

SAN DIEGO MIRAMAR COLLEGE

San Diego Miramar College

Marketing & Outreach Plan:

DRAFT 1.0

San Diego Miramar College

Marketing Plan

FY 2022-23

OBJECTIVE:

The objective of the marketing plan is to inform, persuade and remind current and prospective students in North County San Diego to utilize available college resources and identify and participate in an academic program of study which enables them to achieve their educational and professional goals.

STRATEGY:

The marketing strategy at San Diego Miramar College is to implement multiple marketing campaigns which promote student-centered programs, services and campus activities that result in an increase in student engagement, enrollment, retention and completion.

COMMITTEE:

The purpose and scope of the Marketing Committee is to review and recommend strategies and related marketing campaigns which support the college marketing plan and result in increased enrollment as measured by growth in the number and percent of full-time equivalent students (FTES).

GOALS:

The following goals represent achievement outcomes in support of the college mission and marketing objectives of San Diego Miramar College in the 2022-2023 academic year:

- Maintain a 90% retention of current students as measured by persistence from fall 2022 to spring 2023 semester.
- Increase enrollment of new students to achieve an FTES target of 9,700 by fall 2023.
- Strengthen partnerships in the local community as measured by increased financial contributions made to the Miramar College Foundation, increased community outreach events and increased participation and membership on academic advisory boards.
- Increase the effectiveness of promotional campaigns as measured by a minimum 10% response rate and student feedback

BUDGET:

The annual budget allocation for marketing and outreach is currently \$27,500 and consists of costs from the following prioritization of marketing and outreach activities from highest priority to

lowest priority: (The cost data below is hypothetical and needs to be revised to reflect accurate cost)

1. Paid Social Media Campaign	\$5,000
2. Texting Services	\$1,000
3. Radio/Pandora/Spotify Placement	\$3,000
4. Advertising Production	\$2,500
5. SEO investment	\$2,000
6. Printed materials/collateral	\$1,500
7. Outdoor (billboard, buses)	\$6,000
8. Retargeted Advertisements	\$4,500
9. GEO Fencing	\$1,000
10. <u>Website Maintenance</u>	<u>\$1,000 Target \$27,500</u>
11. Digital Brand (Facebook, Instagram)	\$3,000
12. Purchase lead generation lists	\$1,500
13. Broadcast media – Television Advertising	\$5,000
14. San Diego Union Tribune Advertisement	\$2,000
15. Direct Mail Campaign to former students	\$1,500

RECOMMENDATIONS:

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. Utilize print media such as the Mira Mesa News to promote Miramar College in the local community and serve as an information source for new academic programs, campus-wide events and student achievement that support workforce development in the area.
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.

I. INTRODUCTION

San Diego Miramar College's mission is to prepare students to succeed by providing quality instruction and services in an environment that supports and promotes success, diversity, inclusion, and equity with innovative programs and partnerships to facilitate student completion for degrees/certificates, transfer, workforce training, and/or career advancement.

Recently, the Marketing and Outreach Committee was made aware of a California Block grant that will be used for retention initiatives by the various College stakeholders. The committee would like to secure funds in the amount \$500,000 to help with retention efforts and enrollment efforts through several marketing channels. The current marketing budget for the PIO Office, who heads much of the marketing is \$27,500. This figure has remained the same since 2014-2015 fiscal year.

The number one goal of the Marketing & Outreach Committee is to persuade and inform current and prospective students to enroll and/or remain enrolled in the college and to help these students obtain their educational goals, where it be degree completion, transfer or workforce development.

This plan addresses the following:

- Key messaging
- Marketing campaign themes
- Data driven analysis
- Retention efforts
- Goals mapped to Strategic Plan Goals
- Operational chart for Marketing & Outreach Committee
- Tools for marketing

II. STRATEGY

There is an enormous opportunity for the College to build an awareness and position itself as a community asset. Each year we educate around 16,000 students from the surrounding community. We serve 4 area high schools. Miramar College is one of the top transfer destinations for San Diego State and UC San Diego. It's work force development programs are best-in-class and its Regional Safety Institution trains most of the area's first responders.

A recent study commissioned by 3-Fold/Stitch Marketing in July 2022 on behalf of SDICCA found the following:

- 61% surveyed in San Diego's North Central Region service area recognized community college as a part of higher education. 94% thought higher education was about 4-year institutions while just 38% thought higher education meant job training.

