



The difference is
making one.



case studies

YMCA Buffalo Niagara. Sharing the power of community.

For a number of years, The Martin Group has partnered with YMCA Buffalo Niagara to make the most of the organization's longstanding legacy, deep community roots, and brand recognition. Amid competition for membership dollars, the organization initially engaged with our team to enhance membership and highlight key moments of growth and opportunity—going beyond perceptions of just gym and swim.

In the years and campaigns to follow, our work has highlighted the many physical, emotional, and community benefits for members. Refreshed on a yearly basis, the Y's campaigns have met a variety of goals,

from boosting camp enrollment to driving membership growth to announcing the opening of the new Lockport Family YMCA, with content equal parts inspiring and informative.

Throughout every campaign, we've comprehensively brought the Y's mission and message to life across tactics including billboards, radio, digital advertising, social media, direct mail, and more. By investing conservatively in media spend, taking advantage of added value opportunities to reach the entire community, and driving engagement and membership, we achieved a 31% increase in visits year over year in 2019.

Among our most treasured achievements, The Martin Group was awarded the Stewart Partnership Award, which recognizes an organization that's provided invaluable service to the Y.

WHY THE Y?
To be better, together.

YMCABN.ORG

JOIN IN SEPTEMBER & SAVE

the **Y** YMCA

Write a comment...

YMCABN
December 18 at 9:14am · 🌐

Only 2 weeks until 2018! Join any branch on January 1st and we'll waive the join fee. Join January 2-31st and pay half the join fee. #ForMoreThanAWorkout #ForABetterUs http://bit.ly/2nPHCz0

WHY THE Y?
For a fresh start to 2018.

Like Comment Share

4

DISCOVER THE Y IN YOU
BECOME A MEMBER TODAY

THE SUPERMOM

YMCABN.ORG

the **Y** YMCA

the **Y** YMCA

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

YMCA BUFFALO NIAGARA

DISCOVER THE Y IN YOU

Discover your best here. In laughing at what was scary yesterday. Find what's inside at this year's summer camp. Enroll to discover the Y in you.

THE BUFFALO NEWS

DISCOVER THE Y IN YOU
Experience for free on Try-It Tuesdays. [LEARN MORE](#)

A NEIGHBORHOOD, NOT OPEN SPACE, IN CANALSIDE'S FUTURE

Know It Now

1. Death of man shot by Buffalo police after traffic stop is ruled a homicide, family attorney says. >
2. Estate sale at privately owned castle neighbors >

"Orphan Black" star, Haveli Mandel... >

YOUR NEW HOME FOR FAMILY

The new Lockport Family YMCA is more than just a gym or a place to hop in the pool. It's a home that's open to our entire community, where you and your family are welcome for fitness, wellness, enrichment, friendship, and so much more.

Learn more at LockportYMCA.com

Sign up now and save.

the **Y** YMCA

COMMUNITY
FITNESS
HEALTH
FRIENDSHIP

YOUR NEW HOME FOR FAMILY

the **Y** YMCA

THE NEW LOCKPORT FAMILY YMCA
OPENING OCTOBER 2018

LockportYMCA.com

WHY THE Y?
To always reach higher.

YMCABN.ORG

JOIN IN SEPTEMBER & SAVE

the **Y** YMCA

THE CONTENDER

DISCOVER THE Y IN YOU

Discover your best here.
In the decision to go beyond what comes easy. In the stretch beyond the comfort zone. And in the moment you choose to look deeper. Find what's inside. Become a member today. Visit ymcabuffaloniagara.com.

the **Y** YMCA

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

THE CONTENDER

DISCOVER THE Y IN YOU

Discover your best here.
In the decision to go beyond what comes easy. In the stretch beyond the comfort zone. And in the moment you choose to look deeper. Find what's inside. Become a member today. Visit ymcabuffaloniagara.com.

the **Y** YMCA

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

THE VOLUNTEER

DISCOVER THE Y IN YOU

Discover your best here.
In the decision to forge your own path. In the spirit of working for something bigger than yourself. And in the moment you choose to look closer. Find what's inside. Become a member today. Visit ymcabuffaloniagara.com.

the **Y** YMCA

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

YMCA results

2019 RESULTS

6

independent campaigns

24%

above April Healthy Kids Day
event attendance goal

2018 RESULTS

20%

above yearly
membership goal

11%

above yearly membership
goal for January

31%

increase in page visits

53%

above fall membership
campaign national goals

First Merchants Bank.

Strengthening a bank's acquisition strategy with SEM.

Challenge

First Merchants Bank came to The Martin Group for assistance with their paid search efforts in personal banking. Based on 2021 data, their previous search engine marketing initiatives had a high average cost per acquisition (CPA) for new checking account customers. Our team's task was to increase the number of incremental personal checking accounts opened online during the campaign period. Our secondary objective was to drive down the average cost to acquire new online personal checking accounts from SEM, based on 2021 benchmarks.

Additionally, our team was tasked with achieving four tertiary objectives. One, driving new primary checking customer acquisitions by utilizing intent-based messaging and highlighting brand differentiators to in-market shoppers. Two, maintaining a low CPA in a highly competitive industry within First Merchants Bank's five key markets. Three, creating a strong pipeline of new,

qualified leads to add to the bank's inbound primary relationship acquisition sales funnel. And four, meeting and exceeding audience performance benchmark data through continued campaign and landing page optimization.

