Outcomes Marketing Toolkit

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Outcomes Marketing Toolkit

Demonstrating Program ROI to Career Changers

SECTION 1

- Outcomes Marketing Self-Audit
- Program-to-Career Mapping Guide
- Affinity Group Partnership Guide
- Non-working Marketing Spend Business Case
- Misrepresentation Rule Briefing Sheet
- Social Media Marketing Channel Primer

Tool 1: Outcomes Marketing Self-Audit

Tool Overview

Increasing public scrutiny of the value of higher education, skeptical students, and large student debt burdens have made it essential for colleges and universities to provide evidence of their programs' demonstrated outcomes to prospective students. However, most institutions and units continue to emphasize logistical program information over evidence of a program's professional value. While logistical information, particularly price and curricula, are clearly important data points to inform prospect decision making, prospective students now expect information about career outcomes. Progressive institutions have begun to use outcomes marketing in their advertisements, program pages, and unit or institutional homepages to inform prospective students about the career value of returning to school.

What is Outcomes Marketing?

The COE Forum defines outcomes marketing as campaigns and messages that provide evidence to prospective students about the tangible career benefits of a program. This evidence includes:

- Labor market demand that demonstrates opportunities in a field of study, such as:
  - Available job openings
  - Expected job growth
  - Average earnings by position
- Success and validation of graduates, such as:
  - Student testimonials
  - Quantitative placement data
  - Ratings and reviews
  - Program rankings

Using the Tool:

Use this tool to audit your current program advertisements, program webpages, and unit or institutional homepage to ensure that you are communicating program outcomes clearly.

Each page includes a checklist of important content items to include, and program advertisements, program pages, and other web pages should include a majority of the checklist items.

Each checklist is accompanied by an example of effective advertisements, program pages, or unit homepages to illustrate what it looks like to put outcomes marketing into practice.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Outcomes Marketing Messaging Checklist

Checklist of High-Impact Outcomes Marketing Materials to Include

Advertisements on social media, search engines, and even print media represent the first experience that many prospective students have with your program(s), and the stakes are high for units to make a compelling first impression. Since prospective students have become increasingly skeptical of direct enrollment solicitations, effective program advertisements prioritize professional outcomes instead.

Use the checklist below to ensure that your advertisements effectively capture prospective student attention and provide valuable content beyond program logistics, then review the example from Seton Hall University School of Law for ideas about how to incorporate outcomes marketing into advertisements.[1]

Outcomes Marketing in Program and Unit Advertising

Does Your Advertising Content Include the Following?	Yes	No
Career outcomes (e.g., titles, occupations, employers, industries) related to the program		
Mean or median earnings associated with relevant career outcomes		
Labor market trends (e.g., total number of related job openings, expected growth in total job openings) related to the program		
Interesting and relevant information not explicitly linked to the academic program		
A clear "WIIFM" ("What's in it for me?") appeal for students not explicitly interested in enrolling in a program		
Content aligned to prospects' in-the-moment browsing behavior and mindset (e.g., entertaining content on Facebook, professional content on LinkedIn)		
Empathetic, second-person language (e.g., "Learn how you can take advantage of this growing field")		
A clear sense of urgency or opportunity (e.g., "500 jobs openings in your city, are you prepared?")		
A call to action that is not explicitly enrollment or application related		

Seton Hall University School of Law Example LinkedIn Sponsored Post

1) For additional information about Seton Hall University School of Law's use of labor market data in program advertisements, please see pages 33-34 of this publication.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Outcomes Marketing Web Presence Checklist

Checklist of High-Impact Outcomes Marketing Materials to Include

Once you have successfully captured a prospective student's attention with your advertising and encouraged them to learn more about your program offerings on your website, you must solidify the link between your available programs and relevant professional opportunities. Use the checklist below to ensure that program webpages provide compelling evidence of a program's professional value to prospective students, and then review the outcomes-focused program webpage template for inspiration.[1]

Outcomes Marketing on Program Pages

Do Your Program Webpages Include the Following?	Yes	No
Career outcomes (e.g., titles, occupations, employers, industries) related to the program		
Labor market trends (e.g., total number of related job openings, expected growth in total job openings) related to the program		
Direct connection between courses and professional skills attained		
Testimonial content and endorsements from current students and graduates affiliated with the program		
Quantitative placement data (e.g., job placement rate, promotion rate, career change rate)		
Third-party data validating the program's value (e.g., rankings, awards)		
Reviews of your institution, unit, program, or course		
Content generated by current or former students (e.g., photo submissions, unfiltered program feedback)		

Hypothetical Program Page Template

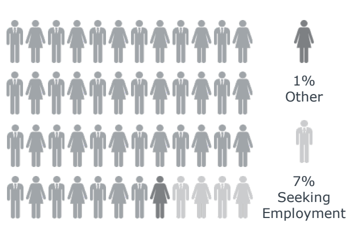
[PROGRAM NAME]

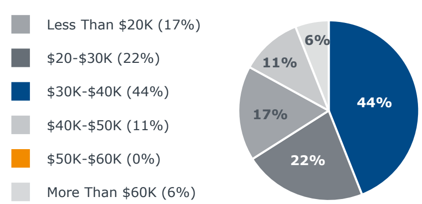
Program Facts at a Glance	
Curriculum	Learning Outcomes
Cost	Credit Transfer
Modality/Format	Related Programs
Credits Conferred/Time to Completion	Request Information/Apply now

Graduate Employment and Earnings Data:

92%

Working, grad school, or both





Career Outlook:

150,000 related job openings nationally

55% expected growth in job openings through 2024

In-Demand Skills:
- Communication
- Software Design
- User Experience

Top Employers
- Deloitte
- Alliant Health Solutions
- Google

1) For additional examples of outcomes marketing on program or unit webpages, please review pages 60-62 of this publication

Source: American University, "We Know Success," www.american.edu/weknowsuccess; EAB interviews and analysis.

Web Presence Student Centricity Checklist

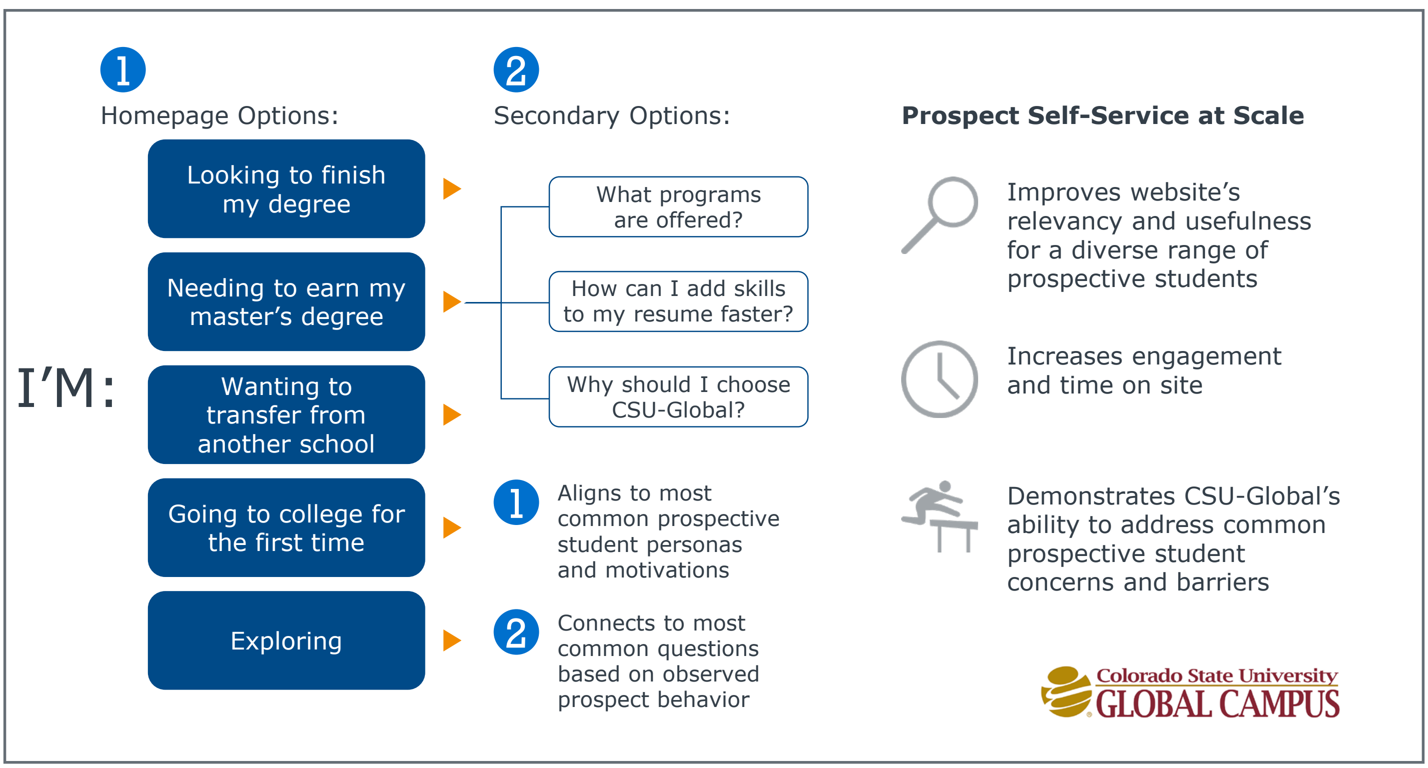
Checklist of High-Impact Outcomes Marketing Materials to Include

A unit's website home page is an indispensable resource for prospective students interested in learning more about how further education can help prepare them to achieve their professional goals, and progressive institutions and units have begun to optimize their website designs towards prospective student information needs, hoping to help prospects navigate as quickly as possible to the information most relevant to them. Use the below checklist to ensure that your website design is optimized to address prospective student questions, concerns, and motivations, rather than institutional capabilities. Finally, review the simplified illustration of Colorado State University Global Campus's institutional homepage for one example of student-centric website design.[1]

Overall Website Usability and Student Centricity

Does Your Website Include the Following?	Yes	No
Information architecture that prioritizes answers to common prospective student questions (e.g., "what programs are available," "what support services are available," "can I transfer credits?")		
Navigational language that reflects the prospective student voice, rather than institutional voice (e.g., "what programs are available?" versus "academic offerings")		
Information and navigational options for visitors unsure whether they plan to return to school		
Intuitive navigation that allows visitors to easily move between program pages		
Features (e.g., program explorer, program or career assessment) that help prospective students determine which program(s) is the best fit for their personal and professional needs		

Colorado State University Global Campus Example



1) For another example of a student-centric website design, please review the University of Colorado at Boulder's Continuing Education website, profiled on pages 44-46 of this publication.

Source: Colorado State University Global Campus, https://csuglobal.edu/; EAB interviews and analysis.

Tool 2: Program-to-Career Mapping Guide

Tool Overview

While institutions and units understand the need to connect their program offerings to labor market opportunities, often these connections are not transparent or readily available for prospective students. Further, many program pages emphasize course and program learning outcomes over career value, and marketing messages focus on program availability rather than professional application.

Progressive COE units incorporate labor market data from sources such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) or Burning Glass Technologies Labor/Insight™ into their program development, planning, marketing, and recruiting efforts. Using labor market data to connect program offerings to local and national professional opportunities represents the critical first step to educating prospective students about the career value they can expect from given programs, and equips both marketers and recruiters to make an outcomes-based case for enrollment based on professional interest.

What Is Labor Market Data?

Labor market data refers to information about the employment trends of a given market (e.g., city, region, industry, employer), typically related to the hiring needs of employers within that market. Labor market data typically takes two forms: structural and real-time.

Structural

Structural labor market data sources such as the BLS rely on surveys and other instruments that collect data periodically. These sources analyze currently held positions, projected employment trends in a given field, conditions within a given field, and other variables. For example, this could include an annual survey of the accounting occupation that includes the total number of account positions held nationwide, skills required for the position, typical tasks, average earnings, and projected growth in available positions through 2024. These data are publically available.

