Guide to selling advertising/ sponsorship opportunities on your ToucanTech website

For ToucanTech Customers

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Introduction

There are lots of ways you can use your community website to generate potential advertising or sponsorship revenue, such as adding advert banners to some of the web pages, placing company logos on your emails or publishing sponsored editorial.

You might want to be discerning about the type of advertisers you select and the quality of the content you display for your community, but most people are accustomed to seeing paid content on websites and, if executed well, the content can be interesting and helpful.

This guide provides some suggestions of what advertising opportunities you can try to sell and gives some practical tips on how to get started. We encourage you to share your questions and experiences with other ToucanTech customers via the support site Discussion group!

Your target audience for advertisers

An organization may be interested in advertising with you to reach your audience of website visitors/ community members/ email recipients.

Think about who your audience is, their demographics, and what value they might represent to a potential advertiser.

If you have a regional database focused around a specific location such as a school, there could be local businesses such as restaurants, estate agents/ realtors and law firms interested in promoting their services to your readership.

If you have a demographic of graduates or mid-career professionals, you could approach recruiters about advertising jobs or building their employer brand through editorial features.

If you have a big segment of retired silver surfers you might find that travel companies want to offer cruise and holiday discounts.

Your community will represent a unique target audience – it's up to you to identify what's interesting about your database/ readership and what benefits you can offer to a potential sponsor.

What to include in your ‘media pack’

A media pack is the proposal you send to an advertiser. This could be a set of slides, a brochure or just a simple email or 1-page flyer. We suggest you include the following info in your pack:

Demographic stats

Introduce the purpose of your website/ community and list some stats about your audience/ readership – for example:

- number of records/ online members
- size of your email list and average open rates
- age range
- geographical locations
- job types
- education backgrounds
- website visitors
- engagement levels
- any other information you think will appeal to advertisers

Benefits of advertising with you

List the main benefits of advertising via your website – for example:

- exclusive access to a private community of X people with an interest in Y
- high visibility (only a limited number of hand-picked advertisers)
- high email engagement rates and clicks
- build a close relationship with your organization as a long-term partner
- positive brand association of being linked with your organisation

Advertising options with price list

List the different advertising/ sponsorship options, with an indication of time frame, costs for each option and how to pay (e.g. online payment via your ToucanTech website, a direct bank transfer or a regular direct debit) – for example:

- advert banner
- sponsored news story or category
- sponsored page
- targeted email
- special offer
- permanent link

Experience of other advertisers

If possible, it’s reassuring to add a positive quote of someone who’s advertised with you before – what did they gain from the experience? Did it drive them any new business or help them build brand awareness?

Different advertising/ sponsorship options you could offer via your ToucanTech system

Sponsorship banner/ panel

This would be a custom ‘panel’ that you place on selected pages across your community site using the Design Hub in your ToucanTech admin portal. It would be a wide landscape sized advert – the sponsor can provide artwork or you can choose a background colour/ image with text, and a hyperlink to the sponsor’s website

File size

2mb or less file size (any bigger could be slow to load)

Dimensions

1440 pixels in width (the standard width for a desk top screen – although remember that the screen will re-size to smaller devices and only the central part of the image will be visible on a mobile device. The image can be any depth although we’d recommend a thin banner that doesn’t take up a huge portion of the screen

Image style

Simple, bold photos or graphics tend to work best, ideally without any text. If you’re overlaying text in the panel, you’ll want to make the image dark (e.g. add a black transparency) and use white/ light font colour

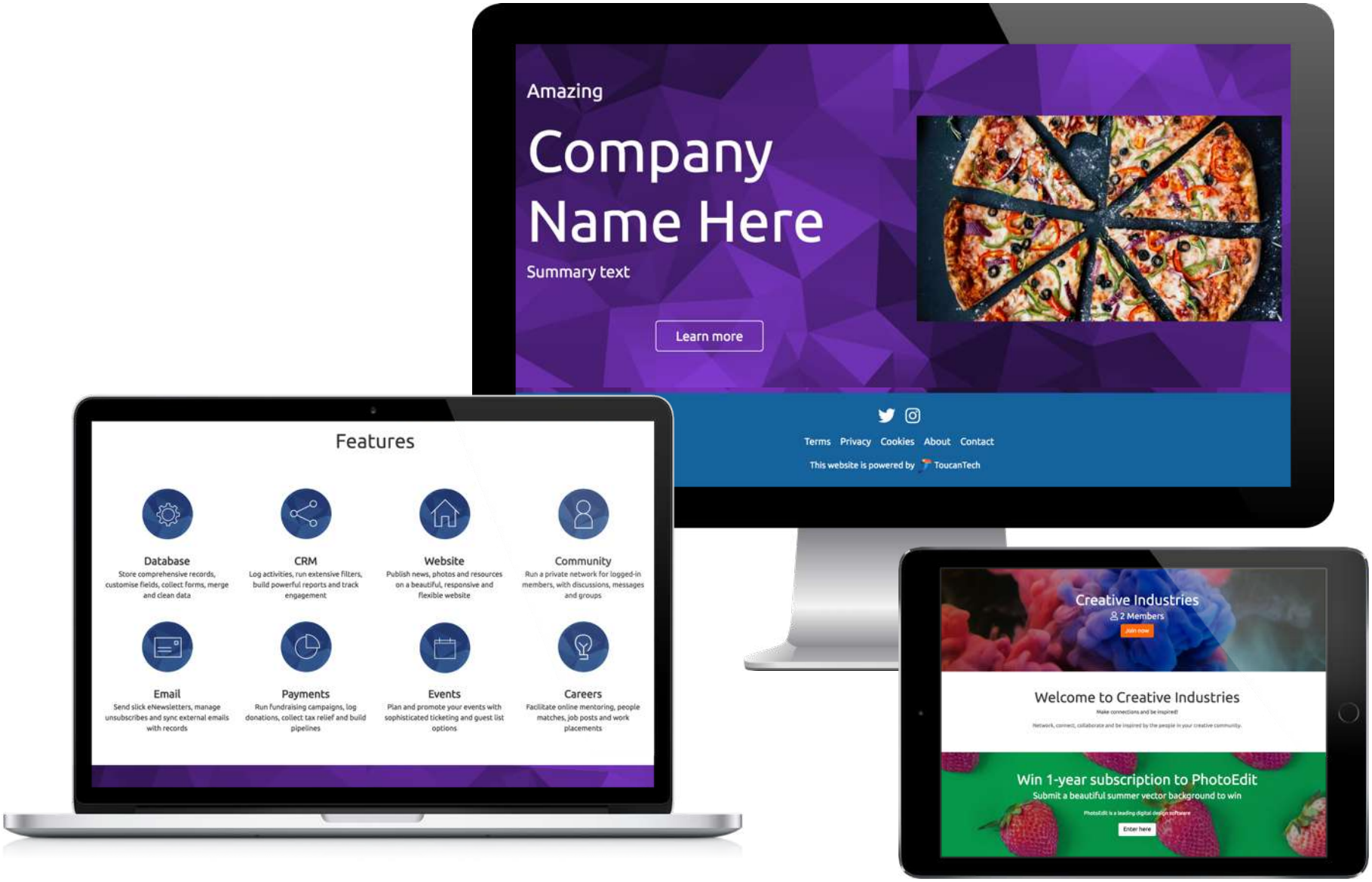
Hyperlink

You can hyperlink the text or button on a panel and you can suggest that the advertiser provides a tracking link so that they can count how many clicks come through from your site