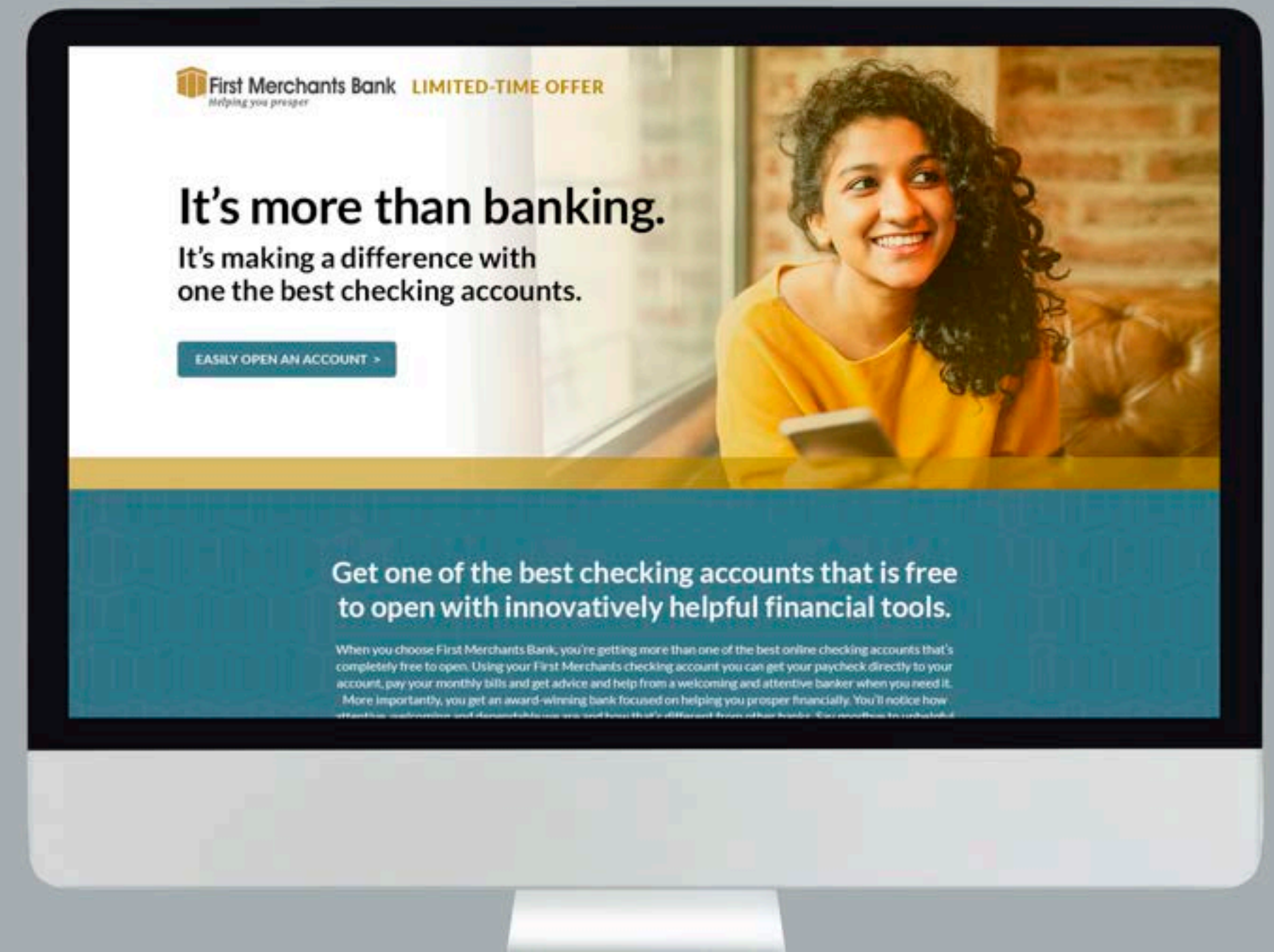
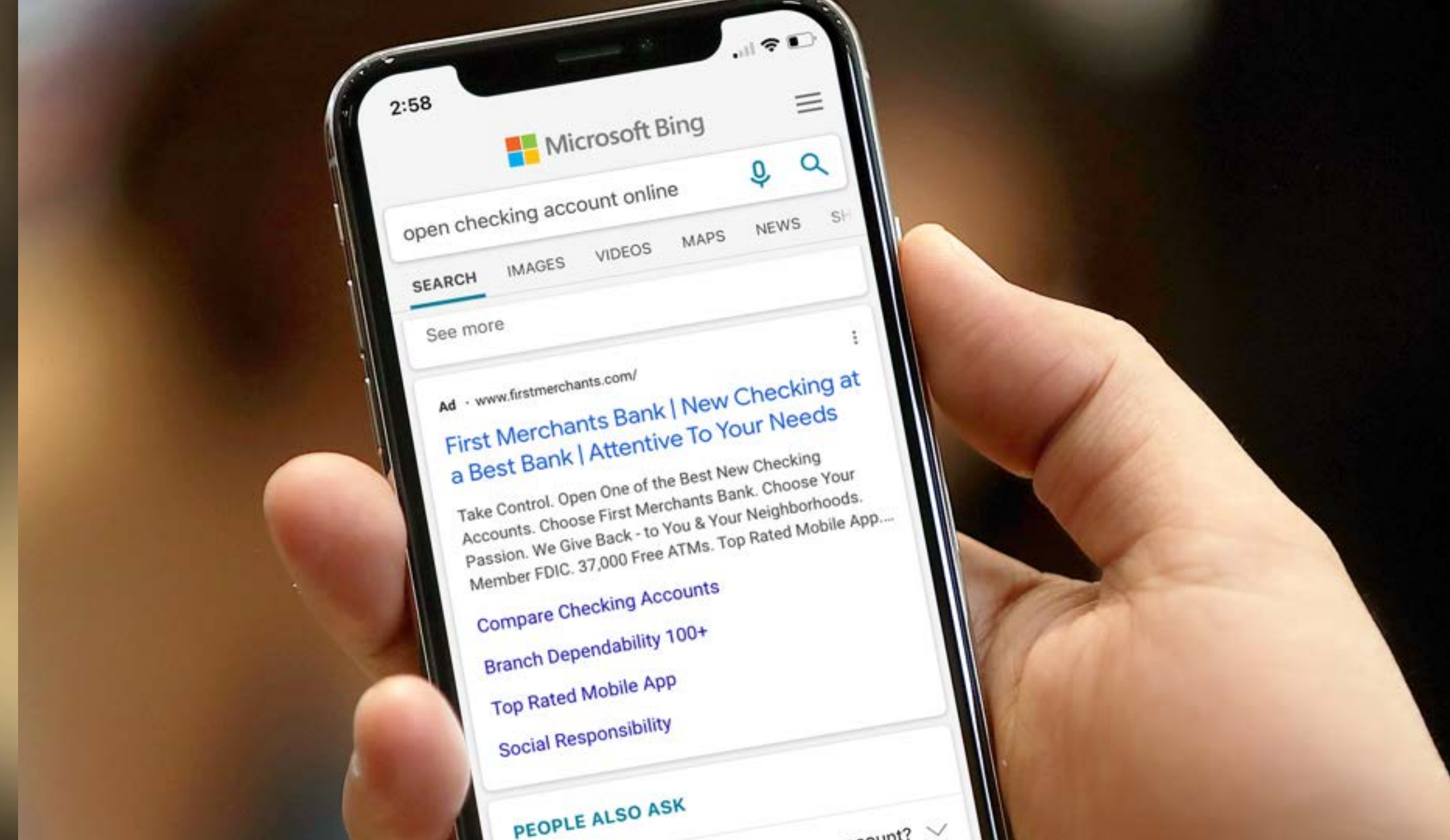
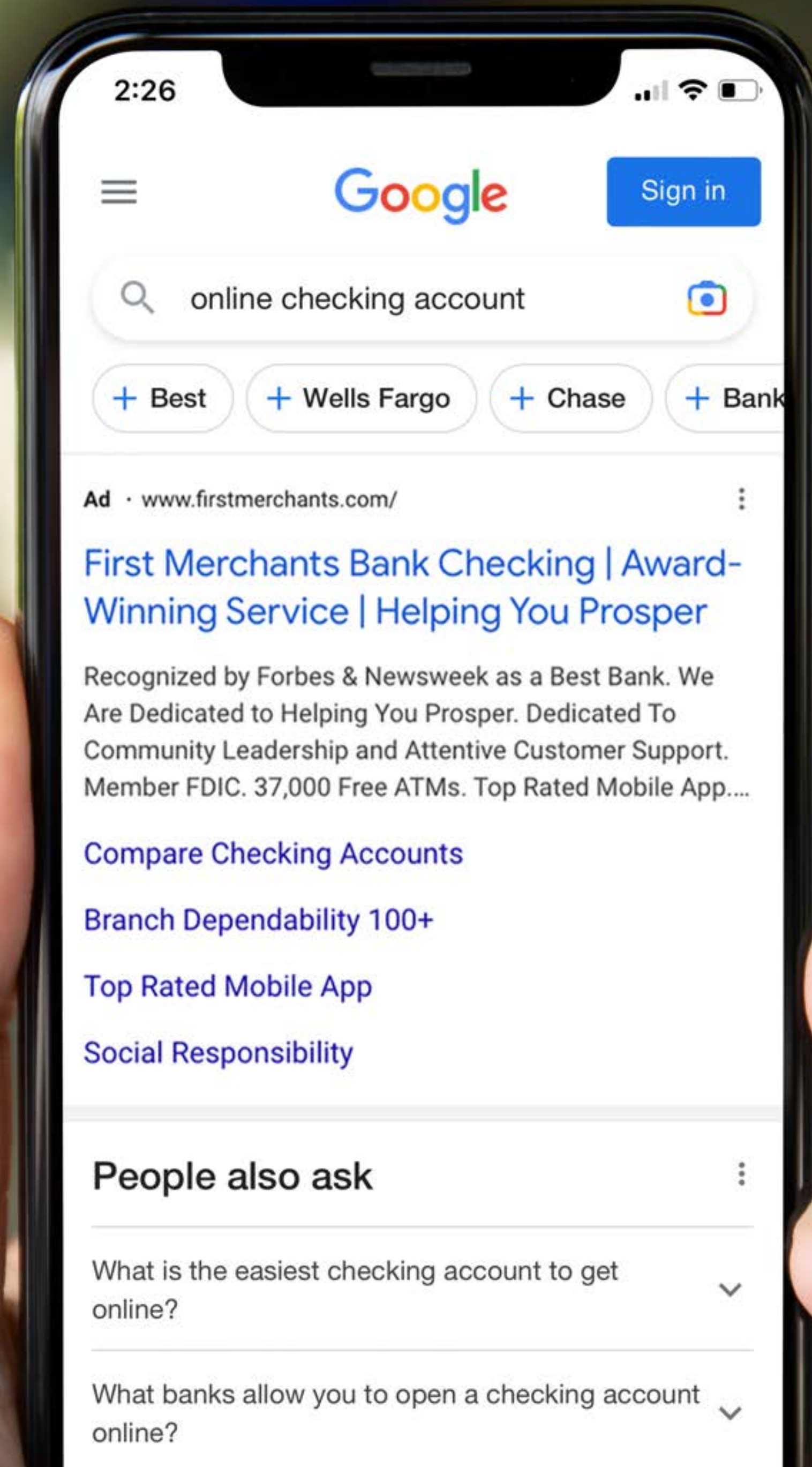
Solution