Real-Time

Real-time labor market data sources use web crawling technology to analyze job postings data and other employer hiring data, and typically collect data daily if not multiple times per day. These sources provide real-time data related to current hiring needs in a given market, which can include the total number of available job openings in a given field, top hiring employers, skills required to fill open positions, and trends by geography. These data are typically proprietary.

How to Use This Tool

This tool provides step-by-step guidance to integrate labor market data into marketing and recruiting efforts.

Part 1: Labor Market Data Primer. Review common labor market data points, how to use those data in marketing and recruiting, and common formats for deploying those data.

Part 2: Program-to-Career Crosswalk Guide. Brainstorm and identify potential career outcomes for which a program graduate will be best positioned and prepared, and link existing programs to quantitative labor market data related to those career prospects.

Part 3: Labor Market Data Marketing Taxonomy. Examine how other institutions have used labor market data in their marketing and recruiting efforts, from quick-wins to more involved examples:

- Text and numerical data in program descriptions
- Data visualizations
- Integrated program sheets that combine multiple types and formats of labor market data
- Interactive website features that enable prospective students to explore the data on their own

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Part 1: Labor Market Data Primer

Type of Data, Effective Uses, and Common Formats

The following pages enumerate common forms of labor market and employer demand data that colleges and universities can use in their marketing efforts to demonstrate the career value and professional ROI of their programs to prospective students. Each type of data includes a brief description, advice on how and when to use the data, the best stage in the recruitment funnel to deploy the data, and common formats for delivery.

Data Type and Description	How to Use	Common Formats
Total Job Openings The total number of open positions in a given field, or that require a certain skill or skill set	• Cite total job openings to size the potential opportunity and create urgency for prospective career changers • Use in top-of-the-funnel lead generation and awareness materials to capture prospect attention	• Infographic-style numbers • Integrated in narrative text • Line or bar charts
Historical and Projected Job Growth The change in total available job openings over time, and the anticipated number of job openings for a given position or field, or for positions that require a certain skill or skill set	• Provide hiring trends over time, or the projected change in total number of open positions to provide evidence that changing careers can provide long-term job stability • Use in top-of-the-funnel lead generation and awareness materials to capture prospect attention	• Infographic-style numbers • Integrated in narrative text • Line or bar charts
Top Titles or Occupations The names of available positions that most frequently require applicants with the skills or experience conferred through your program	• Offer open positions related to a program of study to provide evidence of the program's professional value and the likelihood that a student will secure employment post-graduation • Use on program information pages and related collateral, and in middle-of-the-funnel nurturing interactions	• In-depth career profiles • Bar charts • Text-based lists
In-Demand Skills The top skills required to pursue a given position or career	• Showcase employer-demanded skills to demonstrate the career value of a program when that program's curriculum aligns with those skills • Use on program information pages and related collateral, and in middle-of-the-funnel nurturing interactions	• Bar charts and other forms of data visualization • Text-based lists

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Labor Market Data Primer (cont.)

Data Type and Description	How to Use	Common Formats
Top Industries or Employers The industries and employers posting the greatest number of open positions for applicants with the skills or experience conferred through your program	• Offer information related to the types of employing organizations seeking candidates similar to program graduates to provide evidence of student job prospects post-graduation • Use on program information pages and in middle-of-the-funnel lead nurturing interactions	• Employer or industry profiles • Integrated in narrative text • Text-based lists • Bar charts
Geographic Demand "Hotspots" Geographic areas (e.g., cities, MSAs, states, regions) with large number of employers that require professionals with the skills or experience conferred through your program	• Provide employer demand by geographic area to offer evidence to prospective students that positions are available near them, indicating immediate opportunity • Use in top-of-the-funnel lead generation and awareness-building efforts to capture prospective student attention	• Maps • Bar charts and other data visualizations
Salary or Earnings The mean or median earnings associated with a given position	• Provide mean or median earnings to offer a natural incentive for prospective students to consider a career change, particularly if those earnings are above average • Use in top-of-the-funnel lead generation and awareness-building efforts to capture prospective student attention	• Infographic-style numbers • Integrated in narrative text • Tabular or text-based lists • Bar charts and other data visualizations

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Part 2: Program-to-Career Crosswalk Guide

Using BLS Data to Demonstrate Labor Market Demand for Existing Programs

This step-by-step process shows how to link a single existing program to labor market demand using the Bureau of Labor Statistics' O*NET code occupational classification system.

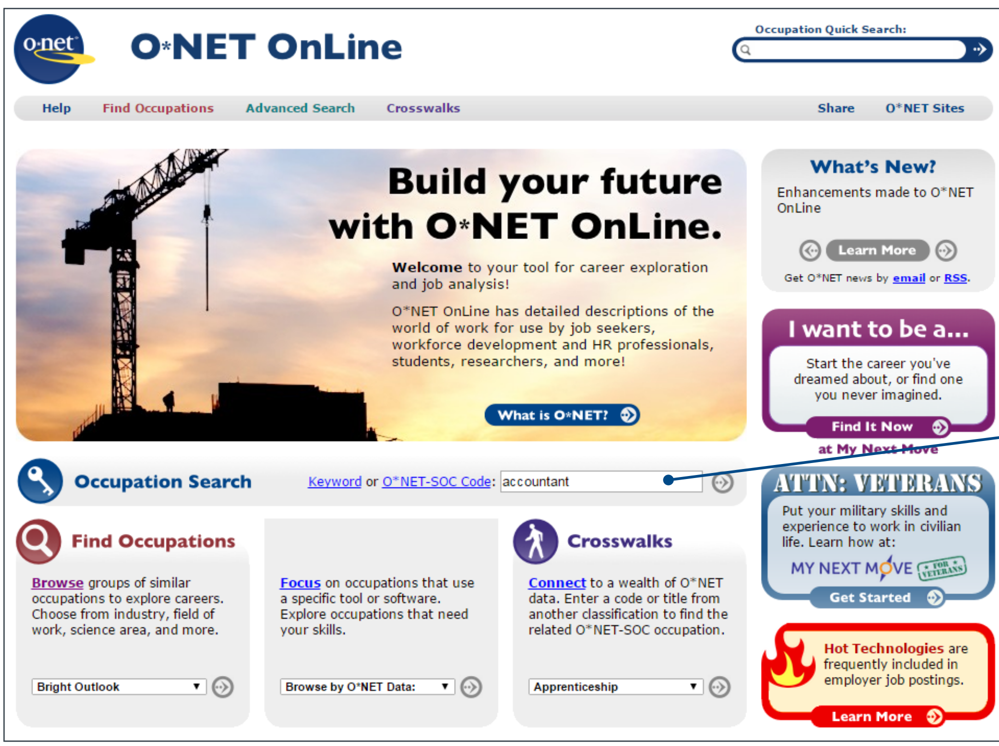
1 Identify Relevant Career Outcomes Related to the Program in Question

- Confer with faculty and staff involved in the program to brainstorm relevant professional outcomes for which program graduates would be best prepared.
- Reach out to current students and especially alumni to ascertain current or expected professional outcomes following graduation from the program.
- Develop a list of one or more relevant occupational outcomes; these can be broad umbrella categories (e.g., scientists) or more specific examples (e.g., bioengineering researcher).
- Write all potential career outcomes into the "Related Career Opportunities" box in the below table.

Program Information	
Program Title	
Degree Level	
Modality	
Related Career Opportunities	

2 Search for O*NET Occupation Codes Related to Identified Career Outcomes

- Visit O*NET Online (www.onetonline.org).
- Type a position, occupation, or career identified in step one of this exercise into the search bar.
- Click the arrow or press "enter" on your keyboard to advance to the search results page.



Type a keyword related to the professional application of this program into the search bar (e.g., "accountant" for an accounting program)

Source: O*NET, https://www.onetonline.org/; EAB interviews and analysis.

Program-to-Career Crosswalk Guide (cont.)

3 Select O*NET Occupation Codes Related to Identified Career Outcomes

- Review the O*NET occupations listed on the search results page and select the occupation most closely related to the program's identified career outcomes.
- Input the occupation code, occupation title, and justification (if the code's relevance to the program in question is not self-evident) in the below table.

O*NET Code Identification

Identify at least one O*NET code for the program in question, based on the one or more occupations that program graduates are most likely to secure. While many programs (e.g., Accounting) will connect clearly to available O*NET codes, others (e.g., Applied Social Research, Gerontology) may not. For programs without obvious related O*NET codes, include the most relevant available code with a justification for your choice in the far right column.

Related O*NET Occupational Code(s)	O*NET Occupational Title	Justification (if not clearly apparent)

Source: O*NET, https://www.onetonline.org/; EAB interviews and analysis.

Program-to-Career Crosswalk Guide (cont.)

4 Collect Labor Market Data for each O*NET Occupation Code

- Scroll to the bottom of the O*NET occupational information page to view the related labor market data points.
- Input “Employment,” “Projected growth,” “Projected job openings,” and “Median wages” in the below table.
- Return to step three and select another relevant O*NET code if one exists.
- Repeat steps two through four for each occupational outcome related to the program in question.


Wages & Employment Trends

Median wages data collected from **Accountants and Auditors**.
Employment data collected from **Accountants and Auditors**.
Industry data collected from **Accountants and Auditors**.

Median wages (2015)	$32.30 hourly, $67,190 annual
State wages	Local Salary Info
Employment (2014)	1,333,000 employees
Projected growth (2014-2024)	Faster than average (9% to 13%)
Projected job openings (2014-2024)	498,000
State trends	Employment Trends
Top industries (2014)	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services

Scroll to the bottom of the following page to identify and catalog the O*NET occupational code’s associated labor market data

BLS Data Collection

For each identified O*NET occupation, include the appropriate data point in the columns that proceed to the right. If multiple O*NET codes are applicable to the program in question, include each additional code and related data points in a subsequent row.

Occupation (O*NET Code)	Employment (2014)	Projected Growth (2014-2024)	Rate of Growth	Projected Job Openings (2014-2024)	Median Wages (2015)

Source: O*NET, https://www.onetonline.org/; EAB interviews and analysis.

Part 3: Labor Market Data Marketing Taxonomy

Example 1: Text and Tabular Data

Highlighting employer demand and labor market data using a narrative text format is a simple, familiar, and straightforward method to communicate the career prospects associated with a given program to prospective students. Unfortunately, given today's prospective student's information consumption habits, short attention span, and high expectations for entertainment value, text-based reporting is typically less effective in lead-generating activities such as display ads. However, on program information pages, delivering labor market data using narrative text or tabular data helps prospects who have already demonstrated interest in your program to quickly and easily consume large amounts of outcomes information related to the program.

American University Deploys Earnings and Jobs Data to Highlight Programs' Professional Value

This degree can prepare you for the more than 27,000 positions requiring data evaluation or program evaluation skills1 that were posted in 2015 alone. In addition, social science positions in the D.C. area are projected to grow by 29 percent from 2010 to 2020, and 19 percent nationwide.2 Among the positions this degree prepares you for are a variety of lucrative analyst and management roles:

- Management Analyst – $81,320
- Operations Research Analyst – $78,630
- Top Executives – $102,690

-Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016 Occupational Outlook Handbook

- Incorporates numerous labor market data points in its program descriptions, sourced from the BLS Occupational Outlook Handbook
- Uses total open positions requiring the skills conferred in its program and projected growth in related position through 2020 to size the career opportunity for prospects and cultivate a sense of urgency to enroll and take advantage of these favorable hiring conditions
- Deploys top titles and earnings data to offer concrete examples of possible career outcomes following program graduation, and to emphasize the tangible financial opportunity associated with enrollment

By 2024, nearly 2.5 million new healthcare jobs will be created in the U.S.1

- Uses differentiated text, font size, and color to draw prospective students' attention
- Highlights the substantial size of the health care job market, and forecasts for its growth to create a sense of urgency

Rasmussen College Offers Transparency by Breaking Out Earnings by Percentile

How Much Could You Earn as a Criminal Justice Professional?