- 86% answered that community college is just about anyone while 32% believe community college was for someone wanting to get to work right away
- City College had the highest awareness at 67% in the North Central Region while Miramar College ranked second at 60%. Miramar College was 5% higher in recognition than Palomar College, 2% higher than Mesa College and 16% points higher than MiraCosta
- 60% of prospective students (18-24) were familiar with Miramar College, 20% somewhat while 20% had not heard of the College. 67% of prospective adult learners were familiar. The other 33% had heard of the college. Not a single adult learner had not heard of the College. Parents had heard of the College at an 86% clip. High school counselors at a 56% had heard of Miramar College. 50% of employers were aware.
- 61% of those surveyed in the Central Region had a “positive” impression of Miramar College. 39% a “neutral” opinion while 0% had a “negative” impression. The top % was SD City College with a 65% clip.
- In the North Central Region, 58% of prospective students (18-24) have “positive” perception of Miramar College with 42% at “neutral.” 0% negative. Employers are 73% on perception. Parents and caretakers 71% while high school counselors are at 44%

Key Messaging

- Miramar College is the communities educational asset
- Miramar College is the region’s workforce development leader and a driver of local economy and economic development
- Miramar College protects the community by having almost every regional first responder train to become and remain a valued member of local first responder community
- Miramar College is one of the top transfer colleges for San Diego State and UC San Diego
- Miramar College faculty and staff are members of the local community who are committed to student success
- Miramar College is a great value at \$46 a unit
- Miramar College has something for everyone

In our current marketing efforts, we have little funds to convey this messaging.

Marketing Campaign Themes/Goals

- Retain current students
- Enroll new students
- Build connections between high schools and employers
- Grow FTES

Recommendations:

- Invest in SEO
- Paid social media
- Hire influencer(s) for weekly TikTok campaigns
- Invest in constant digital brand campaign. (No stop out period) One message all year long to run in digital space (Facebook, twitter, Instagram, Youtube, TikTok)
- Geo-fencing
- Capture data
- Purchase leads
- Lead generation form on website
- Request for info. (Need staff to respond in timely manner)
- Retargeting ads
- Constant contact lists
- Texting service
- Prep Pigskin Report sponsorship (try and gain back sponsorship of Alarm Clock pep rally)
- Tri-fold
- Ability to place tracking codes for marketing campaigns on website
- Radio/Pandora/Spotify ads
- Production of ads
- Unique landing pages
- Let district cover cost of outdoor ads (billboard, buses)
- QPR codes on everything
- Content calendar

Recommendations: Consider Establishing an On-Campus Marketing Department

Bottom line is that we must have resources to implement above recommendations.

The College needs to add a digital multimedia specialist to grow social media platforms and student engagement.

Regardless of the implementation of any item, you will need someone to be collating data around specific key performance indicators for marketing efforts. As it stands, there is an absence of data around:

- Web site traffic
- SEO
- Social Media engagement
- Email Metrics
- Conversion Rates of any kind, but most notably any marketing effort that leads a perspective student to click on the "Register" or "Apply" link.

Having someone, or a department, that is on campus, who is among other tasks responsible for collecting the data and sharing it with the key stakeholders across Miramar College in real-time, would be an asset in helping to achieve program enrollment and retention goals.

This could be accomplished by either hiring individuals to staff the department, or more realistically, reviewing how current personnel and corresponding job descriptions are currently written and reallocating those human resources.

San Diego Miramar College
Career Education Marketing Plan:
A Student-Centric Approach
DRAFT 1.0

III. INTRODUCTION

San Diego Miramar College's mission is to prepare students to succeed by providing quality instruction and services in an environment that supports and promotes success, diversity, inclusion, and equity with innovative programs and partnerships to facilitate student completion for degrees/certificates, transfer, workforce training, and/or career advancement.

Recently, the College has received \$100,000 to market career education programs during the 2022-2023 academic year. The goal of the marketing initiative is to support college-based marketing initiatives that increase awareness, recruitment, retention, and completion of career education programs. As such, recommendations must support the region in improving Strong Workforce outcome metrics including:

- Enrollments
- Students with a noncredit workforce skills gain
- Students who completed 9+ CTE units
- Students who earned a noncredit certificate over 48 contact hours, a CCCC approved CTE credit certification, associate degree, ADT, CCC bachelor's degree or apprenticeship journey status

To accomplish this, the College has a unique opportunity to analyze its current marketing communication efforts and determine the best way to retain current students and enroll perspective students.

Miramar College, like many community college campuses, has seen a decrease in student enrollments. Budget challenges and Covid-19 could be the primary culprit, but that isn't necessarily the case. According to the recent article "Can Higher Ed Bridge the Chasm Between Education and Employment?" there are several more troubling factors to consider:

"Enrollments are also impacted by a demographic cliff, rising inflation and costs of college, a hotter-than-normal job market, and – what many don't want to talk about – widespread doubt over the value of a college education." (https://jenzabar.com/blog/can-higher-ed-bridge-the-chasm-between-education-and-employment?utm_campaign=Blog&utm_medium=email&_hsmi=231303662&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-9GYNivZYG6gP5BSqiLAoGJr7Y6bQmrEhN_J9zZmrPykWLI1mLqx-qppSsdJyJAbsECEUY_OL1DoqzdieCGa5PFyyxUA&utm_content=231303662&utm_source=hs_email)

Add to all of this an overall passive marketing strategy, and what you get is the perfect storm leading to the biggest decrease in enrollments at Miramar College in quite some time. This has also resulted in students abandoning programs prior to completion, despite being just a few classes short of a certificate or degree.

IV. STRATEGY

There is an enormous opportunity for the College to take advantage for both the short-term and the long-term future.