Suggested pricing

This depends on the volume and value of your website traffic, where the advert is positioned, how many pages its displayed on and for how long, and your sponsor’s budgets! An example of pricing could be:
£800/ $1,000 - exclusive 6-month banner sponsorship displayed on 3 main pages such as Home, News and Careers
£2,000/ $2,500 - exclusive 12-month banner sponsorship across every page (logged in and logged out)

Range of panel layouts for an advertiser



Sponsored news story

You could publish a positive story about a sponsor, such as an interview with one of their employees or a write-up of an interesting new product/ service. The content should also be interesting for your readership but it shouldn't be hard to find a relevant 'angle' - eg a member of your community who works for the company. The news story can include hyperlinked text to the company's website to help their SEO (search engine optimization) efforts – these could be very valuable backlinks if you run a reputable website (in the eyes of Google).

Article specs

circa 800-word original news story or interview with strong, enticing headline and compelling story image. We recommend featuring and tagging people within the story, as people-focused content tends to get more social media spread

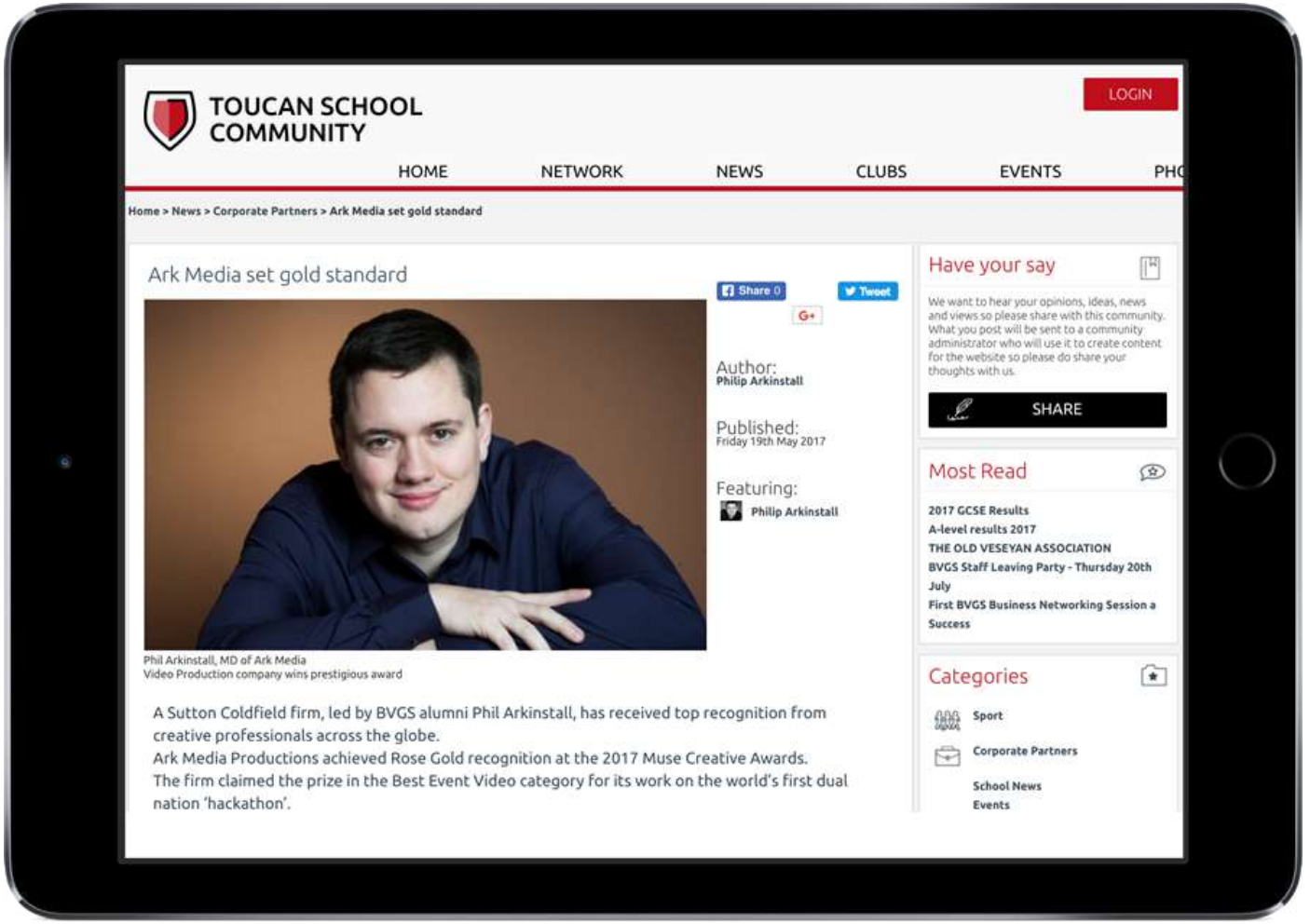
Links

sponsor can have backlinks within the article (hyperlink the 'anchor text' they think will most help their SEO – e.g. "*best Italian restaurant in Oxford*") or add some blurb about the sponsor at the end of the article

Suggested pricing

£400/ $500 per article, depending on the perceived value of this type of 'PR', the size of your readership and whether the story will be featured prominently at the top/ front of your website and/or promoted via email newsletters etc.

