news company that increased their organic traffic by 100 in just seven weeks.

**Case Study**
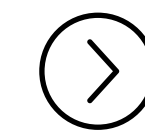


## 20 ADDITIONAL LINKS

By creating content, Extreamist produced 20 additional links for one of their webpages.

## 7.5 WEEKS

After just seven and a half weeks, their page moved from SERP rank nine to rank five. This constitutes, based on SERP averages, an increase from 2.6% of all traffic to 6.1% of all traffic.

## 100% INCREASE IN TRAFFIC

An effect that would be even more pronounced on Acadium given its low rank. Rising from its <0.5% of total traffic at 40th rank to front page can not just double Acadium's traffic share, but multiply it hundredfold.

SEO

# KEYWORD OPTIMIZATION TO PROMOTE ORGANIC TRAFFIC

## USE OF KEYWORDS

Keywords are words that appear within meta tags, site descriptions, image tags, post headings and tags, and so on. Search engines look for keyword presence when determining which sites to show to a user.

## SUGGESTED KEYWORDS

Using some keywords with lower traffic (within 1-10K) ensures lower competition, and using many keywords with higher traffic ensures that a smaller slice of the pie is still a substantial amount.

## IMPROVING KEYWORDS

Hiring an SEO freelancer or firm for the average cost of **$15,000-$20,000** to implement keywords more rigorously into the website is a painless way to boost organic traffic flow.

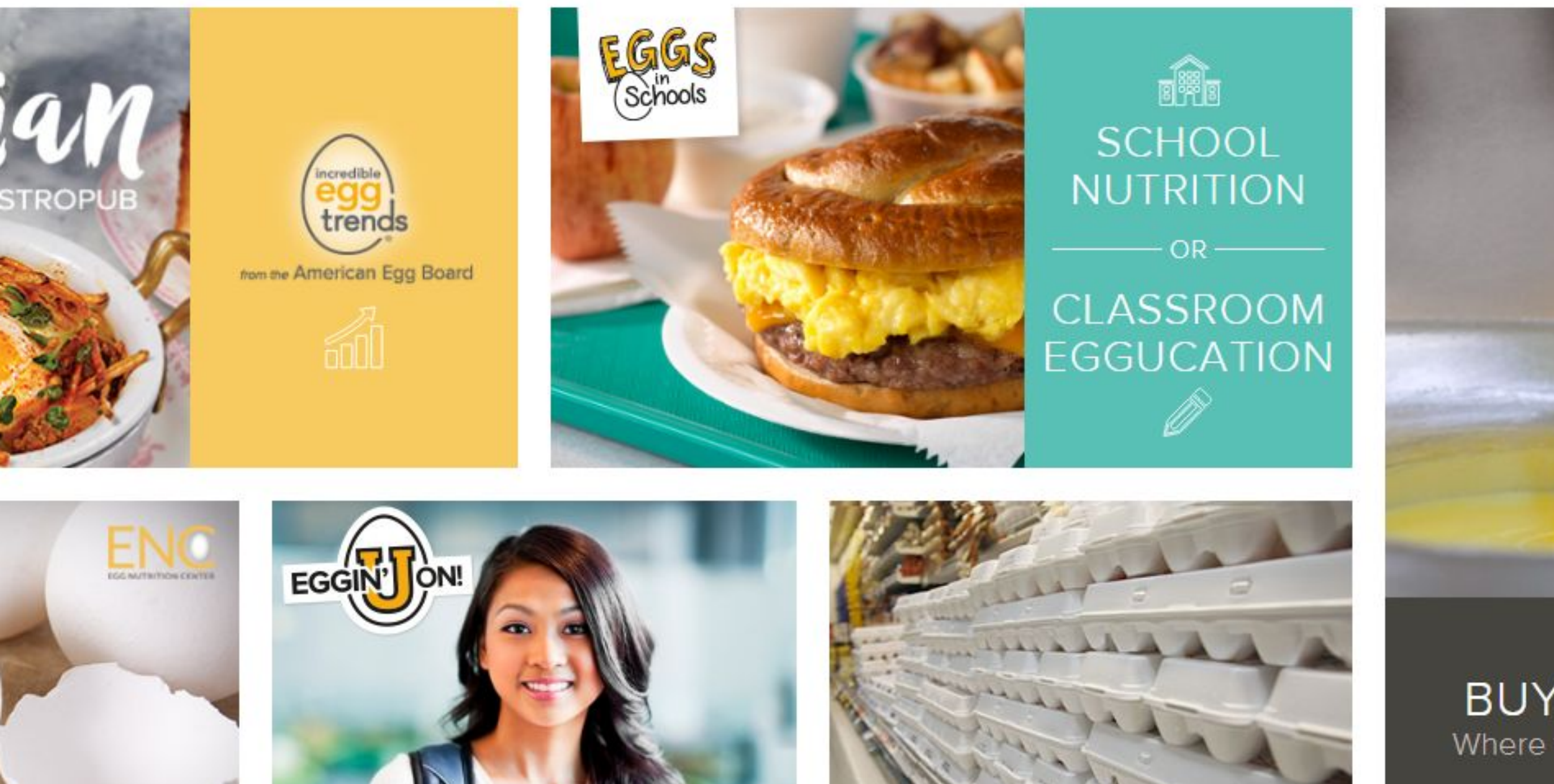| KEYWORD | MONTHLY SEARCH VOLUME (US) | COMPETITION | JUSTIFICATION |
|---|---|---|---|
| SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING | 40,500 | HIGH | MARKETING, HIGH SEARCH VOLUME |
| 4P MARKETING | 27,100 | HIGH | MARKETING, HIGH SEARCH VOLUME |
| ONLINE TEACHING | 1,600 | MEDIUM | LEARNING, LOWER COMPETITION |
| EMAIL MARKETING | 2,400 | MEDIUM | MARKETING, LOWER COMPETITION |
| JOBS ONLINE | 165,000 | MEDIUM | LOWER COMPETITION, HIGH SEARCH VOLUME |
| AFFILIATE MARKETING | 49,500 | HIGH | MARKETING, HIGH SEARCH VOLUME |