After much discussion on how to best position the campaign for success, we decided to focus on the bank's brand differentiators, including recognition as a top bank in the Midwest by Forbes and Newsweek for outstanding customer service. On top of leveraging social proof, this messaging strategy helped decrease low-intent prospects by focusing on value-based brand differentiators rather than sign-up bonuses (which historically attracted lower-value customers). By conducting thorough market and keyword research, The Martin Group was also able to identify opportunities within each key market to reach high-value customers while maintaining a low overall cost per acquisition.

We used a range of strategies to meet our campaign objectives through SEM ads on Microsoft Bing, SEM and display ads on Google Ads, landing pages, interstitial pop-ups, and a series of automated emails to nudge and nurture leads. Our team prioritized Microsoft ads over Google ads to reach qualified prospects in key markets while keeping search volume high and competition low. We made keyword, ad content, bid, and budget optimizations consistently within markets to leverage ad budgets most effectively. We segmented ad groups by intent (IBAG strategy) to reach in-market customers who were searching for specific product attributes. And we utilized landing page interstitial pop-ups and automated emails to nudge and nurture prospects through the funnel, encouraging them to apply for an account.

Results

The "Best Checking" Brand Differentiator SEM Campaign made a huge impact on the bank's acquisitions and associated costs, significantly improving upper funnel performance and reducing promo code-related fees for customers.



First Merchants Bank results

18 to 19

accounts opened per day
during SEM campaign
(versus 10 to 11 pre-SEM)

1506%

reduction in CPA in Q4 2022
(over Q4 2021)

384K+

new website visitors were
driven by ad campaign

49.5%

increase in online checking
accounts opened MoM

608

estimated new accounts
opened during campaign

Note: Results do not include accounts opened in branch.