Example sponsored story

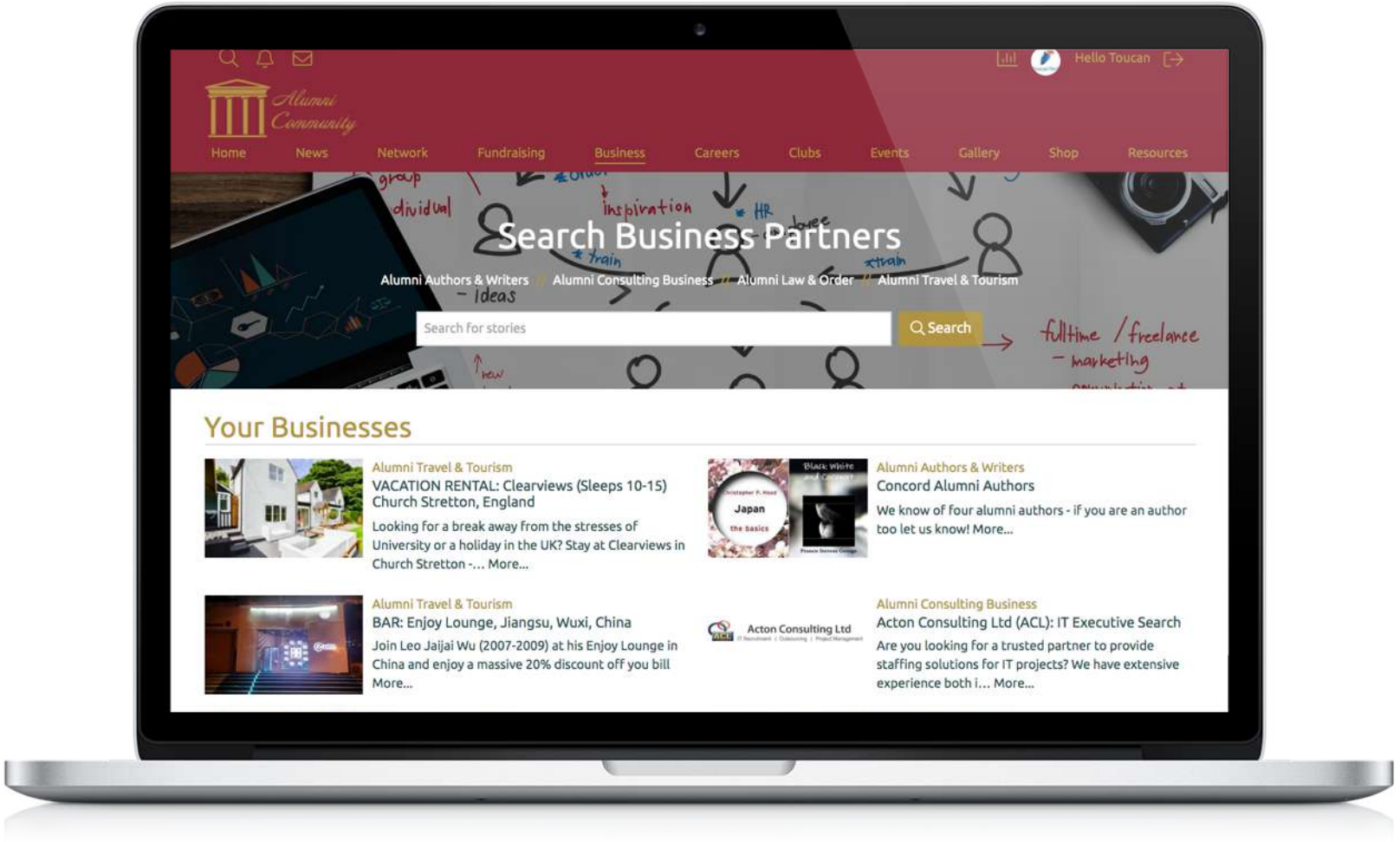


Sponsored page

You could create a dedicated menu tab for a company (maybe on a topic of interest to them - eg Careers or Entrepreneurship) and showcase them prominently for a 6, 12 or 24 months

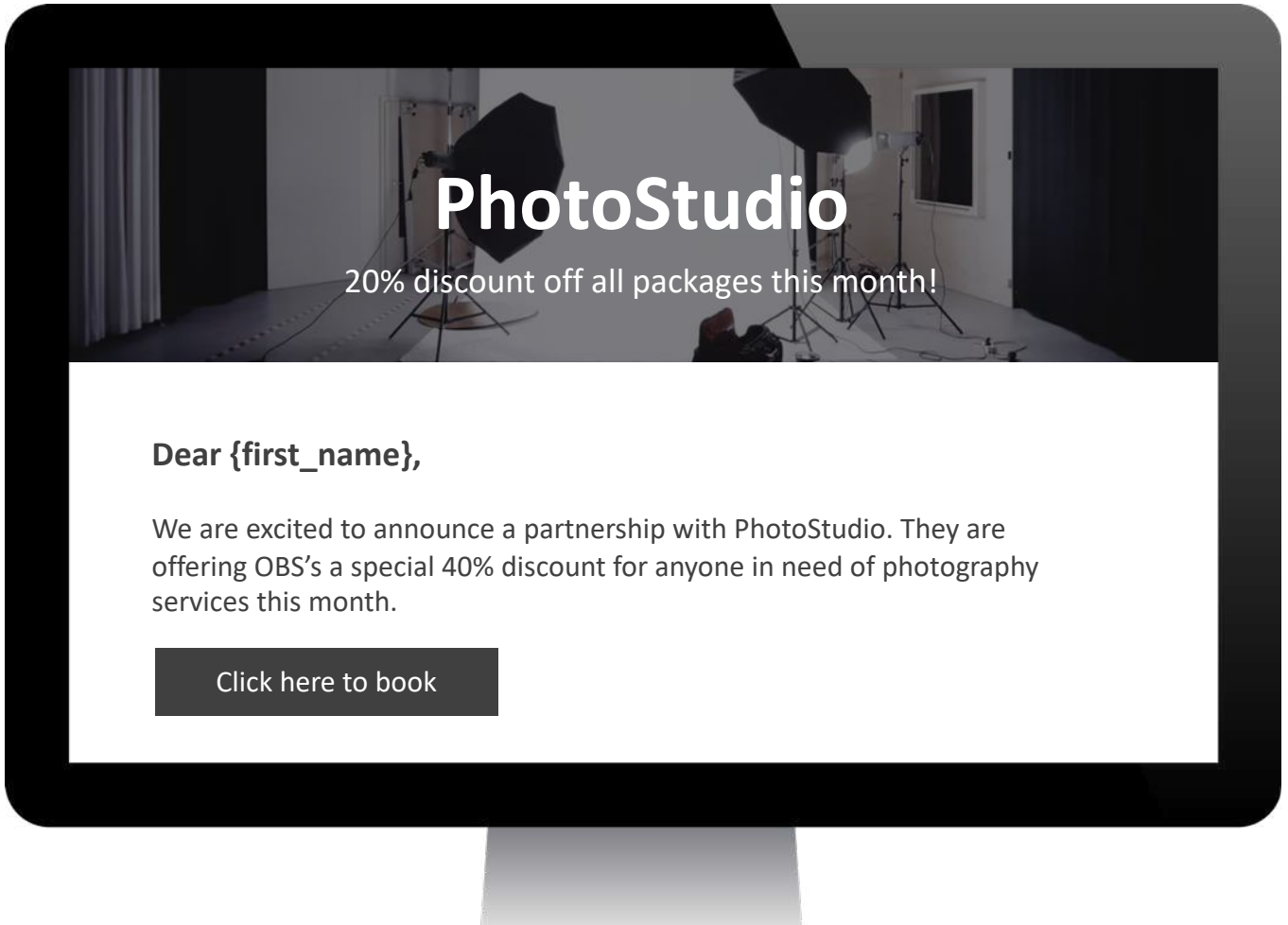
Business directory

You could collate a list of local, relevant or sector specific businesses on a page (use a custom page/ news2/ resources/ clubs) with each business paying a ‘listing’ fee for 12 months



