The background consists of several overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of blue, creating a dynamic, abstract composition. The shapes include triangles and quadrilaterals that intersect to form a central area where the text is located.

**MARKETING CAREER  
EDUCATION FOR SAN DIEGO  
AND IMPERIAL COUNTIES  
COMMUNITY COLLEGES:  
A 3-YEAR PLAN**



## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Enclosed is Civilian’s proposed regional marketing plan for advancing Career Education on behalf of the San Diego and Imperial Counties Community Colleges (SDICCC). The following Executive Summary encapsulates the overall plan in simple form, but we encourage readers to review the plan in full for research, methodology, strategies and tactics deployed for the region.

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This is a three-year, tiered marketing strategy that will fit seamlessly into California Community Colleges’ statewide “Learn By Doing” campaign. It is designed to address the dual goals of 1.) increased enrollment in Career Education programs, and 2.) expanding the audience of prospective students over time.

The two “tiers” of this campaign to deliver the stated goals will be:

- Increasing **enrollment** in SDICCC Career Education programs by informing prospective students about their choices, and driving them toward the choice to enroll in a SDICCC Career Education course.
- Building the SDICCC Career Education **brand**, driving awareness of Career Education as an option for a better future, and shifting perceptions of Career Education within the region’s community colleges;

The **enrollment** campaign will run parallel to each semester’s enrollment window in the spring and fall of each year, while the **brand** campaign will be “always on,” throughout the three years covered by this integrated marketing plan.

Civilian has developed unique, regionally-specific creative concepts to drive key messages and consumer action, which will be qualitatively tested alongside the statewide creative concepts before the campaign’s launch. Additional research, including qualitative, quantitative, and sentiment analysis, will take place before launch. The marketing campaign’s creative messages will be refined based on responses from priority audiences. This research will also help establish benchmarks across a series of key performance indicators and perceptions.

We will then use an efficient blend of **paid media** channels to distribute these messages across the San Diego and Imperial County region, including digital display, out-of-home ads, digital radio, e-readers, SEO/SEM, email marketing, and social media. All digital products will lead prospective students and their influencers to a regional, student-focused website that serves to inform users about Career Education, and drive them to the appropriate college’s program landing page, based on users’ personal criteria such as location or preferred program area.

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Civilian will use a robust **owned and earned media** strategy to properly tell the story of Career Education in the San Diego and Imperial County region. Using both a traditional and digital PR approach, we will conduct community outreach and public relations driven by the stories of individual students, graduates, and employers, told through actionable online content and a video series, for example.

Our team will collaborate with the PIOs from each SDICCC school to understand what Career Education assets are already available, and what media plans are already in place. This will ensure that all regional marketing efforts align with existing schools' efforts.

Evaluation of this campaign will begin once the campaign launches in June 2018. Civilian will provide SDICCC's leadership with monthly readouts to ensure immediate optimization, and will share more in-depth reports on a quarterly basis.



## **1. BACKGROUND**

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## BACKGROUND

### The Problem

Economists note a current and growing shortage in California of skilled workers, forecasting a 1-1.5 million gap of middle skill workers by 2025—that is, 1-1.5 million more jobs than there are qualified workers to fill them.

As a February 2016 article in higher education magazine *Evolution* put it, “California faces a confounding juxtaposition...thousands of unemployed or underemployed workers living side-by-side with thousands of unfilled jobs.” These jobs are in a broad range of industries, from advanced manufacturing to biotechnology. Many require some postsecondary education or training, such as middle-skill degrees, certificates, and credentials, but there simply are not enough qualified workers for these sectors to hire.

If left unchanged, the skill gap will hurt the economies of San Diego and Imperial Valley, with burgeoning industries needing mid-skilled workers. The current employment gap will only worsen unless San Diego/Imperial County Community Colleges (SDICCC) recruit, educate, and prepare qualified students in the region for in-demand careers through robust career training programs

### The Solution

As the largest higher education system in the country, serving 2.4 million students annually, California’s community colleges are prepared to provide education and training for middle-skills career pathways—the same in-demand jobs needing qualified workers, which often require “some college” education over a traditional bachelor’s degree, typically in the form of an associate’s degree or vocational certificate.

In June 2016, the California Legislature approved a \$200 million annual budget dedicated to training in-demand, skilled workers, closing the employment gap and driving continued statewide economic recovery. This economic development program, known as the **Strong Workforce Program**, operates out of the state’s 114 community colleges, across 72 districts. Its goal is to create one million middle-skill workers to fill in-demand jobs by 2020, through creative marketing, recruiting, and program development coalitions among community colleges at the local, regional, and state level.

Under the leadership of the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s office, the program has developed a four-pronged strategy for this effort’s success, under the overall strategic aim of “Doing What MATTERS”:

- Give priority to what matters for jobs and the California economy;
- Make room for what matters for jobs and the economy;
- Promote student success;
- Innovate for jobs and the economy.

The key to program success will be malleability in community college program curricula, and capacity to produce enough graduates to fill openings in high-demand job sectors. From a marketing standpoint, success will also be driven by finding, informing, and matching students with in-demand, well-paying jobs that lead to rewarding careers.

### What This Means for San Diego and Imperial County Community Colleges

The California Community Colleges network has been divided into 10 regions, one of which is the combination of San Diego and Imperial Counties, which encompass 10 institutions across six districts. These are:

<b>Grossmont/Cuyamaca Community College District</b>	Cuyamaca College Grossmont College
<b>Imperial Valley College District</b>	Imperial Valley College
<b>MiraCosta Community College District</b>	MiraCosta College
<b>Palomar Community College District</b>	Palomar College
<b>San Diego Community College District</b>	San Diego City College San Diego Continuing Education San Diego Mesa College San Diego Miramar College
<b>Southwestern Community College District</b>	Southwestern College

Each of these colleges manages its own program offerings. Each college is also responsible for setting and meeting enrollment goals, both campus wide and those specific to the Strong Workforce Program (SWP). The SWP has provided individual marketing budgets to colleges to drive enrollment—and, enclosed in this report, is a regional marketing plan developed for San Diego and Imperial counties specifically.

Currently, there is no cohesive, coherent message to all current and prospective community college Career Education (CE) students in the region. However, all SDICCC colleges are united in the common goal of increasing enrollments in community college Career Education programs, and growing their share of the competitive regional Career Education market.

The role of this regional marketing plan is to unite participating SDICCC colleges on behalf of the broader statewide SWP objectives. It will recognize the unique attributes of each school and its students, while linking them to priority, in-demand jobs with San Diego and Imperial Valley employers.

Success will be *garnered* at the regional level, but *measured* at the school level.

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## The Regional Marketing Plan

The enclosed three-year marketing plan for the San Diego and Imperial County Community Colleges region consists of the following materials:

- **Market Information**, derived from insights gained by the Civilian team during a thorough Situation Analysis, segmented by consumer demographic;
- **Brand Planning**, in the form of foundational strategic objectives for marketing the SDICCC SWP brand, utilizing statewide branding as a foundation, creative messaging recommendations, and high-level channel strategies;
- An **Integrated Marketing Plan**, which presents recommendations for tactical, cross-channel Year 1 activations and digital experience imperatives. Specifically, the Integrated Marketing Plan includes the following components critical to the success of the SDICCC SWP:
  - Multi-media advertising;
  - Employer-to-employer communications;
  - Employer/union outreach;
  - Community outreach;
  - Media relations;
  - Online presence.
- **Budget Allocations**, including projected costs for paid media, production hard costs, and a labor forecast for Year 1 (and estimates for Year 2 and Year 3);
- An **Evaluation Plan**, measuring metrics across Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and establishing an ongoing reporting structure and process.

## Summary of Methodology and References

When formulating the three-year regional marketing plan for SDICCC, the first step was to conduct a thorough Situation Analysis consisting of three primary phases:

**Program Data**, which was gathered through the following methods:

- Auditing Career Education marketing efforts by other California Community College regions—we reviewed findings, recommendations, and learnings from these other regions as they set their strategies and benchmarks for marketing their own Career Education programs;
- Reviewing statewide market research, brand planning and marketing plans for the California-wide SWP. Our team reviewed everything from official policy statements and program goals (<http://doingwhatmatters.cccco.edu/StrongWorkforce.aspx>), to baseline awareness and perception studies by Koski Research (commissioned by Ogilvy Public Relations), to brand positioning and campaign creative produced by Mering Carson for California Community Colleges;
- Synthesizing regional workforce trends, based on labor market assessments and workplace partnership reports, both aggregated and by job sector, published by the California Community Colleges' Centers of Excellence;
- Assessing regional Career Education (CE) outcomes for students participating in those programs at California Community Colleges, with special attention to job placement by sector.



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The Civilian team then conducted a **Competitive Data** analysis of CE program enrollment and middle skills jobs objectives, market trends, sources of volume/share, and competitive opportunities and challenges.

The Civilian team took a data-driven, analytical approach to this research, drawing information from a variety of sources to understand what academic programs in the San Diego and Imperial County area currently draw the highest share of student interest, across all higher education institutions (public, private, non-profit, and for-profit). To truly understand the full higher education landscape in San Diego and Imperial Counties, we also expanded our analysis beyond previously identified Career Education programs, and into popular academic programs across all higher education institutions in the region as a whole.

Civilian drew relevant information from the following sources:

- The California statewide Strong Workforce Program’s “Vision for Success” report, specifically the Enrollment Objective section;
- Policy and data insights from the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE);
- Data on students showing interest in a gap year between high school and college, from the American Gap Association;
- Adult and higher education participation rate data from the National Center for Education Statistics;
- Regional higher education enrollment data from the U.S. Department of Education College Scorecard;
- Higher education program satisfaction ratings from Niche.com; and
- Prospect User Experience by higher education program.

After calculating San Diego and Imperial County community colleges’ general market share of high-volume CE and other academic programs versus other institutions (both public and private, non-profit and for-profit), the Civilian team evaluated feedback from third-party review sites such as Niche.com. Then, team members posed as prospective students, and immersed themselves in the conversion funnel (search, follow-up, information) of each top competitor by program area.

*Note: Civilian supplemented this research, which concentrated on the nine community colleges within San Diego County, with a tailored competitive audit for Imperial Valley College (IVC). The Imperial Valley region faces unique market challenges, based on geography and other factors, and therefore its prospective student demographic warrants a unique method of evaluation.*

Finally, the Civilian team utilized **Consumer Data** from multiple sources to develop consumer profiles, providing additional layers of insight into the core audiences most likely to attend career education schools in San Diego and Imperial Counties.

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Civilian examined data on what we determined to be the primary Career Education stakeholder audiences, namely:

- High school students;
- Parents of high school students;
- Working adults;
- Educators of high school students;
- Current community college students; and
- Employers/the regional business community.

Civilian aimed to find demographic, psychographic, behavioral and motivational commonalities among these audiences, using the following sources:

- Consumer Orbit Segmentation Study;
- Cal-PASS Plus LaunchBoard Student Data;
- Values and Lifestyle (VALS) Attitudinal Typologies Survey;
- Simmons Syndicated Consumer Surveys; and
- Statewide Consumer Research and Media Plan for “Learn By Doing” advertising under “Doing What MATTERS” branding.

Integrating all of these audience data points allowed Civilian to identify a short list of priority “segments” for marketing outreach around Career Education programs at San Diego and Imperial County Community Colleges. Hyper-targeting these groups through consumer segmentation will allow for highly efficient digital media strategies with the technology available to us.



## **2. MARKET INFORMATION**

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## MARKET INFORMATION

The following research insights were derived from the Situation Analysis covered in the Background section, which gives a detailed assessment of the Career Education landscape in San Diego and Imperial Counties, including job demand by sector, employment gaps, SDICCC program offerings, student demand, motivators for key audiences, and competition for students from other higher education institutions. For further information on this research, please visit [SDImpCommons.org](http://SDImpCommons.org).

Based on this research, Civilian has distilled the market information most relevant to the SDICCC regional marketing plan.

### **Demand for Middle-Skill Workers (And Where Career Education Fits In)**

Career Education programs in the San Diego and Imperial Counties region play a substantial role in the area's economic vitality and diversity. The demand for middle-skills workers with some college is growing faster than demand for workers with a four-year bachelor's degree in the most dynamic, lucrative sectors of the San Diego regional economy. Due to demographic trends, however, fewer workers with some college training are available than those with no college (underqualified) and those with a four-year degree (educated but lacking applied skills). Therefore, those who have completed 'some college,' namely a certificate or AA degree in a Career Education program, are in increasing demand and can earn a higher starting salary.

Civilian collaborated with regional economic leaders, workforce development partners, and the Community College Centers of Excellence who helped to identify nine priority sectors with the highest gap in available jobs versus qualified workers to fill them. They are:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Advanced Transportation and Logistics
- Agriculture, Water, and Environmental Technologies
- Energy, Construction, and Utilities
- Health
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Digital Media
- Life Sciences and Biotech
- Business and Entrepreneurship
- Global Trade

In many occupations within the San Diego area's key priority sectors, outlined above, workers with some college can earn a better starting salary than some workers holding a four-year degree. For example, a machinist with a specialized, two-year associate's degree in Advanced Manufacturing from a community college Career Education program can earn more than a bank teller, receptionist, social worker, or journalist with a four-year liberal arts degree.

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## The Shrinking Pool of Prospective Students (And Where to Attract Them)

Community colleges in the San Diego and Imperial Valley region have the updated, specialized Career Education programs—and the funding—they need to attract qualified students and increase the number of associate’s degree and certificate holders. They have the tools to drive up the availability of workers who match the specific needs of employers in the region’s fastest-growing sectors.

Some of these community college Career Education programs (for example, in Health and Biotechnology), are at capacity and have to waitlist qualified applicants. However, the pool of prospective students for most community college Career Education programs is static or shrinking based on declining trends in high school graduation rates.

Careful targeting and sector-oriented messaging is essential to attracting a greater percentage of these prospective students. Regional marketing of SDICCC Career Education programs needs to emphasize, above all, that these community college courses are the path into the San Diego and Imperial Counties region’s sectors with the most jobs, the highest pay and the most salient emotional rewards — such as personal achievement and self-expression — all with the least amount of student debt.

These tactical messages should be delivered to prospective students who could potentially enroll in the programs that are:

- 1) most marketable for jobs that pay well and have good potential for subsequent career growth;
- 2) most popular among current community college students; and
- 3) able to accept more students, or planning to expand capacity in the coming years.

