

Skullcandy Case Competition — Marketing Week 2026

Marketing Week: Skullcandy Campus Ambassador Program

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Competition Objective

Your challenge: design a **campus ambassador program** that turns college students into creators. Their user-generated content (UGC) should drive **awareness and revenue** for Skullcandy among college-aged audiences. It should also keep ambassadors **motivated to create all year**.

The competition runs during Marketing Week, **October 26–29, 2026**. It simulates a real agency pitch, so think like a team pitching a live client.

Event	When	Where
Opening Social & Case Comp kickoff	Mon, Oct 26, 4–5 PM	Garff Auditorium
Speaker Panel, including Skullcandy CEO Brian Garofalow	Tue, Oct 27, 4–6 PM	Garff Auditorium
Skullcandy Case Competition presentations	Thu, Oct 29, 2–7 PM	Garff Auditorium

RSVP at https://educationutah.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_d1dYnCUijvE6qt8

The Client Brief: Skullcandy

Skullcandy is a Park City, Utah audio brand known for headphones, earbuds and speakers. It has deep roots in action-sports and youth culture. Skullcandy wants a program that reaches college-aged audiences everywhere, not just on campus.

Outcome goals

- **Awareness:** UGC that spreads across social and speaks to college-aged audiences nationwide.
- **Revenue:** a clear, trackable path from content to purchase through the Instagram and TikTok Shop affiliate programs.

Both goals depend on **sustained ambassador engagement**. Strong proposals show how incentives keep ambassadors creating consistently all year.

Budget: $15,000

Allocate it however you choose: product seeding, incentives, paid media or events. The strongest plans fund ambassador commissions from the revenue those ambassadors generate, not from this budget. For planning, value seeded product at **50% of MSRP**.

Focus products

Product	Type	MSRP	Seeding value (50%)
Crusher® 720	Over-ear headphones	$209.99	$105.00
Session® 900	Portable speaker	$149.99	$75.00
Method® 360 ANC	Earbuds	$129.99	$65.00
Session® 540	Portable speaker	$69.99	$35.00

How to Approach the Challenge

Treat this as a real client brief. Skullcandy wants bold creative ideas grounded in real marketing logic. Your plan should address these six areas.

1. **Recruitment**
    - Ambassador profile: genuine influence in their circles vs. follower count, content skills, and how you'll vet candidates.
    - Program size: how many ambassadors $15K can support, and whether to pilot small and scale up.
2. **Budget & Seeding**
    - Which products go to whom, and how many units per ambassador.
    - How much to hold back for incentives, contests or giveaways.
3. **Compensation & Retention**
    - Commission structure: a rate that motivates without eroding margin. Choose flat or tiered by performance, and compare it with other affiliate programs students could join.
    - Incentives beyond commission: bonuses for posting or sales goals, contests, free product, early access to new drops.
    - Retention: how you keep momentum past month one, and what happens to inactive ambassadors.
4. **Content Strategy**
    - Volume and cadence: how many videos each ambassador posts, and how often, to improve the odds of a post going viral.
    - Creative direction: how much guidance vs. freedom, and the brand guardrails that protect authenticity.
    - Reach beyond campus: content that resonates with college-aged audiences broadly, plus boosting top posts through partnerships or TikTok Spark Ads.

    - Usage rights: whether Skullcandy can repost, boost or repurpose ambassador content, and for how long.
5. **Commerce**
    - Affiliate setup: Instagram and TikTok Shop affiliate programs, links or codes, and how sales are attributed to each ambassador.
    - Path to purchase: which products and price points fit student budgets, and how content moves viewers to buy.
6. **Measurement & ROI**
    - Awareness and revenue KPIs, and the expected return on the $15K.
    - How the program adjusts based on results.

Use data to support your ideas. Benchmarks, competitor comparisons and reasonable mock data are all acceptable if your assumptions are stated.

What You'll Create

Each team delivers a **Competition Entry Package** with:

- ☐ A 1-page strategy summary (visual or written)
- ☐ A 3–5 minute pitch, live or pre-recorded, with slides
- ☐ A program budget showing how the $15,000 is allocated
- ☐ 2–3 sample ambassador content concepts or storyboards (optional)
- ☐ Data references supporting your ideas, included in your presentation
- ☐ A short AI disclosure paragraph explaining which AI tools you used and how

Team Structure

- Teams may have up to 4 students. Come solo to the Opening Social on Oct 26 to find teammates, or bring your own team.
- Undergraduate and graduate students may compete together.
- Interdisciplinary teams are encouraged (marketing, entrepreneurship, design, communication, etc.).
- Each team selects a **Team Lead** to manage deadlines and submission.

AI Use Guidelines

Teams are encouraged to use AI tools for content ideation, competitor and affiliate-program research, data visualization and mockups. Include a short paragraph explaining which tools you used and how.

> *Example: "Our team used ChatGPT to brainstorm commission structures and Canva AI for content mockups."*

Presentation & Judging

- Teams present on the final day of Marketing Week, **October 29, 2026**, from **3:00 – 4:30 PM in the Garff Auditorium**. Each team receives its assigned time after submitting its Competition Entry Package.

- Entry Package deadline: **Oct 29th at 2 pm**.
- Pitches will be live between 3:00 PM and 4:30 PM.
- Judges include faculty and industry professionals. Teams are scored on the Judging Rubric (100 points).

Category	Points	What judges look for
Program Design & Recruitment	20	Clear ambassador profile, vetting and a realistic program size
Content & Creativity	20	Authentic, shareable UGC concepts that reach beyond campus
Incentives & Retention	20	Commission and incentives that keep ambassadors active all year
Commerce & Revenue Path	20	Trackable affiliate setup and a clear content-to-purchase path
Metrics & ROI	20	Strong KPIs, a sound budget and a credible return on $15K

Awards & Recognition

Top teams receive:

- Marketing Week recognition and prizes
- A feature on University of Utah Marketing Department social channels
- Networking with the Skullcandy team

Pro Tips for Success

- **Use data to tell your story.** Even simple mock metrics show critical thinking.
- **Balance creativity with feasibility.** Make the program exciting and runnable on $15K.
- **Think like the ambassador.** Why would a student keep posting in month six?
- **Follow the money.** Show how a view becomes a sale and how that sale pays the ambassador.