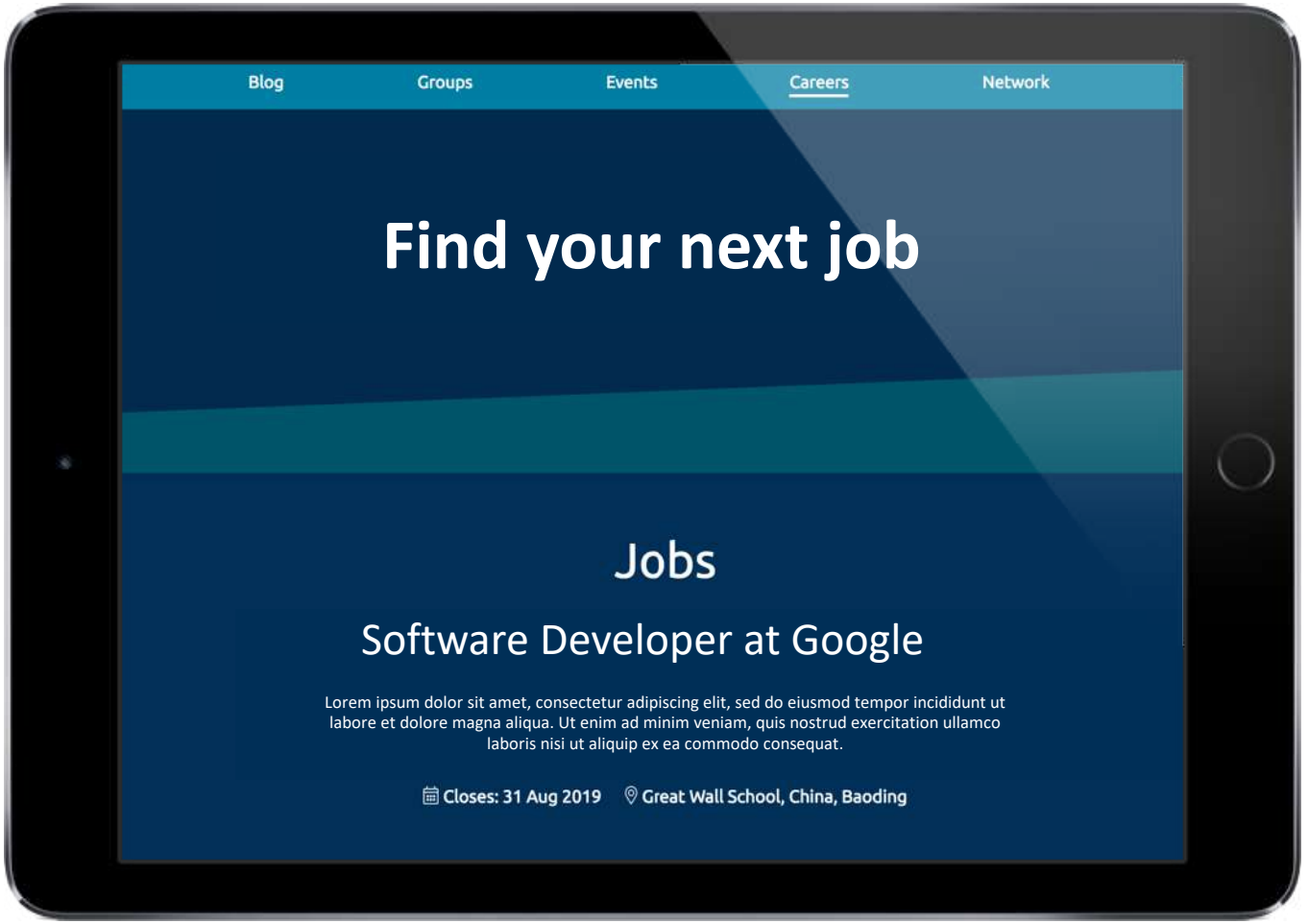
Sponsored email

You could send a dedicated eShot for a company (executed carefully - not to annoy your community!) - or inserts or adverts within your newsletters



Job/ opportunity posts

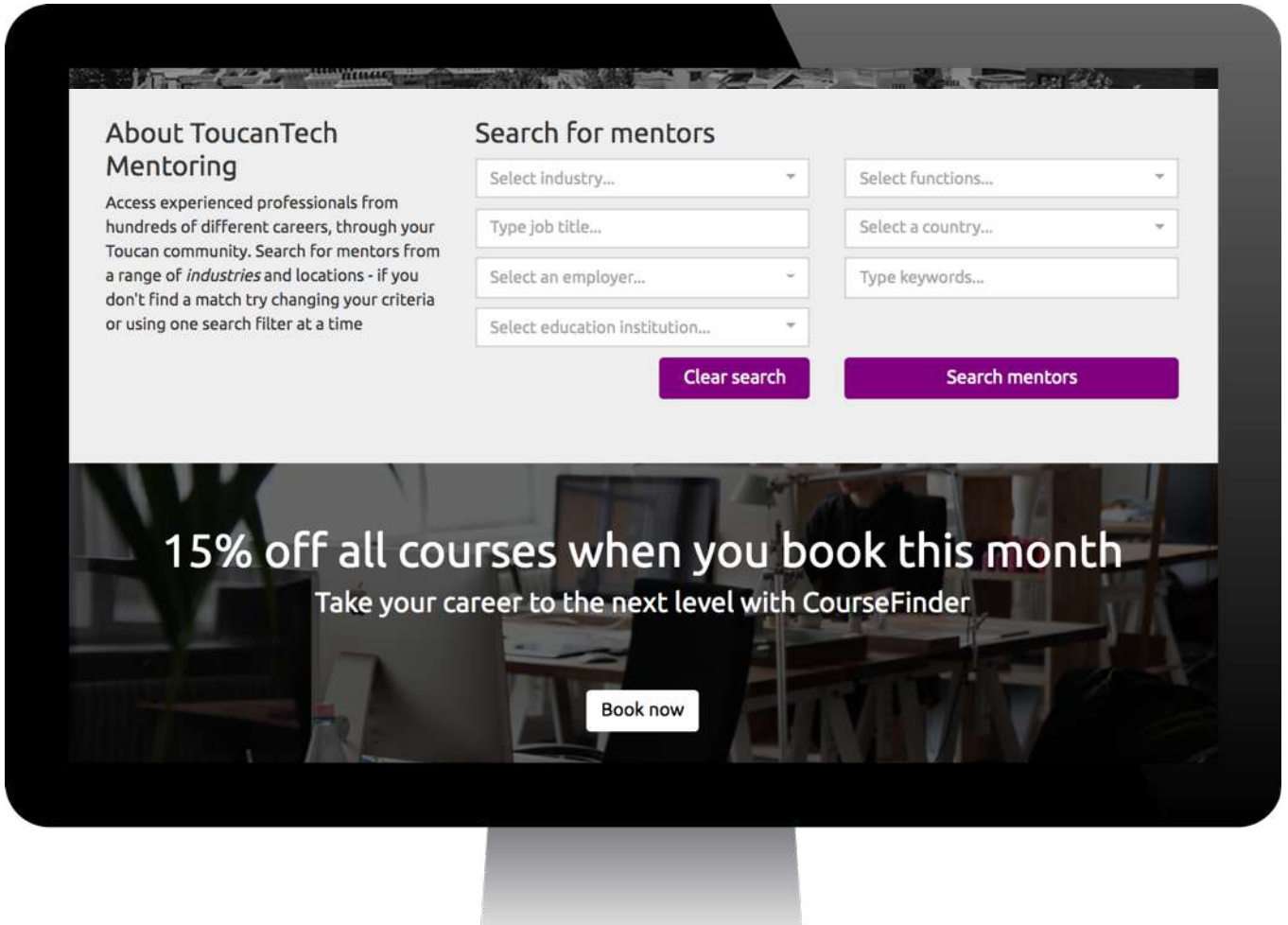
You could post jobs for an employer (or they can upload jobs) – or other opportunities, internships, partnerships (posted as jobs/ stories/ resources)