PRIORITY SECTOR	RESPECTIVE PROGRAM
Advanced Manufacturing	TBD
Advanced Transportation and Logistics	TBD
Agriculture, Water, and Environmental Technologies	TBD
Energy, Construction, and Utilities	TBD
Health	TBD
ICT and Digital Media	TBD
Life Sciences and Biotech	TBD
Business and Entrepreneurship	TBD
Global Trade	TBD

## Target Audiences, And How to Reach Them

Civilian’s robust regional marketing plan for SDICCC Career Education programs inherently speaks to multiple audiences in order to achieve its objectives. Our team identified the following audiences as primary drivers for engagement and conversion with the campaign framework (i.e. those best to target, in order of importance):

- 1) High school students;
- 2) Working adults;
- 3) Parents of high school students;
- 4) Educators of high school students (i.e. teachers and guidance counselors);
- 5) Current community college students; and
- 6) Employers/the San Diego regional business community as a whole.

To further understand these key audiences, Civilian referred to multiple studies, including a series of Simmons Syndicated Consumer Surveys and Values and Lifestyle (VALS) Attitudinal Surveys, conducted to assess attitudes, beliefs, media usage, and other valuable information about these demographics in San Diego and Imperial Counties. Within these breakdowns lie further detail that is especially useful to marketers, particularly information regarding these audiences’ beliefs and motivations regarding their future, and their media consumption habits.



### 1. HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Teenagers aged 16-17

(\*Civilian initially evaluated high school students in 11th and 12th grade, but in order to expand the audience and reach the most prospective students, this segment was expanded to simply include teenagers aged 16-17.)

Hispanic teenagers aged 16-17\*

(\*Civilian has placed particular emphasis on reaching Hispanic audiences within each priority demographic, since 43 percent of current Career Education students in the top three categories in the San Diego and Imperial Counties region are Hispanic.)



### 2. WORKING ADULTS

Adults 18-29

(including members of the military)

Hispanic adults 18-29

(including members of the military)



### 3. PARENTS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Parents of teenagers aged 16-17

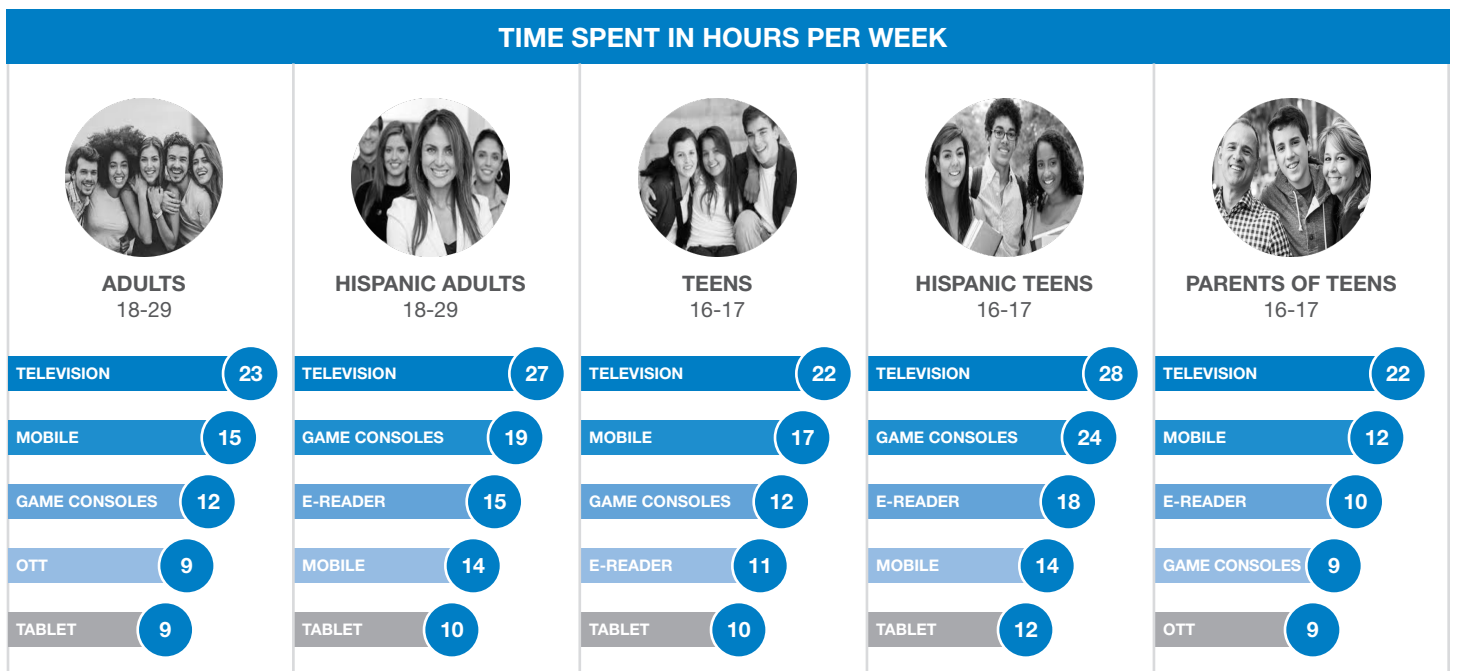
Civilian then used existing regional market research to create tangible, targetable media audiences for the SDICCC Career Education regional marketing campaign. Based on analysis of this information, we have refined the following audiences from the first three priority categories: To glean further insight into these key audiences, Civilian referred to multiple studies, including a series of Simmons Syndicated Consumer Surveys and Values and Lifestyle (VALS) Attitudinal Surveys, conducted to assess attitudes, beliefs, media usage, and other valuable information about these demographics in San Diego and Imperial Counties. Within these breakdowns lie further detail that is especially useful to marketers, particularly information regarding these audiences' beliefs and motivations regarding their future, and their media consumption habits.

Notably, the 2017 Simmons Teen Study of high school students, defined here as teenagers in 11th and 12th grade who will soon graduate from high school, revealed that while 88 percent of high school students surveyed want to go to college, and 82 percent want a career, **80 percent of these students stated "I don't like the idea of being in debt."** In an indication that many of these teenagers are considering alternative options to traditional higher education, and possibly trying to avoid heavy student debt, 38 percent stated that "the military offers a worthwhile career."

When it comes to media consumption, high school students at the time of the survey had spent the most time that week with television, mobile phones, game consoles, e-readers and tablets (in descending order).

### Target Audience: Media Trends and Behavior

Target audiences' media consumption habits and behavioral trends indicate their likelihood to see our ads when advertised to on mediums where they spend the most time. The trends and behaviors analyzed below guide the media mix, tactical strategy, and budget allocation.



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When Hispanic high school students are separated out from this demographic, their responses are largely similar to high school students overall—86 percent would like to go to college, 79 percent want a career, and 77 percent do not like the idea of being in debt. Notably, 15 percent of Hispanic teenagers stated, “I am easily influenced by other people,” and were not as interested in the military after high school compared to teenagers in 11th and 12th grade overall.

The biggest difference between Hispanic high school students and high school students overall, however, lies in media consumption habits. In addition to spending more time overall on media consumption, **Hispanic high school students also spent far more time with newspapers than did high school students overall, and more time on game consoles as well.** Hispanic high school students at the time of the survey had spent the most time that week with television, game consoles, e-readers, newspapers, mobile phones and tablets (in descending order). Also worth noting: According to the Simmons study, **22 percent of Hispanic teens aged 16-17 prefer to consume their media in Spanish.**

The other priority demographic of potential students, working adults 18-29, were surveyed accordingly about their beliefs and motivations regarding their future. According to a 2017 Simmons Local Study in San Diego, a majority (53 percent) did not like the idea of being in debt, and an even stronger majority (68 percent) stated that “It is important to continue learning new things throughout your life.” In a telling response which indicated a necessary perception shift, 48 percent said “There’s little I can do to change my life.” **However, the most informative responses for messaging purposes were gleaned from the plurality of working adults who stated, “I want to get to the very top in my career” (51 percent) and who expected to change jobs in the next 12 months (64 percent).**

Working adults predictably spent less time on media consumption overall, though those surveyed reported that they spent somewhat more time with streaming media, such as Netflix or Spotify. Working adults at the time of the survey had spent the most time that week with television, mobile phones, game consoles, and streaming media (in descending order). Hispanic working adults 18-29 skewed even more heavily, in their responses, toward career-oriented thinking, and were more likely to need perceptions about their future changed. **More Hispanic adults viewed what they do for work as a career rather than a job (60 percent), and said “I want to get to the very top in my career” (65 percent). Even more stated they anticipated changing jobs in the next 12 months (70 percent).** Additionally, there is a much more drastic need to change perceptions among Hispanic working adults about their role in their future—**60 percent of Hispanic working adult respondents said “There’s little I can do to change my life.”**

Compared to working adults as a whole, Hispanic working adults’ media consumption habits skewed far more towards television and game consoles. Hispanic working adults at the time of the survey had spent the most time that week with television, game consoles, e-readers, and mobile phones (in descending order). Also worth noting: According to the Simmons study, 38 percent of Hispanic working adults prefer to consume media in-language.



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Parents of high school students, defined as parents with teenagers in 11th or 12th grade (or between the ages of 16-17) who are about to make decisions about their future, were surveyed accordingly in the same 2017 Simmons local San Diego study about their beliefs and motivations regarding their children’s futures. An overwhelming majority of respondents (81 percent) stated that money is the best measure of success. Most parents (61 percent) also stated that “I like to provide my children with the things I didn’t have as a child.” Interestingly, as well, more parents (61 percent) disagreed with the statement “**There’s little I can do to change my life,**” which bodes well for their potential influence on their children’s higher education decisions.

These parents’ media consumption habits varied across media channels. Parents of high school students at the time of the survey had spent the most time that week with television, mobile phones, e-readers, game consoles, and streaming media (in descending order).

*Note: Within all of the top three priority categories, Spanish-language messaging must be carefully crafted—not simply translated after the fact—to be culturally relevant and sensitive to concerns among the Hispanic population in the San Diego and Imperial Valley region.*

The remaining target audiences (educators of high school students, current community college students) are vital to creating a healthy ecosystem that generates prospective Career Education students and places graduating students into the careers they’re seeking. Within all three of these categories, but particularly current community college students, special attention must be paid to messaging for members of the military who are considering their next steps.

Above all, the primary focus of the regional Career Education marketing campaign should be the SDICCC programs’ superior ability to help students develop the “middle-skills” most in demand by employers in San Diego and Imperial counties—and the “21st century skills” like effective communication and critical thinking that will help them succeed in these careers.

These messages should be sent at two important stages: when students and working adults first consider Career Education courses (and when parents first consider Career Education courses for their children); and when these audiences begin their search for information on Career Education.

As prospective students approach making a decision, marketing communications should focus increasingly on the superior support and services SDICCC Career Education programs provide, particularly for diverse populations with unique needs and concerns, such as Hispanic families and members of the military. The development of in-demand “middle skills,” the 21st century skills to succeed in these careers, and the support and services SDICCC provide are the three key takeaways that should be communicated in messaging (and illustrated with language and concepts that are appropriate and appealing, depending on the target audience).

Beyond recruiting students, the regional marketing plan also aims, in future phases, to position SDICCC Career Education programs as an outsourced human relations function for small businesses in San Diego and Imperial counties. In other words, the message will be that SDICCC do the work for these companies finding qualified workers to fill open positions—and

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these businesses can rest assured that these highly qualified candidates are effectively pre-screened for superior 21st century skills.

However, it is worth remembering that all of the key audiences identified as targets for the regional Career Education marketing campaign have many other options for higher education.

### The Competition

It is no secret that the San Diego and Imperial Valley area is home to many higher education institutions. Of the region's 37 colleges and universities, community colleges enroll about half of all postsecondary students. However, as the pool of potential students shrinks, SDICCC must try to draw an increasing share of fewer prospects in order to meet state and regional enrollment goals. Thankfully, research of the competition shows that there are a few advantages that community colleges can emphasize to sharpen their edge.

Many of the postsecondary students in the San Diego region are interested in business programs, and many of those students are attracted to for-profit institutions, which tend to spend aggressively on marketing. Many San Diego-area postsecondary students are also interested in healthcare professions, and many of those are attracted to for-profit and private institutions. However, according to available data from the National Center for Education Statistics and the U.S. Department of Education College Scorecard on four-year public, private, and for-profit schools in the San Diego region, **attending one of these higher education institutions is 2.5 to 8.6 times more expensive than two-year public institutions (aka community colleges)**. Therefore, the data indicate a good potential opportunity to attract students interested in business or healthcare careers to community college Career Education programs.

Additionally, interest in a myriad of other academic programs among prospective students is widely dispersed across the region's 37 colleges and universities. SDICCC schools' Career Education programs have an opportunity to attract students who would otherwise assume that a four-year or liberal arts education should be their de facto choice, doing so through targeted messaging focused on specific programs and the good-paying jobs they open up for students. **The competition for community colleges therefore not only includes technical programs at for-profit and private institutions, but also the various degree programs across all institutions (including those at community colleges themselves) that do not lead to employment in high-demand, good-paying jobs.** Therefore, the data indicate a good potential opportunity to attract prospective students who might consider two-year pathways into the San Diego region's most in-demand sectors, rather than a traditional four-year or private/for-profit pathway.



## **3. BRAND PLANNING**

## BRAND PLANNING

### Strategic Objectives

To support the overall goals of the statewide Strong Workforce Program, the primary goal for SDICCC's Career Education programs is to close the region's employment gap, equipping students to fill middle-skills jobs in well-paying, in-demand industry sectors. This goal can be achieved through a series of measurable objectives directly and indirectly driven by marketing.

#### 1 DRIVE CAREER EDUCATION COURSE ENROLLMENT AT SAN DIEGO AND IMPERIAL COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGES.

**STRATEGY:** The first goal for the SDICCC Region consortium will be to increase course enrollment in programs that prepare students for employment in the region's priority sectors by an average of **1 percent annually** (These programs are: Advanced Manufacturing; Advanced Transportation and Logistics; Agriculture, Water, and Environmental Technologies; Energy, Construction, and Utilities; Health, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Digital Media; Life Sciences and Biotech; Business and Entrepreneurship, Global Trade). Civilian views this as a "share steal" objective, based on projections of a flat market of students seeking higher education across all institutions (public and private, non-profit and for-profit).