In-Demand Career Options for Your Future

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), earning a degree, regardless of the field of study, can improve income potential.* Here is the average salary by percentile and projected job growth for criminal justice professionals:

Job Title(s)	10th Percentile	25th Percentile	50th Percentile	Job Growth (By Year 2024)
First-Line Supervisors of Police and Detectives	$48,930	$63,050	$82,090	4%
First-Line Supervisors of Correctional Officers	$38,030	$44,020	$59,720	3%
Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	$33,430	$42,910	$58,320	5%

- Employs a tabular data presentation format to illustrate the earning potential associated with various criminal justice professions
- Rasmussen uses BLS data to highlight earnings across various percentiles of criminal justice professionals, clearly illustrating median expected earnings, as well as projected job growth through 2024
- Such information clearly communicates the financial opportunity for prospective students, and facilitates further conversations with enrollment staff about the career value of Rasmussen's programs

Source: American University, "Online Master's in Healthcare Management," http://programs.online.american.edu/mshcm/masters-in-healthcare-management?_ga=1.249914176.79495945.1489096431; American University, "Online MS in Measurement and Evaluation," http://programs.online.american.edu/msme/masters-in-measurement-and-evaluation?_ga=1.249914176.79495945.1489096431; Rasmussen College, "Help Advance Your Criminal Justice Career," http://www.rasmussen.edu/degrees/justice-studies/criminal-justice/; EAB interviews and analysis.

Labor Market Data Marketing Taxonomy (cont.)

Example 2: Data Charts

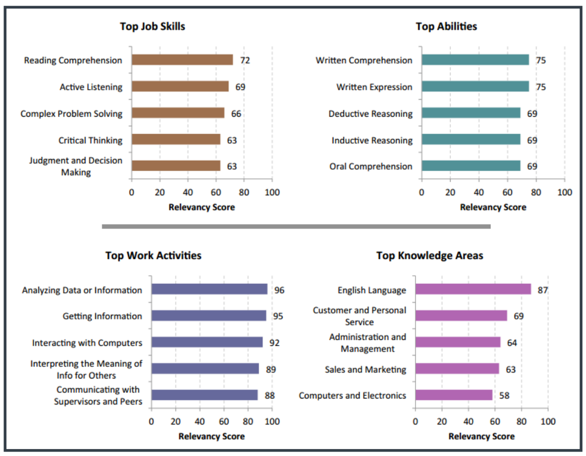
Bar charts, pie charts, heat maps, and other forms of data visualization are an engaging format to communicate labor market and employer demand data to prospective students. These formats can be used to quickly order and prioritize information for prospects, and to size career opportunities (e.g., total number of jobs requiring the skills conferred in the program, top employers hiring candidates with the skills conferred in the program). Further, data visualizations represent an eye-catching element to include in advertisements and lead generation campaigns, and can add color to program pages.

Elements of Effective Data Visualization

- Communicates a clear point or argument
- Minimizes complexity by visualizing only as many variables at a time as necessary
- Uses intentional colors, as few as possible
- Employs informative titling and call-outs

UCI University of California, Irvine

University of California at Irvine Connects Coursework to In-Demand Skills



- Uses bar charts to communicate and rank order in-demand skills that local and regional employers require of candidates
- Offers a "relevancy score" to connect those skills to program curricula, and translate the academic value of programs into career value for prospective students

SETON HALL | LAW

Seton Hall University School of Law Combines Multiple Data Points in Simple Infographic

- Uses labor market data from a market research brief completed by the COE Forum to build an infographic and display advertisements for prospective students
- Materials communicate the career opportunity associated with one of its programs
- The infographic includes numerous forms of data visualization, including:
  - Bar charts rank ordering in-demand skills
  - Infographic-style data points to size the job market and projected growth in open positions
  - Maps indicating the locations of available job opportunities

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Labor Market Data Marketing Taxonomy (cont.)

Example 3: Integrated Program Sheets

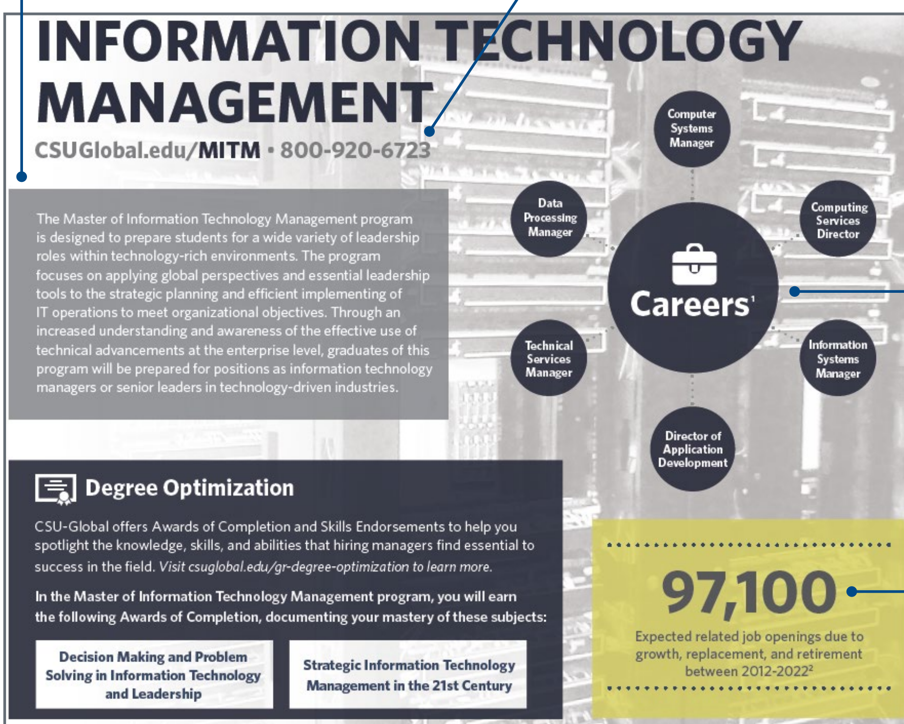
While incorporating single labor market data points into program pages and marketing campaigns represents a crucial first step to articulating the career value of a given program, progressive institutions have begun experimenting with different formats to convey multiple data points and types of information together in a single, cohesive prospect experience. Program sheets or program pages that include multiple types of labor market or employer demand data, in different visual formats, offer prospective students an opportunity to deeply explore a given program and determine whether that program is the right fit for them personally and professionally.

Colorado State University GLOBAL CAMPUS

Combines Multiple Types of Outcomes Data to Present a One-Stop Source of Program Information

Program Description
A succinct description of the program includes learning outcomes and relevant information for students unfamiliar with the topic or program option

Vanity URL
Unique program URL helps to track prospective student leads who may have learned about the program through the program sheet



Career Outcomes
This information sheet provides concrete examples of occupational outcomes that program graduates will be qualified to pursue

Projected Job Growth
Includes projected available job openings through 2022 related to the program, to size the career opportunity for program graduates

Bespoke Credentialing System
"Degree Optimizations" provide awards of completion to students while they are enrolled in a program, which communicate the job-ready skills they have developed following their completion of various course sequences; this system translates the academic value of the program into resume-ready skills to discuss with potential employers

Source: Colorado State University Global Campus, "Online Master's Degree in Information Technology Management," https://csuglobal.edu/graduate/masters-degrees/information-technology-management; EAB interviews and analysis.

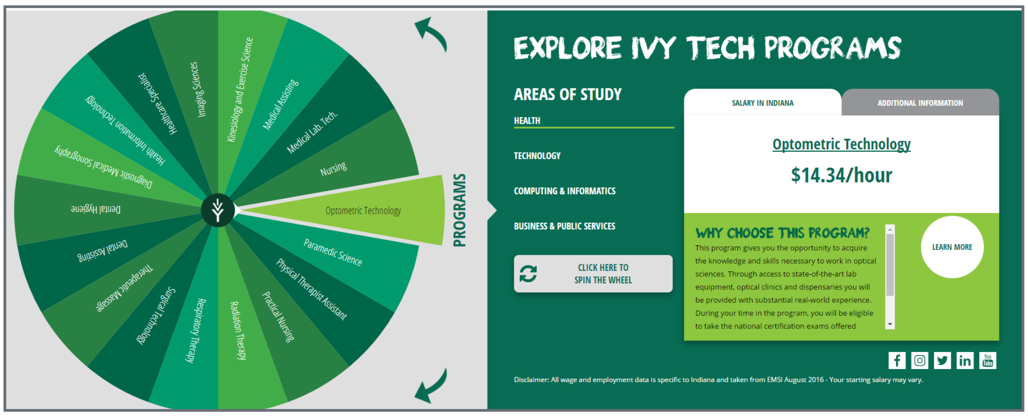
Labor Market Data Marketing Taxonomy (cont.)

Example 4: Interactive Website Content

While interactive website features including net price calculators are becoming more common, they are still relatively rare across higher education websites. However, some progressive institutions have developed interactive features that enable prospective students to explore the career value of the institution's programs. Interactivity provides an engaging distinction for a university or college website, and creates an easily “shareable” opportunity for prospective students to send the website to friends, family members, and colleagues. Further, interactive features can connect to any of the previous three labor market marketing examples.

1 Empower Prospective Students to Explore Program-to-Career Links with Interactive Web Features

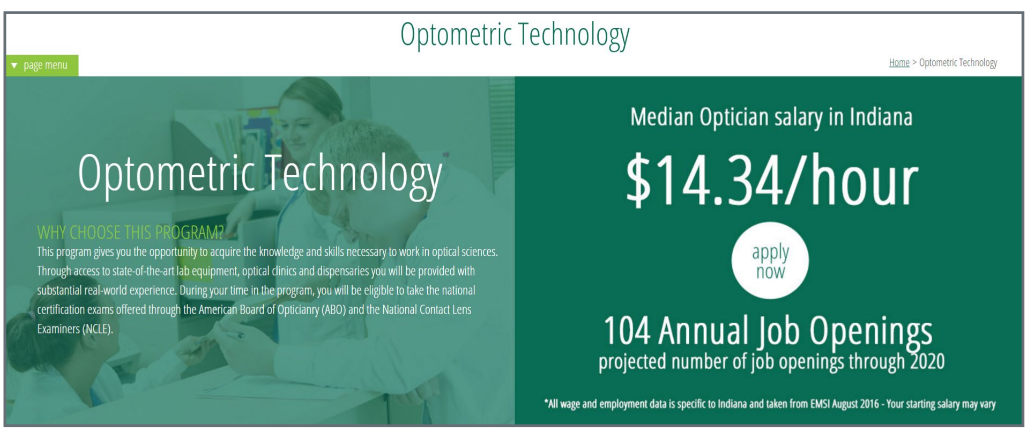
IVY TECH COMMUNITY COLLEGE



Ivy Tech Community College

Uses an interactive “career wheel” tool embedded on its main website to offers prospective students the opportunity to explore the earnings potential associated with its portfolio of market-aligned programs. Students may spin the wheel to learn about a randomly selected position, or may click to a desired occupation to learn more about its associated earnings per hour, and receive a brief description of the program.

2 Enable Students to Deeply Explore Individual Career Options of Interest, and Related Available Programs



If a student decides to click into a single program to learn more, she/he is taken to a labor market-focused program page, which provides a more detailed description of the occupation to which the program is aligned (e.g., optometric technology), median hourly earnings in the state, and the number of projected job openings through 2020. Prospective students can then discuss these data points further with enrollment staff, or apply to the program directly.

Soruce: Ivy Tech Community College, https://www.ivytech.edu/, “Optometric Technology,” https://www.ivytech.edu/optometric-tech/; EAB interviews and analysis.