To be succinct, Miramar College must begin transitioning to integrated marketing strategy framework as presented through eCampusNews slide deck, “Higher Education Digital Marketing Maturity Assessment – Uncovering Your Data Driven Marketing Potential.” (Rob Zaebst, Salesforce.org, June 16, 2022. <https://www.ecampusnews.com/pdfs/higher-education-digital-marketing-maturity-assessment/>)

In it, he writes that the most effective marketing communication strategy aligns technology focused efforts (CRM, Marketing Automation, Web, Analytics) with non-technology elements (Staff, Campus Coordination, Governance, etc.) to ultimately drive success. In applying the assessment tool found in his article to the Miramar College, it is clear we are in the earliest stages of maturity, the reactive stage. Naturally, the mindset must shift from reactive to proactive. Miramar College is at a natural starting point, as there is no comprehensive approach to marketing and communications. Everyone is just trying to do there best with what has been put in place and/or done before. An integrated marketing communication strategy really only works when there is buy-in from top to bottom in an organization:



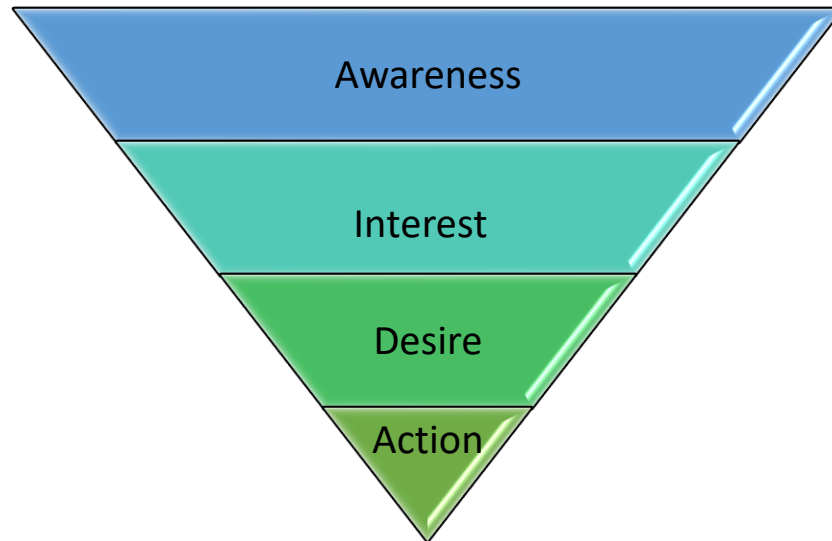
Even better, and by its very nature, an integrated marketing communication strategy – when done correctly – is student centered. The marketing recommendations that follow are broken up into these short-term and long-term action steps for a variety of reasons, but primarily because there is a small window to take advantage of the way Miramar College implements marketing strategies through this grant. The CTE programs will implement some of the

recommendations below, track the outcomes and report the results The College can then review the effectiveness of this approach and potentially adopt it moving forward..

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

PART ONE: Short Term

Looking at the current marketing approach from the perspective of a traditional AIDA Funnel Model, the current approach does a lot for raising awareness and sparking interest.



However, in the current marketing efforts, Miramar College does not appear to spend enough effort to build desire in the prospective student – at least not in a cohesive manner. There are a lot of efforts to create more desire, all certainly well-intentioned, but they seem haphazardly scheduled and it does not appear the various departments are all working toward the same end goal at the same time. There have been anecdotes shared with me that counselors may sit with prospective students who are interested in a career education program, but by the time they leave a counselor the program they have enrolled in is completely different.

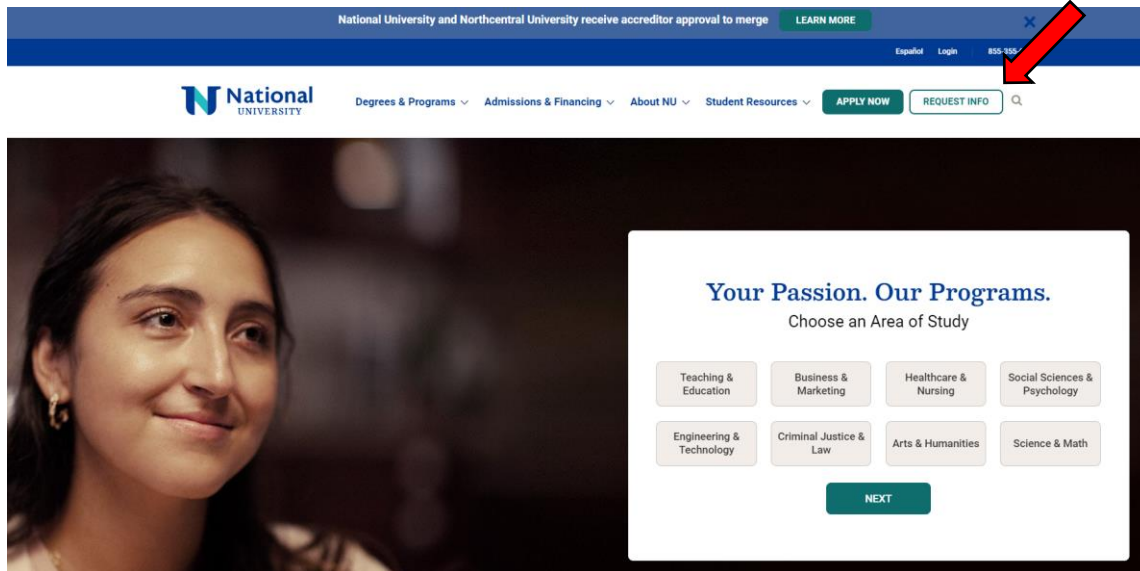
Due to the time constraints of the marketing project, we can take decisive action and focus on building more “Desire” for our perspective students and students who have stopped just short of achieving a certificate or degree (stop-out students).