#### 2 EXPAND THE CAREER EDUCATION MARKET IN SAN DIEGO AND IMPERIAL COUNTIES.

**STRATEGY:** The integrated marketing plan elevates the brand value of SDICCC Career Education by marketing to key opportunity audiences, such as teenagers aged 16-17 (and their parents), and working adults aged 18-29 (including special populations, such as Hispanics and members of the military). The goal is to increase awareness and consideration of Career Education programs among these priority audiences. Civilian views this as a "market growth" objective, based on assessments of demographics with the most potential for increased enrollment in Career Education programs.

#### 3 PLACE GRADUATES INTO THE REGIONAL WORKFORCE.

**STRATEGY:** This is a critical, but not marketing-driven objective within both the SDICCC Region and the statewide Strong Workforce Program. As the SDICCC's marketing campaign evolves over the next three years, however, there will be multiple opportunities to support this objective with marketing activities. The primary goals of this objective would be to increase students' completion rates within in-demand Career Education programs; improve SDICCC Career Education programs' retention rates; and boost salary outcomes for graduating students.

Going forward, Civilian recommends focusing on increasing connections between students and employers through community outreach and partnerships with employers, and establishing this community of connections by cultivating personal stories from students, alumni, and employers about their experience with Career Education programs and graduates.

Naturally, the strategies to achieve these three objectives will evolve as priorities shift. The first year (2018) of this project is focused most on increasing enrollment in and awareness of Career Education programs regionally; Civilian anticipates that the second year (2019) will shift focus toward boosting and maintaining a positive perception of SDICCC regional Career Education brand, while continuing to increase enrollment; the third year (2020), in which enrollment will ideally be steadily growing, will retain the focus on brand perception and also shift focus to community building, particularly with regards to college/employer partnerships.

CAMPAIGN EVOLUTION		
SHIFTING PRIORITIES ACROSS 3 YEARS		
YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
1. ENROLLMENT 2. AWARENESS	1. BRAND PERCEPTION 2. ENROLLMENT	1. COMMUNITY BUILDING 2. BRAND PERCEPTION

### Identifying the Appropriate Tone and Voice for Regional Messaging

The SDICCC’s regional Career Education program must also take several layers of influence and existing branding into consideration in order to be successful: those at the individual college level, regionally, and statewide.

First of all, at the college level, each individual campus has its own unique brand and identity. **The task at hand is not to eliminate or combine them. Any regional branding campaign must be cognizant of their differences, and be mindful not to create any conflict or brand confusion.**

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However, **from both an advertising and community outreach/public relations standpoint, there must be a single voice/identity to represent this campaign regionally, in the San Diego and Imperial Counties.** One immediate challenge in creating that voice is acknowledging the differences between the San Diego and Imperial Valley markets, and how to speak to their communities appropriately and effectively.

In addition, any regional branding campaign for SDICCC's Career Education programs must fit seamlessly into the statewide "Learn By Doing" campaign under California's Strong Workforce Program. It must align with the statewide campaign in tone as well as visuals, while still speaking to regional and campus-specific demographics.

With all of these considerations in mind, Civilian recommends a branding approach that adheres to the creative templates and themes of the statewide "Learn By Doing" Career Education campaign, but with messages tailored to the San Diego and Imperial County region. The goals of this regional campaign would be to drive high-level perception shifts about community college Career Education courses, and to drive increased enrollment through tactical program messaging tailored to the San Diego and Imperial County markets' specific needs and opportunities. **Civilian's proposed regional marketing plan takes a nimble approach to messaging and channel selection in order to meet both enrollment and perception goals for the San Diego and Imperial Counties region.**

### **Positioning: Shifting Perceptions of Community College Education**

Over the past few generations in California, perceptions of what a community college education looks like, and what it means for someone's career prospects, have developed and solidified in the minds of prospective students and their parents—and they're not always positive.

In order for SDICCC to drive Career Education enrollment, and expand awareness among key markets, they must foster an evolved perception of community college education, and the opportunities it can provide.

Civilian has identified the key perception shifts that we can make to represent the "new" regional brand for SDICCCA's Career Education programs. They will drive everything from messaging to visual aesthetic, channel selection to digital experience, and everything in between.

Based on insights from Public Information Officers at each of the colleges and the Koski baseline awareness study, here are the key perceptions that currently hinder Career Education enrollment at San Diego and Imperial County colleges, and the desired perception that can be produced with a strong regional marketing campaign.

## PERCEPTION SHIFTS

CURRENT PERCEPTION	DESIRED PERCEPTION	KEY ATTRIBUTES
“There are ten different community colleges in San Diego and Imperial Counties, and they’re all competing for students and resources. They don’t coordinate and have nothing to do with one another.”	“There are ten different community colleges in San Diego and Imperial County for students to choose from, but they all work together, putting students and their career goals first.”	The <b>student focus</b> of community college Career Education programs, namely the resources and support they provide to enrolled students;
“I’m enrolling in a community college, but I’m transferring to a four-year school once I’ve gotten my associate’s degree. It’s just a stepping stone.”	“I’m enrolling in a community college because it’s the best place for me to learn skills that will put me on a good career track.”	The <b>quality</b> of a community college Career Education degree or certificate, particularly the on-the-job, practical skills experience it provides;
“Community college Career Education courses require a major investment of time and money that I don’t have.”	“Community college Career Education courses are a great value—I can find a degree or certificate that works for me, and will help me advance my career options.”	The <b>affordability</b> of a community college Career Education program, especially in comparison to those offered by competitors like two- or four-year for-profit institutions, or a traditional four-year liberal arts degree in a less focused area;
“Good careers are for the privileged. Higher education just isn’t an option for me.”	“A great career could be within my grasp, and I have several higher education options accessible to me.”	The <b>empowerment</b> a community college Career Education certificate or degree gives to graduates, who can confidently enter the regional job market armed with practical skills, experience and connections that open doors to good careers and salaries;
“I’m in this alone—and I’m not sure there are any jobs in my area for me.”	“There are good-paying, in-demand jobs in my community, and those companies need people like me to fill them. The community colleges in my area want to help me get one of those jobs, and have a wide variety of student support services available to Career Education course enrollees.”	The professional <b>attainment</b> graduates of Career Education programs can reach within the regional economy; and
“Community college is fine, I guess, if you can’t get in anywhere else and you want to ‘settle.’”	“Community college courses—especially Career Education courses—are a viable path to a rewarding career.”	The <b>value</b> of the practical skills, experience, contacts, and interpersonal 21st century skills that Career Education graduates leave with throughout their careers and lives.

### Messaging

In order to drive enrollment in SDICCC Career Education programs, it’s crucial to understand the key motivations that may drive people to choose certain careers—and, in tandem, pursue higher education and/or Career Education programs. Based on our extensive consumer research and segmentation process, Civilian identified these key motivators for our audiences:

- Earnings potential;
- Personal achievement and fulfillment; and
- Self-expression.

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Any successful messaging strategy will hit right at the **emotional bullseye**, or the confluence of all three of these motivations.

The SDICCC regional Career Education marketing campaign aims to hit right at the center of that emotional bullseye, by emphasizing the value of **connections** that a Career Education degree or certificate from a San Diego or Imperial County community college can open up for students who want to launch a well-paying career in a growing, relevant industry sector.

Connections are more than just who you know—and the SDICCC Career Education regional marketing campaign will aim to emphasize not only the breadth and types of connections students make, but also connect with them during every step of their journey towards enrollment, graduation and employment. Connection, in the framework of the SDICCC Career Education regional marketing campaign, means to **inspire, educate, and launch**:

- **Inspire:** A regional, unified brand for SDICCC Career Education will introduce the value of San Diego and Imperial Valley community college Career Education programs to prospective students in the area who want to find well-paying jobs within growing, in-demand sectors of the local economy—and demonstrate that these types of careers are attainable for them.
- **Educate:** SDICCC Career Education programs arm students with both the technical/practical and interpersonal, “21st century skills” they need to secure employment and succeed in the well-paying middle-skill jobs that are most in-demand—and the regional market campaign will demonstrate how San Diego and Imperial Valley community colleges’ Career Education programs do so.
- **Launch:** Community-building is an important aspect of the SDICCC Career Education regional marketing campaign. In addition to conveying the value of the connections, Career Education students will build with employers and the business community during their studies through available support services, the regional marketing campaign will also focus on expanding the ways SDICCC Career Education can bring students and employers together through extended community outreach to local businesses, unions and industry leaders (and, down the line, build a reputation for SDICCC Career Education programs as an outsourced HR function for smaller companies, providing pre-screened, qualified candidates for middle-skill job openings).

### Three-Year Campaign Evolution

Introducing, growing and maintaining a regional marketing ecosystem for SDICCC Career Education programs will by nature require evolution and regular strategic shifts. There are many unknowns that will emerge, which we cannot currently predict, but at this point Civilian anticipates evolving the campaign over time across the following variables:

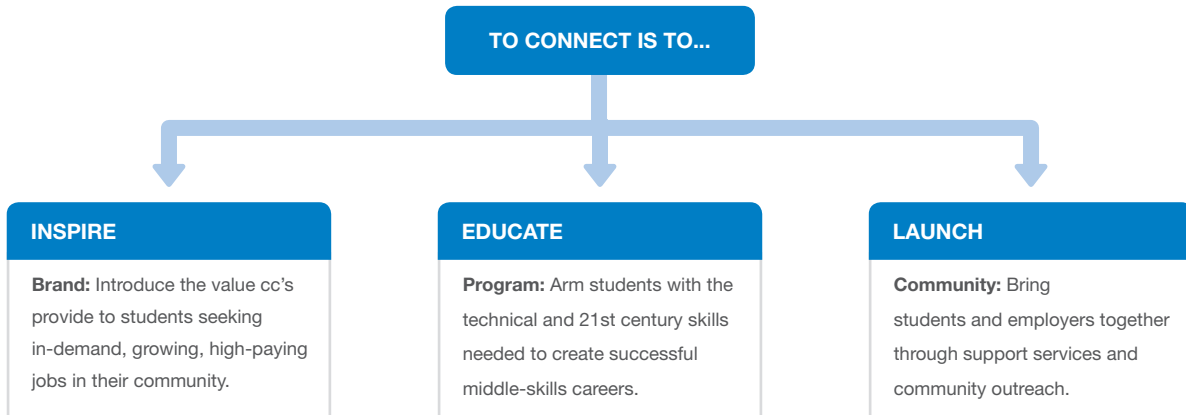


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- **Programs:** From a program standpoint, our initial focus will be driving enrollment among the key priority audiences, meaning the Career Education programs that currently have a good supply of current students already. During Year 1 of this contract, Civilian will identify and support the programs with high potential for growth, and make capacity recommendations based on the ensuing demand for these programs in subsequent years.
  - **Branding:** From a brand standpoint, our initial focus will be increasing awareness of available Career Education programs at San Diego and Imperial County Community Colleges. Over time, Civilian will build and develop brand perceptions of the quality of Career Education programs at SDICCCs; the career **opportunities** that become available to students who enroll in these programs; and the **value** of a Career Education program at an SDICCC (in that order).
  - **Users:** From a user standpoint, our initial focus is to streamline the user experience for both current and potential students at SDICCCs. Once a potential enrollee's interest is captured, Civilian's goal is to remove confusion from the process of learning more about and applying to a Career Education course—in other words, a prospective student sees an ad, clicks on it, explores all of the relevant information, and has the opportunity to apply all in one session. Over time, Civilian will gather insights from user research to optimize the regional Career Education marketing campaign's effectiveness, and also maintain an open dialogue with individual campuses about how to build a great student user experience.
  - **Community:** From a community standpoint, our initial focus will be to deliver a San Diego/Imperial Valley-specific message to the San Diego and Imperial County region. Over time, however, Civilian will forge partnerships with community stakeholders, including unions, Chambers of Commerce, corporate partners and companies to create a self-sustaining messaging loop, in which the local business and worker community continually emphasizes the value of Career Education programs at a SDICCC for students' future employment prospects.

All messaging, however, will center around the core regional brand promise of San Diego and Imperial County Community Colleges, which is the valuable **connections** that a SDICCC education can provide. Value takes many forms, but nothing rivals the value of the connections to mentors, employers, and unions in the San Diego and Imperial Valley region that SDICCCA's Career Education programs make available to students.

This concept of "connection" is multifold, too. A potent branding campaign can inspire students, making them aware of the value SDICCC provide to students seeking in-demand jobs in high-paying, high-growth industries in their community. SDICCC Career Education programs can then **educate** students, arming them with both the technical and interpersonal "21st century" skills needed to succeed in these middle-skills careers. From there, SDICCC Career Education programs help launch students into their careers, bringing students and employers together through support services and community outreach.

## VALUE OF CONNECTION MARKETING FRAMEWORK



Overall, the framework of this campaign is intended to be self-perpetuating, promoting a cycle of awareness, consideration, conversion and advocacy. Ideally, prospective students will become aware of the connections available to them through SDICCC Career Education programs, consider enrolling, and upon enrollment, advocate for the value of these programs to their peers and fellow students—adding to the overall success of the statewide Strong Workforce Program as a whole.



## **4. INTEGRATED MARKETING PLAN**

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## INTEGRATED MARKETING PLAN

This section contains a detailed summary of Civilian’s proposed three-year, regional integrated marketing plan for SDICCC Career Education programs. While the following proposed strategy and tactics have been carefully planned according to the market analysis and research outlined in Section 2, they are above all guidelines, and can be evolved as priorities and enrollment numbers shift.