The Establishment.

Introducing a new way of financial planning to the next generation.

MassMutual Buffalo contracted The Martin Group in August 2015 to help launch The Establishment, a financial education initiative designed specifically for millennials, and one that would offer a series of free courses in a comfortable, social environment. Before its first classes debuted the following November, The Martin Group was tasked with cultivating the initiative's brand and website, assisting in public relations, and establishing its social media voice, presence, and direction—all designed to encourage millennials who don't think about their finances to start seeing value in spending time on retirement plans, homebuying, credit scores, investing, etc.

Through language consistent with its coursework and demographic—and with a focus on luring interested parties between the ages of 21 and 35—The Martin Group has executed The Establishment's aims with regular organic and boosted posts on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter, and with a style that's led to sold out classes and webinars. These social media successes have led to the educational initiative's proliferation, with The Establishment OKC (in conjunction with MassMutual Oklahoma City) launched in the fall of 2018, The Establishment Barnum (in conjunction with Connecticut's Barnum

Financial Group) launched in summer 2019, and a Rochester-specific Establishment location (in conjunction with MassMutual New York State) in January 2020.



GIVE YOURSELF SOME (HEALTHY) CREDIT

THE BIGGER PICTURE OF CREDIT SCORES

ESTABLISHMENT

YOUR BRAIN ON LOAN

IDEAS FOR PAYING OFF STUDENT LOANS PAINLESSLY

ESTABLISHMENT

IT'S TASTING TIME.

THINK (MONEY) RESPONSIBLY.

BOOK YOUR FREE CLASS

TheEstablishmentBuffalo.com

ESTABLISHMENT



3:36 PM 60%

theestablishmentbarnum.com

WALK INTO A BAR

FINANCIAL KNOWLEDGE IS NO JOKE.

No matter who you are, what you do, or where you're trying to get, The Establishment is here to help you understand money, better.

DEREK SZCZUPAKOWSKI
MassMutual New York State Financial Advisor and Investment Specialist

The Establishment results

3

accounts launched: New York, Oklahoma, and Connecticut

15%

conversion rate for class registrations in 2020

2.4K

people + 800 engagements on Facebook for Jan 2020 Rochester Launch Party post

3.5K+

class registrations (new leads) in 2020 (+16% YoY)

45%

increase in social conversions in 2020

2.8K

total audience across Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram for NY location

Rich Products.

Building a flourishing following for plant-based products.

Challenge

Good things are growing in Rich Products' plant-based product portfolio. From flaky pizza crusts to picture-perfect desserts, their numerous plant-based solutions represent a full field of delicious options for customers. To build awareness for their unmatched offering, they turned to The Martin Group.

