



If your gym is an unsightly storage area for infrequently (or never) used items--your school is telling guests, "We are so stretched keeping up the bare minimum that we don't have the time and energy to make our environment appealing."

If the majority of your gym's wall space is dedicated to sponsorships and banners advertising your sports teams' winning seasons--your school is telling guests, "Sports and winning are important to us."

None of these are inherently evil things. But they are not the focus of why your school exists. Your gym is your best avenue for visibly reinforcing your school's mission, and in the process differentiating yourselves from your competition.

### **What story should it tell?**

You will need to decide what is most important to your school and what makes you different and special. But I'll give you a couple hints. Academics and character development are the two most successful differentiators for Christian schools across the country.

### **Are there any examples?**

Why

wonderful draw and/or that because this is the school's gym it is appropriate to focus on sports in that space. Here are my thoughts:

- Successful organizations differentiate themselves from their competition. (This is true for schools or banks or car manufacturers.) What makes you different and special?
- Your gym is your most public space and therefore your best avenue for communicating to your community what makes you different and special.
- No Adventist school that I know can effectively compete with their **local** public school on sports. This is true both on the level of our sports teams competing and, because we don't win on the field (against our local public schools), as a point of differentiation.
- Looking like a public school, with banners and sponsorship advertising, means you are sending the message, "Us too. We do sports too. We look just like our local competition." But you need to look different and better than the competition on a metric of your choosing.

**Delegating:**

Setting the mission and differentiation of your school is a team effort, and should be led by yourself, your board chair and/or pastor through the school board. Everything else here can be delegated: brainstorming a way to communicate your differentiation, making it happen, organizing a work bee, soliciting and coordinating use of the gym for outside entities.

**Binder tab:** June

**School size:** All

**Marketing process step:**

- 1) Who are we?
- 2) What do families want?
- 3) What needs to change?
- 4) How do we tell our community?
- 5) How do we track results?