



VOL. 02 · CAMPAIGNS

THE STUDIO OWNER'S GUIDE

The September Enrolment Playbook

Plan in July, fill classes by September. The 12-week campaign that quietly fills your timetable while everyone else is still on holiday.

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WELCOME

Hello, and welcome to your September.

September is the single biggest enrolment window of the year for UK dance schools. Done well, it sets the tone for everything that follows.

Most studios approach September the same way every year. A burst of social posts in late August, a flurry of replies to enquiries the week before classes start, and a slightly anxious first Saturday wondering who will actually show up. It works, mostly. But it leaves a lot on the table.

The studios that quietly fill their timetable each September are doing something different. They start in early July. They build a waitlist before the doors even open. They use a deliberate cadence of emails, social posts and partnerships across twelve weeks, and they use scarcity honestly when it matters. This guide is the playbook.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Read it once in late June with a cup of tea, then use it as a working document through the summer. The worksheets at the back are designed to be printed and stuck above your desk. Fill in your dates, your numbers and your offer, and you will have a campaign plan ready to run.

WHO THIS IS FOR

- Studio owners who feel September is too important to leave to chance
- Schools who want to lift enrolment by 15 to 30 percent without spending more on ads
- Marketing leads at multi-venue dance organisations planning a new term
- Anyone who has ever stared at half-empty Tuesday afternoon classes in October

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PART ONE

Plan

Before the first email goes out, before a single post is scheduled. The decisions you make in July quietly shape the whole campaign.

Why September makes or breaks your year.

September is the deciding window. The students you enrol in the first three weeks of term are the ones still with you in May.

For most UK dance schools, somewhere between half and two thirds of the entire year's new enrolments happen in a six-week window from late August to early October. Miss it, and you spend the rest of the year topping up. Hit it, and the autumn term funds everything that follows: the show, the summer school, the new studio space.

62%

of annual new enrolments fall in the August to October window

3x

higher conversion on enquiries that come in with a clear offer

12wk

ideal lead time between first campaign post and first class

WHAT A STRONG SEPTEMBER BUYS YOU

- **Confidence.** Full classes from week one. Teachers stay motivated. Parents see momentum.
- **Cashflow.** Term fees collected up front fund the costumes, hires and shows ahead.
- **Community.** Strong cohorts make friends. Friends keep coming back.
- **Headroom.** Time to focus on teaching, not chasing enquiries every week.

MINDSET SHIFT

Stop thinking of September as a single week of work. It is a twelve-week campaign that happens to end in classes starting. The work begins in early July, when everyone else thinks the term is winding down.

The 12-week timeline at a glance.

Twelve weeks. Three phases. Each one builds on the last. Print this page if nothing else.

Weeks 1 to 4 · Plan

Early to late July. Set your offer, lock the timetable, publish the waitlist page, brief your team, gather last year's family endorsements.

Weeks 5 to 8 · Promote

Late July to late August. Email cadence starts. Social ramps. Partnerships activated. First scarcity nudges go out as classes start to fill.

Weeks 9 to 12 · Launch

Late August to mid September. Final 'spaces running out' sequence. First class week. Trial conversion. Tracking. Quick wins for the term ahead.

THE SEVEN THINGS THAT SHOULD BE READY BY 1 AUGUST

- Final autumn timetable published on the website (no "coming soon")
- A waitlist landing page live and tested on a phone
- Your offer or incentive agreed and documented in plain English
- An email list segmented into current, lapsed and waitlist
- Three to five strong social assets ready: a class video, a teacher intro, a parent quote
- A simple tracking sheet for enquiries (source, date, class, status)
- A booked-in afternoon to brief your team on the campaign

If five of those seven are not in place by the end of July, the campaign starts to compress, and compression always shows up as fewer enrolments.

Building your September waitlist.

A waitlist is the single most underused tool in dance school marketing. It costs almost nothing and reliably turns the first week of term from a scramble into a queue.