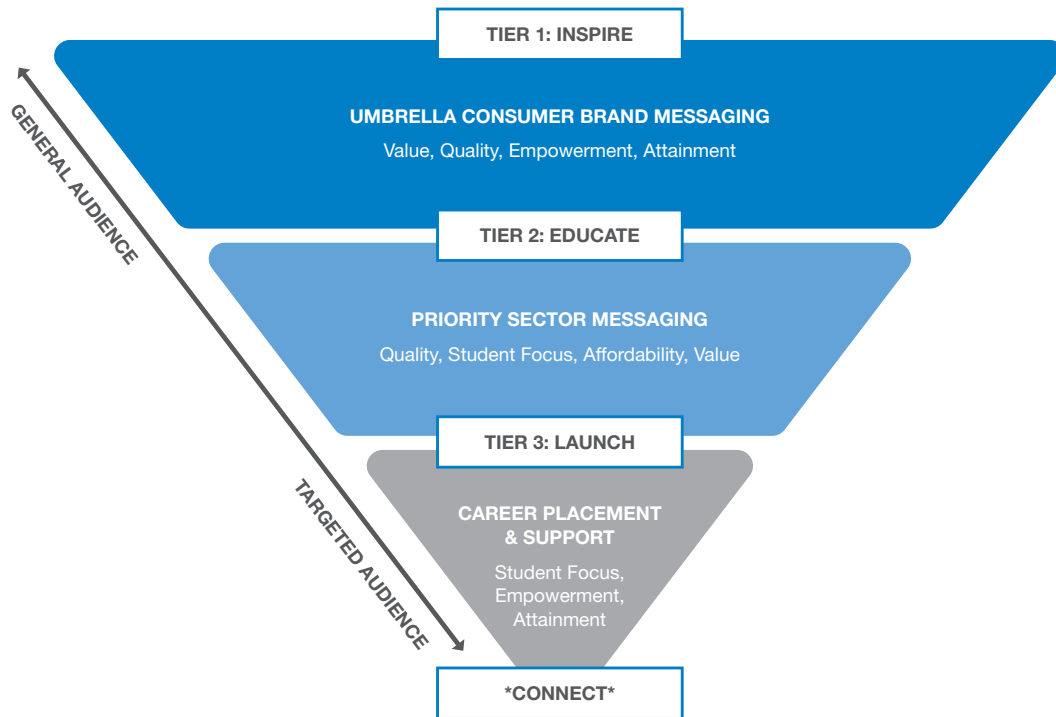
### **The Conversion Funnel (Or, How Marketing Aligns with Decisions Consumers Make)**

Civilian’s integrated regional marketing plan for SDICCC Career Education programs aims to engage with key audiences at every stage of what is known as the **conversion funnel**, starting with generating **awareness** (making sure those in the demographics most likely to benefit from Career Education programs know they are a good, viable option); **consideration** (when these prospective students are doing their research online, asking friends and taking in information that will guide them toward enrollment); **conversion** (when they decide to apply or enroll, ensuring they complete their application/enrollment); and **advocacy** (when these Career Education students have graduated and gone on to a successful middle-skills career, and are most likely to recommend their experience to others).

In the beginning phases (i.e. awareness), mass marketing channels that reach the most people as often as possible are best. However, the further along a prospective student is in the conversion funnel, the more targeted marketing activity becomes more specific, in channel and message, to each demographic. As such, the tactics change and refine even more as a prospective student moves closer and closer to a decision to enroll or apply (more detail on the individual tactics will be provided later in this report).

## CONVERSION FUNNEL

'CONNECTION' FRAMEWORK TIERS



Furthermore, the marketing philosophy at each point of the conversion funnel easily matches up with the three aspects of “connection” within the SDICCC Career Education regional campaign framework, and the six previously identified key attributes positive aspects of community college Career Education programs.

During the **awareness** phase, marketing strategy and tactics aim to **inspire**, with positive brand messaging emphasizing the **value** and **quality** of Career Education, and how they **empower** students to **attain** career success in in-demand sectors.

During the **consideration** phase, marketing strategy and tactics aim to **educate** prospective students about their choices, emphasizing the **value** and **quality** of SDICCC Career Education programs give to students preparing a career in the region’s most in-demand sectors, their **affordability**, and the **focus on students** SDICCC provide, through support and career services.

During the **conversion** phase (and into the **advocacy** phase, as well), marketing strategy and tactics aim to **launch** graduating students through career support and assistance placing them with employers, and emphasize to other prospective students how well SDICCC Career Education programs do so. The top key attributes to emphasize at this stage? Back to the **student-focused** philosophy and structure of Career Education programs, and how they **empower** students to **attain** their full potential in well-paying, middle-skill careers.

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The goal, of course, is for all prospective students to enroll, complete their course, attain employment and enter the **advocacy** phase, wherein they **connect** with students who are considering Career Education like they once were. Ideally, they will have formed connections with employers through their coursework, and be willing to share their stories and experience with Career Education, setting in motion a cyclical engine, spreading **awareness** and bringing new future students into the top of the funnel.

### Messaging

One of the goals of the proposed San Diego and Imperial Counties marketing campaign is to remain consistent with California Community Colleges' statewide Career Education branding, ensuring both a unique regional voice and compatibility with the statewide campaign, which will continue to run its own ads in the region. To this end, the Civilian team recommends maintaining the state's color palette and photo art direction, and adhering to the statewide campaign's adopted style guide, templates, fonts, and other usage recommendations.

However, in order for SDICCC to regionalize this statewide campaign for maximum impact and relatability, Civilian recommends replacing the core California Community Colleges logo with a San Diego and Imperial Counties designation.



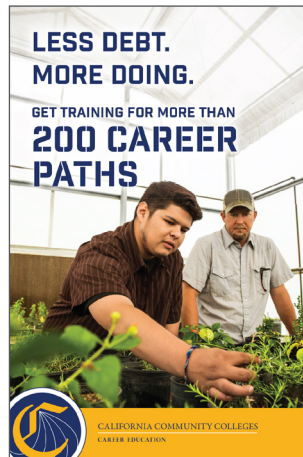
CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES  
CAREER EDUCATION



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES  
CAREER EDUCATION | SAN DIEGO AND IMPERIAL COUNTIES

We have also developed two new campaign concepts, to be tested upon plan approval to provide insight and direction for final selection, which speak to the specific goals and desires of the top identified target demographics in San Diego and Imperial Counties. More information regarding creative pre-testing can be found within the Evaluation Plan section of this report.

Statewide Campaign Creative - “Learn By Doing”

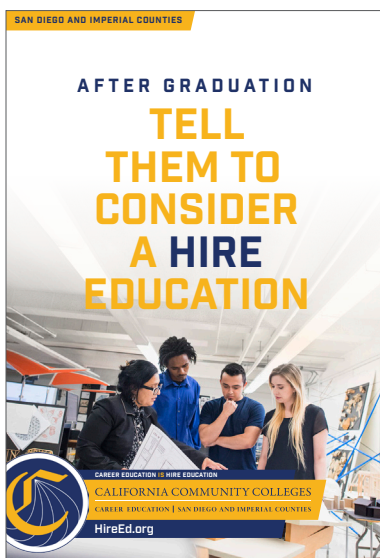


\*Source: CaliforniaCareerEducation.com

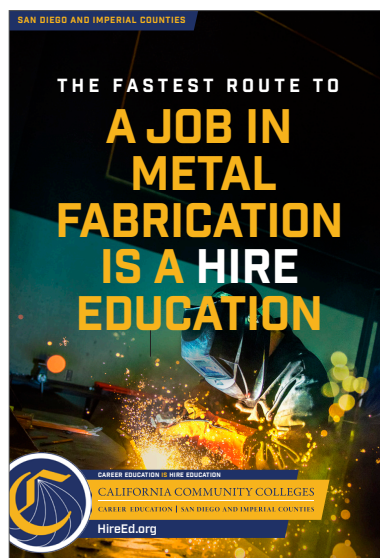
Test Concept #1: “Career Education IS HIRE Education”

The “HIRE Education” campaign serves multiple purposes. First, it dispels pre-existing perceptions of what a higher education means, drawing a direct line to the outcome: an education that will get the student **hired**—dispelling the notion that a graduating high school student has only two options: an hourly job or enrolling in a four-year college. Instead, it adds a new third option: real-world skills, knowledge and experience in a high-demand, well-paying industry—all in about 18 months.

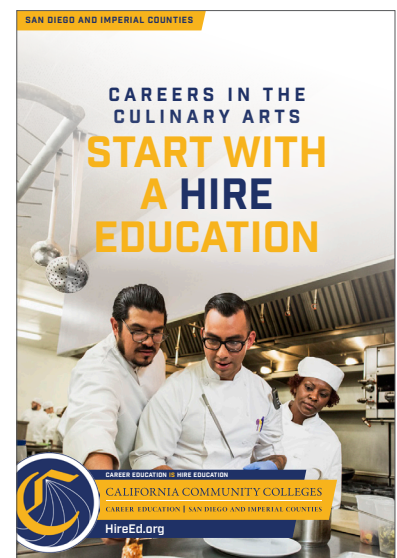
Secondly, “HIRE Education” sends the message to prospective students that good, well-paying careers in growing industries are attainable, cementing the value of Career Education programs in the minds of prospective students. It tells them explicitly that SDICCC Career Education programs share their ultimate goal of getting hired.



GENERAL AWARENESS



PROGRAM SPECIFIC MESSAGING





## Test Concept #2: “Practical Skills for Practically Any Career”

“Practical Skills for Practically Any Career” is a campaign that breaks down exactly what the statewide “Learn By Doing” promise means for San Diego and Imperial County residents, in a more understandable way. Using straightforward yet clever phrasing to describe exactly what Career Education at a California community college means—specifically a San Diego or Imperial County community college—“Practical Skills for Practically Any Career” makes Career Education simultaneously more empowering and more approachable for prospective students.



GENERAL AWARENESS



PROGRAM SPECIFIC MESSAGING



## Test Concept #3: Retain the statewide “Learn By Doing” concept

In addition to the two original, regional concepts, Civilian recommends testing the pre-existing statewide “Learn By Doing” message along with our proposed campaign concepts. This will ensure that we capture and measure objective feedback from consumers about which campaign is most impactful, meaningful, and motivates them toward action. Find out what works for all and apply those findings to the preferred campaign.

### Cultural Authenticity

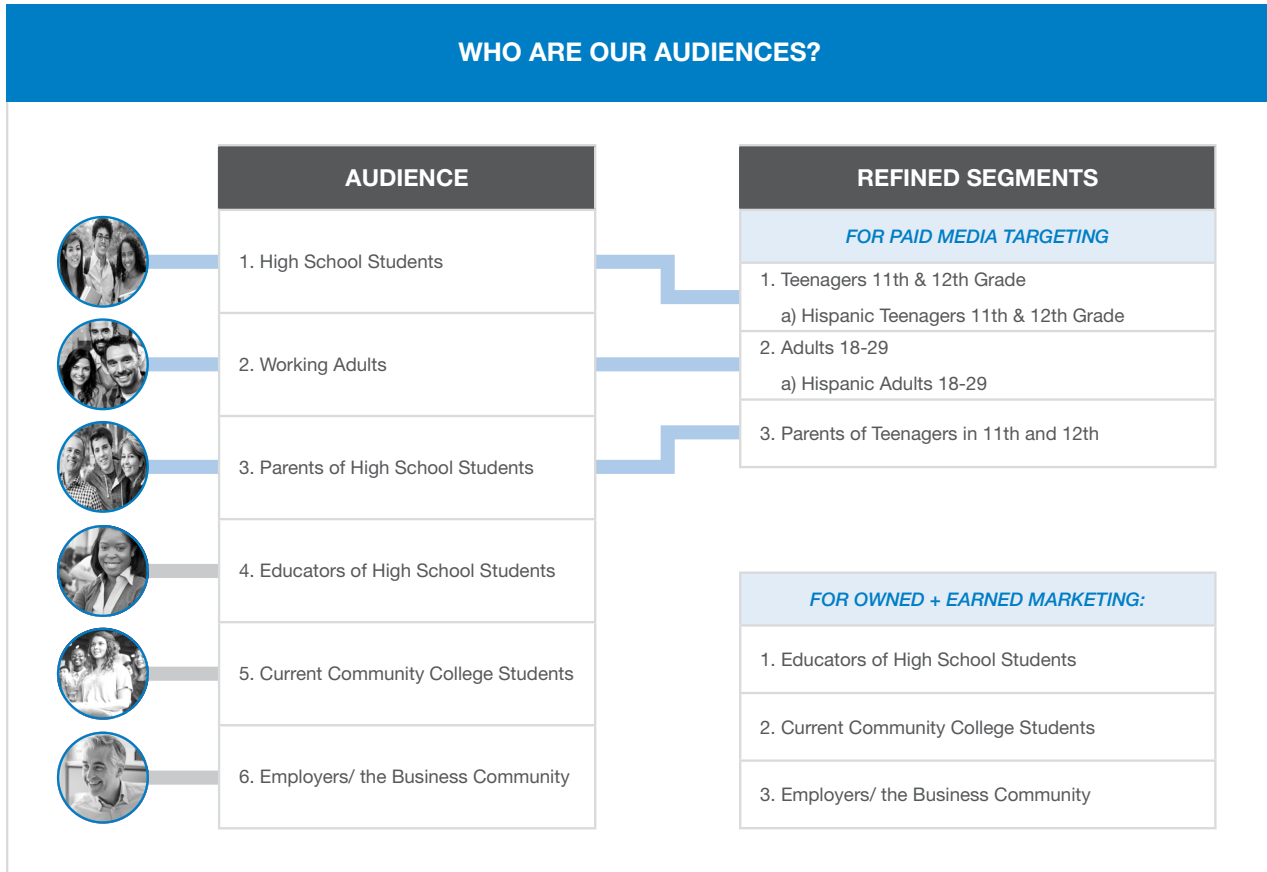
Based on regional demographics and cultural considerations in the San Diego and Imperial county region, Civilian will deploy multi-lingual messages in appropriate channels, with a focus on Spanish-language media. Decisions regarding when and where such language “transadaptations” need to be leveraged are based on the media consumption preferences of each priority audience, as well as what is most cost-efficient.

Civilian will disseminate messaging to the six identified key audiences through tactics that can be separated into two categories: **paid media** and **owned and earned media**, which will be discussed in the sections immediately following.