Recommendation #1:

First and foremost, the website for Miramar College (www.sdmiramar.edu) must be upgraded in three significant, yet easily achievable manners:

1. Every conceivable logical page must have “Request More Information” – it is vital that we make it easy for perspective or returning students to leave their contact information with us. The contact information can then be forwarded to the department or school for

the program they have and interest. National University is a great example of how we can model this:



NU Home Page



Program Filter Page



Bachelor of Arts in Digital Media Design

- Overview
Course Details
Program Outcomes
Admissions
Why National University?

Program Overview

Have a hand in shaping the way the modern world works, learns, communicates, and plays with a Bachelor of Arts in Digital Media Design. Social networks, games, animation, and instructional content all rely on the expertise of digital media designers to engage users and guide their experience.

The knowledge and experience gained in digital media design courses prepare you for a transmedia, visually literate future that incorporates web design, audio, video, special effects, layout and design, image creation and editing, and game design.



The Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accredits public and private schools, colleges, and universities in the U.S.

Take the first step in your National University Journey

Monthly Class Starts

REQUEST INFORMATION



REQUEST INFORMATION



National University Chat form with fields for Name, Phone Number, and Email.



Course Details

Program Specific Pages – there are four - FOUR(!) - different ways to capture perspective student information on this page.

Capturing the contact information of a perspective student allows Miramar College ample opportunity – through chat, text and email channels – to raise interest and stoke desire. And this approach has a wide appeal, as it can be useful no matter if the student is just graduating high school, or if they are interested in building their professional skills toward career advancement opportunities.

I have seen that the Outreach Department on the Miramar website uses a landing page to capture contact information. As departments are able to capture the information, follow up with perspective students, and nurture the relationship, they are also able to provide a “warm” hand off to the Admissions Department as they are preparing the student to enroll.

- 2. When creating this Landing Page, the College must include the question (or a variation of it) “How did you first hear about or consider Miramar College?” In gathering information about what the College is currently doing with regard to its enrollment processes, I asked the question of several people: Does the College capture the answer to this question, and if so where is it? As far as anyone knows, the College does not ask that question. To ascertain what marketing is working, what opportunities are out there for the College to exploit, we must capture the

answer to this question for every lead and enrollment that knocks on the door. The question should be included on every interest form, and any landing page online. It should be asked by every program lead, admissions representative, and financial aid officer. It is vital to help determine which marketing is working and which is not. These answers should be routinely reviewed.

3. The College needs to adopt the mentality of a For-Profit College and begin looking at marketing and admissions as their sales team. By doing so, the College can then invest in SEO and SEM programs and embrace related analytics. It is vital to know as much as we can about visitors to the site, most popular pages, time spent, etc. so that we may engage prospective students with content that will compel them to provide their contact information and ultimately enroll. This means tracking every lead as that lead either enrolls or does not. The College needs to see conversion ratios, and track retention number.

Recommendation #2:

Further define the student personas of Miramar College, and their “buyer’s journey” at Miramar College.

The CTE Grant provides us with a very clear set of guardrails when identifying the types of students we should be focusing on with our marketing. As a result, of that we should also look into creating a very clear set of guidelines on the actions we take at the College during each step of their journey from initial inquiry to graduation/alumni status.

This “buyer’s journey” will help to identify all the stakeholders, and what action items these stakeholders must take to successfully enroll and retain the student.

Recommendation #3:

Identify and re-engage students who are a few classes short of completion and leverage Mesa-College Beta Project, develop a texting strategy. This strategy has the potential to be a two-fold purpose:

1. Help former students re-engage with the College to complete their certificate or program. A form of this is already in the works with the STOP-OUT Program efforts, as well as the Chat-bot function through the Outreach department.
2. The second – and equally important – strategy is for Retention purposes. Developing a thought-out, program specific texting strategy which delivers key reminders of deadline, upcoming opportunities and positive affirmation would be a great benefit to the College and to the student.

