

San Diego/Imperial Regional Workforce Program  
Marketing Initiatives: Executive Summary  
1/17/18

Strategy and planning for the regional marketing plan nears completion, as agency recommendations have been shared with the Marketing Committee and are under revision. This effort consists of two main phases: Situation Analysis and Marketing Plan.

Top-level findings from Situation Analysis include:

- The development of *soft skills* and *mid-level skills* that are most in demand in SD/Imp Counties should be the focus of career education marketing communications at two important stages:
  - a) When students, parents, and working adults first consider career education
  - b) When these audiences begin their search for career education information
- As the career education prospect approaches a decision, marketing communication should focus on superior support services, especially for special populations and special needs/concerns.
- To maximize the nine identified, high-growth job sectors, a marketing segmentation approach is recommended, with discreet marketing strategies for each area. It is critical to connect popular and growing program areas of study with those job sectors for marketing purposes
- Civilian utilized a blend of 3<sup>rd</sup> party market data and 1<sup>st</sup> party student data to identify a series of Targeted Segments which will receive direct, Program-specific messaging through the campaign.
- Primary Segments for targeted marketing include Teenagers 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade (high school audience), Adults 18-29 (working adult audience), and Parents of Teenagers 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade (high school student influencers). A subset of Hispanic individuals is identified for each of the segments listed above, and will be targeted appropriately.

Top-level recommendations from the Marketing Plan include:

- A tiered marketing strategy designed to address dual goals of a) increased enrollment and b) audience expansion over time. We recommend creating media and messaging tiers to address each of these: Brand (to drive awareness and shift perceptions of CE within the regional CC's) and Program (to inform and drive conversion for new students). The Program tier will run parallel to each semester's enrollment window, while the Brand tier will be 'always on.'
- Three creative concepts have surfaced for qualitative testing prior to the campaign launch.
- An efficient blend of media channels will distribute the message across the region, including: digital display, out of home, digital radio, e-readers, SEO/SEM, email, and social media.
- Civilian recommends creation of a regional, student-focused website to inform users about CE and drive them to the appropriate college landing page (based on their personal criteria such as location or preferred program area).
- Community Outreach and Public Relations will be driven by individual stories, told through actionable content and a video series. Both traditional and digital PR will be employed.
- Civilian will collaborate with PIOs from each of the colleges to understand what assets are available, and media plans are already in place – this will ensure regional efforts align with individual school efforts, and create opportunities for synergy and media efficiency.
- Additional research – qualitative, quantitative, and sentiment analysis – will take place prior to campaign launch. This research will guide decisions (such as the creative campaign) as well as establish benchmarks across a series of key performance indicators and perceptions.
- Evaluation will continue once the campaign launches in June, with monthly read-outs provided by Civilian for immediate optimization and in-depth reports shared on a quarterly basis.