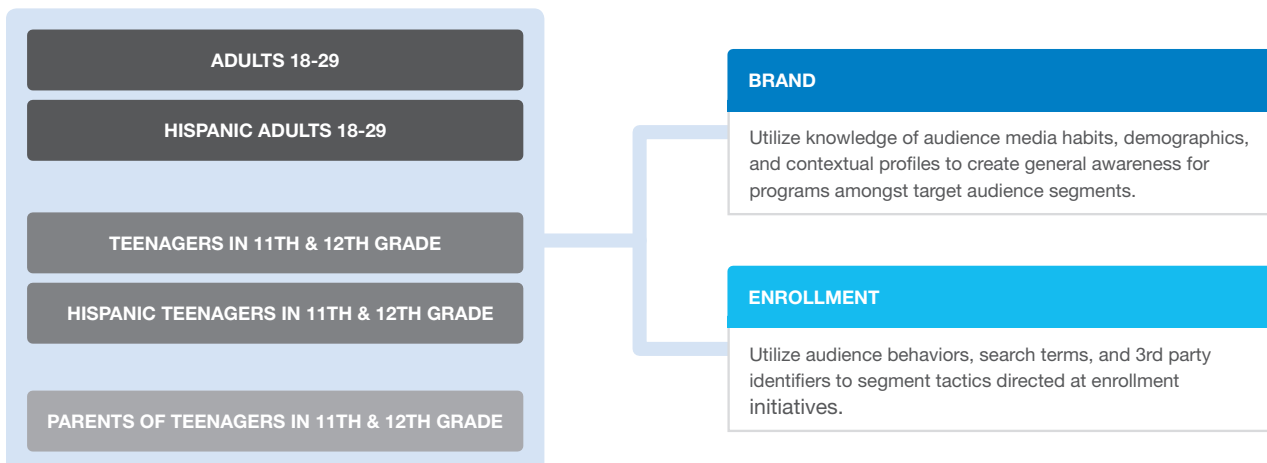


## Paid Media

The first three priority audiences Civilian has identified for this campaign (high school students, working adults, and parents of high school students) are most effectively reached via highly-targeted, paid media channels. Paid media, which consists of all messages in advertising purchased in order to be seen by targeted audiences, is an essential component of brand awareness.



Use a targeted, data-driven marketing approach to reach audiences at various stages of the enrollment process



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Civilian's recommended strategy for SDICCC Career Education programs will use targeted, data-driven media to reach these audiences at various stages of the enrollment process, outlined in the conversion funnel (awareness, consideration, conversion, advocacy).

The two main differences between the messaging used in brand-oriented and enrollment-oriented paid media tactics at every stage of the conversion funnel are as follows:

- Paid media focused on building up the Career Education brand utilizes knowledge of each target audience's media habits, as well as demographic and contextual profiles of the typical user in each audience to create general awareness about SDICCC Career Education programs as a strong tool for starting or enhancing a career.
- Enrollment-focused media identifies prospective students who have shown interest in specific priority programs through their online behavior, such as the websites they visit or the terms they search for online. The tactics are customized based on user interest and provide well-placed information about the specific benefits of Career Education in order to encourage them to visit the SDICCC Career Education website to learn more.

Brand-oriented and enrollment-oriented paid media tactics will also vary slightly by budget and primary target audiences in the first year of the regional integrated marketing campaign. Brand-oriented paid media will have a budget of \$340,000 for a deployment period of June 18-August 31, 2018 in San Diego and Imperial Counties, and will have a broader target audience. Enrollment-oriented paid media, will have a smaller budget of \$160,000 for the same deployment period in the same geographic area, with a smaller and more focused set of target audiences. The higher budget for Brand is driven by a need to create 'splash' awareness, while the Enrollment media will be more tactical and conversion-driven.

After the campaign's launch, Civilian will apply learnings about ad reach and audience behavior during the 2018 summer enrollment period (June 18-August 31, 2018) to refine our paid media messaging and shift tactics in order to achieve the campaign's objectives both in the next year, and in years 2 and 3 of this campaign.

## MEDIA PLAN PARAMETERS 2018

BRAND		ENROLLMENT
<i>PLAN PARAMETERS</i>		<i>PLAN PARAMETERS</i>
<p><b>Budget:</b> \$340,000</p> <p><b>Timing:</b> 6/18/18 - 8/31/18</p> <p><b>Geography:</b> San Diego &amp; Imperial County</p> <p><b>Target Audiences:</b>                      General &amp; Hispanic Adults 18-29                      General &amp; Hispanic Teens 16-17                      General &amp; Hispanic Parents of Teens                      Military 18-29</p>		<p><b>Budget:</b> \$160,000</p> <p><b>Timing:</b> 6/18/18 - 8/31/18</p> <p><b>Geography:</b> San Diego &amp; Imperial County</p> <p><b>Target Audiences:</b>                      General &amp; Hispanic Adults 18-29                      General &amp; Hispanic Teens 16-17                      High-Potential Candidates</p>

Several times in this report, we have referred to the six key target audiences for this campaign, which include the top three priority demographics (high school students, working adults and parents of high school students). Across San Diego and Imperial Counties, the target audiences for all SDICCC Career Education paid media messaging consists of 1.73 million adults, parents and teenagers aged 16-17. These can be roughly separated into **brand audiences** and **enrollment audiences**.

The **brand audience** actually comprises most of these target consumers, and consists of people who may not know about the Career Education programs offered by community colleges. This includes adults aged 18-29 and teenagers aged 16-17 (and their parents).

The **enrollment audience** consists of adults aged 18-29 who plan to enroll in college or otherwise return to school in the next 12 months, according to cross-referenced data from the Spring 2017 San Diego Simmons Local Study. Civilian expects the enrollment audience to grow once the brand audience is exposed enough to our messaging, and begins transitioning into a consideration/enrollment audience.

Teenagers aged 16-17 are the only demographic that fall into both the brand and enrollment audiences, simply because of their high potential to find out that local community college Career Education programs are an option after high school and end up applying.

## TARGET AUDIENCE COMPOSITION

### BREAKOUT

Across San Diego and Imperial Counties, our total target audience consists of 1.73M adults, parents, and teens.

### BRAND AUDIENCE

AUDIENCE TARGET: 1.37M



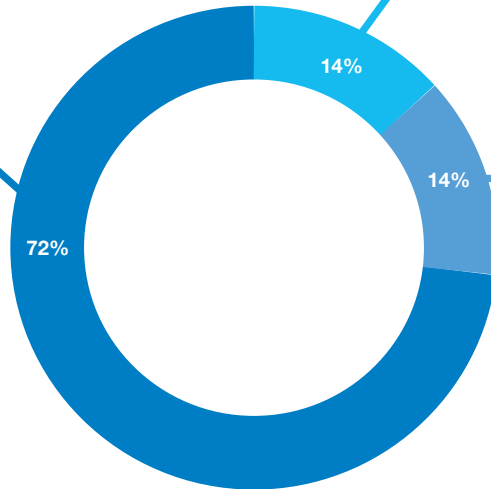
40% General Adults  
18-29



18% Hispanic Adults  
18-29



14% General and  
Hispanic Parent of  
Teens 16-17



### ENROLLMENT AUDIENCE

AUDIENCE TARGET: 235K+



9% General Adults  
18-29 Plan to Enroll in  
next 12 months



5% Hispanic Adults  
18-29 Plan to Enroll in  
next 12 months

### SHARED AUDIENCE

AUDIENCE TARGET: 122K+



11% General Teens  
16-17



3% Hispanic Teens  
16-17

As previously mentioned in the Market Information section of this report, it is critical to understand the media consumption behaviors among each target audience for this regional marketing campaign. Target audiences' media consumption habits, and overall behavioral trends when it comes to media, indicate their likelihood to see ads on mediums where they spend the most time. Civilian analyzed data from the Spring 2017 Simmons Local and Fall 2016 NCS Teens Study about our target audiences' media consumption for a seven-day period. We then used the trends and behaviors found to guide our initial recommendations for the mix, tactical strategy and budget allocation of paid media for this regional marketing campaign.

NOTE: Civilian did not include television ads in our initial paid media recommendations because the highly specific, targeted, regional nature of this campaign would not be suited for a television ad buy (which can only be done statewide or nationally). Since television cannot reach as highly targeted of an audience as digital media, and the statewide "Learn By Doing" campaign's television ads cover the San Diego and Imperial County region, and our key priority audiences are heavy digital users across many of the same types of media channels, we have chosen to focus our efforts on highly targetable, data-driven digital media approaches. In the first year of this campaign, paid media on channels that are friendly to highly specific, targeted advertising (such as mobile web and e-readers) will begin with ads aimed at the

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largest pool of qualified individuals, in order to gain further understanding of who is interested in enrolling in community college programs. This information is then used to further refine target audiences in real time, narrowing in on who is most likely to apply to a SDICCC Career Education program.

This process is repeated every time someone in a target audience sees or interacts with a digital ad on their preferred media channel, giving the Civilian team the ability to anticipate the consumer journey at each step of the “awareness-to-consideration-to-conversion-to-advocacy” conversion funnel. This allows us to better allocate paid media in order to increase reach, frequency and user action in response to ads across the top-used digital media channels.

Speaking of the conversion funnel: because all paid media ads for this campaign are designed to reach audiences at various stages of interest in and intent to apply to Career Education programs, different tactics will be used at different stages, from awareness to advocacy. “Top-funnel” tactics are designed to provide reach, scale and frequency of messaging, whereas “lower-funnel” tactics become more targeted, in order to drive enrollments. Broken down further:

- During the **awareness** phase, paid media tactics will be cost-efficient, easily scalable, contextually relevant, and above all aim to increase campaign recognition. Some of the tactics targeting consumers in this phase will include online display ads (both desktop and mobile), billboards, streaming/digital radio, content marketing, and location targeting (television and broadcast radio are often included in this category, but will not be considered for the SDICCC Career Education regional marketing campaign at this point for reasons outlined earlier).
- During the **consideration** phase, paid media tactics will have a much narrower scope, and above all aim to inform consumers with relevant messages about Career Education. Some of the tactics targeting consumers in this phase will include social media, behavioral targeting, contextual targeting, and online native display ads.
- During the **conversion** phase, paid media tactics are even more narrowly targeted, with the sole intent of driving enrollment. Some of the tactics targeting consumers in this phase will include search engine marketing, email blasts, and retargeting consumers who have previously expressed interests with ads encouraging application and/or enrollment.
- During the **advocacy** phase, communications tactics will focus on engaging with both current students and alumni, and encouraging them to share their stories, stay involved, hire recent graduates, and generally help cultivate the next generation of Career Education students.

Each paid media tactic serves a purpose in moving users from being aware of Career Education programs, to considering one for themselves, to enrolling (and then spreading the word about their experience). Civilian’s proposed broad paid media tactical strategy, focused either on building the Career Education brand or boosting enrollment, allows the SDICCC Career Education regional marketing campaign to reach users at multiple touchpoints throughout their day.

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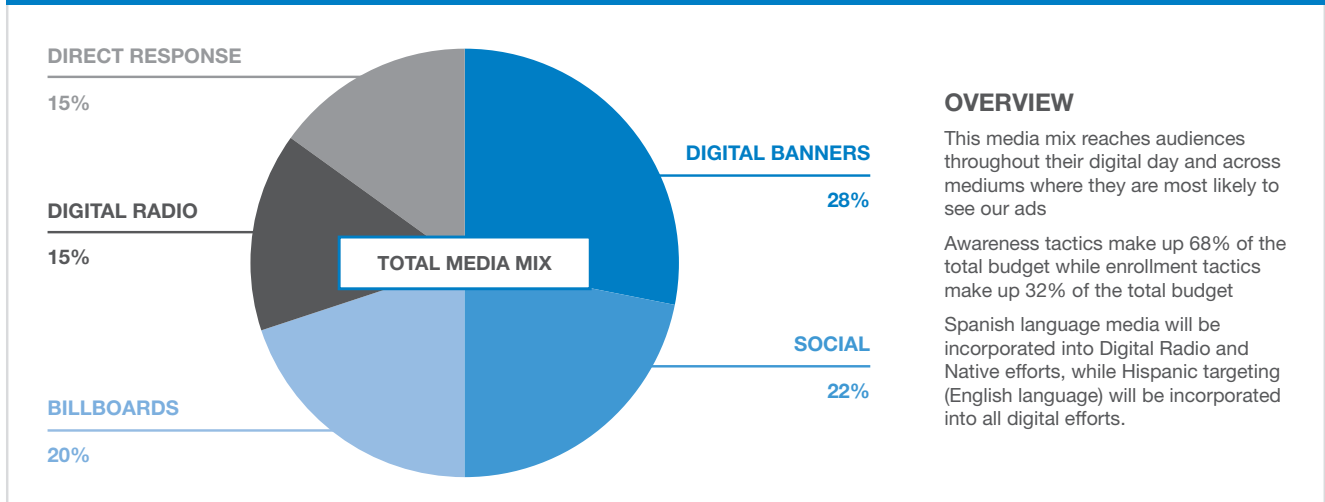
Here is a brief overview of the types of tactics, by focus, that can be deployed in the San Diego and Imperial Counties region to increase awareness of Career Education and/or boost enrollment in these programs.

- Tactics focused on building the SDICCC Career Education **brand** focus on reach and frequency. They generate awareness via:
  - “Out-of-home” (OOH) messaging, such as billboards and bus ads across San Diego and Imperial counties, which would reach the broadest audience;
  - Digital radio messaging, in the form of high-frequency, targeted ads reaching all segments across San Diego and Imperial counties;
  - Digital display ads on a mix of media channels, including mobile web and e-readers, which reach each audience when they are most likely to be online.
- Tactics focused on boosting **enrollment** in SDICCC Career Education programs are guided by consumer behavior. They include:
  - High-impact social media, such as promoted posts on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Snapchat, which support opportunities for prospective students to learn more about Career Education programs with highly informative ads throughout their digital day;
  - Direct response, such as email marketing to prospective students who have volunteered their contact information to learn more about Career Education programs, reaches “active hand-raisers” who are looking into continuing their education;
  - Retargeting, which analyzes website and online behaviors to identify users who were initially interested but dropped off, guiding them to enrollment with increasingly targeted follow-ups.

Monetarily speaking, tactics that drive **awareness** of the SDICCC Career Education **brand** make up 68 percent of the total paid media budget. Tactics designed to move prospective students from **consideration** to **conversion**, which means **enrollment** in a Career Education program, make up 32 percent of the total paid media budget.

NOTE: Spanish language media will be incorporated into digital radio and some direct response advertising efforts, while ads in English targeting Hispanic audiences will be incorporated into all digital efforts.

## MEDIA MIX ALLOCATIONS



Civilian chose to focus this project’s proposed paid media budget on the following channels:

- Out-of-home messaging
- Digital radio ads
- Digital banner ads
- Paid social media
- Direct response

Out-of-home messaging, which is solely brand-focused and takes up 20 percent of the paid media budget, can be targeted by audience demographic, and pinpointed at a physical location with 100 percent viewability to a broad target of working adults, parents and high school students in the San Diego and Imperial County region.