Counselors and Department or School-appointed representatives should have access to a program to communicate via text with these students, to re-engage with them and potentially

help them to re-enroll and finish their program. There are many studies that suggest texting students can help in both areas, but particularly for Retention:

This article suggests that retention and a sense of belonging in the University community were two specific results from a texting program:

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0260691716301149>

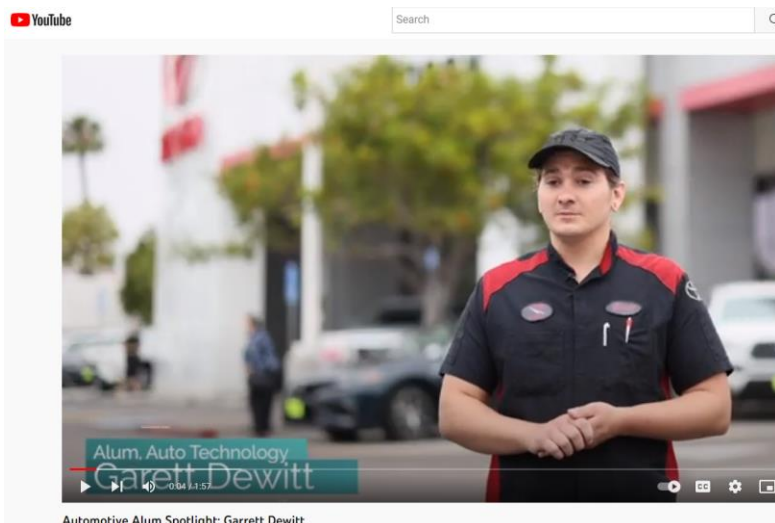
Another study - <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11162-022-09678-8> - suggests that texting helped connect “students with academic advisors and used infographics to further reduce informational complexity. The infographics provided step by step action items students could take to apply for scholarships, to be an ambassador, fill out required financial aid forms, and make an appointment with an academic advisor.”

(Retention is another goal, further expanded upon in the Long-Term Recommendations below.)

Recommendation #4:

Begin implementing a centralized approach to Miramar College marketing through the creation and use of a **Content & Event Marketing Calendar**. Establishing a Content Calendar allows for a methodical approach to integrated marketing communications and its growth, along with an easy way to organize and track performance. It also presents opportunities to collaborate with all stakeholders across the college, allowing for input on a program-by-program basis. By planning ahead, the College can create relevant, effective content, and build out stories to engage current and prospective students for new enrollments and retention purposes.

One of the immediate opportunities would be to use this tool in conjunction with Recommendation #2. The College should immediately leverage content already produced to re-engage with these students, such as program-specific testimonials:



Additionally, implementing an Event & Content Marketing Calendar would allow increased engagement for all stakeholders. Everyone would have a shared document for reference in the creation of content geared toward upcoming events (e.g., Miramar College Signing Day). By having everything planned out for either a calendar year or academic year, department heads are able to align with Counseling, Financial Aid and Admissions as new perspective students present themselves. As a result, there would be even more opportunity to measure effectiveness of not just web, social media and employee performance, but also events to ensure they will lead to the ultimate goal of enrollment or retention.

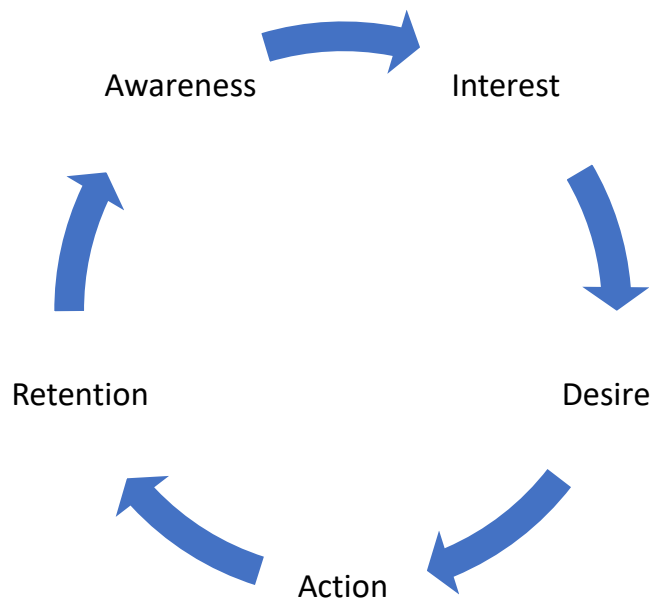
Finally, the recently launched Academic and Career Pathways provides a great reference point to jumpstart the calendar creation process. The ACP efforts could act as a comprehensive roadmap for Miramar College to look at marketing for retention of current students and enrolling new students.

PART TWO: Long Term

Even though the Recommendation #3 is in the previous section, there is a natural carry-over effect into this section. Establishing a Content Calendar allows for a methodical approach for integrated marketing communications and its growth. But in doing so, it becomes clear that other changes must be made. Ultimately, the AIDA model the College traditionally follows isn't appropriate, as it suggests a transactional approach.

Recommendation #5

As a result, Miramar College needs to move toward the AIDAR Model, as it puts retention on equal footing with action:



As opposed to performing marketing tasks as if it were a funnel, if the mindset is adopted, marketing communication efforts are more akin to a cycle. By looking at marketing efforts this way, we can see how prospective and current students could move forward and backward in the AIDAR Model.