WHY WAITLISTS WORK

Parents researching in July are not ready to commit. A waitlist gives them a low-stakes way to say "I am interested, tell me more". By the time September arrives, you are not selling to strangers, you are nudging warm leads who have already raised their hand.

THE WAITLIST PAGE ESSENTIALS

01 A specific promise

"Be first in line for our September ballet classes. Limited spaces in each age group." Specific beats clever every time.

02 Five fields, no more

Child's name and age, parent name, email or phone, class interest, optional notes. Anything else costs you signups.

03 What happens next

"We will email you mid August with the final timetable and first booking access, 48 hours before everyone else." Make the early access real.

04 A photograph and a face

A real class photo plus a short paragraph from you. Parents commit to people, not forms.

FROM THE STUDIO FLOOR

We see studios consistently capture 60 to 120 waitlist signups across July and August on a single page. Of those, around 35 to 50 percent convert to a trial booking once doors open. That is a transformative number.

PART TWO

Promote

Eight weeks of deliberate, varied, kind comms. Email, social, partnerships and offers. The cadence does most of the work.

The email cadence: July, August, September.

Email is still the highest-converting channel for dance school enrolment. Use it deliberately, not anxiously.

WHAT TO SEND, AND WHEN

01 **Early July · The save-the-date**

To your full list. "Autumn timetable lands 1 August. Existing families have priority booking." Sets expectations and rewards loyalty.

02 **Mid July · The waitlist invite**

To lapsed families, past trialists, summer school families. "Join the waitlist for September." Soft, generous, no pressure.

03 **Early August · Timetable reveal**

To everyone. Full timetable, prices, teachers, and a clear booking link. The single most opened email of the year.

04 **Mid August · The teacher feature**

Profile one teacher and one class. Warm, human, photo-led. Builds trust before booking peaks.

05 **Late August · Spaces running out**

Honest scarcity. Name the classes that are nearly full. "Three spaces left in Tuesday Ballet, Year 1 to 3."

06 **First week of September · Welcome and reminders**

For booked families: what to wear, where to park, what to expect. For un-booked: "Last chance before term starts."

Six emails across ten weeks. Not one a week, not one a day. A cadence that respects the inbox is a cadence that gets opened.

The social cadence.

Social is where parents notice you exist. Email is where they decide to book. Both matter, and each does its own job.

THE WEEKLY RHYTHM

Two posts a week, July to September

More than that and the bar drops. One class moment plus one teacher or parent feature. Stay specific and warm.

Three to five Stories or Reels a week

Behind the scenes. Quick teacher intros. Short class clips with consent. Stories build familiarity in a way the grid cannot.

CONTENT THAT CONSISTENTLY WORKS

- **The class moment.** A 10-second clip of a real class. Music, smiles, a teacher's voice in the background.
- **The parent quote.** A single sentence on a clean background. "My daughter ran into class." Credit them by first name.
- **The teacher introduction.** Short, warm, ends with what they love about teaching this age group.
- **The behind-the-scenes.** Setting up. Costume planning. The empty studio on a sunny morning.
- **The honest scarcity.** "Tuesday Ballet Year 1 to 3 has two spaces left." Posted once it is true.

AVOID

Generic dance content reposted from elsewhere. Aspirational quotes over stock photos. Anything that could come from any studio anywhere. Parents are looking for proof you are real, local and warm.

Pricing, offers and incentives.

An offer is not a discount. It is a reason to act this week instead of next month.

OFFERS THAT ACTUALLY MOVE ENROLMENT

Free trial class

Still the highest-converting offer. Frame as "first class on us", not "free". Limit it to the first two weeks of term.

Sibling or multi-class discount

A clear percentage off the second child or discipline. Easy to understand, rewards the parents you most want to keep.

Early-bird registration

A small saving for families who book and pay before 31 August. Pulls decisions forward, smooths cashflow.

Friend referral credit

Existing families get a class credit when a friend enrolls and stays past four weeks. Honest and low cost.