Example job post

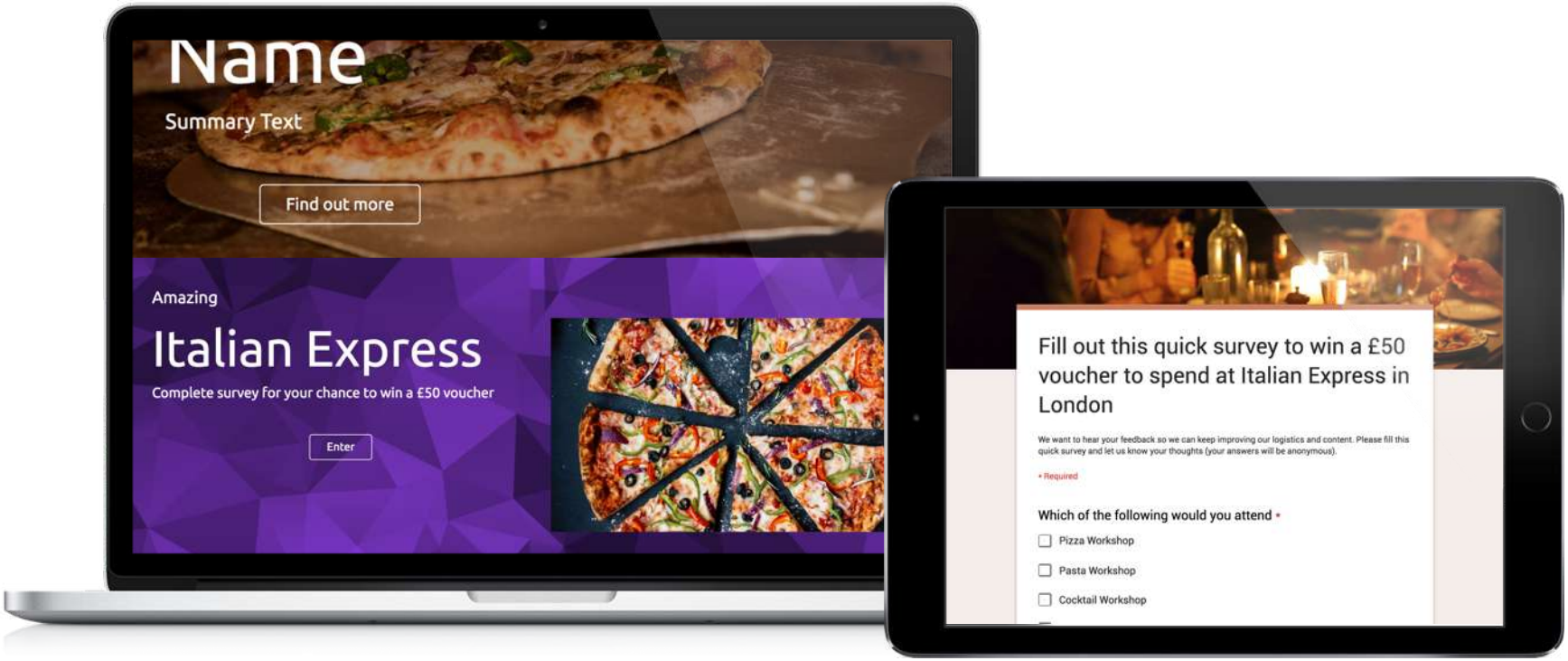
Free offer/ special discount

Can the sponsoring company provide a special offer/ discount exclusive for your members? Post the offer as a custom panel – see example below!