Solution

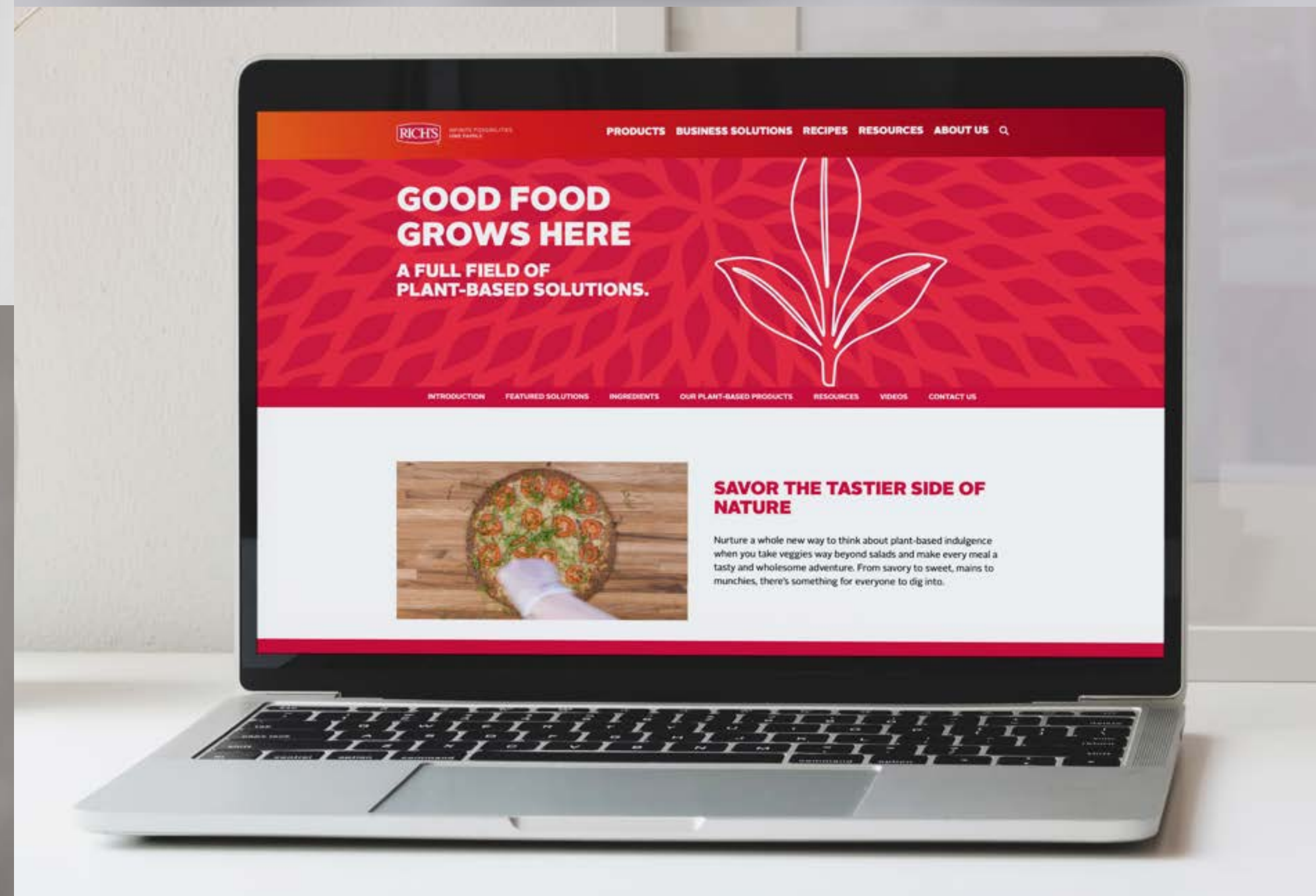
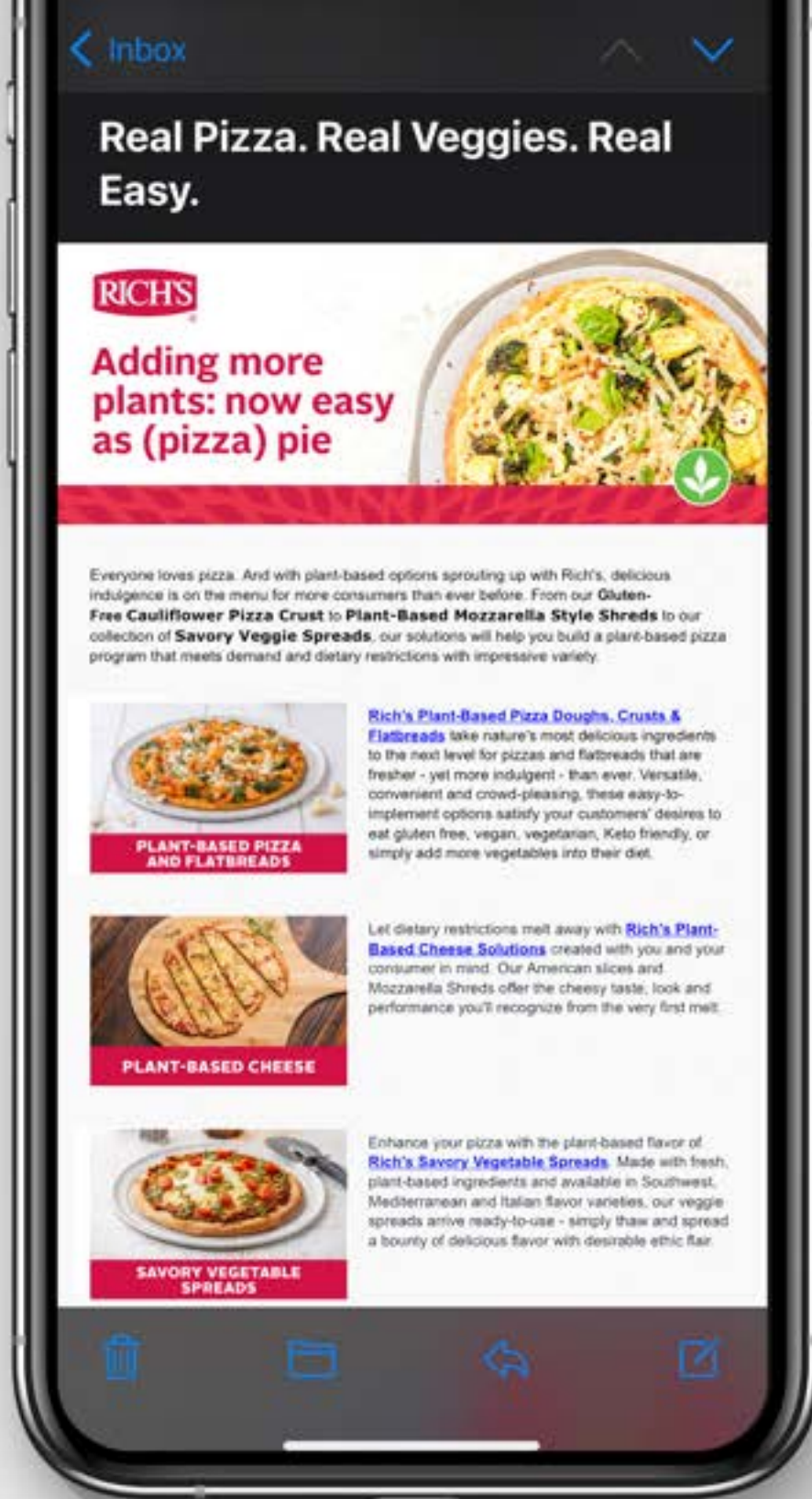
Working with Rich's, our team developed and executed a campaign to position the company as a leader in plant-based food. We set our sights on foodservice and in-store

bakery/deli operators across the country with a three-phase campaign, taking them on a delicious user journey from awareness to engagement to motivation. Our team thoughtfully targeted and retargeted our audience, based on engagements and interests, throughout the campaign, via digital display, SEM, paid and organic social media, influencer marketing, email marketing, and content marketing through thought leadership. Email marketing played a vital role in the full-funnel strategy by keeping our campaign messaging top-of-mind for users over the course of several months.

Results

The email nurture program, targeting over 120k users, had a 58% CTR for engagement phase emails and an 86% CTR for motivation phase emails. Of all thought leadership content marketing downloads during the campaign, email drove 20%. Our audience was very responsive to content being delivered directly to their inboxes.

In just five months, the campaign generated over one million paid impressions, over 20,000 website sessions, and longer average visits to the plant-based landing page (over 10 minutes!). This full-funnel strategy resulted in the highest click-through-rate among all Rich Products campaigns in 2021.



Rich's results

\$.49

average CPC across
all SEM campaigns
(industry avg. \$1.77)

86%

CTR for motivate
phase emails

48K+

new sessions on
plant-based landing page

86%

new website visitors
during campaign

10min+

spent on campaign
landing page

685%

increase in social mentions
of plant-based products

Excelsior College. Driving leads in a crowded landscape.

National college enrollments are shrinking, and an increasing number of online education programs are entering the market. Excelsior College—a pioneer in distance education and leader in online learning—sought to differentiate themselves from their competitors, clearly communicating their value to become the school of choice for their target student population. The Martin Group was brought in to expand brand awareness, grow alumni engagement, and increase qualified leads through targeted digital advertising, conversion rate optimization tactics, cohesive media planning, content marketing, and strategic branding initiatives.