Tool 3: Affinity Group Partnership Guide

Tool Overview

COE leaders require actionable intelligence about market trends and employer needs to maintain competitive program portfolios, and cannot achieve that goal solely with structural economic data from sources such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics. While real-time labor market data sources provide some insight, qualitative intelligence directly from professionals in the field is critical to truly understanding market needs. Professional organizations and other formal and informal interest groups represent an underutilized source of inspiration for program development and marketing, as well as under-tapped sources of prospective students. Units and institutions that are able to successfully partner with professional organizations can develop a virtuous partnership cycle of needs assessment, program development, and training to remain nimble and responsive to market needs.

This tool provides start-to-finish support for members seeking to partner with key influencers, create or partner with formal and informal affinity groups, and leverage those groups for market intelligence and program enrollment.

Part 1: Key Influencer Identification Guide

Step-by-step guidelines for identifying, qualifying, and engaging key "influencers," or known professionals with large followings in a given field, for marketing or instructional purposes.

Part 2: Meetup.com Partnership Process Map

Step-by-step process to effectively identify and partner with existing Meetup.com groups, gather program development intelligence, and promote new programs.

Part 3: Guide to Creating a New Meetup.com Group

Step-by-step process to create new Meetup.com groups to attract local professional interest, capitalize on influencer relationships, gather market intelligence, and promote new programs.

Part 4: Professional Organization Partnership Guide

High-level guidance for initiating educational partnerships with professional organizations, and approaching organizations to glean intelligence to support program development and further B2B partnership opportunities.

Part 5: Market Intelligence Questionnaire Templates

Templates for questionnaires to deliver to employers and employees affiliated with professional organizations and Meetup.com groups to glean intelligence related to local educational and training needs and program development opportunities.

Part 1: Key Influencer Identification Guide

Finding students as they explore professional options online, such as when they are reading about new industry trends or checking in with their LinkedIn groups, is critical to capturing the attention and interest of career-oriented prospective students. However, these students are often skeptical of traditional advertising approaches, and value recommendations from trusted sources of branded solicitations.

Follow the steps below to identify those external entities—bloggers, social media groups, professional organizations, and thought leaders—that are highly influential in the field in which you are developing a new program or marketing an existing program. These steps can be completed as a one-time project (likely stretching over the course of a week), but many prefer to consistently track key influencers over time.

Process Overview

Gather Information → **Make Cuts Based on Level of Influence** → **Rank Based on Level of Influence and Audience Reach** → **Allocate Influencer Cultivation** → **Invite Influencer to Teach in Course or Program**

Process Step-by-Step

Step 1: Gather Information

Search for…
- Blogs
- Articles
- Social media posts

…**To Find**:
- Blog authors
- Journalists
- Social media super users
- Professional organizations

Use: search engines, Google Alerts, and social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook

Record:
- ❑ Date
- ❑ Source
- ❑ Author
- ❑ Subject
- ❑ # of comments
- ❑ # of followers / readers

See the Web Presence Optimization Toolkit for more information on Google Alerts.

Step 2: Make Cuts Based on Level of Influence

Remove any entries that seem insufficiently influential. Warning signs include:
- Having an unprofessional or sparse bio
- Having very few comments (check for repeat commenters and author comments that could add false volume)
- Having low-quality comments (e.g., off-topic, spam, relatives, etc.—essentially not the type of people you envision enrolling in your program)
- Having a small readership
- Copying another source's content—unless their copy draws a lot of quality comments

Source: "Web Presence Optimization Toolkit: Methodology for Identifying Key Influencers," EAB, https://www.eab.com/research-and-insights/continuing-and-online-education-forum/toolkits/2014/web-presence-optimization-toolkit; EAB interviews and analysis.

Key Influencer Identification Guide (cont.)

Step 3:

Rank Based on Level of Influence and Audience Reach

Determine how powerful an influencer the source is. A source is influential if it has some or all of the following:

Attribute	Method of Measuring	Ranking Criteria		
		High Reach (3pts)	Middle Reach (2pts)	Low Reach (1pt)
Follower Activity Score	Calculate the ratio of comments to posts	21:1+	6:1 – 20:1	1:1 – 5:1
Follower Size Score	Record # of followers or best guess at size of readership	201+	51 – 200	1 – 50
Follower Fit Score	Rate how often the site seems to be speaking to your target market specifically	81 – 100%	41 – 80%	1 – 40%

Rank the individual attributes of each identified influencer using the above criteria

Combine individual attribute ranking scores to create a composite ranking score

Arrange all identified influencers in ascending order of composite ranking score using the below table

Influencer Name	Follower Activity Score	Follower Size Score	Follower Fit Score	Total Score

Step 4:

Allocate Influencer Cultivation

Assign top scoring influencers to staff members for cultivation. Staff members should reach out to prospective influencer partners and maintain regular contact with them, discussing their work and how it relates to unit or institutional programs and initiatives.

Task one staff person with the responsibility of revisiting this process every six to eight months to refresh the list.

Use the Web Presence Optimization Toolkit's "Guidelines for Cultivating Key Influencer Relationships" for specific guidelines on developing cross-linkages with each type of influencer (blogger, social media group, and professional organization).

Meet as a team approximately once every six or so months to conduct an informal meta-analysis of the list to ascertain whether certain influencers or types of influencers are most valuable (i.e., yield more viable prospects, help convert existing prospects, etc.)

Source: "Web Presence Optimization Toolkit: Methodology for Identifying Key Influencers," EAB, https://www.eab.com/research-and-insights/continuing-and-online-education-forum/toolkits/2014/web-presence-optimization-toolkit; EAB interviews and analysis.

Key Influencer Identification Guide (cont.)

Step	
Step 5: Invite Influencer to Teach in Course or Program	**Invite** the influencer to lead a session at a standing Meetup.com group event or similar educational event, either on campus or at an off-campus location. If the influencer already leads a Meetup.com group or other formal or informal interest group, proceed to step two, below. **Observe** the influencer's performance in front of a group participants. • Does the influencer bring sufficient professional experience and expertise to the presentation to add value for members and participants? • Does the influencer manage his or her time well • Does the influencer respond appropriately and helpfully to participant questions? • How interactive is the session? **Invite** qualified and/or successful influencers to teach a single course once you have had the opportunity to observe and vet them as a potential instructor. **Monitor** course feedback to ensure that influencer continues to provide valuable educational experiences for students.

Source: "Web Presence Optimization Toolkit: Methodology for Identifying Key Influencers," EAB, https://www.eab.com/research-and-insights/continuing-and-online-education-forum/toolkits/2014/web-presence-optimization-toolkit; EAB interviews and analysis.

Part 2: Primer for Partnering with Meetup.com Groups

Communities of Interest Represent Rich Source of Intelligence and Enrollments

Meetup.com is a global platform that enables users to create communities around shared personal and professional interests. Progressive institutions have partnered with existing Meetup.com groups to better understand the education and training needs of their local and regional markets, develop new programs based on group participants' feedback, and even source instructors for new programs based on performance in front of Meetup.com groups and ability to attract new students into the program. Institutions have also created new groups to identify specific educational and training needs within a broader field, develop new programs to meet those needs, and to generate awareness and enrollments for newly developed and launched programs.

Use the below guidelines to effectively identify and partner with existing Meetup.com groups, and/or to develop new Meetup.com groups where one does not already exist.

Basic Statistics

30.1M	270,024	182
Members worldwide	Meetups and counting	Countries hosting

Meetup Partnership Process

Conduct Market Research to Identify In-Demand Program Opportunities

- Use labor market data, questionnaires, interviews, and other intelligence-gathering methods to identify potential in-demand programs based on demonstrable local or regional employer (e.g., hiring, training) or employee (e.g., skill building) needs
- Solicit COE Forum support identifying high-priority opportunities

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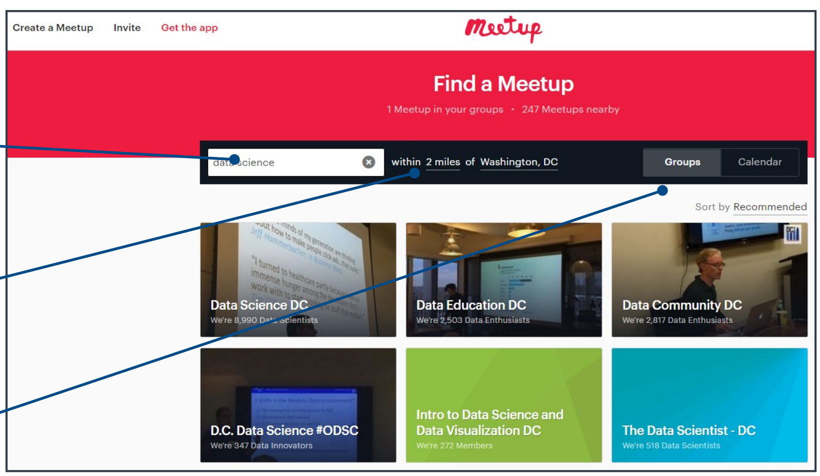
Search for Existing Meetup.com Group(s)

- Visit www.Meetup.com and sign up to create an account
- Navigate to the "Find a Meetup" page, and follow the below instructions
- Determine whether Meetup groups related to program opportunity exist
- If relevant groups do exist, continue to page 87
- If relevant groups do not exist, skip to page 90



Input keywords related to your identified program opportunity into the search bar

Set geographic parameters for your desired Meetup location (e.g., "within 2 miles of zip code 20037")

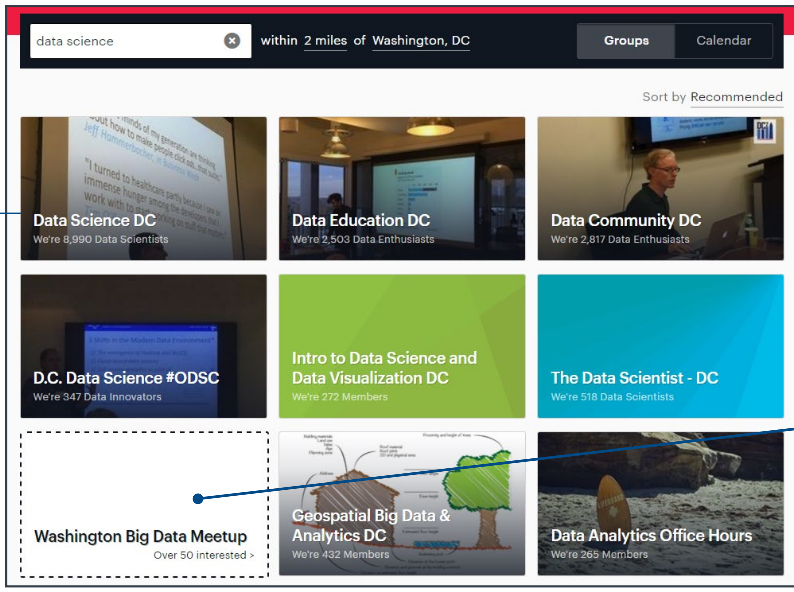
Sort search results by either existing groups, or by upcoming events

Source: Meetup, www.meetup.com; EAB interviews and analysis.

Primer for Partnering with Meetup.com Groups (cont.)