WHAT TO AVOID

- Aggressive percentage-off discounts that train parents to wait for the next one
- Confusing tiered pricing that needs a spreadsheet to understand
- Anything that undercuts your existing families' loyalty

RULE OF THUMB

If your offer cannot be summarised in one sentence on a card behind the reception desk, it is too complicated. Simplify until it can.

The 'spaces running out' sequence.

Honest scarcity is one of the most powerful tools you have. Dishonest scarcity is one of the fastest ways to lose trust. Know the difference.

WHEN TO USE IT

From mid August onward, as classes genuinely begin to fill. Not before. The minute parents sense manufactured urgency, the whole campaign loses credibility. Wait until it is true, then say so clearly.

THE FINAL-FORTNIGHT SEQUENCE

01 T minus 14 days · The honest update

Email and social. "Booking is going well. Here is what is nearly full and what still has room." Specific classes, real numbers.

02 T minus 10 days · The parent story

A short story from an existing family. Why they joined, what changed. Place it where booking happens.

03 T minus 7 days · The named classes update

"Three classes now full. Two have one space left. Here is the link." One CTA, one path.

04 T minus 3 days · The friendly nudge

Short and warm. "Term starts Monday. If you have been meaning to book, this is the moment." Reply-by promise.

05 Term opens · The closing call

"First class went brilliantly. Two classes still have room. Spaces close Friday." Honest, specific, finite.

Used five times across a fortnight, this sequence routinely lifts late August and early September enrolment by 20 to 40 percent on its own.

Partnership tactics.

The most reliable enrolment lifts come from places your competitors are not looking. Schools, mums groups, local press, complementary businesses.

FOUR PARTNERSHIP PLAYS THAT WORK IN JULY AND AUGUST

01 Primary school newsletters

Most local primaries send a parents newsletter at the start of term. Many will include a friendly free-classes message from a local studio. Ask in early July, write the copy for them, supply one image. Aim for three schools, not thirty.

02 Local Facebook mums groups

Identify three to five active groups in your town. Do not spam them. Join, contribute genuinely for a few weeks, then post one warm, well-written introduction with a clear waitlist link. Reply to every comment.

03 Complementary businesses

Soft play, swim schools, gymnastics clubs, family cafes, independent bookshops. A small cross-promotion stack of flyers and stories during August. Reciprocate. Local economies love local loops.

04 Local press and parish magazines

Many local papers and parish magazines are short on summer content. A 200-word piece on "a local dance school preparing for its busiest term" with a strong photo gets printed more often than you think.

PARTNERSHIP CHECKLIST

- Three primary school newsletters secured by mid July
- A short, warm introduction post drafted for community groups
- A small print run of postcards or flyers for complementary businesses
- One local press story pitched by the second week of August

PART THREE

Launch & measure

The week of, the day of, the term that follows.
Tracking, forecasting, and the small adjustments that
compound year on year.

The week of: launch comms and first class.

By the time term week arrives, the heavy lifting is done. This week is about reassurance, last-minute conversion, and a flawless first class.



COMMS FOR THE WEEK OF

- **Monday.** A warm welcome email to every booked family. What to wear, where to park, who their teacher is.
- **Tuesday.** A short social post: "We cannot wait to see you this week." Include a teacher cameo.
- **Wednesday.** A final nudge to un-booked families. Name the classes still with space.
- **Friday.** A behind-the-scenes post: setting up, music ready, studio sparkling.
- **First class day.** Photograph the moment (with consent), share by Sunday with a thank-you.

FIRST CLASS WEEK CHECKLIST

- Registers printed and double-checked against the booking system
- A named greeter at the door for every session, not just the first
- Parking and entrance signage in place if anything has changed
- Teachers briefed on the offer and the trial conversion script
- A simple way for nervous parents to ask questions before the class starts

The trial day playbook.

Most studios spend three months filling the trial. Then the trial happens and nobody quite knows what comes next. This is where conversion is won or lost.

BEFORE THE CLASS

01 A friendly confirmation

A short email or WhatsApp the day before. "Looking forward to seeing Eva on Saturday. Here is what to bring."

02 A named welcome at the door

A second person, not the teacher, who knows the child's name and shows them where to wait.