# CASE STUDY - AMERICAN EGG BOARD

By revamping their website with keywords to make it more search-friendly, AEB was able to increase their mobile traffic flow by 87%.
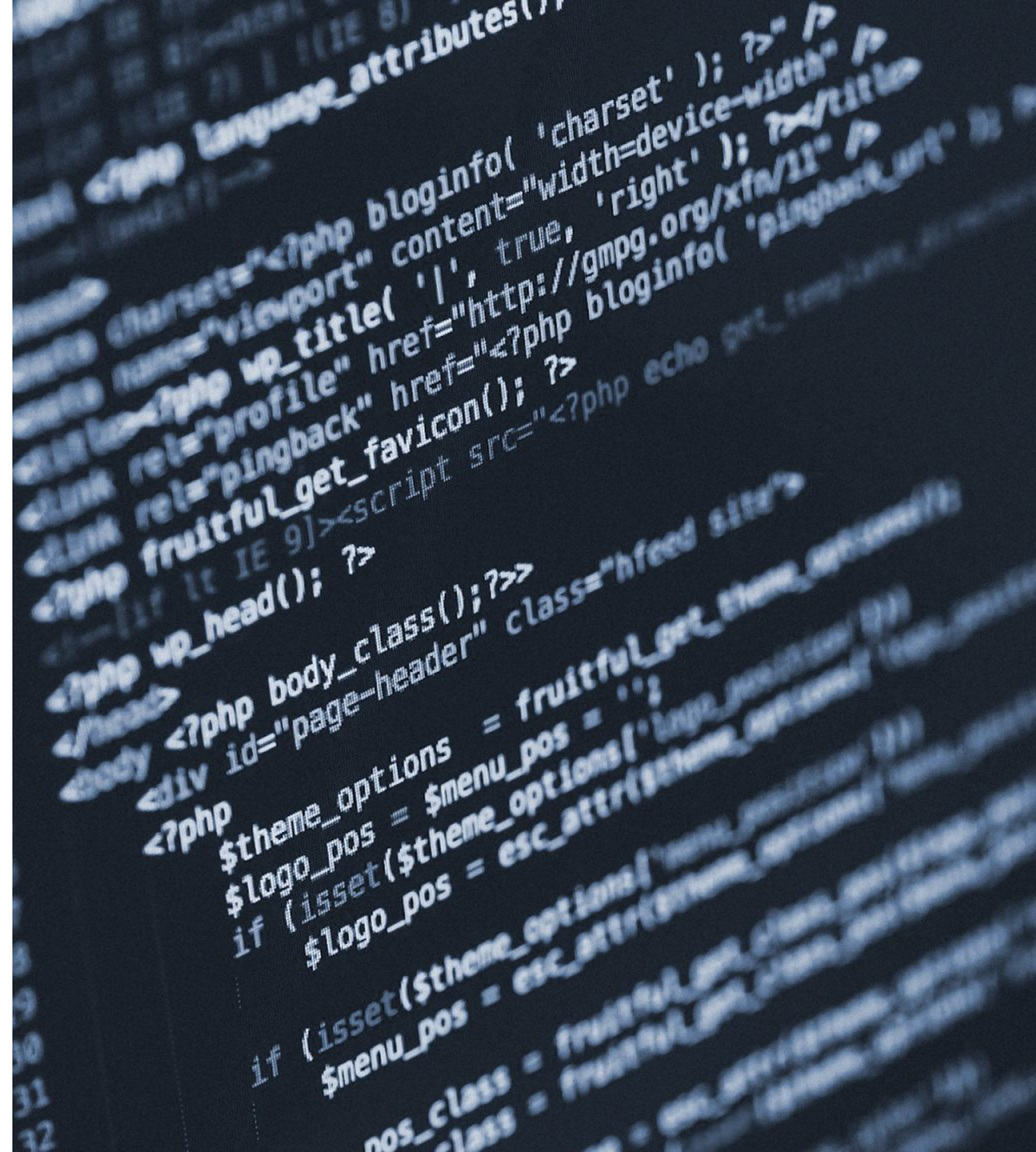
**Case Study**