Measuring the current positioning of the college and exploring internal culture were key to solidifying a strategic foundation from which to launch a cohesive brand awareness and enrollment campaign. Internal and external perception research studies, creative concept testing, and digital marketing audits were

performed in collaboration with Excelsior key stakeholders and marketing teams. Our efforts indicated that a significant population of adults who seek college degrees aren't served well by a traditional higher education experience. This group wants to earn their degrees as efficiently as possible amid their full-time commitments, with a drive to capture advancement and opportunities in a new or current field.

The Martin Group translated these insights into a fresh brand position: Life Happens, Keep Learning. This tagline highlights Excelsior's key offering of college credit for past experience and training, in addition to its core component of flexible, student-centered online learning. Targeted messaging and a fresh creative look were developed and refined across multiple communication platforms to support Excelsior's lead generation and enrollment campaigns while seeding brand throughout.

This included improvements in digital marketing, digital user experience, and content development that would support lead generation from new inquiries (focusing on a sales funnel of awareness, consideration, and conversion). After a thorough advertising and audience analysis, national target audiences were narrowed and aligned with key program initiatives to optimize overall digital campaign performance monthly and yearly.

Following elevated targeting and lead generation tactics, Excelsior budgets were maximized, and waste eliminated. Deliverables included SEM, display, social media advertising, organic social media, retargeting, marketing automation, email nurture campaigns, landing pages, content marketing, SEO, ad creative, and direct mail—all of which contributed to the most important campaign result: 3,700 enrollments.

YOU CAN COMPLETE YOUR DEGREE—WHILE YOU KEEP UP WITH LIFE.

Learn more at excelsior.edu.

30+ ONLINE PROGRAMS
MAXIMUM TRANSFER CREDIT
REGIONALLY ACCREDITED
NOT-FOR-PROFIT

EXCELSIOR COLLEGE
Life Happens. Keep Learning.™

EXCELSIOR COLLEGE

LIFE HAPPENS. KEEP LEARNING..

Transfer more credit | Complete your degree sooner | Lower your total cost

YOU'VE GOT THIS.

Program Level:

Level of Study:

EXPLORE ONLINE PROGRAMS

GET MAXIMUM CREDIT FOR YOUR NAVY TRAINING

Choose from 50+ online degree programs

GET STARTED

EXCELSIOR COLLEGE

YOUR WHOLE FAMILY IS IN THE MILITARY

That Means Shared Sacrifice—and Benefits

When your spouse is in the military, it's hard enough to stay on top of your own life. Now you have to worry about your child's education, too. Excelsior College makes it easy and affordable for you to pursue your degree while your spouse is in the military. We offer a variety of online programs that can be completed in as little as 18 months. And our flexible scheduling allows you to study at your own pace. Contact us today to learn more about our military-friendly programs.

EXCELSIOR COLLEGE

LIFE HAPPENS. KEEP LEARNING.

More transfer credit for faster degree completion

EXCELSIOR COLLEGE

excelsior.edu

Excelsior College
January 18, 2018

Excelsior College Degrees at Work: See how Terry Evans, Cybersecurity graduate is putting his four degrees to work running his own business and see the advice he has for his fellow Excelsior students.

DEGREES AT WORK

CEO of Cybersleuth Investigations, Inc.
TERRY EVANS

Degrees At Work: How Terry Evans Turned Four Excelsior Degrees Into a Career Fighting International Cybercriminals

3 Shares

14 Comments

EXCELSIOR.EDU

THE BUFFALO NEWS

LIFE HAPPENS. KEEP LEARNING.

With credit for post-education and professional training

MIKE HARRINGTON: IN DISMISSING PHIL HOUSLEY, JASON BOTTERILL PUT HIMSELF ON THE CLOCK

Know It Now

1. Around 100 million people in the world are...
2. When will another election be held in the next...
3. How many people are currently in the...
4. Suburban plans are expected to be...
5. Suburban TV ratings are set to be...

EXCELSIOR COLLEGE

10 Tips to Get More Out of Your Online MBA Program

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- Tip 1: Plan Your Time
- Tip 2: Stay Motivated
- Tip 3: Engage in Discussion
- Tip 4: Set Realistic Goals
- Tip 5: Stay Organized
- Tip 6: Stay on Schedule
- Tip 7: Stay on Top of Your Work
- Tip 8: Stay on Top of Your Studies
- Tip 9: Stay on Top of Your Networking
- Tip 10: Stay on Top of Your Career Development

Start with more credit

Work around your schedule

Master of Business Administration 36-45 CREDITS

| FOUNDATION COMPONENT (Required) | CREDIT HOURS | CORE FOUNDATION COMPONENT | CREDIT HOURS |
|--|---------------------|--|--------------|
| Essentials of Business | 3 | Accounting | 3 |
| Organizational Behavior | 3 | Business Statistics | 3 |
| Quantitative Analysis | 3 | Business Law | 3 |
| TOTAL CREDITS FOR FOUNDATION | 9 | TOTAL CREDITS FOR CORE FOUNDATION COMPONENT | 9 |
| CORE COMPONENT (Required) | CREDIT HOURS | | |
| Accounting for Managers | 3 | | |
| Global Business Environment | 3 | | |
| Information Technology | 3 | | |
| Leadership | 3 | | |
| Managerial Finance | 3 | | |
| Marketing | 3 | | |
| Operations Management | 3 | | |
| Project Management: Processes and Applications | 3 | | |
| Strategy and Policy Options | 3 | | |
| TOTAL CREDITS FOR CORE COMPONENT | 27 | | |

Excelsior College results

2.2M+

impressions from brand awareness campaign

56%

conversion increase year over year

80%

CPL decrease year over year

3.7K

new enrollments

50+

media campaigns

56.6K

clicks

Niagara University.

Taking graduate enrollment to a higher degree.

In Spring 2021, for the first time in its history, Niagara University needed to create a campaign aimed specifically at graduate students. Facing factors such as a renewed interest in remote learning and the pandemic-era mindsets that led professionals to consider new paths, Niagara had—and needed to react to—opportunities to raise both awareness of and inquiries into enrolling within selected graduate degree programs, which ranged from business administration to education to cybersecurity.