Market research indicates that, in the San Diego area, out-of-home ads, such as billboards and bus wrap ads reach:

- 48 percent of the Hispanic audience aged 16 and older: every 4 weeks, at a frequency of seven times per week; and
- 78 percent of the region’s general audience aged 16 and older: every 4 weeks, at a frequency of 10 times per week, creating a total of 28 million impressions across the San Diego area from June-August 2018.

Out-of-home ads have many benefits, including broad reach in San Diego County: it is easy to get billboard coverage along all major freeways in the area. Civilian’s relationship with our OOH media partners allows us to leverage added value in the form of extra weeks of advertising, pro-bono ad placements, and competitive rates, saving us over \$80,000 in media spend given the current scale of this project.

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**Digital radio** ads, which are **brand**-focused only, take up 15 percent of the paid media budget. They offer the same opportunities for reach, frequency and scale as traditional broadcast radio, with the added benefits of being able to track user behavior and segment target audiences more intelligently. Over 30 percent of San Diego and Imperial County residents are active Pandora listeners, which makes Pandora, as well as all other digital and streaming radio services, an excellent platform for digital radio ads promoting SDICCC Career Education programs to the top three priority audiences (including, within the working adults population, members of the military). According to the 2017 Simmons local study of the San Diego region, over 50 percent of adults 18-29 listened to digital/streaming radio only, and between 35-48 percent of high school students stated the same.

Digital radio ads also offer a unique opportunity to reach Hispanic prospective students with in-language messaging, and allow us to index the top zip codes in San Diego and Imperial Counties for response rates to these ads. The reach potential for these ads is also significant: one 30-second audio ad on a digital radio platform during high-impact listening times for key audience segments, accompanied by a banner ad directing the user to the SDICCC Career Education campaign landing page, can result in 7.5 million impressions on 460,000 unique users, ten times over the course of the two-month launch campaign, from June-August 2018.

**Social media**, which would focus on both building the Career Education **brand** and boosting **enrollment**, takes up 26 percent of the paid media budget. Civilian strongly recommends adopting unique strategies for each social media tactic, such as:

- **LinkedIn:** LinkedIn ads reach both broad and specifically targeted audiences with creative messaging designed for career-minded users, designed to drive both awareness and enrollment. In fact, more than 20 percent of our previously-identified working adult audience with plans to enroll in college in the next 12 months uses LinkedIn on a monthly basis.
- **Facebook:** Facebook ads offer advanced targeting capabilities, allowing us to segment audiences by location, interests and behaviors. High-impact, contextually flexible, in-feed Facebook ads offer the most coverage, and give users the most opportunity to learn more about SDICCC Career Education programs.
- **Instagram:** Instagram ad inventory is tied to Facebook, its parent company, therefore allowing any Instagram ad buy to leverage learnings about audience behavior and targeting opportunities from Facebook. Over 40 percent of our previously identified target audiences use Instagram at least weekly, and its mobile-focused nature means ads have generally a greater impact.
- **Snapchat:** Snapchat ads would largely be used to target teens aged 16-17, within high-indexing zip codes in San Diego and Imperial Counties. These ads can be featured in between Snapchat stories, and also within publisher stories themselves.

**Direct response**, including search engine marketing (SEM) and keyword search ads, as well as email, which would be focused on boosting **enrollment** only, take up 17 percent of the paid media budget. These types of ads are excellent for reaching people well past the



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consideration phase on the conversion funnel, who are already searching for Career Education options, on our terms. They enhance enrollment efforts by giving detailed insights into the behaviors of audiences research their career options. These types of ads can be divided into the following categories:

- **Keyword search:** These ads appear in a users search results list when that user queries specific words that were paid for by an advertiser (in SDICCC’s case, terms which indicate that a user in the consideration phase is researching a specific type of program).
- **Search Engine Marketing (SEM) or Search Engine Optimization (SEO):** These tactics would drive traffic to the SDICCC Career Education microsite by purchasing ads that appear on popular search engines like Google or Bing.
- **Google AdWords:** Using Google Adwords can create more leads in a shorter amount of time, thanks to Google’s extremely high usage. The service offers more ad extensions, and more options for settings, targets and further optimization of messaging.

NOTE: Civilian will work very closely with the regional schools to ensure search terms remain regionally focused, and do not prioritize any college over the other, or bid against current college SEM efforts.

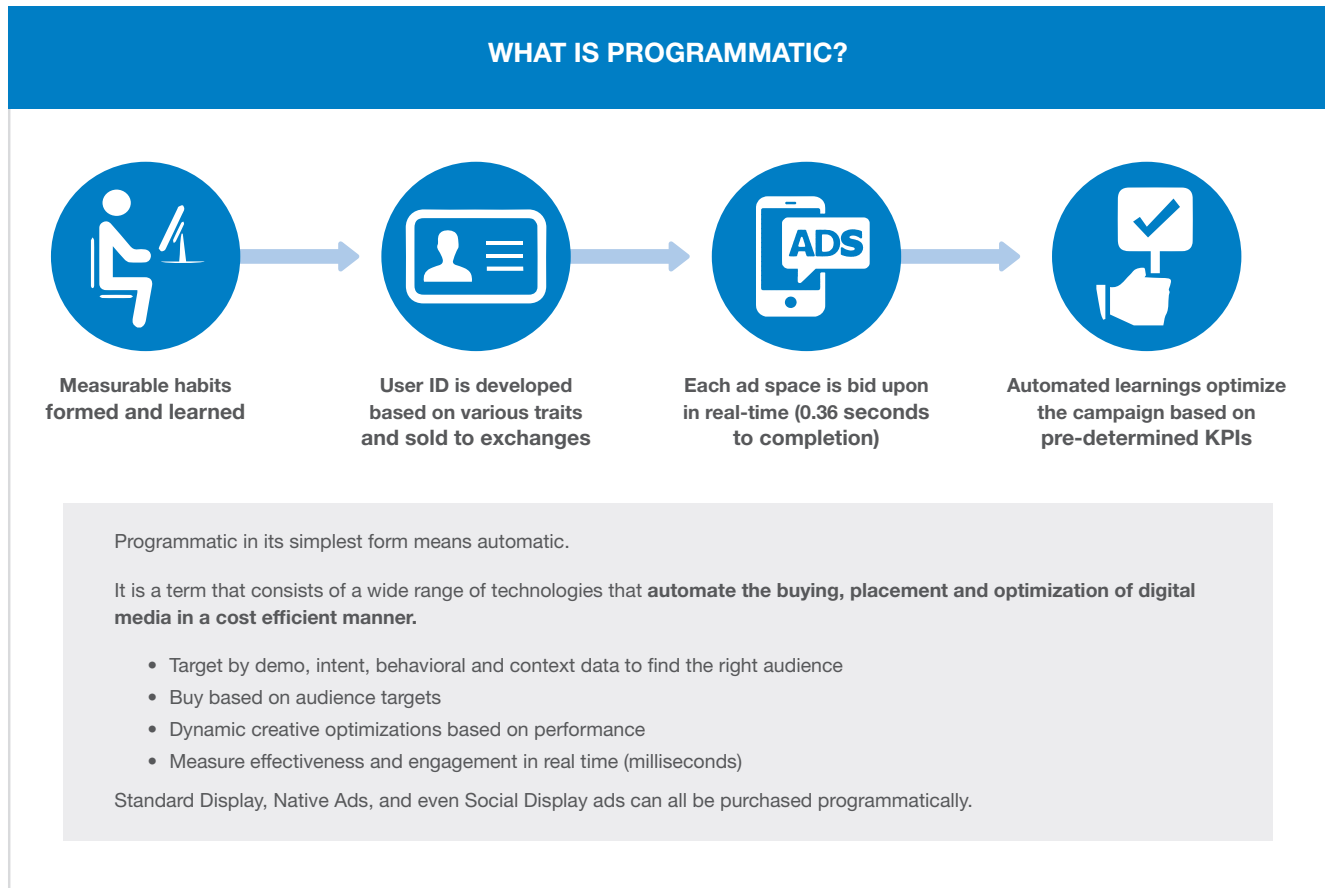
Separately, within the direct response ad budget overall, Civilian recommends allocating 18 percent to **direct response email marketing**. Email offers a targeted, high-impact way to reach key audiences as they’re making their decisions, and guides them to the next steps in the Career Education application or enrollment process. Because emails are opt-in only, they protect the SDICCC Career Education brand against negative reactions, and are highly relevant to users who have begun to consider Career Education.

There are a variety of ways to use email marketing, including customized mailing lists targeting users who have opted in to interest-based emails (rented lists, within this category, also provide opportunities for even more highly targeted reach). LinkedIn and Amazon also offer an email follow-up feature to target users who have previously interacted with an ad on those platforms.

**Digital display** ads on web pages visited frequently by target audience members, which would be focused on both building the Career Education **brand** and boosting **enrollment**, take up 26 percent of the paid media budget. They provide an efficient way to reach target audiences, and are easily scalable. It is also easy to control the frequency of these ads, which are seen wherever users access the Internet, whether via desktop, mobile or tablet, and they are available in a variety of ad sizes and formats to reach users throughout their digital days. The technology behind digital display ads allows us to layer advanced targeting techniques, and reach more and more specifically defined demographics within our key priority audiences.

These ads use contextual and behavioral cues from users in these target demographics, on the websites they frequent, to find the prospective Career Education students among them. The ad services then distribute these ads based on demographic, contextual, and behavioral data,

to ensure that the right people see the right message. We can then further optimize these ads and refine messages based on user engagement data, even retargeting users who have seen or clicked on ads, but not completed an application or enrollment form. These ads, naturally, have a massive potential reach of up to 20 million impressions ten times over the course of the launch campaign from June-August 2018, reaching 90 percent of users in our target audiences.



Civilian has broken out further proposed budget allocations per type of ad within the overall digital display ad budget. These are:

- 30 percent: **e-reader** ads, which are **enrollment**-focused only. They provide a unique reach, as Amazon Kindle ads reach 21 percent of our local target audience with plans to enroll in college in the next 12 months, and 12 percent of teens aged 16-17. Amazon Kindle ads also allow us to use Amazon’s proprietary behavioral in-market and lifestyle segments to reach audiences most likely to take an interest in community college programs, and re-target users who have engaged with ads but not completed enrollment with a follow-up email. There are a variety of ad placement options available for Amazon Kindle, which support landing page links and clickable features leading users to the SDICCC Career Education microsite. These include:
  - Wake screen ads, or full-screen advertisements that appear after the device has been turned on again from sleep mode;

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- Home screen banner ads, which appear persistently at the bottom of the Kindle home screen for each targeted user; and
  - Customer email, or the “retargeting” email ads sent to follow up with users who have interacted with an ad but not followed through by completing an application or enrollment form.
  - 19 percent: **direct response native ads**, which are **enrollment**-focused only. These ads, which appear within mobile, desktop, and tablet web pages as thumbnails linking to articles, reach audiences across relevant web pages and take the form of editorial content. They are far more effective at driving clicks than digital banner ads, and use advanced targeting capabilities to serve ads to audiences who plan to enroll in a Career Education program, as well as audiences who have indicated interest in enrollment by engaging with **brand**-focused ads on other channels. Civilian’s direct response native ads strategy aims to reach Hispanic audiences with messaging in both Spanish and English on frequently visited news and entertainment sites, in order to drive enrollment in specific SDICCC Career Education programs. These ads also have a significant reach, creating up to 5 million impressions across San Diego and Imperial counties, at an estimated 15 times over the course of the two-month launch campaign from June-August 2018.

The Civilian team considered a wide variety of paid media options, ultimately narrowing down to the above recommended tactics. Here are the other paid tactics considered, but not recommended:

- Television and traditional/broadcast radio: The statewide “Learn By Doing” campaign already blankets the San Diego and Imperial county region with broad messaging about Career Education, allowing the regional SDICCC campaign to focus on more targeted channels.
- Movie theater ads: While movie theater ads indexed well with our priority audiences, digital ads online are a much more targeted alternative.
- Mall ads: Ads displayed at shopping malls didn’t index as well with priority audiences (including high school students), compared to other tactics. Digital ads offer more targeted options for reaching high school students.
- App partnerships: Civilian considered partnership opportunities that would allow for takeovers, or the ability to run ads on popular apps such as Weather.com or WAZE. However, the creative messaging for this regional campaign did not fit well on these apps.
- Digital video ads: Digital video ads, including YouTube ads and streaming media pre-roll placements, will not be incorporated into the initial launch period of this campaign, during the first year’s summer enrollment (June 18-August 31, 2018). However, Civilian recommends incorporating digital video ads as a tactic later, as the campaign evolves based on refined creative messaging and audience targeting.
- Game console ads: This platform is only available for ads that will run nationally, making game console ads an inefficient use of regional paid media budgets.

Civilian applies brand safety measures for all marketing campaigns to ensure ads are served in the right environment. All of the ads served using the chosen/recommended paid media tactics for the initial launch of this regional marketing campaign (**out-of-home, digital radio, social media, direct response and digital display**) will be vetted for **brand safety**. Measures are in place to block ads from appearing on sites that contain adult content, hate speech, spyware/malware, offensive language, spam, obscenity, and illegal downloads, as well as pages dedicated to firearms, gambling, illegal drugs and dating sites. These measures also block and report on bot traffic to the San Diego and Imperial county Career Education microsite from ads, and ensure that all ads are meeting viewability standards.

The timing of each paid media tactic throughout this campaign is important. Below is a chart illustrating when ads on each paid media channel will be deployed and when, whom they will be targeting among our selected audiences, and how much budget they should require.