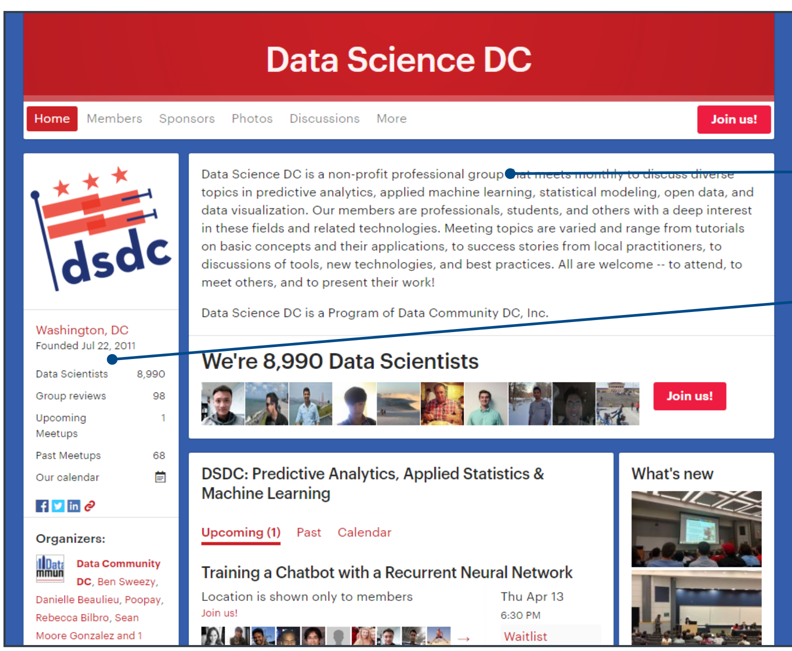
Identify Relevant Meetup Groups

- Browse the search results page to identify the most relevant groups to your program opportunity.
- Be sure to scroll to the bottom of the page to look through all available groups, as multiple relevant groups related to your program opportunity might exist.



Numerous relevant groups may exist, requiring careful research and consideration to identify the correct partnership opportunity.

Groups that appear with dotted-line borders and no profile image require an organizer; click into the group to nominate your unit!



Read through the group's description to ensure that it matches your program opportunity

Note important information related to the group's size, activity, sponsors, and meeting content

Source: Meetup, www.meetup.com; EAB interviews and analysis.

Primer for Partnering with Meetup.com Groups (cont.)

Screen Relevant Meetups

- Select the most relevant groups and research their main group pages
- Note important information for each potentially relevant group and compare to guidelines and benchmarks below
- Identify the single most relevant Meetup group to explore partnership

Checklist Criteria for Quality Meetup.com Leads	
Number of members	Meetup groups must have at least 1,000 members to be considered large enough to merit a formal partnership approach (Note: this number may be larger or smaller depending on the average Meetup group size in your geographic location).
Frequency of Meetups	Meetup.com requires that groups maintain a baseline level of activity, but the most promising potential partners are those that host at least one well-attended Meetup per month.
Average Meetup event attendance	At least 15 members should attend each event, and attendance should be varied from event to event (e.g., not just the same 15 members showing up every time) for the group to be considered appropriately active for potential partnership.
Meetup event content	Meetup events should be varied in both content (e.g., exploring various topics within the group's overarching theme) and format (e.g., lectures, workshops, networking events).
Content of group reviews	Meetup group reviews should be mostly positive, though negative feedback can still provide interesting insights.
Number and type of sponsor(s)	An abundance of sponsors may indicate that the group is less willing to entertain additional partnership solicitations, though this is not necessarily the case. Note the number of sponsors, sponsor type (e.g., company, nonprofit, university or college), and sponsor role (e.g., providing meeting space, providing financial and catering support) to determine where your institution can provide needed support.
Meetup group leadership	The group should have active organizers and co-organizers who sometimes host their own events but also frequently manage to secure speakers and other hosts.
Related Meetup groups	Each Meetup page will provide a list of additional Meetup groups that contain overlapping members. This list can provide additional inspiration for partnership approaches.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Primer for Partnering with Meetup.com Groups (cont.)

After Identifying the Most Promising Potential Partner, Attend Events in Person

- Navigate to the group's calendar of upcoming events and choose two or three to attend in order to get a sense for how cutting edge the content is and how engaged the attendees are
- Note the number of attendees at each event you attend in person, the content of the event, and the quality of the presenter
- Discuss the events with other attendees. What do they like about the group, or this event in particular? What do they not like?

Reach Out to Connect Directly with the Meetup Group's Organizer(s), Preferably in Person

- Introduce yourself at an in-person event, or reach out to the group's organizer(s) over email or social media
- Explain who you are, what you do, and who you work for
- Explain that you are hoping to learn more about the professional needs of the field in which the Meetup group operates to ensure that your unit's current and future programs align as closely as possible with market trends
- Offer your unit as a partner or sponsor to the group, providing either meeting space (most common), financial or catering support, or expert presenters and SMEs

Connect with Meetup Group Members

- With the permission of the group's organizer(s), begin to collect more purposeful market intelligence from Meetup attendees, in the form of surveys or in-person interviews
- Determine the degree to which Meetup attendees require additional training or education related to your program opportunity, and whether they would be willing to enroll in your proposed program
- Engage with organizers and event hosts to determine individual interest in supporting program development or teaching a course within a full program as an adjunct

Launch and Market Your New Program

- Launch either your full program or a single course, and offer Meetup members a discount to enroll
- Use a discount code to track leads generated through the Meetup group

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Part 3: Guide to Creating a New Meetup.com Group

Leverage Influencer Relationships to Create New Communities of Interest

When a Meetup.com group aligned to your proposed new program opportunity does not already exist, you may choose to create one yourself. While Meetup.com groups do cost a nominal monthly fee to create and require effort to develop engaging event content, such groups can generate organic interest for new program opportunities among engaged professionals, and can serve as a vital source of market intelligence to inform new program design.

Identify an Influencer

- Use Part 1 of this tool to identify key influencers in your proposed program's field
- The influencer should have a large and engaged enough following to draw interested attendees to a new Meetup.com group
- The influencer must be willing to participate actively in the group, taking on the majority of work concerning developing ideas for new events, securing speakers and facilitators, and advertising the Meetup to his or her network

Create a New Meetup in your Area Related to your Identified Program Opportunity

- On the main Meetup.com page, navigate to "Create a Meetup" and follow the resulting instructions
- Select the group's location
- Select your group's related topics from the available list, using the search bar to narrow your choices
- Select a name for your Meetup group and provide a detailed description
- Create the group!
  - Meetup.com groups range in price from $9.99 to $14.99 per month to organize and host

Develop Content for Meetup Group

- Assign a member of your team (it could be yourself) to serve as primary Meetup group coordinator, who is responsible for working with your partner influencer to develop Meetup event content and manage space and other Meetup logistics
- Try to plan out at least three months' worth of event content during quarterly meetings with the influencer
- Ensure that Meetup event content is varied in both topic and format
- Monitor attendance and engagement levels, and work with your influencer to respond appropriately to any negative or critical feedback

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Guide to Creating a New Meetup.com Group (cont.)

Gather Intelligence from Group Members

- Begin to collect purposeful market intelligence from Meetup attendees, in the form of surveys or in-person interviews following Meetup events
- Determine the degree to which Meetup attendees require additional training or education related to your program opportunity, and whether they would be willing to enroll in your proposed program
- Determine influencer or other presenters' interest in supporting program development or teaching a course within a full program as an adjunct

Launch and Market Your New Program

- Launch either your full program or a single course, and offer Meetup members a discount to enroll
- Use a discount code to track leads generated through the Meetup group

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Part 4: Professional Organization Partnership Guide

Professional organizations and other industry groups represent rich sources of market intelligence and potential students, and COE units should endeavor to build relationships with local, regional, and national organizations aligned to the programs the unit offers. Marketers and program developers should research industry and occupational associations that are related to their programs, and forge a connection with content and educational leaders at those organizations.

Use Part 4 of this tool to understand how to structure mutually beneficial partnerships with professional organizations. Then, use Part 5 of this tool to survey professional organization memberships to glean real-time intelligence on local professional educational and training needs.

Defining Partnership Value for Professional Organizations

How Professional Organizations Can Benefit from Partnership

- Free resources: unit websites (its blogs and free webinars) and information about programs are resources to the association's members
- Short cuts for members working toward an organization-sponsored certification: offer applicable information about approved courses provided by your unit, which can lower the amount of time employees need to spend working in the field before becoming "certified" by the professional organization
- Access to employers: if you are willing to list the association on your website, you increase the association's name recognition among employees that could be members
- Access to industry professionals and subject matter experts (SMEs); you can help by contributing articles (provided by your SMEs) to any periodicals they produce

Topics to Avoid

- Immediate co-branding before the organization gets to know you
- Exclusive access to organization members
- Hard-sell language or aggressive calls to action (e.g., "apply here")

How to Structure Mutually Beneficial Partnerships

Provide Program Information and Contact Details for Associations' Education/Resources Pages

Ask that your best-fit program be featured on the organization's "resources" or education page. Also provide a contact name, phone number, and email address should an incredibly eager prospect stumble upon the website.

Share Links to Free Webinars, MOOCS, or Blogs

Suggest that the association link to any free, industry-focused resources you offer prospects.

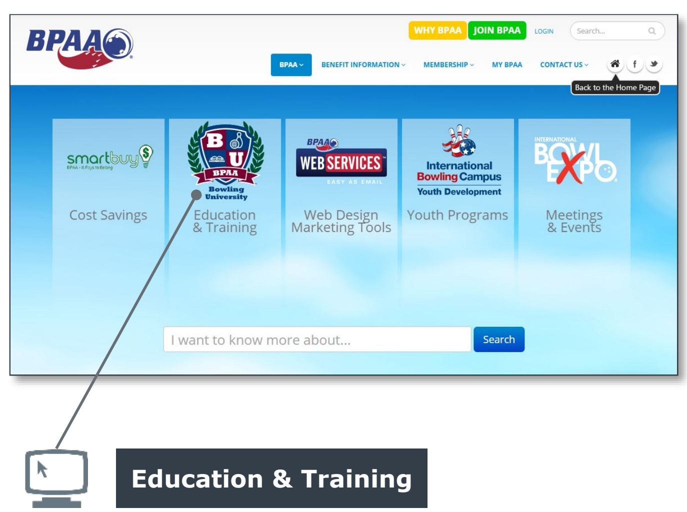
Host Association Information on "About the Industry" or "Career" Section of Program Website

Professional organizations hope to reach as wide an audience as possible; offer to list their website as a resource for prospective students considering a career in relevant industry. Point out that employers may also spot them in this context.

Offer Subject-Matter-Expert Perspective

Suggest that an instructor write an article as a guest contributor, offering an authentic voice and knowledge about the association's focus industry or occupation.

Case Study: Anne Arundel Community College Partners with the Bowling Proprietors' Association of America



The "Education and Training" link on the Bowling Proprietors' Association of America directs visitors to online modules offered through Anne Arundel Community College.

Source: "Web Presence Optimization Toolkit: Guidelines for Cultivating Key Influencers," EAB, https://www.eab.com/research-and-insights/continuing-and-online-education-forum/toolkits/2014/web-presence-optimization-toolkit; EAB interviews and analysis.

Part 5: Market Intelligence Questionnaire Templates

Many professional organizations and Meetup groups will allow third parties to send short surveys to their members and attendees, which institutions can use to gather primary market intelligence on real-time hiring and training needs in their local and regional markets. These surveys may be distributed either in person or over email.

Market intelligence questionnaires should directly apply to the content of the professional association or Meetup event at which they are distributed, and should in general reflect the interests and needs of the profession in question. Surveys may be distributed and collected anonymously if you deem that you will receive more authentic responses. Use the below templates as starting points to develop your own survey—feel free to adjust the number and type of questions as necessary.

Questionnaire Template for Employees

Basic Information	
Name	
Title	
Employer	
Email Address	

Educational or Training Needs		
Please list the top five skills or competencies for which you feel you require additional education or training to be successful in your current role:	1. ____ 2. ____ 3. ____ 4. ____ 5. ____	
Please list the top five skills or competencies for which you feel you require additional education or training to secure a promotion or pay raise:	1. ____ 2. ____ 3. ____ 4. ____ 5. ____	
Please rank-order the following topics based on their relevance and importance to success in your current role:	____ *[Insert testing program topic 1]* ____ *[Insert testing program topic 2]* ____ *[Insert testing program topic 3]* ____ *[Insert testing program topic 4]* ____ *[Insert testing program topic 5]*	
Please rank-order the following topics based on your willingness or ability to pay for training in each area:	____ *[Insert testing program topic 1]* ____ *[Insert testing program topic 2]* ____ *[Insert testing program topic 3]* ____ *[Insert testing program topic 4]* ____ *[Insert testing program topic 5]*	
Do you currently receive funding from your employer to secure additional education or training?	❑ Yes	❑ No
If so, how much?	❑ $1-$999 ❑ $1,000-$2,499 ❑ $2,500-$5,000 ❑ $5,000+	

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Market Intelligence Questionnaire Templates (cont.)

