



NEW INDUSTRY MEMBER GUIDE

How to break into the college
and university market

LEVERAGING CONFERENCES

Get noticed. Know what to expect.



MAINTAIN CONSISTENCY

Make sure customers are seeing the same faces – and that they are the ones building relationships.



SELL A YEAR OUT

Colleges are planning ahead, not looking to purchase immediately. Make appointments to get on campuses, and the sales will come.



ATTEND THE FULL CONFERENCE

At the networking events and learning sessions, you'll meet people and learn about the industry. You never know who's shopping or where you might run into them.



VOLUNTEER

Volunteering gives you an opportunity to expand relationships. Familiarity builds trust.

TIPS & TAKEAWAYS

- **Build relationships.**
Relationships should come before brand recognition. People buy from who they know.
- **Advance your career.**
Network with more than just institutions—get to know people across the industry. Membership is not just a benefit for the company, but a great personal and career investment.
- **Leverage events.**
Begin participating as an exhibitor at Spring Conferences to progressively build your presence leading up to the National Conference. Network and volunteer. Sponsorship is most beneficial once you establish relationships.

Industry 101

GROUND ZERO: UNDERSTANDING THE SEGMENT

NACUFS INDUSTRY MEMBERS

- Food & Beverage
- Packaging
- Consulting
- Services
- Technology
- Distribution
- Equipment
- & more!

DECISION MAKERS ON CAMPUS

- Food service director
- Dietitian
- Purchasing team
- Executive chef
- Residential dining director
- Marketing director
- Retail dining director
- Catering director
- Finance & IT administrators
- Contract administrator
- Associate vice president (AVP)

VENUES ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

- All-you-care-to-eat (AYCTE) facility
- Retail dining (quick-service dining)
- Convenience stores (C-stores)
- Athlete meals/training table
- Catering
- Concessions
- Vending

TYPES OF OPERATIONS

Operations may be self-operated or contract-managed. Always inquire about the operation and whether they use a group purchasing organization (GPO).

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

With answers from long-time industry members

● What's the best advice for a new industry member?

- Know your product and value proposition
- Build relationships and get involved
- Attend conferences (not just Showcase)
- Learn about the dining operation before launching your pitch
- Volunteer

● When is the most opportune time for industry representatives to engage with colleges and universities?

Spring and summer (second semester)—around menu planning cycles. Avoid September and January.

● How long does it take to achieve meaningful sales results?

It typically takes about 1 to 3 years to integrate into the NACUFS community, build relationships, and start to see meaningful sales results, due to the unique academic and administrative environment.

● For each type of industry, who is the best point of contact to influence decisions?

Food: Executive chef, director, unit manager, or dietitian

Distributor: Group purchasing organization, request for proposal (RFP) processes

Technology: Vice president (VP) of auxiliary, director of dining, director of Information Technology

Other: Middle management, director, VP, other key decision makers

● How can I find more information or connect with an operator?

Use NACUFS online member search tool to obtain insights and contact information. Search by institution, industry, or people. Filter by size, type, location, demographics, etc. Find contact information, functional titles, and more.