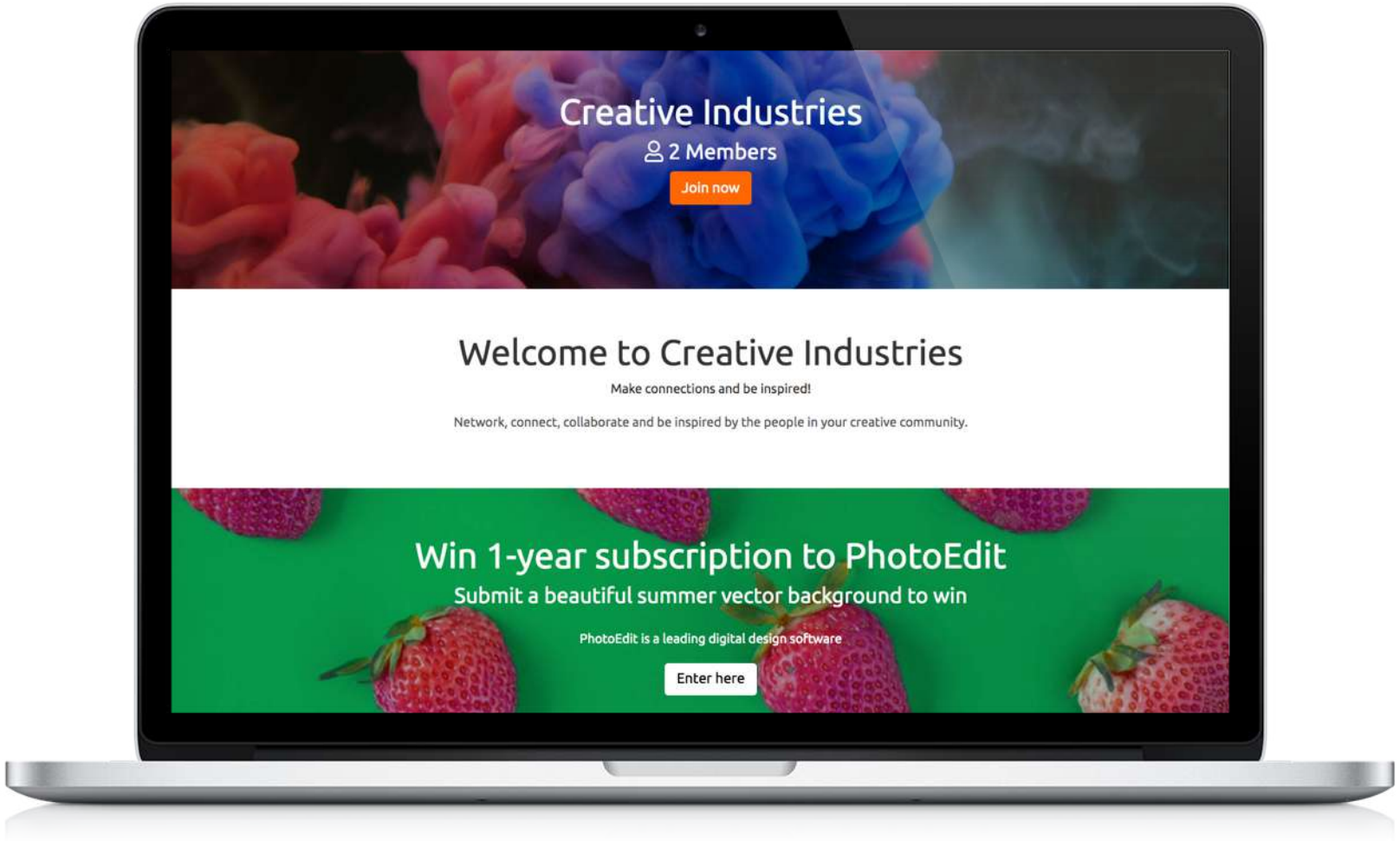


Contest/ survey/ discussion

A sponsored survey or competition via the website, which could include research questions of interest to the company (eg local restaurant habits or where do people look when they're considering a house move etc)