### KEYWORD LENGTH
AEB targeted specifically medium-tail keywords (those of 3-4 keywords in length) to avoid too much competition while still using searchable terms.

### LOW-END SEARCH VOLUME
Again, with keywords of 1-10K searches per month, AEB strikes the balance between searchability and competitiveness.

### TRAFFIC INCREASE
Overall, AEB saw an **87%** increase in mobile traffic, a 22% increase in website traffic and a 32% increase in website sharing.

# OPTIMIZING META DESCRIPTIONS

Meta descriptions are often treated as an afterthought. However, statistics show that they matter: **62.9%** of respondents said that the description of a link had the most significant impact on their decision to click.

Meta tags are part of the site content embedded within the HTML. They work with keywords to increase search ranking and to provide clarity to the searcher.

# CASE STUDY - META TAGS

By optimizing their meta tags, these companies were able increase their traffic.



### INCREASED IMPRESSIONS
By optimizing meta titles and descriptions, Elise Dopson was able increase search traffic to her site by 54%, her impressions by 57%, and her average position by 10 ranks.

### OPTIMIZED SEARCHABILITY
Lonely Planet was able to reach the first rank for "travel inspiration"by optimizing their meta tags.

### FIRST RANK SERP
Similarly, HelloFresh was able to reach the first position for "recipe box subscription" by optimizing their meta tags.

By increasing Google ranking positions, traffic is gained.

# IMPLEMENTING SEO

There are three options to consider when implementing SEO: hiring a new employee or freelancer, doing it in-house, or working with a marketing firm. While enough information has been compiled here so that the DIY approach is viable, working with a specialized firm is suggested for ease of mind.

## BLUEHAT MARKETING

BlueHat Marketing is the top SEO and marketing firm in Montreal and Toronto. As well as being official Google partners, they were ranked as the number 1 SEO company by Clutch They offer a variety of services that encompass anything Acadium will require for SEO and website design.

Their average pricing is around $2,500 per month, or $15,000 for 6 months. Pricing for freelance SEO consultation from other third parties or individuals is similar, averaging at around $2,000 per month.