Questionnaire Template for Employers

Basic Information	
Name	
Title	
Organization or Company	
Organization or Company Size:	❑ 1-49 employees ❑ 50-99 employees ❑ 100-249 employees ❑ 250-500 employees ❑ 1,000+ employees
Email Address	

Educational or Training Needs			
Please list the top three positions or roles are you organization with the greatest education or training needs:	1. ____ 2. ____ 3. ____		
For each of those three positions, please list the three to five skills or competencies that each most requires to be successful:	*[Position 1]* 1. _______________ 2. _______________ 3. _______________ 4. _______________ 5. _______________	*[Position 2]* 1. _______________ 2. _______________ 3. _______________ 4. _______________ 5. _______________	*[Position 3]* 1. _______________ 2. _______________ 3. _______________ 4. _______________ 5. _______________
Please rank-order the following topics based on their relevance and importance to your organization's success:	____ *[Insert testing program topic 1]* ____ *[Insert testing program topic 2]* ____ *[Insert testing program topic 3]* ____ *[Insert testing program topic 4]* ____ *[Insert testing program topic 5]*		
Please rank-order the following topics based on your willingness or ability to pay for training for your employees in each area:	____ *[Insert testing program topic 1]* ____ *[Insert testing program topic 2]* ____ *[Insert testing program topic 3]* ____ *[Insert testing program topic 4]* ____ *[Insert testing program topic 5]*		

Assessment of Current Training Solutions		
To what degree do you currently offer training and development opportunities to your employees?		
How do you currently provide such trainings (e.g., external partner, online videos, internal training staff)?		
What is your organization or company's current per-employee budget for training and development?	❑ $1-$999 ❑ $1,000-$2,499 ❑ $2,500-$5,000 ❑ $5,000+	
Would you be interested in learning more about training and development opportunities available in partnership with *[INSTITUTION NAME]*?	❑ Yes	❑ No

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Tool 4: Non-working Marketing Spend Business Case

Tool Overview

Marketing Is About More Than Just Advertising: What Academic Leaders Need to Know

COE leaders, particularly those with out-of-industry experience, understand the need to invest in marketing to promote existing programs and facilitate growth. However, many see the function largely as advertising spend, in both print and digital formats, that places a product-first message with an enrollment-focused call to action in front of prospective students.

While this method of marketing has succeeded in the past, prospective students have become increasingly skeptical of product-first solicitations, and such strategies alone are no longer effective. Today's institutions must rely on a more diversified multichannel marketing approach that combines digital and print advertising with investments in content creation, social media presence, and direct user engagement.

The Challenge with Creating New Content: Additional Demands on Staff Time

Creating engaging and informative content that builds trust and credibility with prospective students is as important, if not more so, than line-item investments in channel-based advertising campaigns for generating interest in your portfolio of programs. However, content creation requires staff time and effort, rather than simple financial investment, and many marketing departments lack the time and human resources to invest in creating new content.

Part One: Explaining Marketing's Challenge to Your Executive

Use the first page to provide high-level educational material for your executive, which lays out the challenges associated with continuing to invest in an advertising-first strategy:

- Rising digital advertising costs
- Increasing digital advertisement exposure
- Rising adblocking technology adoption
- Miniscule click-through rates on digital ads.

These quantitative and qualitative data can help create urgency for your executive, and provide the background required to make a successful case for additional investment in non-working marketing activities.

Part Two: Making the Business Case for Non-working Marketing Spend

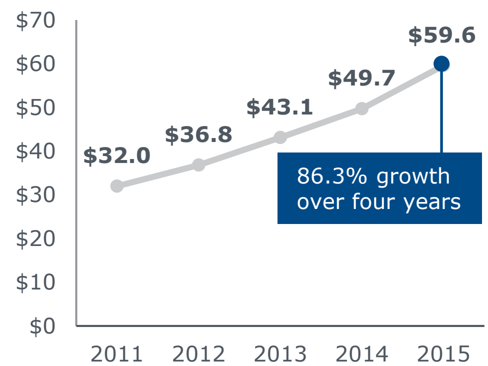
The second and third pages provide a template for a business case related to either a new marketing content creation effort, new marketing staff line, restructuring of existing staff time to include additional or alternative marketing activities (e.g., developing social media content, cultivating key influencer contacts), or other effort. Example responses are included in italics.

Traditional Marketing Has Reached a Tipping Point

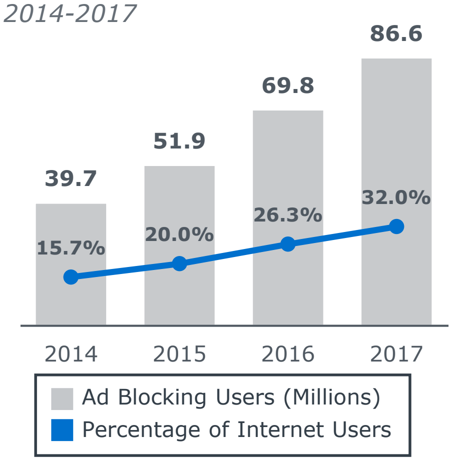
Increased Competition for Consumer Attention Drives Up Costs for Higher Education

Demand for consumer attention has never been greater, but the supply of that attention has never been scarcer. Today's marketers must spend increasing amounts of time and money to convince consumers to pay attention to their messages, but increasing investment in direct marketing and advertising has become an unsustainable strategy to maintain lead generation and enrollments. Increasing advertising efforts across industries, focused on the same finite number of platforms, have simply driven costs higher.

Dollars Spent on Digital Ads (in Billions)
United States, All Industries, 2011-2015



Ad Blocking Growth in the U.S.
2014-2017



Decreasing Returns on Traditional Advertising

As companies, organizations, and institutions vie for consumer attention with increasingly costly and numerous advertisements, those same consumers have reacted with increased skepticism and resentment, adopting ad blocking technology and neglecting to engage with the advertisements they do see.

Consumers Ignore Ubiquitous Advertisements

362 **Average digital ad exposures** per user per day in the U.S.

.06% **Average click-through rate** of display ads

The Takeaway: New Investment in Diversified Marketing Strategy Needed to Compete

Advertising alone will not be enough to build awareness of your institution or unit and generate sufficient enrollments for your programs. Rather than product-first advertisements that communicate information about new and existing programs, career-oriented prospective adult students demand engaging, informative, and relevant content that helps them plan and manage their personal and professional lives.

Marketing outreach must include engaging content that highlights the career value of the programs that you offer, integrating labor market data, student stories, and outcomes into multichannel communication strategies. While marketing can communicate some of this information through direct advertising, investments in website design, social media presence, in-person events, and other types of content will become increasingly necessary to capture and sustain a prospective student's attention, and convince him or her to enroll.

Budget allocations for marketing must reflect this new reality, and set aside resources for content creation—including staff time—and engagement with prospective students over social media.

Source: Lu K, Holcomb J, "Fact Sheet: Digital News Revenue," Pew Research Center, June 15, 2016, http://www.journalism.org/2016/06/15/digital-news-revenue-fact-sheet; "Adults Spend 10 Hours Per Day with the Media, but Note Only 150 Ads," Media Dynamics Incorporated, September 2014, http://www.mediadynamicsinc.com/uploads/files/PR092214-Note-only-150-Ads-2mk.pdf; "26.3% of Internet Users Will Use Ad Blockers This Year," eMarketer, https://www.emarketer.com/corporate/coverage/be-prepared-ad-blocking; Rich Media Gallery, "Display Benchmarks," Google, http://www.richmediagallery.com/tools/benchmarks; EAB interviews and analysis.

Marketing Investment Business Case Template

Use the below template to describe and advocate for additional marketing investment. Use the first question to describe your proposed investment (e.g., more staff time dedicated to social media, new hire dedicated to graphic design and content creation) and explain its expediency and differentiation from existing marketing strategies. Then describe the benefits and return-on-investment you anticipate from the tool, as well as how you intend to measure success. Finally, describe the anticipated costs and risks, and how you intend to defray those.

1. Provide an Overview of Proposed Marketing Investment and Explain Why It Is Necessary Now
Describe your proposed marketing investment (e.g., new staff, new content creation, restructuring of existing staff roles to include additional or alternative efforts)
Explain in detail why the proposed strategy requires investment now
Describe how it differs from or improves upon existing efforts

2. Describe the Investment's Benefit(s), Return on Investment (ROI), and Success Metrics

Projected Benefit(s)	Anticipated ROI	Metrics to Track	Data Collection Methodology
Increase prospective student traffic to social media accounts and increase engagement on social media accounts	• *Increased engagement on social media builds awareness for programs* • *Increased enrollments resulting from exposure on social media*	*Social media metrics:* • *Likes and comments* *Social distribution:* • *Shares* *Incoming student response data:* • *Degree to which social media student was persuaded to enroll*	*Social media monitoring* *Standard questions asked of incoming students*
[Custom]			

3. Outline the Cost(s), and Risk(s) Associated with This Investment

Estimated Cost and/or Level of Effort	Risk Driver(s)	Strategies to Mitigate Risk
Additional five hours per week of marketing coordinator time to manage social media account	*Reduced marketing coordinator time spent developing and sharing daily Google Display Ad status updates due to increased time spent producing content for social media accounts*	*Submit weekly, rather than daily, status updates for ongoing Google Display Ad campaigns*
[Custom]		

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Tool 5: Misrepresentation Rule Briefing Sheet

Tool Overview

As more students seek evidence of career value or return-on-investment (ROI) from educational programs, communicating outcomes with labor market data, job placement rates, and student testimonials will become necessary for programs to stay or become competitive. However, marketing outcomes carries a risk, and many marketers and COE leaders worry about the potential legal consequences of appearing to falsely "promise" graduate outcomes by using labor market data, survey response data, and other sources. These concerns largely stem from high-profile Department of Education enforcement of the Title IV Misrepresentation Rule against for-profit institutions such as Corinthian Colleges and ITT Technical Institute.

This tool provides important information and background on the Department of Education's title IV Misrepresentation Rule and its enforcement to date, and provides guidance for members about red flags to avoid when using outcomes data. The following information reflects the COE Forum's own analyses of Department of Education legislation, and conversations with higher education policy experts.

Please note: This Briefing Sheet provides an informational overview and is not intended as legal advice. Please review The Advisory Board Company's legal caveat, available on page 2 of this publication, for further information.

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Title IV Misrepresentation Rule in Brief

What Is the Misrepresentation Rule?

The Department of Education's (ED) Title IV Misrepresentation Rule was adopted in 2010 to enforce prohibitions against deceptive marketing related to the "nature of the educational program," "nature of financial charges," and "employability of graduates" on the part of institutions that receive federal funds through student aid. All Misrepresentation Rule enforcement to date has focused on violations of the "employability of graduates" clause, which is also the aspect of the rule that most concerns members.

Rule Component	Information Covered
Nature of Educational Programs →	General characteristics about a program, including its curriculum, experiential components, technology, instruction, interactions with faculty and other students, and overall experience
Nature of Financial Charges →	All costs, fees, and other expenses associated with the program
Employability of Graduates →	• Institution's knowledge about current or likely future conditions, compensation, or employment opportunities • Government job market statistics in relation to the potential placement of its graduates • Other requirements needed to be employed in the fields for which the training is provided (including disqualifiers, such as convictions)

What Are the Consequences of Violating the Misrepresentation Rule?

Institutions that violate the ED Misrepresentation Rule may face serious financial consequences, including revocation of eligibility to participate in Title IV, limiting or completely blocking access to federal financial aid. Institutions may also face a $35,000-per-violation fine.

How Can Institutions Avoid Violating the Misrepresentation Rule?