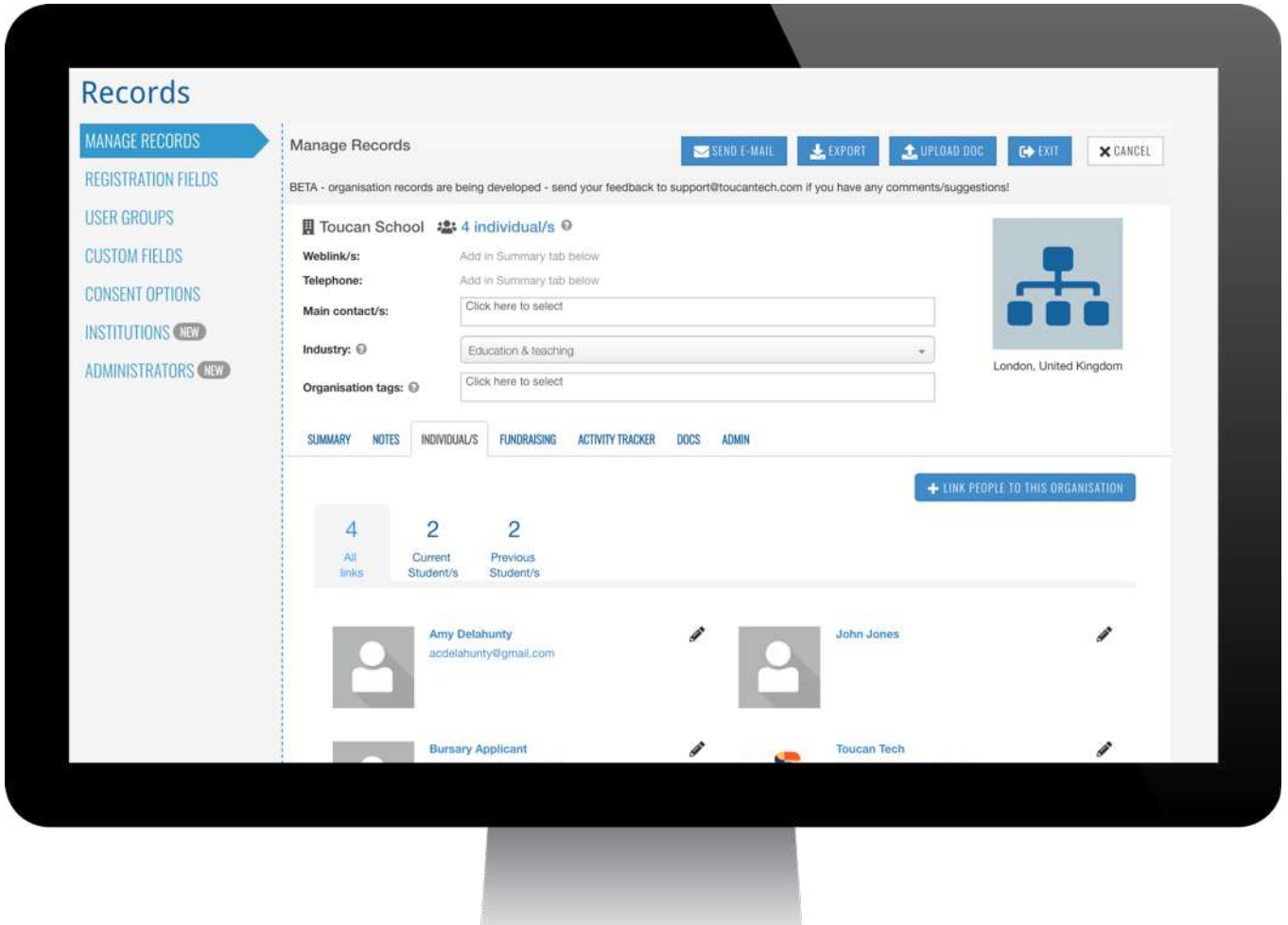


Example sponsored contest



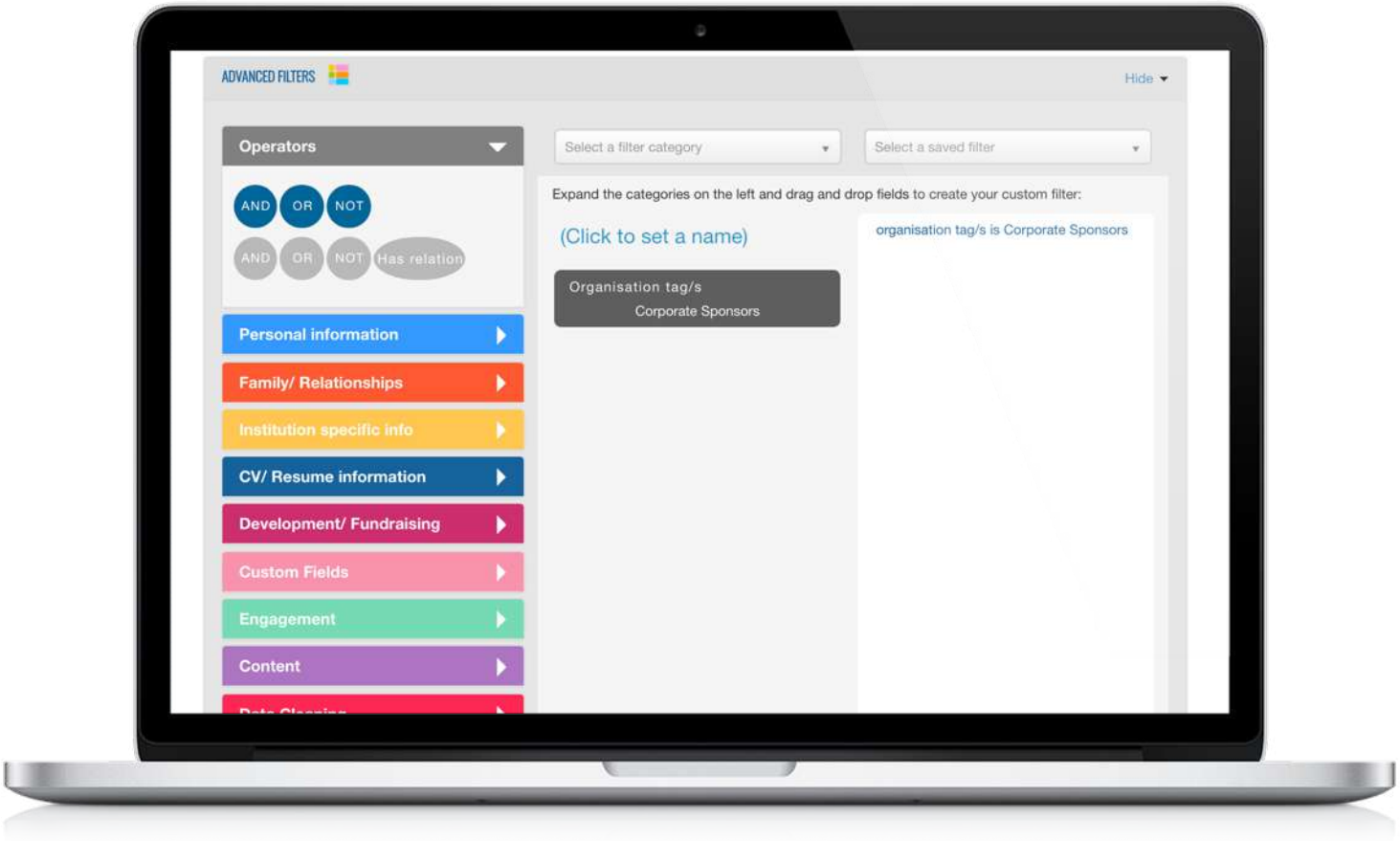
Toucan Tip – Org records for sponsors

Store details of your sponsors/ advertisers in an Org record in your ToucanTech database. Link individuals (such as current employees) to the organisation for a quick view of anyone in your database connected to the company



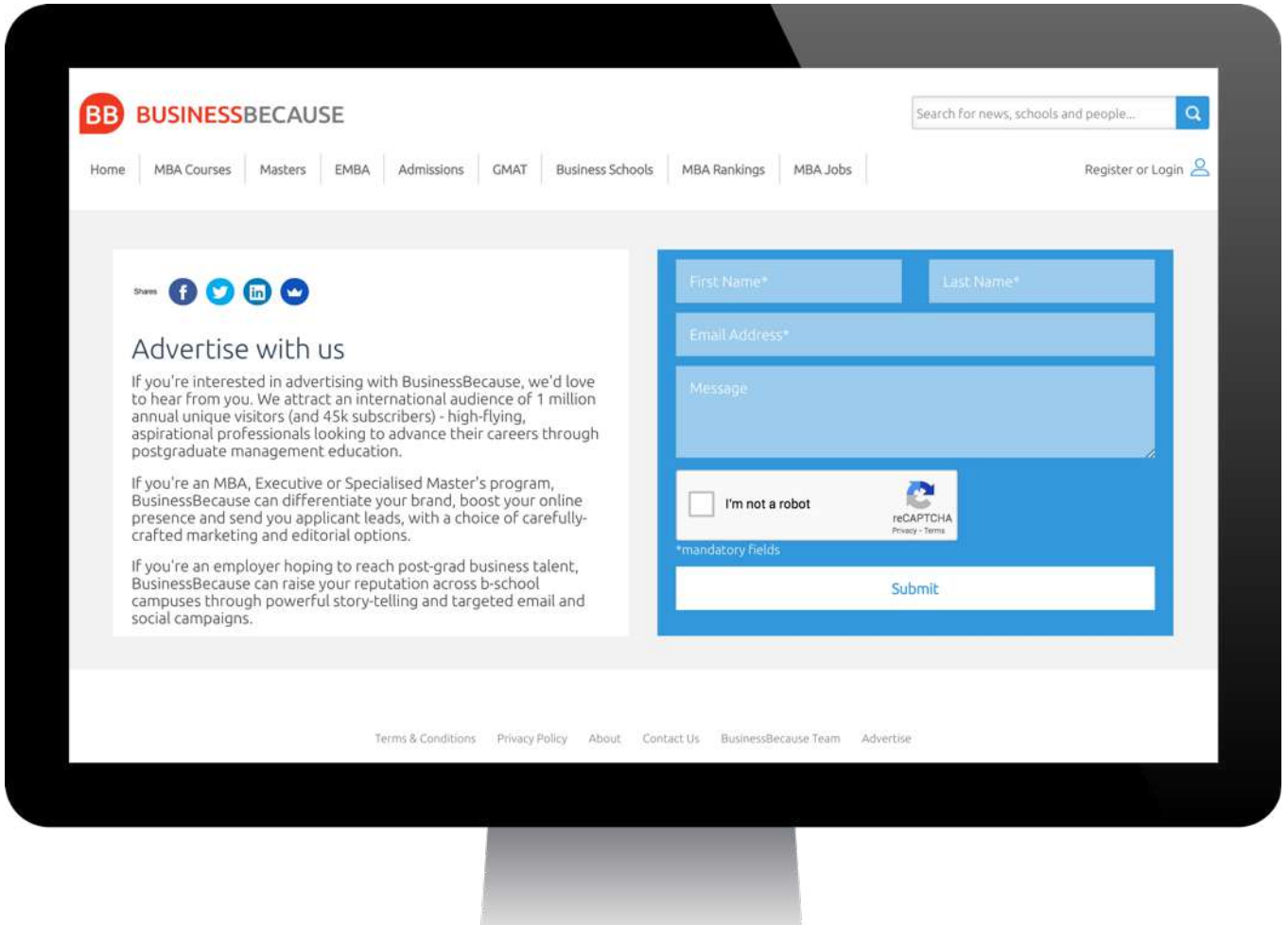
Toucan Tip – User groups/ Org tags

Create a User Group and/ or Org tag to label any sponsors/ advertisers for quick filtering purposes in your database