## $2500 PER MONTH

## SALVAGED WEBSITE - CASE STUDY

BlueHat Marketing migrated a site and its French counterpart to a WordPress e-commerce store. Now, it helps provide SEO services, including seasonal blogging content. The team corrected 2,000 erroneous redirects that another vendor failed to setup correctly, thus salvaging the link building campaign.
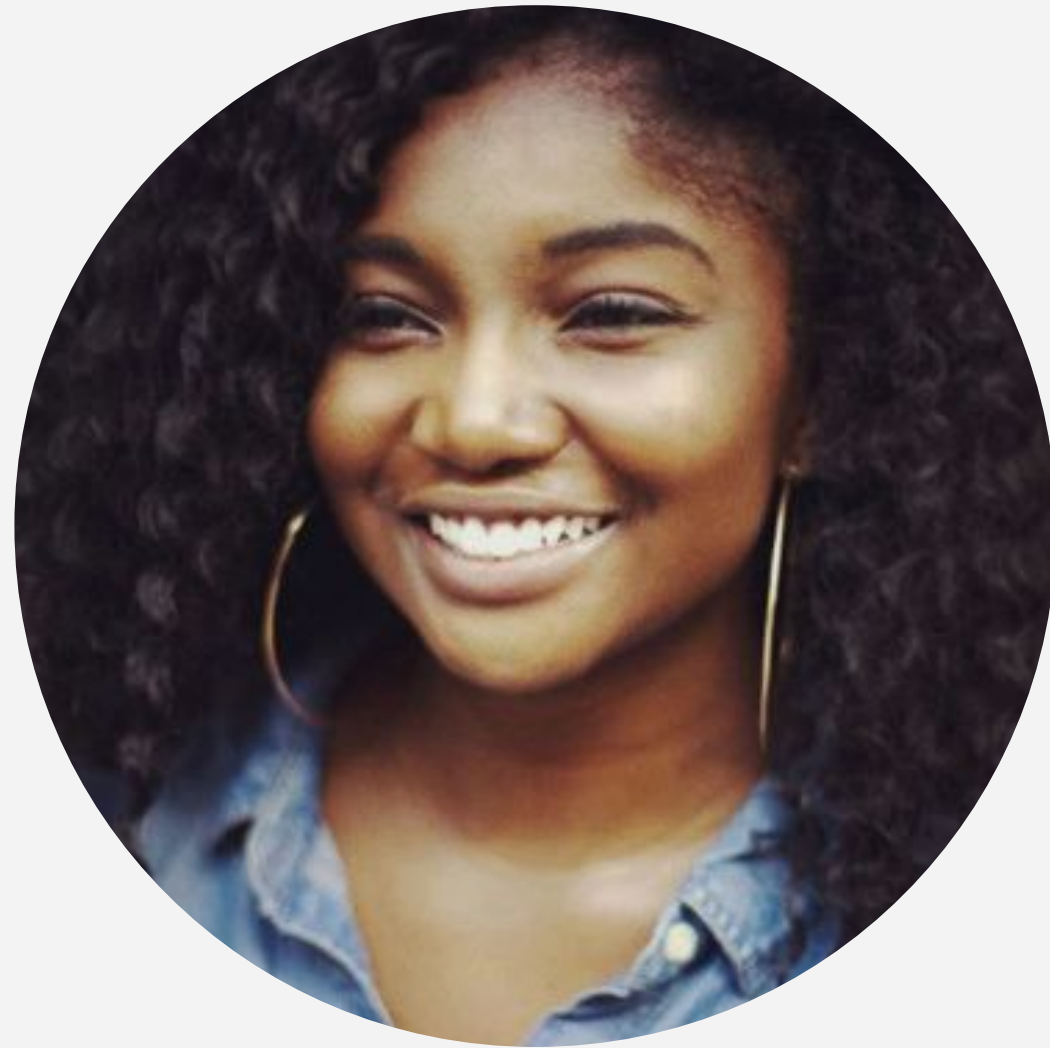
## $10,000 to $49,000

## Feb. 2017 - Present

"BlueHat Marketing has kept our company alive. The team is true to their word and maintains high standards."

### DINA ARDIZZONI

# STORI DANIEL

stori@storidaniel.com

> *SEO is great for growth, and keywords and backlinks are the way to go for optimization.*

### SERVICES PROVIDED

Digital Marketing · Brand analyst · Expertise in Copywriting and Social Community Management

# EXPECTED RESULTS

# SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Combining the results from all suggestions to calculate expected growth.

## GEOFENCING

Generating 225 million impressions at a cost of $4 CPM, 3.38 million new visitors are expected.
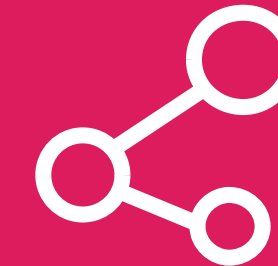
## IMPROVED WEBSITE

By creating 15-20 new landing pages, organic traffic is expected to grow by 55%, resulting in 10,800 visitors per month.

## BLOG TRAFFIC

By increasing blog posts to daily, organic traffic is expected to increase by another 50%, bringing the result up to 16,000 visitors per month.