Consider the Yoga Teacher Program, for example. Students might enroll in the 200-hour program, begin taking the courses and see the immense value (additional Desire has been stoked as a result of an in-class alumni presentation, or purely due to the passion and charisma of their faculty) in taking the longer 300-hour program, and re-enroll (second action to initial enrollment) for the longer program.

This approach really considers the whole student – and it naturally aligns with the recently launched academic career pathways. The College should invest in efforts to check in with

students periodically at the program level. Regular updates via Program or Academic Career Pathways Newsletters would be another means to boost campus culture and a sense of involvement for students. Conversations regarding challenges and obstacles are necessary, and the ACP Program provides a natural launching pad to initiate such activities.

Recommendation #6: Implement TikTok and Instagram Accounts, Re-engage LinkedIn

If the college is to seriously look at ways to create awareness amongst perspective students, it must do so by meeting them where they are spending their time online. In a review of the current social media accounts for the College, the following were highlighted on sdmiramar.edu:

- Twitter
- Pinterest
- Facebook
- YouTube

These are all important platforms and have their place in an overall MarCom strategy. But the trends on where perspective students are spending their time online point to two overlooked platforms: Instagram and TikTok.

US Social Network User Growth, by Platform, 2020 & 2021

% change

	2020	2021
TikTok	87.1%	18.3%
Reddit*	25.9%	14.4%
Pinterest	7.8%	3.1%
LinkedIn**	6.2%	4.2%
Instagram	6.2%	3.7%
Snapchat***	4.0%	2.6%
Twitter	4.0%	0.2%
Facebook	3.3%	0.8%

*Note: internet users of any age who access their account via any device at least once per month; *logged-in users; **internet users 18+ who access their LinkedIn account via any device at least once per month; ***mobile phone users of any age who access their Snapchat account via mobile phone app at least once per month*
 Source: eMarketer, April 2021

The user growth in TikTok particularly screams of an opportunity to not just engage in a recruitment tool, but also as a retention tool. As both a Miramar College Instructor with the CCAP program, and as a father of two teenagers (a 19-year-old college sophomore and 14-year-old high school freshman), I am always looking for ways to engage with students. I know from experience that

this age-group in particular spends a lot of time on these platforms and there is a big opportunity we are not taking advantage of at the moment.

Demographic information for each platform also supports the adoption of them in a strategy for the college:

- LinkedIn
 - o Largest Age group: 25-34 at 58.4%
 - o Gender: 48% Female, 52% Male
 - o 63% of users access the network weekly, 22% of users access it daily
- Instagram:
 - o Largest Age group: 25-34 at 31.2%, followed closely by 18-24 at 31%
 - o Gender: 48.4% Female, 51.8% Male
 - o Platform holds a firm grasp on Gen Z and Millennials
- TikTok:
 - o Largest Age Group: 10-19 at 25%
 - o Gender: 61% Female, 39% Male
 - o Users spend almost 90 minutes on the platform per day

[\(https://sproutsocial.com/insights/new-social-media-demographics/\)](https://sproutsocial.com/insights/new-social-media-demographics/)

Other Community Colleges have already implemented TikTok in their marketing efforts, Like Cape Fear Community College in Wilmington, N.C.

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2021/05/11/community-college-attracts-growing-tiktok-following>) with great results. In the May 11, 2021 Inside Higher Ed article, noting its popularity and efficacy, the article also highlighted that “one video on community college stigma garnered over a million views in September 2020.”

Similarly, re-engaging LinkedIn could provide a variety of opportunities, primarily engaging Millennials looking to enhance their career skills (Students with a noncredit workforce skills gain). Managers, Supervisors, Career-minded employees access the platform regularly. It would be the perfect medium to attract those looking to augment their workplace skills.

Additionally, in soliciting feedback from BTCWI Faculty and Staff a request for “short clip production-fast quick snippets of students working in career education areas” was made. TikTok as a platform is designed for 30 second to 3-minute videos. Instagram “Reels” is essentially the same as TikTok, and often highlights the same content created/found on TikTok.

Finally, if the Regional Marketing Plan has already spent significant amounts of time and money in engaging potential students on these platforms, then Miramar College should not hesitate in doing the same.

Recommendation #7: Implement Marketing Automation

There are a number of reasons why college-wide marketing automation should be considered. First, this would be the natural follow-up course of action to take after implementing Recommendation #1 (Request Information Landing Pages). Secondly, depending on the responsibilities assigned to various department heads, an automated email response to a prospective inquiry can be a great tool to increase the desire in a student to take action (visit the campus, enroll). It also can increase productivity and reduce the amount of work department representatives, counselors, financial aid and admissions representatives would need to take in responding to some of the most frequently asked questions. Marketing automation also allows for personalized communication.

Additionally, the College should strongly consider partnering with one of the top marketing automation companies, such as Salesforce, Hubspot or Marketo. The tools offered through these platforms would be highly beneficial to a small marketing team with such large tasks as outlined in this plan.