Building off of an established and longstanding relationship with Niagara University, The Martin Group team began by hosting a strategy session with the University's leadership, marketing team, and program deans. This yielded a host of insights, including the type of prospective graduate student who would be most sought after in enrollment goals: working professionals

with a wealth of experience looking to take their next step. These lifelong learners had unique challenges (family responsibilities, full-time careers, higher standards for ROI, and more), and would be best served by the flexible environment and breadth of programs belied by Niagara University's intimate size. With reaching these individuals at its core, our team next developed a brand brief and comprehensive paid media plan ahead of creative exploration. Our creative team developed the concept of "To a Higher Degree," speaking to prospective students for whom experience and eventual advancement are highly valued. The campaign saw us enrich the meaning of a "higher degree" to point to the tangible yet aspirational benefits of choosing Niagara University, and came to life in a robust, full funnel of tactics, including: social media advertising, native advertising, digital streaming and video

ads, search engine marketing, custom landing pages, retargeting ads, and more.

Through working with The Martin Group, Niagara University has been able to reach a wide swath of prospective graduate students located across New York State, Northwestern Pennsylvania, and Northern Ohio. Final results from the one-year campaign include 40.5 million ad impressions, over 131,000 website sessions, a wealth of phone calls to admissions offices, and thousands of qualified leads. Our enrollment conversion rate improved from 15% to 18% by the end of the campaign, meaning nearly 1 in 5 leads gained during this timeframe ended up enrolling in the university. This important campaign laid a solid foundation and benchmark for NU to continue to build upon their graduate program marketing and advertising.

THIS IS A
higher degree
OF LEARNING

Take your career higher
Request more information about our graduate programs.

The graduate programs of Niagara University

At Niagara University, our graduate programs bring new meaning to the idea of a higher degree.

By combining exceptional resources and education with a

First Name*
Last Name*
Telephone*
Email*

YouTube

A HIGHER DEGREE OF influence

Why Niagara?
33 views · Jan 28, 2022

Niagara University
1,17K subscribers

Becoming a member of the Niagara family instills in students a heightened sense of purpose through robust student life, service-learning, and study abroad experiences. That's The Power of Niagara.

12:41

NU Niagara University
Sponsored ·

Earn a Master's in Finance from Niagara University— with supportive faculty to guide you.

A HIGHER DEGREE OF success

NIAGARA-UNIVERSITY.COM
A Higher Degree of Success
Find out what sets NU apart. [Learn More](#)

76

Like Comment Share

1:15

Niagara University
25.9K followers
Promoted

Stay a step ahead with an M.S. in Information Security & Digital Forensics from Niagara University. [See more](#)

A HIGHER DEGREE OF potential

M.S. INFORMATION SECURITY & DIGITAL FORENSICS

Explore a career in cybersecurity.
niagara-university.com

12:10

NIAGARA UNIVERSITY

ALL THE PATHS TO a higher degree OF ACHIEVEMENT

Whether you're looking to take the next step as an educator or make the leap into this influential field, our graduate programs can help you get there.

[REQUEST MORE INFO](#)

11:21

NU Niagara University
Sponsored

IMPACT thrives

[Learn More](#)

YouTube

CAREERS grow

Niagara University results

40.5M+

impressions

18%

enrollment conversion rate

32%

application conversion rate

3K+

leads

131K+

website sessions

Albany Law School. Amplifying student stories and philanthropic support.

Challenge

With conservative rates of giving among alumni, many of whom have student loan debt, and a small group of philanthropists who are courted by numerous concurrent regional campaigns, Albany Law School asked The Martin Group to position and brand their \$30 million campaign—We Rise Together: The Campaign for Albany Law School—in preparation for its public launch in 2019. The school faced other barriers to meeting its big ambitions, including a limited budget, an outdated photo library, and antiquated website technology.

Solution

With steady enrollment growth, increased rankings, and accolades for academic innovation, Albany Law, the nation's oldest independent law school, was already experiencing positive

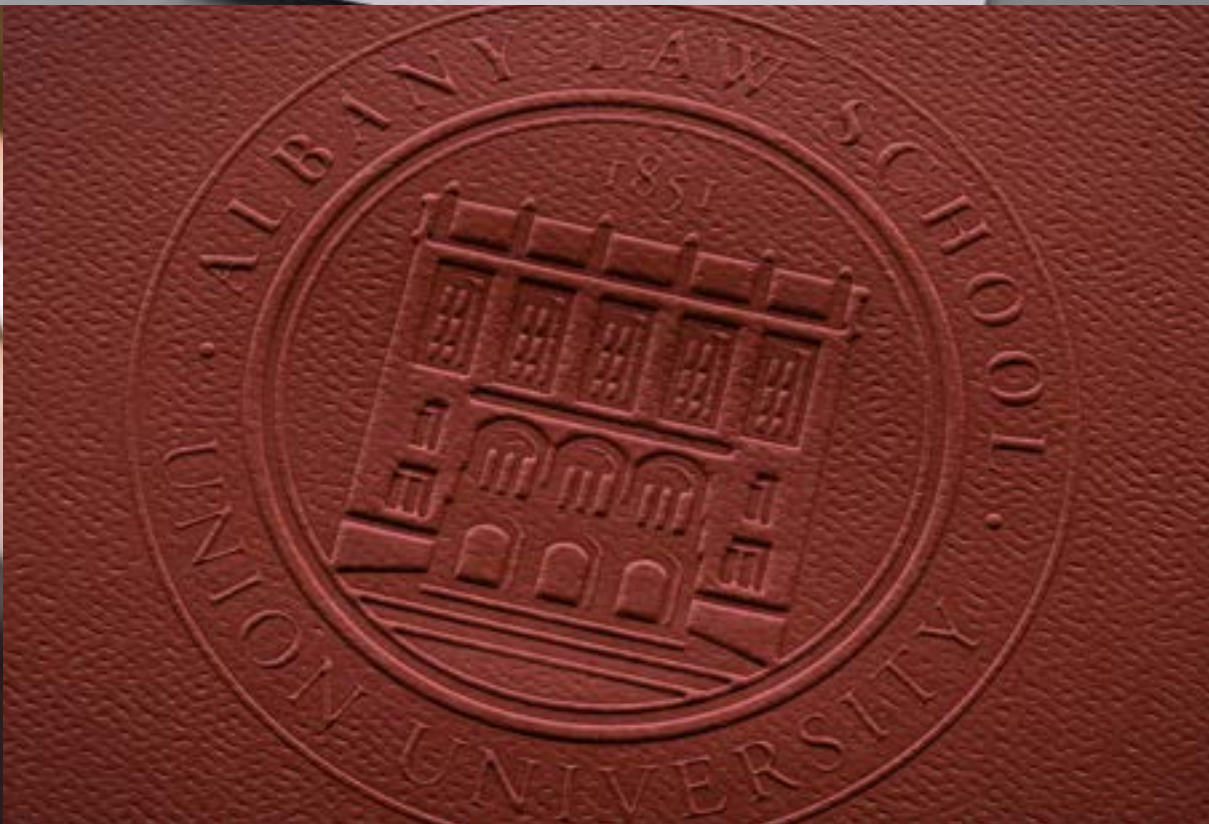
momentum. But how to transfer that momentum to an ambitious fundraising campaign? Our strategy and creative, like the campaign itself, recognized and centered around a single fact—individual stories of student perseverance and triumph collectively raise the institution to a new level and form a compelling reason for philanthropic support of Albany Law and its mission to create the next generation of leaders in law and beyond.