## SEO OPTIMIZATION

By optimizing the website's SEO score, Acadium is projected to increase its average position to 6th in 75 out of 300 keywords, netting an additional 52k visitors / month.

# FINAL RESULTS

Combining geofencing and organic traffic growth, 3.78 million new visitors are expected within the next 6 months. At the industry's 18% conversion rate Acadium's 25%* marketplace rate, 170,341 new marketplace students is projected.

- 151,875
- 14,071
- 4,395

New users coming from each strategy over 6 months

■ GEOFENCING  ■ SEO OPTIMIZATION

■ IMPROVED WEBSITE + BLOG TRAFFIC

## 170,341 Students

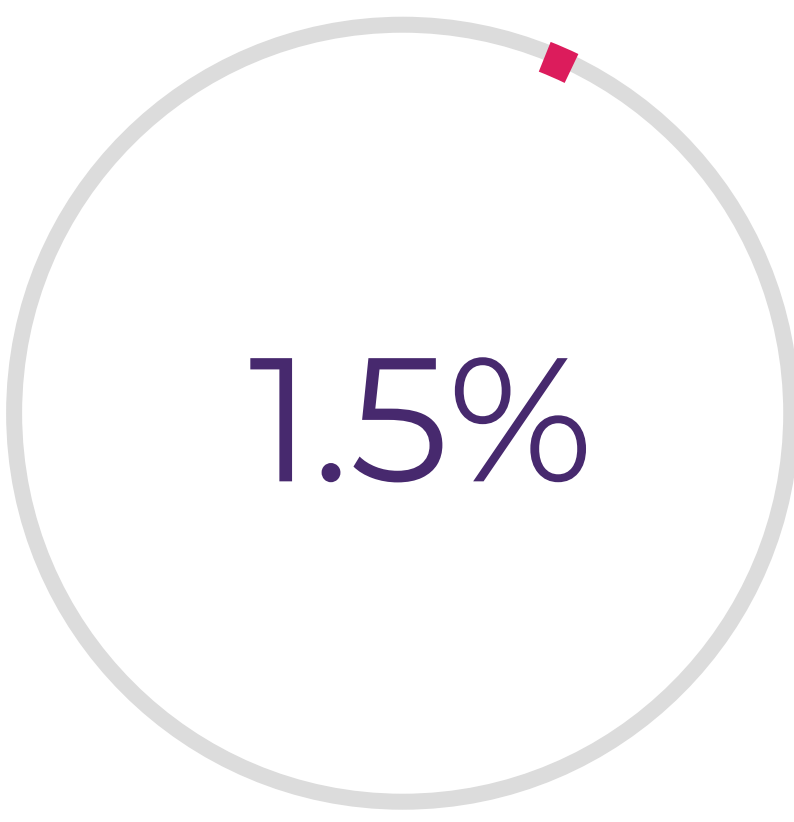*3.75 out of every 15 signups enter the marketplace, making 25%.

# COST BREAKDOWN

## 90%

### Geofencing

To get 225 million impressions at $4 CPM, $900,000 is required.

## 2.25%

### Full Time Writer

The average cost for a full time writer for 6 months is $22,500. This person is to be tasked with the daily blog content.

## 1.5%

### SEO Agency

The cost for an SEO agency for 6 months is around $15,000. They are to handle all SEO-related matters.

# BONUS SUGGESTIONS

We saved you $62,500. Here are some ways to spend that extra cash.

## SOCIAL MEDIA ADVISOR

RIght now, Acadiums advertises on the right platforms for the university demographic: Instagram, Tiktok, and Facebook. However, the ads need to be curated to the right sub-demographics, which requires expertise.

## GIVEAWAYS

Either 60 giveaways of $1,000, or a single massive giveaway of $60,000 strictly towards a student's higher education needs. This strategy allows Acadium to massively boost social media following, as well as marketplace membership (by making "take an apprenticeship within the next 3 months" a condition, for example).

## FOLLOW-UP CALLS

According to advice coming from both consulted specialists, people find follow-up calls more endearing and thoughtful than follow-up emails. Part of the additional budget can be put towards this as a strategy.