Recommendation #8: Consider Establishing an On-Campus Marketing Department

Ultimately, if the bottom line is to increase enrollments and retention across the board – and in doing so, creating a more cohesive approach to integrated marketing communications – at the very least an individual, but more realistically, a team needs to be charged with these efforts. Regardless of the implementation of any item, you will need someone to be collating data around specific key performance indicators for marketing efforts. As it stands, there is an absence of data around:

- Web site traffic
- SEO
- Social Media engagement
- Email Metrics
- Conversion Rates of any kind, but most notably any marketing effort that leads a prospective student to click on the “Register” or “Apply” link.

Having someone, or a department, that is on campus, who is among other tasks responsible for collecting the data and sharing it with the key stakeholders across Miramar College in real-time, would be an asset in helping to achieve program enrollment and retention goals.







This could be accomplished by either hiring an individuals to staff the department, or more realistically, reviewing how current personnel and corresponding job descriptions are currently written and reallocating those human resources.

VI. SUMMARY

In the July 20, 2022 Inside Higher Ed article “The Different Types of Potential Learners and What They Want,” author Doug Lederman highlighted survey results of 6,500 learners. He specifically pointed out the distinction between students and learners because “colleges and universities are increasingly competing against not only each other but an ever-broadening array of alternative providers who might offer education or training more affordably, more conveniently or more effectively.” The survey – conducted by consultant firm Accenture and presented by Samantha Fisher – offered a look at satisfaction levels and what colleges could be doing better. In doing so, they separated the learners into six categories:

- Wayfinding Intellectuals (7% surveyed) – full time students
- Campus Enthusiasts (16%) – residential, active students
- Junior Specialists (31%) – focused learners pursuing a credential to get a first job
- Evolving Professionals (23%) – successful, early-stage workers looking to advance their careers
- Midcareer Climbers (14%) – Full time workers looking to advance their careers by obtaining a credential in a specific skill-based area
- Trajectory Transformers (9%) – Full-time workers who are skeptical about the value of full program but seek short-term, skill building programs for career enhancement or a career change.

What were they looking for? In short, they wanted to find flexibility, opportunity to build connections, and value for their money spent:

	 Wayfinding Intellectuals	 Campus Enthusiasts	 Junior Specialists	 Evolving Professionals	 Mid-Career Climbers	 Trajectory Transformers
What matters most?	Variety of academic experiences	Campus life and internships	Acquiring specific job-relevant skill	Flexibility and quality	Acquiring specific job-relevant skill	
	Campus location and safety		Cost and financial aid	Availability of specific program	Flexibility and quality	Cost and quality
	Wide variety of co-curricular experiences and social opportunities				Real-world application	Sense of belonging/ culture

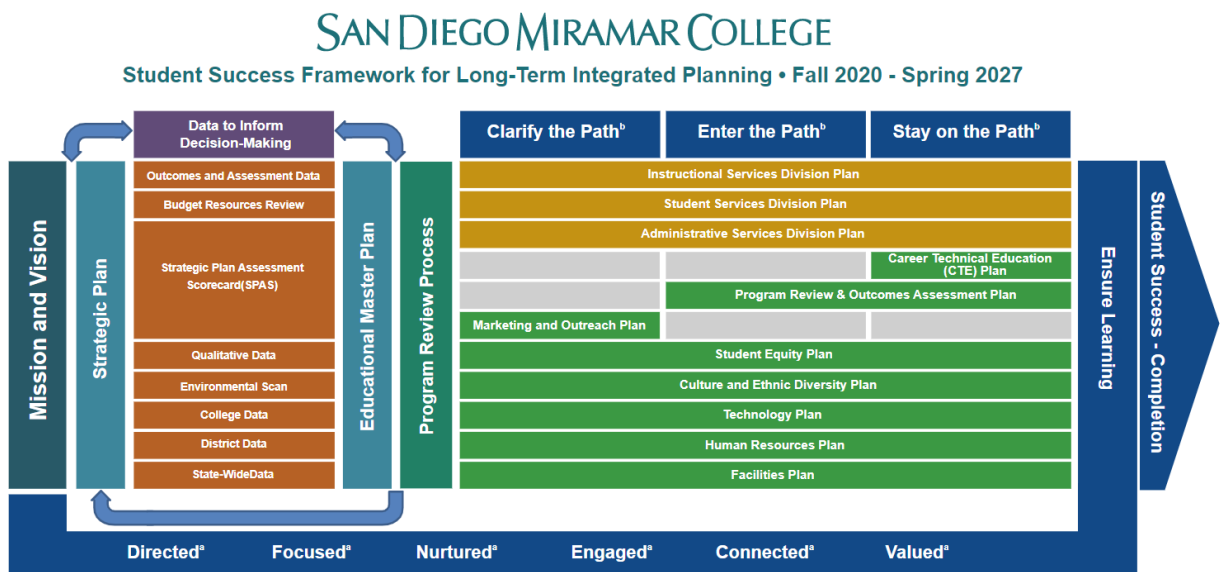
	Wayfinding Intellectuals	Campus Enthusiasts	Junior Specialists	Evolving Professionals	Mid-Career Climbers	Trajectory Transformers
Top Recommended Improvement	More opportunities for networking	More opportunities for internships/ co-ops	Greater flexibility around coursework modality Ability to move through program faster	Greater flexibility around coursework modality	Greater flexibility around coursework modality	Lower tuition
Primary Emotions	Mostly satisfied: happy, hopeful, surprised	Mostly satisfied: happy, hopeful, surprised	Satisfied: hopeful, stressed, anxious, overwhelmed	Mostly satisfied: happy/excited	Satisfied: excited/ hopeful	Most dissatisfied: excited/ hopeful, stressed, anxious

Miramar College has all of the tools at its disposal to make a huge impact on enrollment and retention numbers. The recommendations above would contribute toward addressing the needs all six categories of student learners as identified in the survey. From some small, immediate changes to more robust and long-term shifts.

