

RECOMMENDATIONS

Progress and Proven Success (2023-Present)

San Diego Miramar College has made significant strides in implementing targeted marketing initiatives over the past two years, demonstrating measurable impact and validating the strategic direction outlined in this plan:

SEO Investment Results: The SEO pilot program launched in 2023-2024 has delivered substantial returns, with significant increases in traffic to program-specific pages (some as high as 59% year-over-year). This data-driven approach demonstrates that search engine optimization is not merely a marketing expense but a critical investment in student recruitment. The measurable uptick in organic traffic to career education and transfer program pages validates that prospective students are actively searching for the educational opportunities Miramar College offers—we simply need to ensure they can find us. [With a dramatic increase in AI-generated searches](#) beginning to take place, a strategy around this area has become even more imperative.

Social Media Expansion: Since 2023, the College has expanded its social media presence to include Instagram, LinkedIn, and TikTok, successfully increasing visibility among our target audiences. However, this success has been achieved despite—not because of—current staffing levels. These platforms are currently managed by limited, part-time NANCE staff, which severely constrains our ability to maintain consistent engagement, respond to inquiries in real-time, and create the volume of content necessary to compete in today's digital landscape.

Marketing Automation Platform: The procurement and implementation of Element451 (2024-present) represents a transformative step forward in student communication. Early results are promising, with initial ROI appearing in measurable improvements to engagement rates and student persistence. This automated marketing platform enables personalized, timely communication at scale—exactly the kind of student-centered approach that drives enrollment and retention. However, we are only beginning to tap into the platform's full potential.

Strategic Recommendations for AY 2025-2027

Based on our proven successes and identified opportunities, the following recommendations will position Miramar College for sustained growth in enrollment, retention, and student success:

Marketing Strategy & Implementation

1. Develop and deploy online marketing campaigns which target students and provide evidence of messaging effectiveness such as number of clicks on the site, number of students who recall message theme, and number of students that persist and complete enrollment in a course or program.

2. Continue and expand SEO investment based on the documented success of the 2023-2024 pilot program. The significant increases in traffic to program-specific pages demonstrate clear ROI. Sustained investment in SEO will ensure Miramar College maintains and grows its digital visibility, capturing prospective students at the critical moment they are searching for educational opportunities.

3. Implement a reminder marketing campaign using broadcast media such as Pandora, Spotify, and other platforms that promote Miramar College and remind students to enroll in classes before the start of each semester.

4. Institutionalize the Element451 automated marketing platform to deliver personalized, timely communications that guide prospective students through the enrollment process and support current students toward completion. Secure a long-term contract extension with the vendor and build upon the initial positive results in engagement and persistence by developing sophisticated communication workflows for different student populations and critical touchpoints (application deadlines, registration periods, financial aid processes, etc.).

Organizational Structure & Staffing

5. Re-position the web design/development employee to report to the Office of Public Information Officer (PIO). This structural realignment would bring Miramar College into consistency with its sister colleges within the San Diego Community College District.

Centralizing web development under the PIO office ensures cohesive brand management, streamlined website updates, and coordinated digital strategy across all marketing channels.

6. Increase marketing budget to hire a full-time Digital Communications Specialist reporting to the Office of PIO. This position is critical to sustaining and expanding the successful social media initiatives launched in 2023. The specialist would:

- Manage daily content creation and posting across Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, Facebook, and YouTube
- Monitor and respond to student inquiries and engagement in real-time
- Develop and implement social media campaigns aligned with enrollment cycles
- Analyze performance metrics and adjust strategy accordingly
- Collaborate with academic departments to create authentic, compelling program-specific content

This staffing addition would align Miramar College with its sister colleges and address the current reliance on limited, part-time staff that cannot adequately support our growing digital presence.

7. Establish dedicated marketing analytics and data management capacity. Whether through a new hire or reallocation of existing personnel, the College must have staff responsible for collecting, analyzing, and reporting on marketing KPIs including:

- Website traffic and user behavior
- SEO performance and keyword rankings
- Social media engagement metrics
- Email campaign performance
- Conversion rates (inquiry to application, application to enrollment)
- Element451 engagement and persistence data

Data-driven decision-making requires dedicated personnel to transform raw data into actionable insights shared with stakeholders across the College.

Technology & Systems

8. Implement comprehensive website improvements including:

- "Request More Information" forms on every program and service page
- Tracking question on all forms: "How did you hear about Miramar College?"
- Enhanced analytics to monitor user journeys and identify drop-off points
- Mobile optimization to serve students searching on smartphones
- Unique landing pages for specific campaigns to enable accurate attribution

Budget Impact

The current annual marketing budget of \$27,500 (unchanged since 2014-2015) is grossly inadequate to support a modern, data-driven marketing operation. The requested increase to \$500,000 would enable:

- Full-time Digital Communications Specialist: ~\$75,000-90,000 (salary + benefits)
- Element451 CRM platform (annual contract): ~\$50,000-75,000
- Enhanced SEO services: ~\$25,000-35,000 annually
- Paid social media advertising: ~\$60,000 annually
- Content production and creative services: ~\$40,000 annually
- Texting/SMS platform: ~\$12,000 annually
- Remaining funds for traditional media, events, and emerging opportunities

This investment is justified by:

1. Proven ROI from SEO pilot and Element451 initial results
2. Enrollment decline's direct impact on SCFF funding formula
3. Alignment with sister colleges' communications infrastructure
4. Re-accreditation requirements for comprehensive marketing plan
5. Alignment with Miramar College Strategic Goals

Conclusion

Miramar College has demonstrated that strategic marketing investments yield measurable results – and has done so on a shoe-string budget. The SEO pilot drove significant traffic increases. Element451 is improving engagement and persistence. Expanded social media is reaching target audiences. **The question is not whether to invest in marketing—the data proves it works. The question is whether we will provide adequate resources to scale these successful initiatives before enrollment declines permanently damage our budget under the SCFF funding model.**

The recommendations above represent a comprehensive, student-centered approach to marketing that aligns organizational structure, leverages proven technology, and provides the staffing necessary to execute at the level our students and community deserve. With proper investment, Miramar College can transform marketing from an under-resourced afterthought into a strategic driver of enrollment, retention, and institutional success.