MEDIA PLAN RECOMMENDATION - FLOWCHART																		
2018																		
BRAND	TACTIC	JUN			JUL			AUG	TOTAL BUDGET	% OF TOTAL BUDGET								
		1	8	15	22	29	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	31			
Adults 18-29	Digital Banners																\$105,000	21%
Hispanic Adults 18-29	Billboards																\$100,000	20%
Teens 16-17	Digital Radio																\$75,000	15%
Hispanic Teens 16-17	Social																\$60,000	12%
Parents of Teens																		
<b>Total</b>																	<b>\$340,000</b>	<b>68%</b>
ENROLLMENT	TACTIC	JUN			JUL			AUG	TOTAL BUDGET	% OF TOTAL BUDGET								
		1	8	15	22	29	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	31			
Adults 18-29 (Plan to enroll 12 months)	Digital Banners																\$75,000	15%
Hispanic Adults 18-29 (Plan to enroll 12 months)	Billboards																\$50,000	10%
High Potential Site Retargets	Digital Radio																\$35,000	7%
<b>Total</b>																	<b>\$160,000</b>	<b>32%</b>
<b>Total Spend</b>																	<b>\$500,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

Measuring engagement and response to each paid media/ad type is key to refining messages for the right audiences, as they move closer to an enrollment decision. Each paid media strategy and tactic will serve the same purpose of driving users down the conversion funnel and into Career Education enrollment process, ensuring through consistent monitoring and optimization that ads are delivered efficiently to the most qualified prospective students. This is what that looks like at each stage of the conversion funnel:

- **Awareness:** Paid media tactics during the awareness phase cast a wide net. The audience for these ads is the broadest and least refined. Therefore, it's necessary at this point to rely pretty heavily on ad optimization to find and move prime audience targets from “aware of” to “considering” Career Education.
- **Consideration:** Paid media tactics during the consideration phase are aimed at audiences that have

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seen and engaged with Career Education ads, thus having given us information on their behaviors and interests. This allows us to serve more and more specific ads with the aim of moving these prospective students from “considering” to actually completing an application or enrollment.

- **Conversion:** Once further targeted ads have encouraged prospective students to finish the enrollment process, we can use findings from their behavior to make future campaigns even more efficient, and promote advocacy among graduates.

As the campaign evolves throughout 2018 and into 2019 and 2020, our learnings from the initial launch period will guide our optimizations for future strategy and tactics—all while remaining aligned with the larger campaign objectives to shift perceptions around community college Career Education programs in San Diego and Imperial counties, and build a community among students, schools and employers. Throughout the three-year regional marketing campaign for SDICCC Career Education programs, Civilian will:

- Use demographic, behavioral and messaging performance data to guide both the brand and enrollment-focused paid media tactics;
- Consider new partners and channels for paid media tactics based on the insights we gather about ads’ performance on the channels we initially recommended; and
- Refine target audiences over time to develop new segmentation approaches, based on the regional marketing campaign’s needs.

Paid media plays a major role in the SDICCC Career Education regional marketing campaign. Oftentimes, though, it will overlap and merge with our proposed **owned and earned media strategy**, outlined as follows.

### Owned and Earned Media

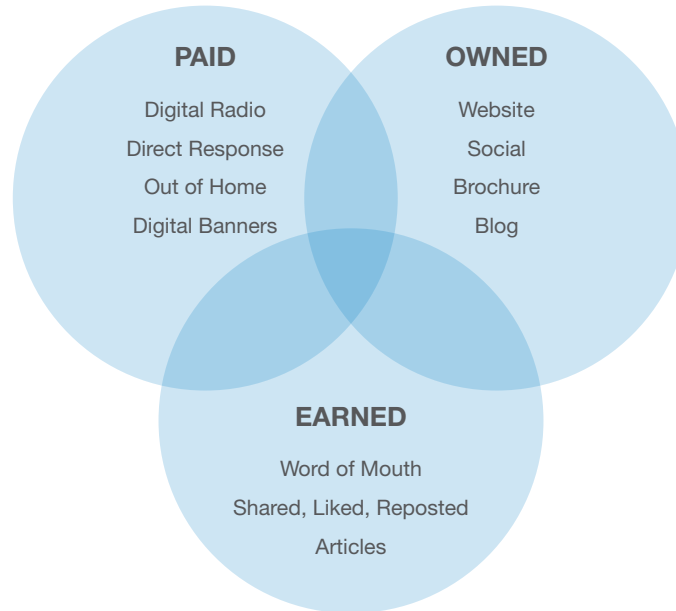
Paid media tactics will work together with **owned and earned media** tactics in this regional integrated marketing plan, spreading the brand’s message across the multiple paths our target audiences follow across devices, screens, and media channels. This overlap is known as a **converged media strategy**. Using a converged media approach reflects the changing nature of the customer journey, and will ensure we reach our key priority audiences regardless of what media they’re consuming, or which device they’re on. It’s the only way to reach customers on their preferred terms.

**Owned media** refers to tactics where the message can be “controlled” by the advertiser, like website content, brochures, blog posts, and infographics. **Earned media** refers to media exposure earned by word-of-mouth and focused pitching, and the recognition then received as a result. This includes press outreach that results in television news and print coverage, as well as compelling owned media content that receives positive reviews, reposts/retweets/shares and recommendations.

In other words, owned and earned media tactics are all about people, not product. They aim to generate advocacy by consumers on behalf of the SDICCC consumer education brand. The key to success in this respect for the SDICCC regional marketing campaign will be finding out what our key priority audiences react to the most, learn how join those conversations, and then use those genuine conversations to change perceptions.

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## REALITIES OF CHANNEL CONVERGENCE



The overarching strategy we recommend using to guide owned and earned media content development is this: **humanize the SDICCC Career Education experience through compelling storytelling, thereby making the experience more relatable and memorable to the audience in a way that facts and statistics cannot.**

This strategy underscores the shift of public relations from traditional tactics (measured by media hits) to an increasingly digital approach, in which success is measured by engagement—reposts, likes and shares. While traditional PR remains an important tactic, because there is no better way to increase your credibility than third-party press coverage, compelling and actionable content is critical.

As part of our proposed owned and earned media strategy, Civilian will generate **actionable content** that is informative, relevant, entertaining, and unique. Actionable content not only disseminates information, but seeks to build a relationship with our key priority audiences. SDICCC Career Education content will not only explain what to achieve (a good-paying, middle skills job opportunity in a growing sector), but will also tell the reader specifically how to achieve it (a SDICCC Career Education program). This will allow our audiences to smoothly advance further down the conversion funnel, toward conversion/enrollment.

Actionable content may include real student stories about their Career Education experience (both written and in video format), application and enrollment how-to's, answers to common questions about Career Education programs, photos of students at work or graduates on the job, and infographics about Career Education's impact on graduates' salary potential. These will then be disseminated via a unified regional Career Education website, social media, or even the more traditional route of favorable press coverage.

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As mentioned previously, an important aspect of this strategy is **storytelling**. Much of the content that this plan will generate revolves around stories from students, graduates, and employers that shows what Career Education looks like. These stories will target both prospective students and employers at their “emotional bullseye,” and focus on finding authentic stories from students, not creating or planting them.

Owned and earned media messaging will target the same primary audiences as paid media, though they will be adjusted somewhat across demographics. For example:

- The primary message to **high school students** and their **parents** will be, “SDICCC Career Education programs offer both a quality education and a pathway to good-paying, in-demand jobs in the area.”
- The primary message to **working adults** will be, “SDICCC Career Education programs can help me get a more interesting, rewarding job in the future. Career Education is affordable, and can give me real-world experience, hands-on training in a variety of programs that can put me on the path to an in-demand, better-paying job.”
- The primary message to **educators of high school students**, such as teachers and guidance counselors, will be, “SDICCC Career Education programs offer a wide variety of possible degrees and certificates, all of which offer both a quality education and a pathway to good-paying, in-demand jobs in the area.”
- The primary message to **employers** will be, “Partner with us. SDICCC Career Education programs can serve as an outsourced hiring function, sending you qualified candidates for the jobs you need filled the most.”
- The primary message to **current community college students** will be, “Your school offers paths to good-paying, available jobs in high-demand industries. Consider a Career Education program at a SDICCC school.”

### Owned and Earned Media Tactics

A unified regional Career Education website is the single most important marketing tool to present a cohesive brand and attract audience traffic. SDICCC needs a consistent single source of information to which to drive everyone “for more information.”

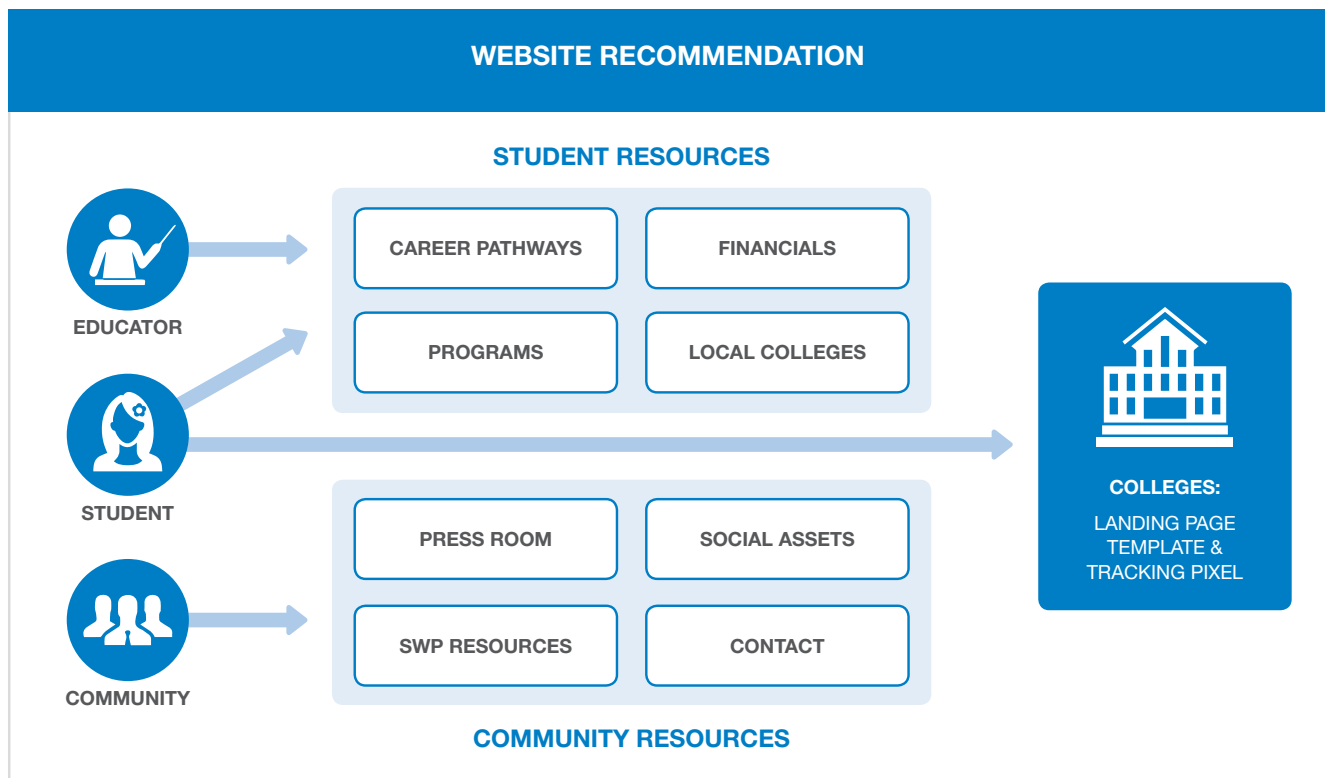
There is no shortage of available websites with information about Career Education at California community colleges. There is an abundance of statewide, regional, college-level, program-focused and industry-focused Career Education material in various online states. There are ancillary sites for applications, priority registration, employer information, community organizations, financial aid and other subcategories.

However, all of these individual websites, with varying levels of user-friendliness and focused on different aspects of the Career Education experience, are difficult for prospective students to navigate. Unfortunately, there is currently no end-to-end solution, or unified website, for San Diego and Imperial County area students to learn about their Career Education options, apply for financial aid, and enroll/apply for programs.



Civilian recommends a **new, unified regional website** that is focused, directional and informative for prospective students looking to learn more about regional-specific opportunities, and then apply or enroll on a specific college’s website. It will allow them to explore different career paths in the region’s most high-demand industries and the salaries they offer, and then find the school and degree or certificate program to help them get there. The website will also include SDICCC Career Education information for influencers like parents and educators, and for employers interested in hiring graduates, as well as press information and regional contacts for members of the news media looking to learn more.

This new website will maintain a consistent look and user experience that fully aligns with all regional campaign marketing materials and messaging. Above all, its ultimate goal is to deliver prospective students to the application or information page for the best Career Education program at the best school for them, all in one seamless process.



To begin the site development process, Civilian will conduct a full audit of existing Career Education websites that a prospective SDICCC Career Education student might encounter. The team will then compile a report about their functionality requirements and integration options, so that content from those sites can be incorporated as appropriate into the new, unified regional site. The content for this new regional website should ideally come from existing sites aimed at our target audiences (so as to not “reinvent the wheel”).



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The unified regional website should be fully responsive, mobile-friendly, clean and contemporary in design, and built using best practice UX/UI considerations. While the Civilian team will explore all avenues to keep it at a minimum, regular database maintenance will likely be required, as this is what makes any website vital and useful. Civilian will maintain this website on a quarterly basis, with input and cooperation from SDICCC.

To drive website traffic through **social media** engagement, Civilian recommends developing campaign properties and/or pages for the SDICCC regional Career Education brand on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. The Civilian team will produce a monthly, approvable social media content calendar charting when and where original and shared material will be posted. Content disseminated via social media can include video, images, links to press releases, and website content, as well as graphics or text featuring program highlights, success stories and other campaign messages.

All social media posts will use the SDICCC regional campaign's branding templates, styles, colors, etc. so that audiences directed to the regional Career Education website will find the site seamless and familiar. Civilian also encourages individual SDICCC colleges to share regional Career Education campaign content on their own social media pages, which will vastly expand the campaign's reach to existing community college audiences.

While social media is a major driving force in Civilian's owned and earned media strategy, **traditional media relations** plays a significant role, as well, in telling "the regional story" of Career Education in San Diego and Imperial counties. Civilian will target regional news and business publications including the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, *El Latino San Diego*, *sdnews.com*, *The Peninsula Beacon*, *Beach & Bay Press*, *La Jolla Village News*, *the Imperial Valley Press*, *La Prensa San Diego*, *Imperial Valley News* and the *San Diego Business Journal*.

Civilian will also explore opportunities for contextually relevant "advertorial" messaging in regional and local publications, specifically within special sections or editions of those publications. Community-based activities, such as events, present an opportunity to engage in local dialogue to tell the regional story. Civilian will identify the proper activities and make individual recommendations to the regional leadership team.

With input from the region's Public Information Officers, Civilian will identify newsworthy milestones and develop an ongoing editorial calendar to result in a drumbeat campaign of news. The overall goal is promote the unified regional effort offering quality education, which leads to well-paying jobs, and improving the local economy by filling critical job gaps.