By capturing prospective student information and creating marketing automation to display the campus life and internships available; by creating a content calendar that highlights the variety of academic programs and career paths; through the implementation of TikTok videos and Instagram Reels that show the flexibility and quality of specific programs; by having a centralized mechanism to produce and implement these strategies – students and the College administrators, faculty and staff can create a culture that fosters a desirable sense of belonging. All of this would work cohesively toward the goal of increased enrollments and retention.

But time is critical. With the “Hold Harmless” period ending in the 2025-2026 Academic Year, the time to act is right now. Correcting the downward trend of enrollments and retention rates is even more important due to their impact on budget funding formula. According to the recent study “Listen, Optimize, Repeat: A Student-Centric Approach to Higher Ed Marketing,” embedding the full scope of an integrated marketing communications plan “is going to require at least four to five years.” Even in acknowledging this timeframe, it makes too much sense to ignore the need for a cohesive marketing approach. After all, such a plan is a major requirement in two different areas for Miramar College:

- Re-Accreditation requires a marketing plan
- The already identified Integrated Planning Framework



It is incredibly exciting to see a very tangible path toward creating an Integrated Marketing Communication strategy. It is a great opportunity for the San Diego community at large, who will ultimately benefit from the results of our labor. And by taking action now, we have an opportunity to create a series of wins:

- An Integrated Marketing Communication plan will provide a framework to measure marketing through enrollments and student retention
- It creates student-centered approach to their time at Miramar College
- Increased enrollments and higher retention rates will directly and positively affect the SCFF model for Miramar College
- Every student success story is a success for the San Diego community
- Adopting this plan will check off a series of institutional requirements

More than anything, adopting an Integrated Marketing Communication strategy will put Miramar College, and the San Diego communities it serves, in the best position possible over the next 5 years, and beyond.

VII. Roadmap

RECOMMEDATION	ACTION/OUTCOME	STAKEHOLDERS	MEASUREMENTS
Request Information Landing Pages	Determine where landing pages must be implemented on website; how and where those leads will be funneled for follow-up	IT/IS Department, Program Directors, Deans, Outreach, Marketing Team	Leads by department/program
Adding “How did you hear about Miramar College” to landing pages, verbiage from college representatives	Training Program Directors, Counselors, Financial Aid Representatives, Admissions Team and Academic Career Pathways personnel to ask and track answers.	Program Directors, Deans, Admissions, Counselors, Financial Aid, Marketing Team, Executive Team	Answers analyzed against current marketing efforts to determine efficacy and conversion ratios where applicable
Implement Analytic Measurements	Agree upon key measurements to support the goal of increased enrollment and retention	Program Directors, Deans, IT/IS Department, Outreach, ACP Team, Admissions, Financial Aid, Counselors, Marketing Team and Executive Team	Web Analytics (Site visits, source, time spent, etc.), Leads, Enrollments, Retention Rates, etc.
Creation and Implementation of Event and Content Calendar	Work with key stakeholders to plan all event, materials, social media posts into an integrated approach for supporting increased enrollments and retention	Program Directors, Deans, Outreach, ACP Team, Admissions, Financial Aid, Counselors, Marketing Team and Executive Team	Content and event calendar established for academic year

Creation and Implementation of Retention Program through Academic and Career Pathways	Work with ACP Team to develop Program & Pathway specific Retention activities	Program Directors, Deans, Outreach, ACP Team, Admissions, Financial Aid, Counselors, and Marketing Team	Retention numbers on a program or pathway basis
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Implement and/or Re-engage social media accounts for TikTok, Instagram and LinkedIn	Identify the employee(s) to create/curate content for each platform as a part of the overall integrated marketing communications	Program Directors, Deans, Outreach, ACP Team, Admissions, Financial Aid, Counselors, Marketing Team and Executive Team	Views, Likes, Shares, Web visits from platforms, Request for Information where platform is specified, Leads, Enrollment or Retention numbers
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Partner with Marketing Automation organization like HubSpot or Marketo	Seek out details of partnering with organization, identify best fit for Miramar, and how it would support overall integrated marketing communication goals	Program Directors, Deans, IT/IS Department, Outreach, ACP Team, Admissions, Financial Aid, Counselors, Marketing Team and Executive Team	TBD
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Commit to Full Time Marketing Team at Miramar College	Identify, build/hire individual(s) to implement and cultivate an integrated marketing communications approach	ALL	Percentage increase in awareness, enrollments, and retention
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VIII. References

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