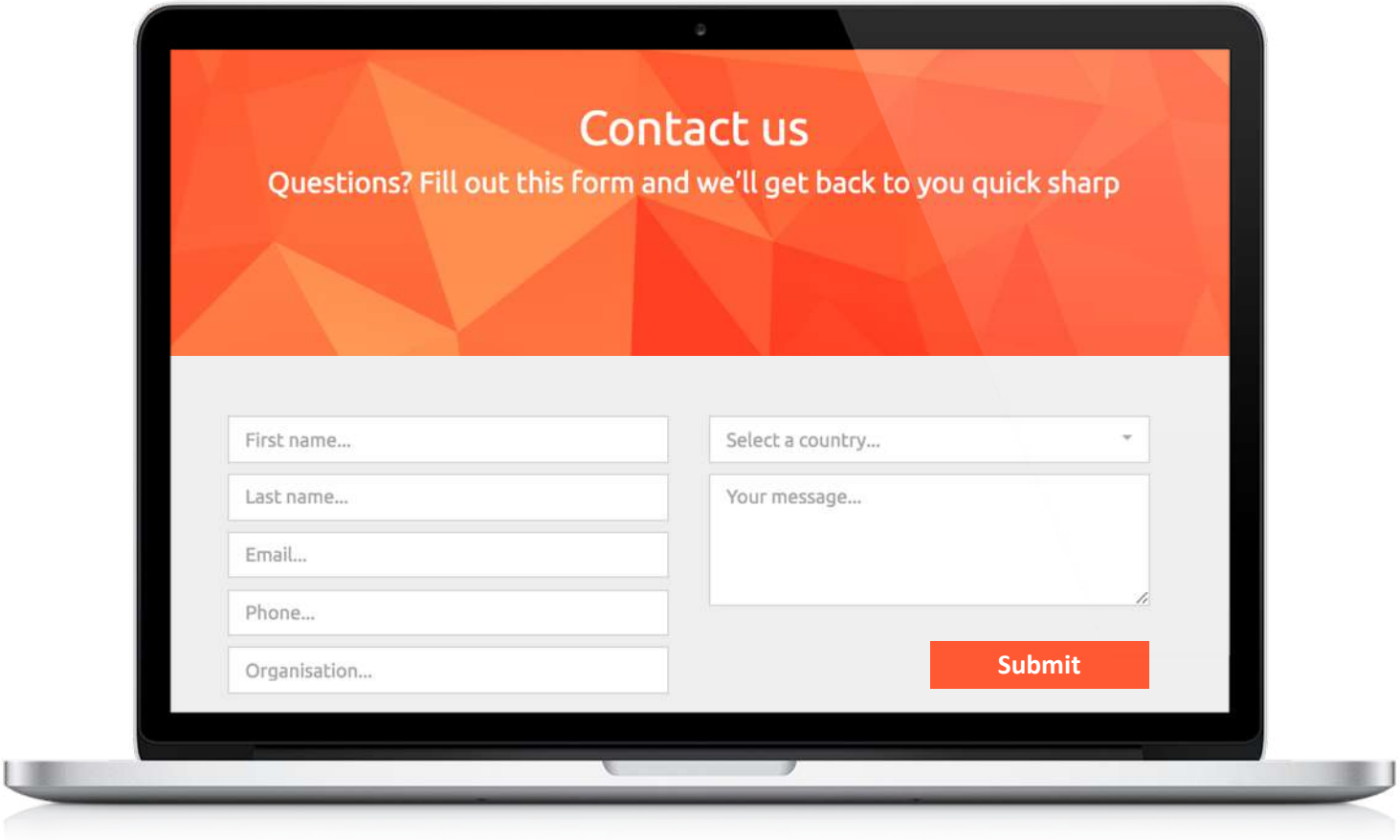
Toucan Tip – ‘Advertise with us’ page

Create a page/ section about sponsorship opportunities on your website - you could add this to the Footer of your website (e.g. rename your ‘Contact’ section to ‘Sponsorship’)



Toucan Tip – Contact form

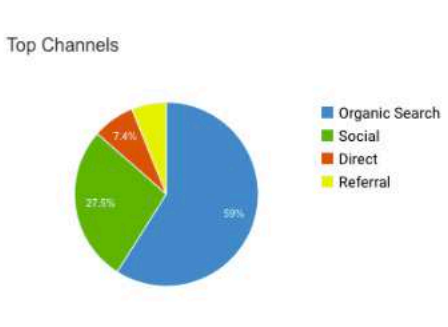
Add a contact form to your site to encourage potential sponsors to contact you – this is an easy custom panel to set up – choose the background colour and transparency

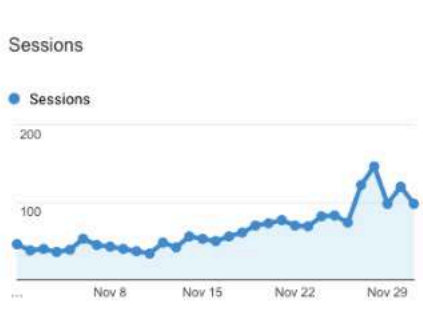


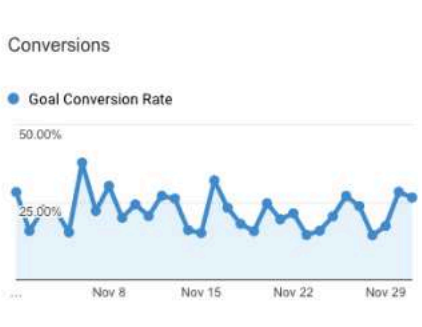
Toucan Tip – Set up Google Analytics

You can pull off some stats from your ToucanTech admin portal (e.g. news story reads, online members, email open rates etc) but for a detailed analysis of web you might want to use a specialist traffic tool such as Google Analytics.

We're happy to help you set this up (for free – as part of your licence fee). You'll need to create a Google Analytics account, create a 'property' for your ToucanTech site on your Google Analytics console and then send your Google tracking code/ ID to the ToucanTech support team who will place this ID in your website's HTML code. Once we've added this tracking code you'll be able to log in to your Google account to view visitor numbers for your ToucanTech site, understand where visitors are coming from and what they're clicking on.







Showcase: Old Campbellian Society

This past pupils' society from a leading school in Northern Ireland has attracted a range of different corporate sponsors, at different sponsorship levels (Green, Black, White) and promotes each company with a logo banner on the bottom of their community website. Here are the sponsors to give you some inspiration about the types of business you might want to approach for your organisation:

City Air Express – courier and delivery services

Haldane Fisher – building merchants

Nelson Radiology – radiology diagnostic service

Cunningham Coates – investment management

Flooring Solutions NI – flooring contractors

Rodgers & Browne – estate agency

Sharpe Group – air conditioning

Showcase: Say thanks!

Using a news article on their community website, the Old Campbellian Society thanks their sponsors, providing a short description of each business and linking out to each sponsor's website.

ToucanTech

Thank you for reading

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