Albany Law's campaign pillars of Independence, Innovation, and Impact were both ownable and backed by tangible stories and results. The Martin Group developed campaign messaging and a look and feel that balanced Albany Law's 167-year history, its pioneering curriculum, and its accomplished alumni with the school's commitment to respond and adapt to the rapidly changing legal landscape. Through stories of

students who each embody a different campaign pillar and who all embody the Albany Law commitment to excellence, service, and insatiable improvement, a case statement, brochures for high- and low-level donors, campaign video, and campaign landing page told the Albany Law School story—one that evoked pride in the school's past and enthusiasm for its future.

Results

The campaign was such a success that it ended six months early and \$3 million over the goal—the most successful fundraising effort in school history. And because Albany Law liked the concept so much, they wound up applying our campaign branding assets, photography, and style guide architecture to redesign their alumni magazine, admissions viewbook, and a host of other applications.



Albany Law School results

\$33M

total funds raised
(\$3M above goal)

6

number of months early
the campaign was able
to end due to success

3K

individual donors

3%

conversion rate (better
than industry standard)

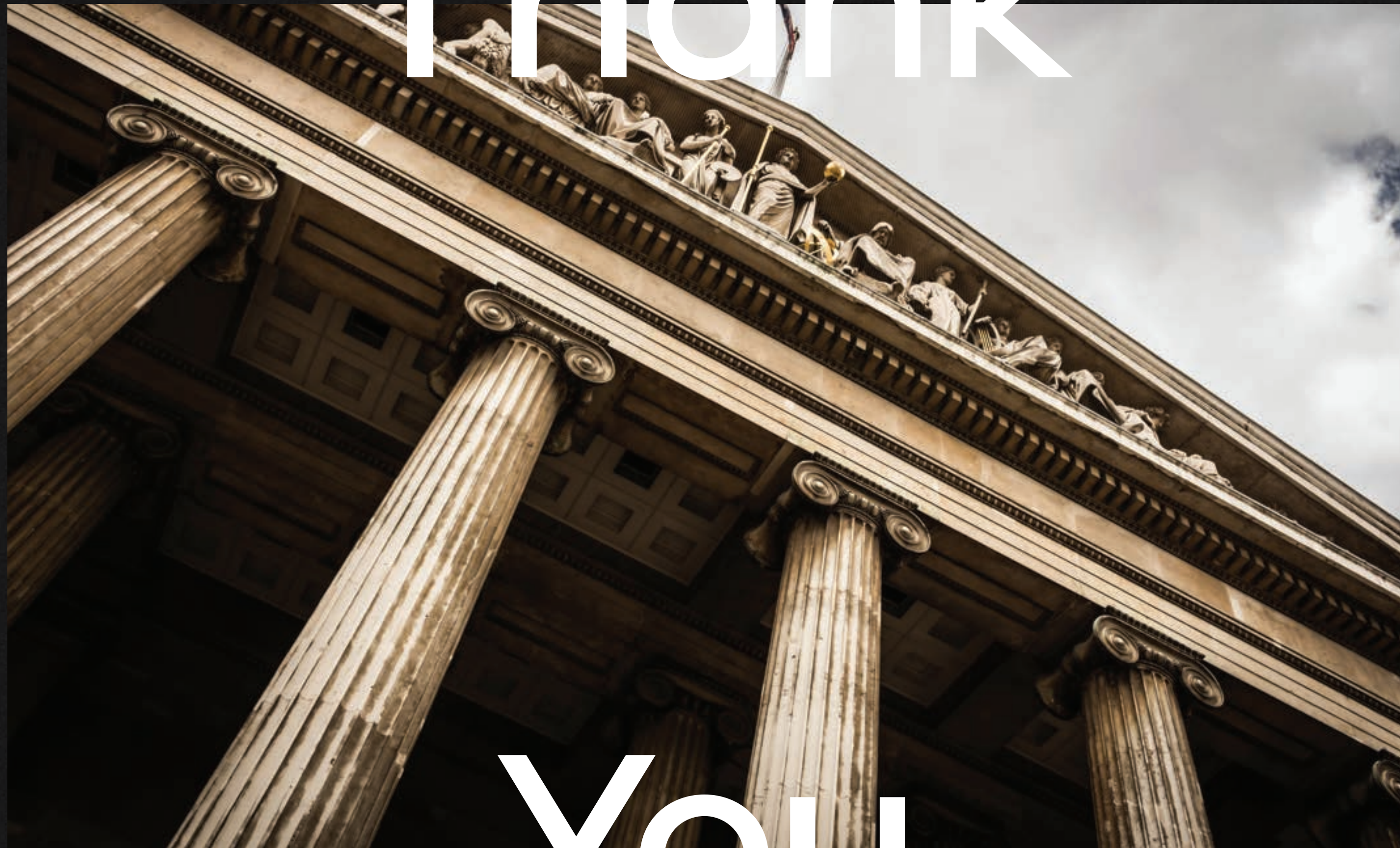
10

new scholarships
and endowed funds

5+

programs supported
through major gifts

Thank



You