GIVEAWAYS

SOCIAL MEDIA ADVISOR

FOLLOW-UP CALLS
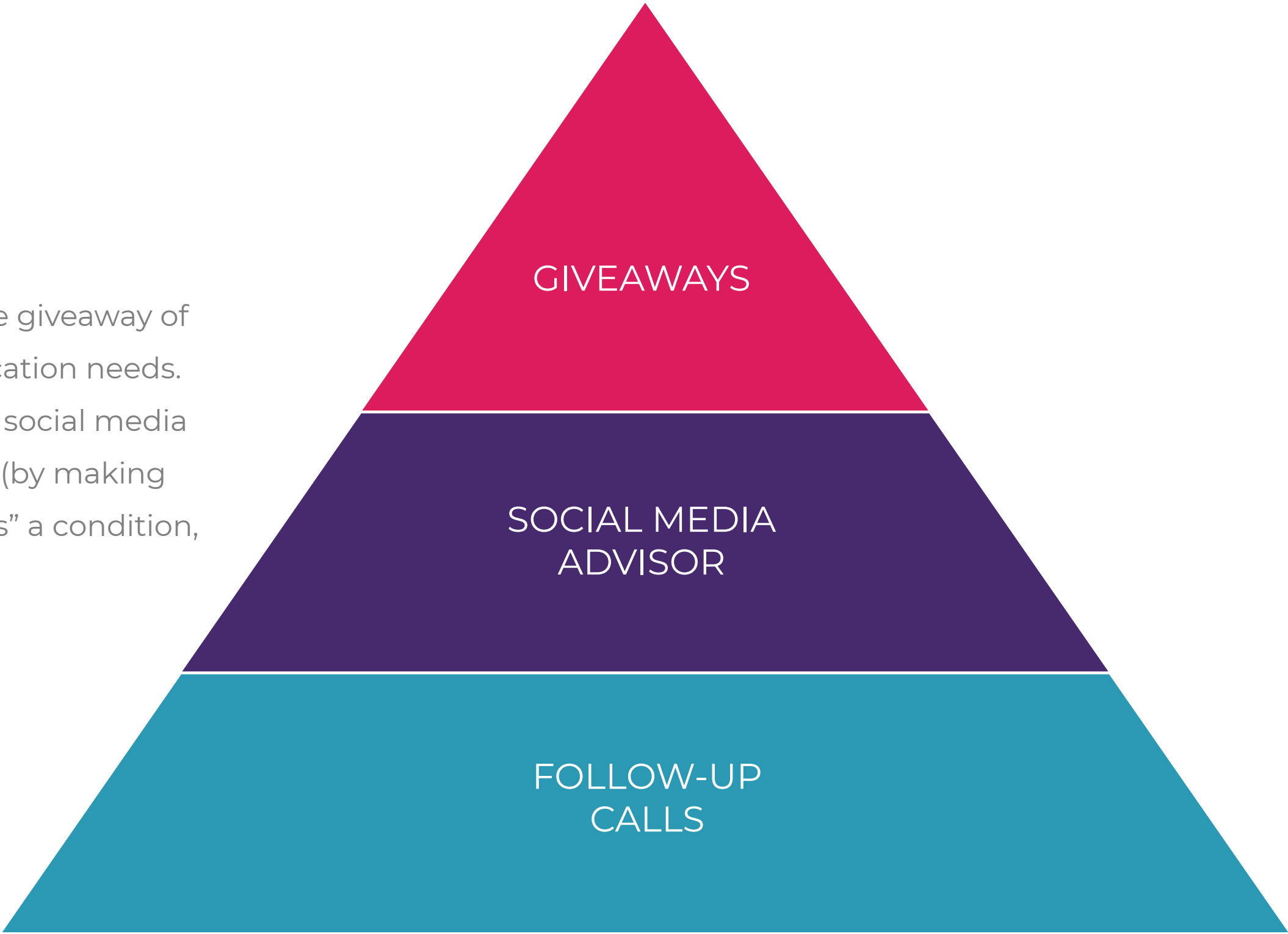
# ON A MORE PERSONAL NOTE

Thank you for providing us the opportunity to contribute to Acadium and the free educational resources that it stands for. Through this experience, we have all learned an incredible amount about digital marketing strategies, campaign optimization, and teamwork, skill sets that will serve us well into the future.

We hope our recommendation is impactful to Acadium's future direction, and that the platform grows to help more students find the experience they need to succeed. One day, when we too need mentors to learn industry skills, we would love to see an Acadium ad pop up on our devices.

Once again, thank you!

**THOMAS LAWRENCE**      **ANTHONY EROUKOV**      **ROBERT MACWHA**      **TAM AN LE QUANG**      **JONATHAN RETHISH**