Civilian also recommends developing **regional marketing collateral** which does not already exist, highlighting SDICCC's Career Education offerings. These materials may include fact sheets, press kits, PowerPoint presentations and infographics.

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Civilian will also assist in developing materials to ensure consistent regional messaging for Career Education spokespeople, leaders, and stakeholders, such as public information officers, deans and admissions directors. This would include media talking points and boilerplate descriptions of the SDICCC Career Education effort.

Regional marketing collateral will also need to be developed as part of another important portion of Civilian’s owned and earned media strategy: **community outreach and creative programs**, aimed at reaching prospective students physically, where they are, or assisting educators in their day-to-day student engagement activities. These may include brochures, flyers and 3’ x 8’ pop-up displays for career and resource fairs aimed at prospective students. They may also include in-school materials like information kits for high school guidance counselors, presentation materials for high school assemblies and promotional giveaways.

Additionally, Civilian recommends developing a “HIRE Alumni” program, to continue to engage Career Education graduates after they have left school and found employment. Working CE graduates are proof that the regional program is successful and we want to continue to tell their stories and more importantly turn these former students into regional CE advocates so they tell their own stories. These advocates would continue to put a human face on the SDICCC regional Career Education brand and its success.

To execute Civilian’s storytelling-focused owned and earned media action plan for the SDICCC Career Education regional marketing campaign, next steps would include:

- Conducting a full audit of existing marketing inventory, both print and digital, and assess what channels are already available to disseminate materials;
- Collaborating with SDICCC press information officers to identify media relations opportunities and broadcast program milestones;
- Collaborating with stakeholders such as the Workforce Committee on support and developing regional marketing collateral for employer outreach and community relations;
- Developing an editorial calendar to organize social media and blog content; and
- Identifying student and graduate stories to highlight from each school.

### Campaign Schedule

Civilian has mapped out how the proposed regional integrated marketing plan for SDICCC Career Education program will unfold over the next three years. These flights align with key Fall/Spring enrollment windows and utilize an ‘always on’ brand messaging strategy which will maintain awareness of Career Education throughout the year. Recommended budget allocations are outlined in the next section.

## CAMPAIGN SCHEDULE 3-YEAR MACRO VIEW

	2017		2018				2019				2020	
	JULY- SEPT	OCT- DEC	JAN- MAR	APR- JUNE	JULY- SEPT	OCT- DEC	JAN- MAR	APR- JUNE	JULY- SEPT	OCT- DEC	JAN- MAR	APR- JUNE
Marketing Plan	█											
Campaign Execution			█									
Brand Campaign				LAUNCH	█							
Fall Enrollment				█				█				█
Spring Enrollment						█				█		
Project Management					█							
	YEAR 1				YEAR 2				YEAR 3			



## **5. BUDGET ALLOCATIONS**

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## BUDGET ALLOCATIONS

Civilian has outlined the following recommended budget allocations for the first two years of the SDICCC Career Education regional marketing campaign.

### Campaign Execution: March-June 2018

**Budget:** \$325,000

**Deliverables:**

- Pre-testing (20 percent), in order to determine how representative samples of priority audiences react to messaging in paid, earned and owned media tactics;
- Creative execution (15 percent), or actually producing the creative materials (graphic design, copywriting, etc.) for paid, earned and owned media tactics;
- Web design/development (25 percent), to produce the central SDICCC Career Education website;
- Video production (30 percent), or the planning, scripting, shooting and editing of any video content for paid, earned and owned media tactics;
- Print production (10 percent), or the actual printing costs associated with physical ads.

After the campaign execution period, Civilian recommends the following budget allocations for the two concurrent **brand** and **enrollment** campaigns.

### Brand Launch Campaign: June-August 2018

**Budget:** \$450,000

**Deliverables:**

- Paid media (75 percent), including the purchasing of both physical and digital ad space;
- Owned media (15 percent), including the production and execution of owned media content (including brochures, high school materials, blog posts and social media);
- Earned media (10 percent), including outreach to members of the media, as well as community organizations, high schools and employers.

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## Fall Enrollment Campaign: June-August 2018

**Budget:** \$225,000

### Deliverables

- Paid media (75 percent);
- Owned media (10 percent);
- Earned media (10 percent);
- Creative execution (5 percent).

After the initial launch period for these two campaigns, Civilian recommends the following budget allocations for the renewed, continuously-evolving **brand** campaign into 2019, and the **enrollment** campaign for spring 2019.

## “Always On” Brand Campaign: September 2018-June 2019

**Budget:** \$250,000

### Deliverables:

- Paid media (80 percent);
- Owned media (10 percent);
- Earned media (5 percent);
- Creative execution (5 percent).

## Spring Enrollment Campaign: November 2018-January 2019

**Budget:** \$250,000

### Deliverables:

- Paid media (80 percent);
- Owned media (10 percent);
- Earned media (5 percent);
- Creative execution (5 percent).

As with most integrated marketing plans, these are simply initial recommendations. Civilian recognizes that the campaign’s needs will change and evolve as our team learns more about our priority audiences, and will adjust budget recommendations appropriately.



## **6. EVALUATION PLAN**

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## EVALUATION PLAN

Civilian has constructed an evaluation plan for the regional marketing campaign, which allows for assessment and benchmarking before the campaign launches, followed by consistent and transparent reporting of results for ongoing campaign optimization.

Pre-launch research activities will consist of 3 main tasks:

1. **Campaign Benchmarking:** Before the campaign launches, we will collect baseline awareness and perception data (or, measure how much our target audiences know about community college Career Education options and how they feel about them as a path to good-paying jobs) for the San Diego and Imperial Counties region. Civilian recommends gathering these insights through quantitative online surveys, asking representative numbers of our target audiences about their awareness and perception of SDICCC Career Education programs—and then sending follow-up surveys to these same respondents annually. This will create trend data over time, which will inform how to refine messaging in paid and owned media, and how to target prospective students more intelligently.
1. **Social Listening:** This is the most accurate, important tactic for obtaining real-time data on how target audiences feel about Career Education before launch—and then seeing how they react to the SDICCC Career Education regional marketing campaign. Analyzing what people in our target audiences are saying about Career Education on social media (through their own original posts, retweets, shares, comments and likes, etc.) every hour of every day is the best way to provide conversational context for traditional media KPIs, such as impressions, clicks and conversions. Despite the best intentions of any qualitative or quantitative research, response bias can exist, and social listening tools give the strongest indicator of a user’s “true self,” based on how they express themselves to friends and family on social media. Civilian recommends conducting this kind of real-time social listening using sentiment analysis software that measures consumer perceptions about a given brand or set of keywords through their social media expression.
1. **Creative Validation:** Before deploying creative materials related to this marketing campaign (i.e. advertisements), Civilian recommends exposing select groups from our target audiences to campaign creative via qualitative exposure in-person or through an online panel, and getting feedback to guide “big idea” selection. Then, we will use insights from test audiences to optimize the campaign concepts further. Civilian will determine specific research methodology during a research planning process.

### Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Civilian has identified a variety of KPIs, across the span of the conversion funnel, that can be used to determine the success of this campaign, and ensure that we use only the strongest-performing tactics and messages to achieve the campaign’s objectives.

In the **awareness** phase, the KPIs will be:



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- **Reach**, or how many people can possibly see/read/hear paid, earned or owned media messages associated with the campaign;
  - **Frequency**, or how often people have seen/read/heard these messages;
  - **Impressions**, or how many members of the target audience have at least seen/read/heard these messages;
  - **Placements**, or how frequently this campaign and its ideas have been mentioned in articles, blog posts, radio/TV interviews, etc.

The specific measurement metrics for these KPIs will include: **targeted reach**, or how many people in our target audiences can possibly see/read/hear campaign messages; **targeted frequency**, or how often our target audiences have seen/read/heard these messages; **media coverage**, or how often and in what fashion SDICCC Career Education is written about in publications or mentioned on television or radio; **questions/inquiries** about Career Education programs; **SEO rankings**, or how close SDICCC Career Education pages are to the top of search results list for Career Education-related terms; and **referral cross-links**, or where and how often external sources link to SDICCC Career Education materials.

In the **consideration** phase, the KPIs will be:

- **Click-throughs**, or how many times audiences clicked on an online ad or social media post linking to the SDICCC Career Education website;
- **Website traffic**, or how many users visited the SDICCC Career Education website, and how they behaved once they were on the website (i.e. what additional links they clicked on, how long did they spend there, etc.);
- **Engagement**, or how much and how often users share, retweet, post about or comment on social media content, or how many inquiries users submit about SDICCC Career Education after seeing online content;
- **Social sentiment**, or what people are saying about Career Education on social media (see the three main tasks of the evaluation plan outlined above).

The specific measurement metrics for these KPIs will include: **content clicks; likes and shares; comments; brand mentions**, or how often and when the SDICCC Career Education brand is mentioned on social media; **key terms**, or how often the search terms associated with Career Education bring users to the SDICCC Career Education website; **unique visitors**, or how many individual users visited the website; **bounce rate**, or how often users left the website without taking action once they landed there; **pageviews**; and **session duration**, or how long they spent on the website each visit.

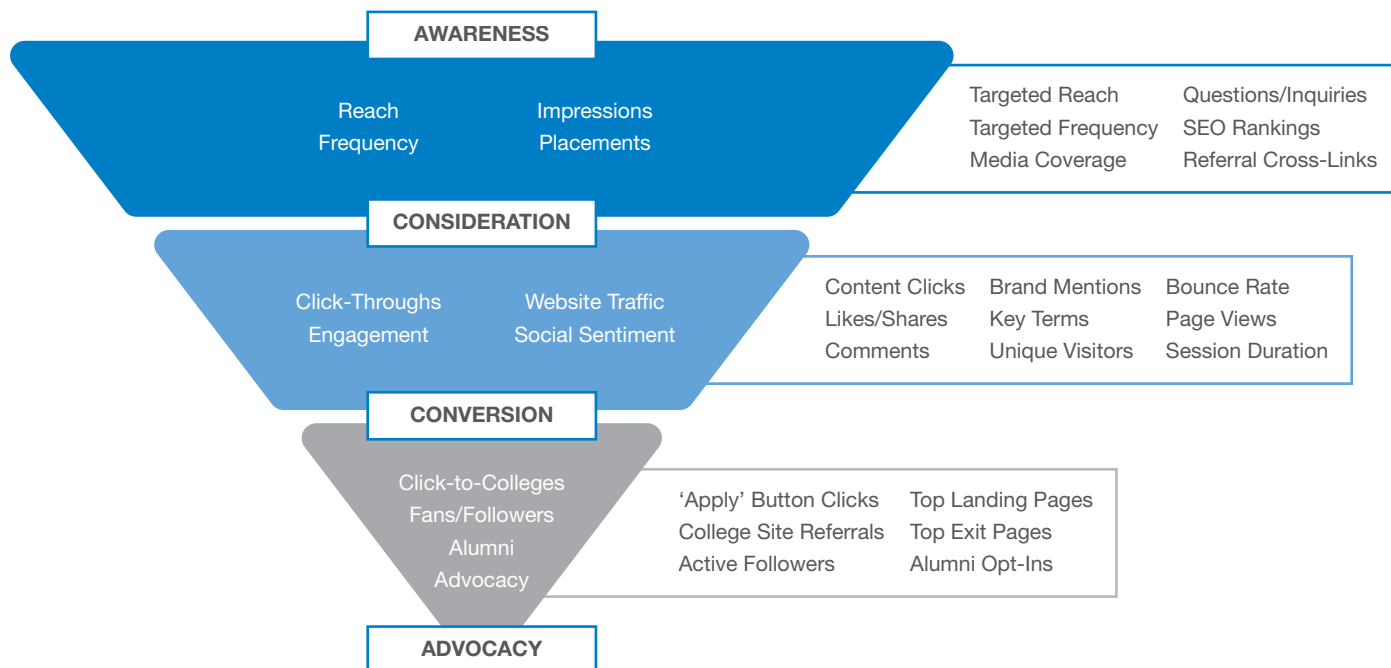
In the **conversion** phase, the KPIs will be:

- **Clicks-to-colleges**, or how many users clicked from the SDICCC Career Education website to specific colleges' Career Education program sites to apply or enroll;
- **Fans/followers**, or how many current students, prospective students or influencers are following SDICCC Career Education-related social media pages;

- **Alumni**, or how many alumni of SDICCC Career Education programs are continuing to participate in conversations about Career Education, and tell stories about their experiences as students;
- **Advocacy**, or how many alumni, current students and influencers are speaking well of SDICCC Career Education on social media and otherwise.

The specific measurement metrics for these KPIs will include: **“Apply”-button clicks**, or how many users actually clicked on a link to apply or enroll in a SDICCC Career Education program after being directed to that page from the SDICCC Career Education website; **college site referrals**, or how many people go to an individual college’s website after being directed by an ad or social media post, or the SDICCC Career Education website; **active followers**, or how many fans/followers on SDICCC Career Education-related social media pages actively engage (like, comment, retweet, etc.) with posts; **top landing pages**, or which Career Education-associated web pages users end up on the most after exposure to messaging; **top exit pages**, or which Career Education-associated web pages are the last pages users interact with before they end their session; **alumni opt-ins**, or how many SDICCC Career Education alumni engage with Career Education-related social media pages, join alumni groups, sign up for newsletters, or talk about their Career Education experience.

### Evaluation Plan: Measurement Metrics



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## Reporting Structure

All of these KPIs and their associated metrics throughout all phases of the conversion funnel, will be reported both monthly and quarterly.

The Civilian team will prepare **monthly readout dashboards** to highlight all actionable insights gleaned from each KPI. This will ensure that we engage regularly with SDICCC to identify new opportunities or concerns in a timely fashion. The monthly dashboard will be shared in a “Dashboard” PDF, and reviewed during a monthly conference call between Civilian and SDICCC.

These monthly dashboards will also feed into **quarterly performance reports**, the purpose of which are to share detailed results and trends across all utilized marketing channels. They will also provide a forum to report enrollment and audience feedback, so that the Civilian team can optimize future campaign messages and channels based on what we’ve learned. The quarterly performance report will be shared during quarterly in-person presentations to SDICCC, and sent in document form to the broader team associated with this effort.

Civilian will post all reporting documents to the CE Commons for community reference.