The following strategies can help institutions to mitigate their risk of misleading current or prospective students about the employability of program graduates:

- Substantiate all program-related claims (e.g., graduate placement rates, student testimonials) with evidence that can be easily produced in the event of legal action
- Follow established rules of statistical significance and available guidelines (e.g., NACE survey response rate guidelines) when conducting graduate surveys or other data collection efforts
- Ensure that all website material, marketing collateral, and other information remains up-to-date
- Do not include any information on marketing collateral, website pages, or other institutionally affiliated publications that you cannot definitively verify and defend

Source: Harris K, "FAQs about Corinthian Colleges (Heald, Everest, and Wyotech Campuses," State of California Department of Justice, March 2016, https://oag.ca.gov/consumers/general/consumers_cii_faqs; "ITT Educational Services," US Senate HELP Committee, http://www.help.senate.gov/imo/media/for_profit_report/PartII/ITT.pdf; "FTC Brings Enforcement Action Against DeVry University," Federal Trade Commisssion, January 2016, https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/press-releases/2016/01/ftc-brings-enforcement-action-against-devry-university; EAB interviews and analysis.

Enforcement of the Misrepresentation Rule

How Has the Misrepresentation Rule Been Enforced to Date?

To date, the Department of Education has not brought suit against an institution unless the Department is legally certain that the institution has deliberately lied to or misled students, accrediting bodies, or other stakeholders, and the Department typically only acts when it receives evidence of falsified job placement rate data. Though the rule technically covers "misleading" disclosures or claims in addition to blatantly false ones, the Department has only acted on falsities to date.

Examples of Enforcement

1 Corinthian Colleges

Background:

- Ceased operations in April 2015 due in part to rule enforcement
- Court-ordered to pay restitution and civil penalties of over $1.1 billion

Examples of Misrepresentation:

- Knowingly published false job placement rates and salary data
- Advertised programs not actually offered
- Misrepresented credit transferability
- Unlawfully used military seals

2 ITT Technical Institute

Background:

- Closed all campuses in September 2016
- Letter of credit increased from $124 million to approximately $247 million

Examples of Misrepresentation:

- Overcharged for degree programs to maximize student loan-taking
- Placed graduates in low-wage jobs unrelated to their fields of study
- Aggressive recruiters obfuscated costs

3 DeVry University

Background:

- Settled with the Department of Education in October 2016
- Required to post a five-year letter of credit of no less than $68.4 million

Examples of Misrepresentation:

- Misrepresented historical job placement data dating back to 1975
- Made false claims related to graduate earnings

Future Changes to the Rule

Borrower Defense to Repayment

To date, for any institution to be sanctioned under the Misrepresentation Rule the Department of Education has had to collect evidence and bring legal action itself. However, the new Borrower Defense to Repayment Rule, published on November 2016 with an enforcement date of July 2017, creates a single federal standard to simplify the loan discharge claims process for victims of Misrepresentation Rule violations. Under the rule students will be able to petition ED to have their Title IV loans completely discharged if they can prove that they have been lied to or misled by an institution under the criteria set forth by the Misrepresentation Rule.

- Aggrieved students may bring defense to repayment claims directly to the Department of Education
- Institutions found to be financially unsustainable or engaged in misconduct must set aside "letter of credit" to potentially repay students and the government
- Pell eligibility restored for students unable to complete course of study due to institution closure

Source: Harris K, "FAQs about Corinthian Colleges (Heald, Everest, and Wyotech Campuses," State of California Department of Justice, March 2016, https://oag.ca.gov/consumers/general/consumers_cii_faqs; "ITT Educational Services," US Senate HELP Committee, http://www.help.senate.gov/imo/media/for_profit_report/PartII/ITT.pdf; "FTC Brings Enforcement Action Against DeVry University," Federal Trade Commisssion, January 2016, https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/press-releases/2016/01/ftc-brings-enforcement-action-against-devry-university; "Borrower Defense Rules finalized," *Inside Higher Ed*; EAB interviews and analysis.

Tool 6: Social Media Marketing Channel Primer

Tool Overview

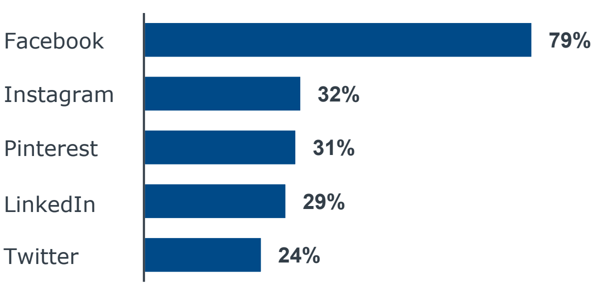
Today's prospective students access numerous websites across multiple different devices daily if not hourly. While outcomes marketing messages can effectively compel aspiring career changers and other professional students to consider further education, marketers must still deliver those messages on the right channel at the right time. This tool helps identify the demographics of individuals active on five common social media channels—Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, and Pinterest—according to the Pew Research Center's study on the demographics of key social networking platforms to help marketers determine which channels offer the best opportunity to reach high-affinity student groups.

Social Media Trends and Key Takeaways

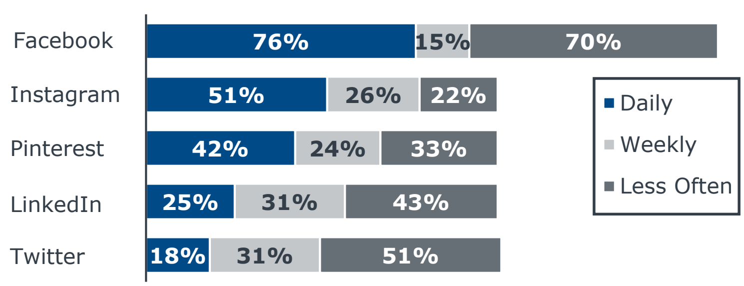
The following key findings from Pew Research's 2016 Social Media Update, the most formal and robust investigation of social media usage by U.S. adults, offer insight into changing digital behavior:

- More than half of online adults (56%) use more than one of the five social media platforms measured in this survey.
- Facebook continues to be the starting platform for most social media users. Among those who only use one social media platform, 88% indicate that Facebook is the one site that they use. Moreover, the vast majority of those who use other social media sites also use Facebook. For instance, 93% of Twitter users also use Facebook—as do 95% of Instagram users and 92% of Pinterest users.
- A majority of U.S. adults—62%—get news on social media, and 18% do so often.
- Among social media-using adults in the U.S., 35% have used social media to look for or research a job, 34% have used social media to inform their friends of an available job at their place of employment, 21% have applied for a job they initially found out about through their social media contacts.

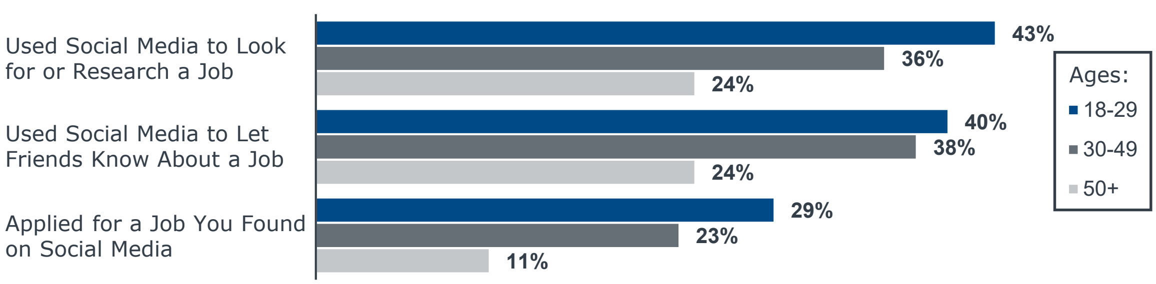
Social Media Usage Among All U.S. Internet-Using Adults



Frequency of Site Usage by Platform Users[1]



Percentage of U.S. Social Media Users Who Have Used Those Platforms for Employment-Related Purposes



1) Percentage is relative to all that platform's users, so 76% of Facebook users use the site daily

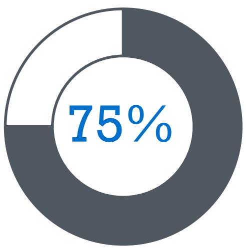
Source: Pew Research Center, November 2016, "Social Media Update 2016," http://www.pewinternet.org/2016/11/11/social-media-update-2016/; EAB interviews and analysis.

Facebook

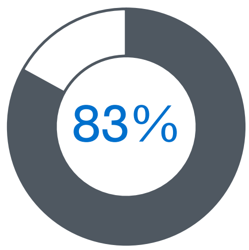
Facebook Usage Among U.S. Adult Internet Users

- **79%** of U.S. adult **internet users** use Facebook
- **68%** of the **entire U.S. adult population** uses Facebook

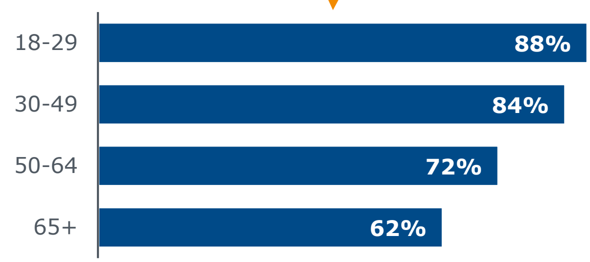
Men



Women



By Age



Facebook Usage by Educational Attainment

High School Grad or Less

77%

Some College

82%

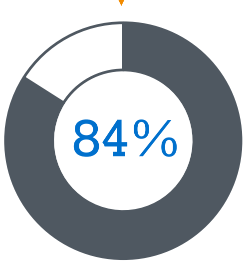
College +

79%

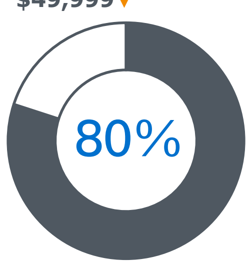
Facebook Usage by Geography and Income

- Urban: **81%**
- Suburban: **77%**
- Rural: **81%**

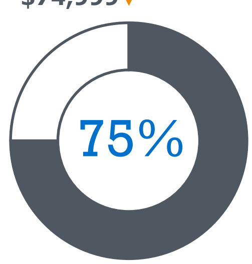
<$30,000



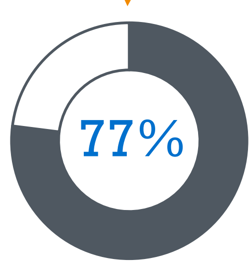
$30,000-$49,999



$50,000-$74,999



$75,000+

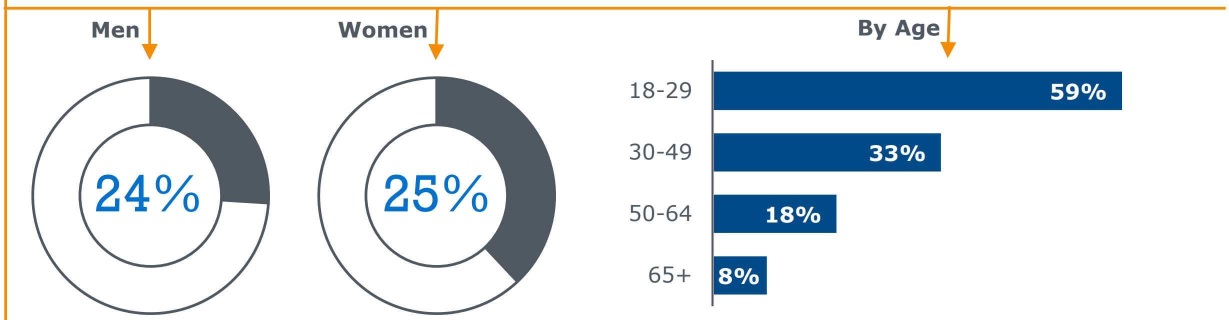


Source: Pew Research Center, November 2016, "Social Media Update 2016," http://www.pewinternet.org/2016/11/11/social-media-update-2016/; EAB interviews and analysis.