03 A clear parent space

A chair, a coffee if you can, a small information card. Most parents decide in the viewing area.

AFTER THE CLASS

01 A warm conversation, not a pitch

"How did Eva find it?" Listen first. Offer to send the booking link by message rather than asking them to decide on the doorstep.

02 A same-day follow up

Within four hours. A short, personal message with the booking link. Conversion rates fall steeply after 24 hours.

03 A second nudge at 48 hours

One gentle reminder, then stop. "We saved a space until Friday in case you wanted it."

CONVERSION TARGET

Healthy studios convert 55 to 75 percent of trial attendees. If you are below 50 percent, the leak is almost always in the four hours after the class.

Tracking and forecasting.

You cannot improve what you do not measure. Three numbers, captured weekly, will tell you more than any analytics dashboard.

THE THREE NUMBERS

Waitlist signups per week

Captured from late June onwards. The single best leading indicator of September enrolment.

Enquiries by source

Ask every new family how they heard. Social, friend, school, search, flyer. Track it in one column of a sheet.

Trial-to-enrol conversion

Of the trials that happened this week, how many enrolled? Aim for 60 percent plus.

A SIMPLE FORECAST

Multiply your waitlist signups by 0.4 to estimate trial bookings. Multiply trial bookings by 0.6 to estimate enrolments. Compare with last year by mid August. If you are 15 percent down on either number, you have three weeks to act. If you are 15 percent up, plan for capacity, not promotion.

ANNUAL HABIT

Run the same numbers next year, and the year after. Within three Septembers you will know your own ratios more accurately than any agency could, and your campaign will run itself with quiet confidence.

Common mistakes.

The studios that struggle with September are not lazy. They are usually just doing one or two things that quietly cost them most of the gains.

THE SEVEN WE SEE EVERY YEAR

- **Starting in late August.** Eight weeks of warm-up is doing the work. Skipping it leaves money on the table every time.
- **No waitlist page.** Sending July traffic to a generic contact form. Most of those parents never come back.
- **Hiding the prices.** Parents researching at 9pm on a Tuesday do not phone to ask. They scroll on.
- **One enormous discount instead of an offer.** Trains parents to wait. Devalues your work. Almost never necessary.
- **Posting daily on social.** Quantity drops the quality bar. Two great posts a week beat ten rushed ones.
- **No follow up after a trial.** The single biggest leak in dance school marketing. Fix this one thing and watch September shift.
- **No tracking.** Running the same campaign for years with no idea what is working. Three numbers in a spreadsheet is plenty.

IF YOU FIX ONLY ONE THING

Build the waitlist page and start collecting signups by 1 July. It is the single highest-leverage change most studios can make. Everything else compounds on top of that.

Forecasting your September.

Fill these in by mid August. Compare them to last year. Act on the gap.

WAITLIST SIGNUPS SO FAR (DATE AND NUMBER)

ESTIMATED TRIAL BOOKINGS (WAITLIST X 0.4)

ESTIMATED ENROLMENTS (TRIALS X 0.6)

LAST SEPTEMBER'S ENROLMENT TOTAL

THE GAP, AND WHAT I WILL DO ABOUT IT

TOP THREE ENQUIRY SOURCES THIS YEAR

1.

2.

Your 12-week campaign calendar.

Map the campaign month by month. One big thing per phase. Stick this above your desk by the end of June.

June PREP	Set up · waitlist page, offer, timetable <hr/> <hr/>
July PLAN	Build the list · save-the-dates and waitlist invites <hr/> <hr/>
August PROMOTE	Cadence in full · email, social, partnerships <hr/> <hr/>
September LAUNCH	Convert and welcome · trial day, first class, follow up <hr/> <hr/>

SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE...

On the first Saturday of October, my September has worked because:



Want a website that quietly powers your next September?

Vector Web Design builds beautiful, hard-working websites exclusively for UK dance schools. Waitlist pages, conversion-led timetables, photography direction and launch, all in one place.

[Book a free 30-minute consultation](#)

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