

## SALES TECHNIQUES USED BY OUR TOP PERFORMING SCHOOLS

Last year we contacted 50 faculty advisors at schools that have used Data Match for a minimum of five years and have consistently sold **70-100% of their printouts each** and every year. We wanted to find out the secrets to their successes and pass them on to you. We will tell you how they do it, but first here are some things we learned by analyzing the demographics and sales statistics of our customers over the past 5 years.

Smaller schools (you know who you are) sell a much higher percentage than larger schools. A greater percentage of kids know each other at smaller schools and tend to support each other's activities. And, because more kids know each other, there is increased interest in finding out who will wind up "on their list."

*Larger schools have to work harder and be more creative to sell a significant percentage.*

Schools choosing Program 2 sell a much higher percentage of their printouts (61% on average) than schools choosing Program 1 (43% on average). Program 1 can be much harder to sell. Each student has to purchase two printouts to get all their matches, which is harder to explain, and may become too expensive for some students.

*By switching to Program 2, you may be able to sell printouts to more students and increase your profits.*

## Here Is What The Top Selling Schools Do

These are presented in no particular order, but represent the most commonly mentioned or creative practices followed by the faculty advisors we contacted.

1. According to Mrs. Yung, the DECA advisor at Warrensburg High School, Warrensburg, MO, "Data Match is a great fundraiser – the program sells itself!" Although we appreciate Mrs. Yung's comments, selling Data Match requires marketing skill and effort, especially if you are competing with other fundraisers at or near the same time. And many schools tell us the most critical factors are the enthusiasm and creativity of the club members running the sale. Make sure they are aggressive, are leaders, and can generate positive energy among the student population.
2. The most popular time of the year is around Valentine's Day.
3. Many schools sell the printouts during lunch periods. Some schools "leak" a few out early in the day to get the students excited about purchasing them during lunch.
4. Some schools hold a Data Match Dance (see box at right) or some other get-acquainted event.
5. Get the faculty involved and "pumped up." There is a separate questionnaire that faculty can complete and faculty printouts are free. Hand deliver the faculty printouts the day before the official sale begins, which gets them chattering and builds anticipation for the students.
6. Offer a "prize" (e.g. pizza delivery) to the classroom (team, grade, etc.) with the highest percentage participation.
7. Publicize the fundraiser in the school newspaper, make daily announcements, and put posters up in the halls.
8. Publish the list of Most "Compatible" Couples sent by Data Match on the school's closed circuit TV.
9. Send out flyers when the printouts come in letting everyone know where and when they can be purchased.
10. Publicize the Data Match prize drawings to increase your club's sales.
11. Some schools pre-sell the printouts when the students turn in their questionnaires, or charge 25 cents for students to fill out a questionnaire, thus eliminating the "comedians" and those students who view it as a waste of time.
12. Mail your order to Data Match at least two weeks before you need the printouts, especially if they are needed for a scheduled event, such as a dance or other get-acquainted activity.
13. Allow sufficient time for your sale – at least 10 days, especially if you are subject to weather-related school closings.

Schools with very high sales percentages (over 80%) tend to have the same faculty advisor every year; whereas many schools with very low sales percentages often have a different faculty advisor running Data Match every year.

*Consistency can really pay off when the advisor is a willing, enthusiastic, leader who enjoys Data Match and has a good formula for success.*

Most low-percentage schools (i.e. selling less than 20% of their printouts) run a Data Match fundraiser every year; whereas some very-high percentage schools skip one or two years in between.

*Large schools especially, may want to run Data Match only every other year in order to keep it fresh and prevent the kids from getting bored with it.*



## HOW TO RUN A DATA MATCH DANCE

A number of schools have told us this is their most successful event all year — the kids love it, and it's profitable. The cost of admission to the dance already includes payment for their Data Match printout. The printouts are given to the students as they arrive, so nobody knows who is on their list until they get to the dance. Several times during the dance, each person has to dance with, or participate in a game with someone on their list – sometimes a best match, sometimes an unlikely match. The admission price to the dance is the same whether a student filled out a questionnaire or not (so, you might as well fill out a questionnaire if you intend to go to the dance). Students not attending the dance can purchase their printout the week after the dance. Another approach is to sell the printouts before the dance and to reduce the price of the ticket by \$.50 - \$1.00 for anyone bringing their printout to the dance.