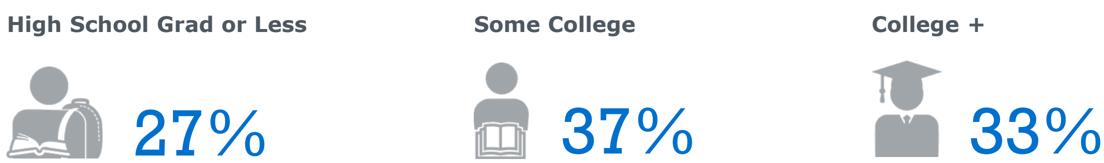
Instagram

Instagram Usage Among U.S. Adult Internet Users

- **32%** of U.S. adult **internet users** use Instagram
- **28%** of the **entire U.S. adult population** uses Instagram

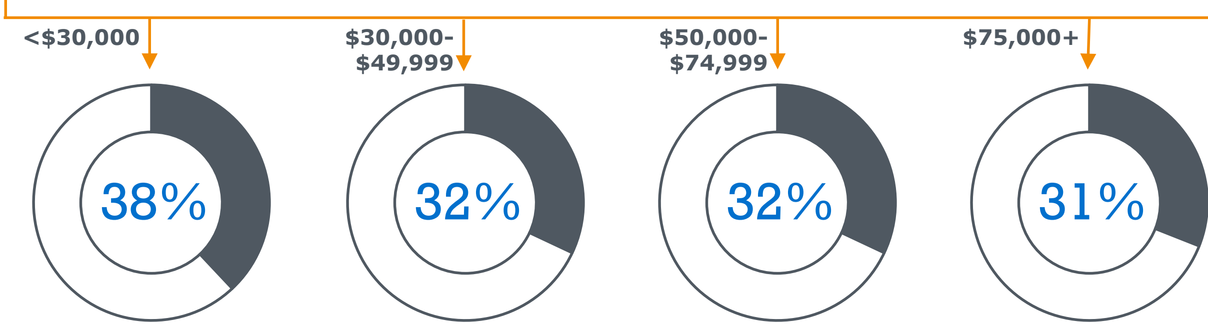


Instagram Usage by Educational Attainment



Instagram Usage by Geography and Income

- Urban: **39%**
- Suburban: **28%**
- Rural: **31%**

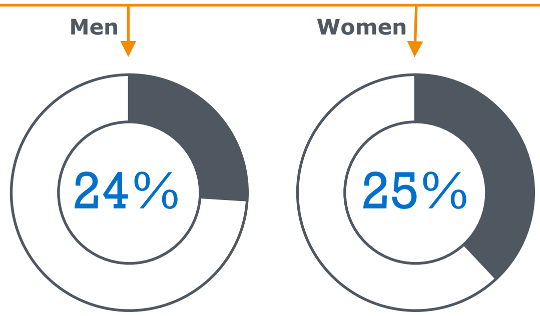


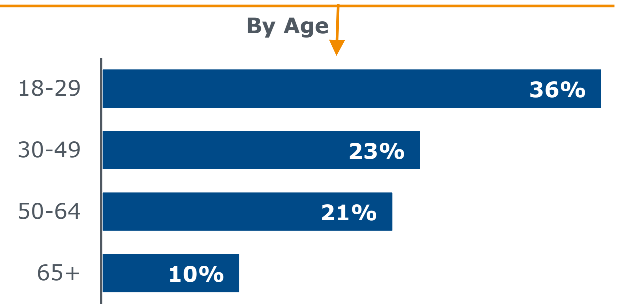
Source: Pew Research Center, November 2016, "Social Media Update 2016," http://www.pewinternet.org/2016/11/11/social-media-update-2016/; EAB interviews and analysis.

Twitter

Twitter Usage Among U.S. Adult Internet Users

- **24%** of U.S. adult **internet users** use Twitter
- **21%** of the **entire U.S. adult population** uses Twitter





Twitter Usage by Educational Attainment

High School Grad or Less

20%

Some College

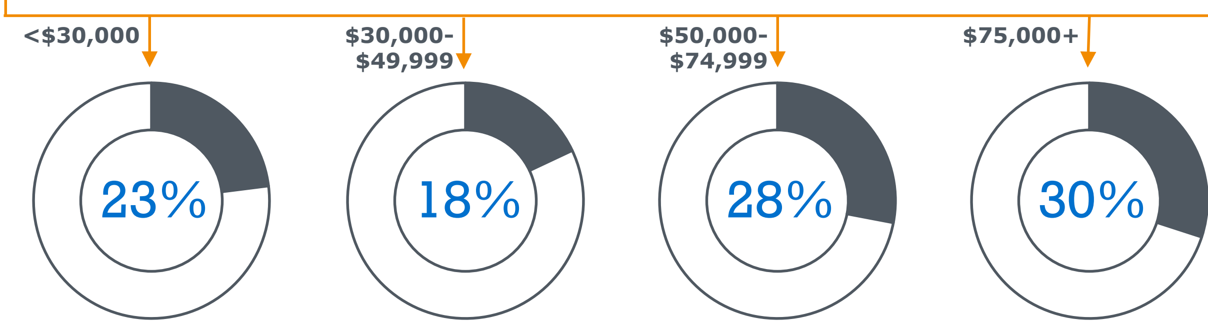
15%

College +

29%

Twitter Usage by Geography and Income

- Urban: **26%**
- Suburban: **24%**
- Rural: **24%**



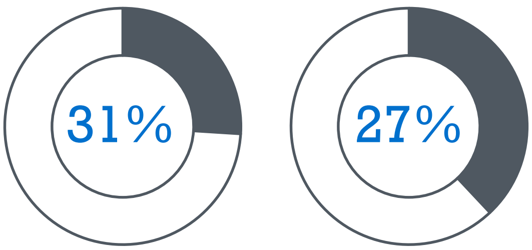
Source: Pew Research Center, November 2016, "Social Media Update 2016," http://www.pewinternet.org/2016/11/11/social-media-update-2016/; EAB interviews and analysis.

LinkedIn

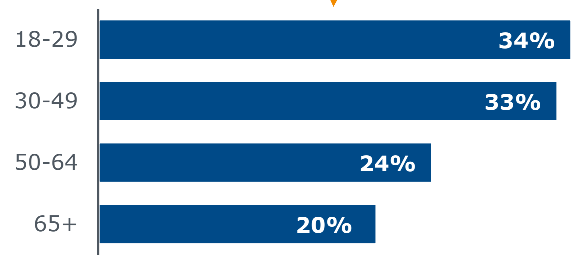
LinkedIn Usage Among U.S. Adult Internet Users

- **29%** of U.S. adult **internet users** use LinkedIn
- **25%** of the **entire U.S. adult population** uses LinkedIn

Men **Women**



By Age



LinkedIn Usage by Educational Attainment

High School Grad or Less

12%

Some College

27%

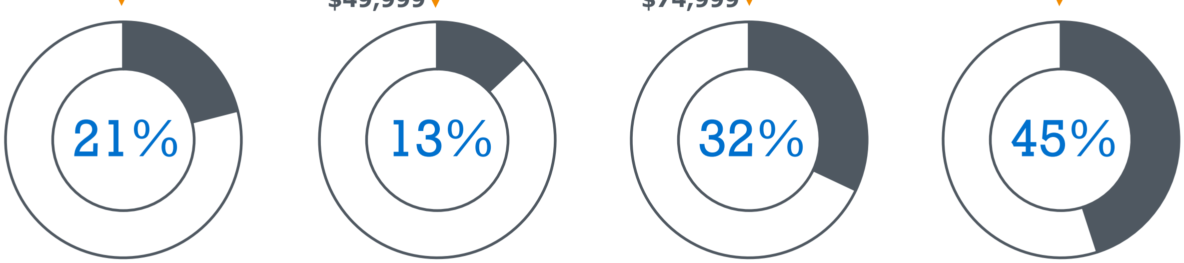
College +

50%

LinkedIn Usage by Geography and Income

- Urban: **34%**
- Suburban: **30%**
- Rural: **18%**

<$30,000 **$30,000-$49,999** **$50,000-$74,999** **$75,000+**

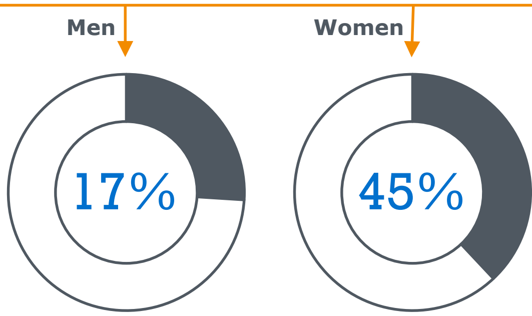


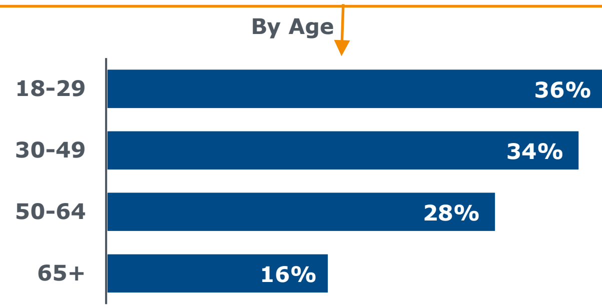
Source: Pew Research Center, November 2016, "Social Media Update 2016," http://www.pewinternet.org/2016/11/11/social-media-update-2016/; EAB interviews and analysis.

Pinterest

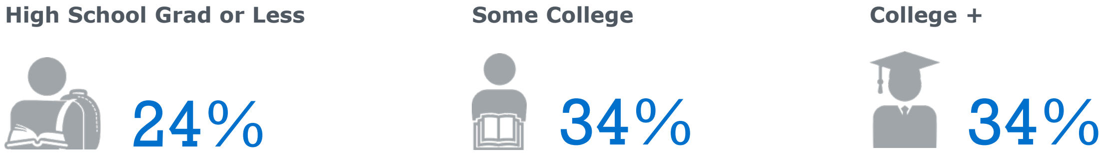
Pinterest Usage Among U.S. Adult Internet Users

- **31%** of U.S. adult **internet users** use Pinterest
- **26%** of the **entire U.S. adult population** uses Pinterest



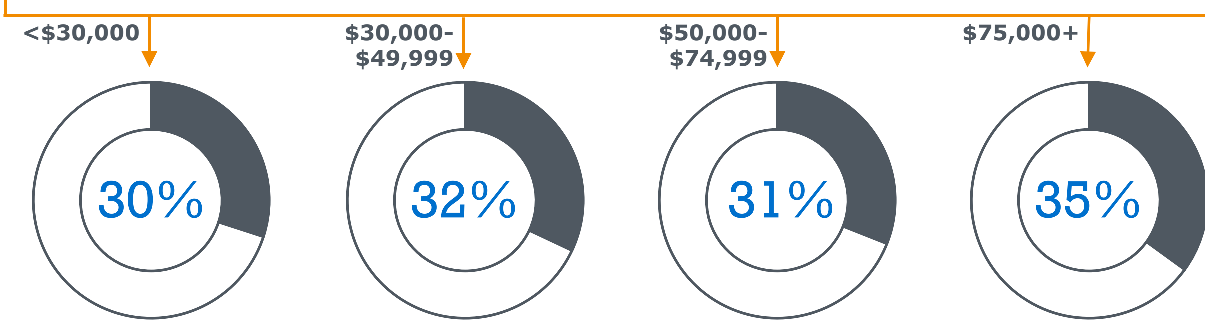


Pinterest Usage by Educational Attainment



Pinterest Usage by Geography and Income

- Urban: **30%**
- Suburban: **34%**
- Rural: **25%**



Source: Pew Research Center, November 2016, "Social Media Update 2016," http://www.pewinternet.org/2016/11/11/social-media-update-2016/; EAB interviews and analysis.

EAB

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