Promises kept.

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# Interactive Audit

# Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District

El Cajon, California

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# Introduction

Stamats was commissioned by Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District (the District) to conduct research on the Grossmont College, Cuyamaca College, and District Web sites. The District seeks to assess the current status of the Web sites, and the District's approach to content development and management while ensuring the sites are user-friendly and up-to-date with the latest Web marketing strategies.

In today's rapidly-evolving interactive world, ideas and directions for improving the institutional Web sites are endless; our purpose is to help the District set priorities in order to take the site to the next level. In this document, we will assess the ability, through navigation, content, and functionality, to communicate the key messages and to act as a relationship-building tool that meets the needs of its target audiences. This audit will outline:

- Strategic goals and target audiences
- Current site review, including:
  - Overall appeal
  - o Information architecture
  - Marketing content
  - Accessibility for Section 508 compliance
  - Search engine visibility
- Site maintenance
- Competitor/comparison analysis
- Best practices
- Recommendations

# Campus Visit

To gain a solid understanding of both the Grossmont College and Cuyamaca College communities and gauge needs for the Web sites, Stamats visited both campuses on September 18 and 19 to gather perspectives and opinions from a variety of individuals. These sessions allowed us to gather opinions and perspectives from user audiences, as well as to gain a better understanding of the site management, processes, goals, expectations, and overall site impressions. The interviews included:

- User groups, including prospective students, current students, and alumni
- Key influencers and contributors, including:
  - Web teams and Web content authors
  - Marketing and public relations
  - Deans and faculty
  - o Admissions, outreach, and counseling

# **Executive Summary**

# Our Findings

We recognize the District's use for an interactive audit stems not from a need for a solution to a particular problem, but to identify where it should focus efforts in order to take the Web site to the next level. This document is meant to set clear goals and priorities for the site that complement the institution's strategic goals.

The following are key concerns for the Web site that surfaced during this project:

- The sites are not recognized as a marketing and recruiting function. In today's web-linked culture, a Web site cannot be regarded as simply a repository of information—the 21<sup>st</sup> century equivalent of a filing cabinet. The site needs to be owned by the marketing team and embraced as a recruiting and relationship-building tool, rather than an information resource for internal audiences. A publication that the marketing team may produce will only be seen by so many people, whereas the Web site will be seen by anyone who is interested. As the site currently stands, it is a step above a sitemap and a collection of links. One individual from the Web content authors group stated that a prospective student she spoke to was interested in taking a course on Dreamweaver and ultimately decided to take it at another community college because they actually found the class listed on that site. As the Web becomes the primary—and increasingly the only—source of information for prospective students, the reality is that the Colleges could risk lower enrollment numbers if the sites don't provide people with the information they seek.
- The site has outgrown its original structure. Little strategy is placed behind the effort put into the site. Individuals responsible for updating the site get direction from multiple people with no one identifying the priorities and goals for the site. In reviewing the current sites, we found that the global navigation options (which took 18 months to finalize) have not allowed the site to be scalable. Standards are a very important part of maintaining a college Web site and should continue to be used; however, when the choices made are confusing to the end user, no one benefits. The approach toward Web sites have changed since the site was created—Web sites are no longer merely information resources; they are more than a tool to present the most important details to the targeted audiences.
- Site maintenance results in reactive updates. Being in charge of site maintenance is a lot like being a fireman—you choose whichever fire is burning the hottest at the moment and focus on putting it out. Because the District has no content management solution, it gives constituents no option to put out their own fire, no matter how small it may be. This creates a bottleneck that makes it quite a challenge to allow the site to continually evolve.

A mammoth responsibility of an institutional Web site is keeping it fresh, and a large portion of managing an effective Web site involves maintaining and updating content. However, while developing strong marketing messaging and

content for the site is a priority, the individuals responsible for the overarching direction for the site have become bogged down by day-to-day details while trying to continue to offer a site that is innovative and useful to the institution. If the person responsible for the 30,000-foot view is also required to fly the plane at the 5,000-foot view, it becomes a complicated act to balance, leaving little room for growth. We understand that only in an ideal world would managers not take any part in assisting with fulfillment (since it will be necessary), but they should be able to assign the tasks to be completed as necessary.

# General Challenges for Higher Education Web Sites

Educational institution Web sites are complex for a variety of reasons that are not typically found in other industries. Community colleges are even more complex due to the variety of individuals they serve; the District magnifies that complexity because it is a multi-college district. While many of these challenges are far from unique to the District, the problems are still very relevant. These problems include:

- Strategic Focus—Trying to serve many individuals internally and externally
  can undermine the marketing message and effectiveness of the site. When a
  multitude of departments and functions vie for prominence on the site, and all
  audiences are identified as a priority, nothing is emphasized. Through
  strategic planning, outlining of key messages, and aligning departments and
  stories behind those key messages, the District can convey a better, more
  compelling story to its constituents.
- Consistent Content Development—Content is developed by numerous people, many of whom are not trained writers or marketers. In addition to their "real" jobs, they review and update Web content when they can find the time. They are rarely informed of institutional messages, nor provided the opportunity to learn and develop their Web writing skills in a consistent manner.
- Resources—No site has unlimited resources, and the District is no exception. With the acceleration of new technology and Web features, those limited marketing dollars and staff time must be focused on what's current and useful. Items that should receive the most attention are those that improve a process, create efficiency, allow you to do what you accomplish elsewhere, or are requested and being used by your audience. If it's just the latest fad, it's not worth the expense. The days of Web surfing are long gone. Today, people go to particular sites with a specific mission in mind. It may be communication or entertainment, but it is not "browsing."
- Absence of a Captivated Audience—Web site visitors are skimmers first and readers second. It's essential for site managers to keep on top of the site's Web statistics and perform usability tests to know what's working for each audience, continue to deliver what works, and fix what isn't working. The younger the demographic, the harder and harder it will be to capture a user's awareness, considering they've been raised in an environment where multiple distractions are vying for their attention.

#### Stamats' research shows:

- Teens find it easier to ask someone out for a date through IM than on the phone
- More than one-third IM or send e-mails to their grandparents, and 38 percent IM their parents
- 88 percent say they go online for 3.06 hours per day and 69 percent use e-mail
- o 29 percent go online more than once per day
- Too Much Information—The structure of the medium has led many to believe that a Web site is meant to serve as an endless source of information. In this effort to provide "information," many content contributors have lost the ability to identify the main topics of interest, and instead have chosen to post everything imaginable in an effort to cover all bases. It's important to remember that while the Web is scalable, the more options presented to a Web site user, the more difficulty they'll have finding what they need. A well-thought-out information architecture aims to get users in and out as quickly as possible, recognizing that a Web site is a tool, not a destination.

# Strategic Goals

Long gone are the days of having an attractive Web site and having that be sufficient. Rather than an online brochure, Web sites have evolved into sophisticated marketing tools that meld strategies and messages, allowing an institution to communicate with its important audiences at home and around the world. To achieve this, the District, Grossmont, and Cuyamaca Web sites must:

- Act as a critical branding tool to market both of the Colleges and emphasize key messages
- Showcase the Colleges as affordable institutions with strong academic programs that provide a personalized education to prepare individuals to transfer or move forward in his or her career
- Facilitate the progress of both future and past students through the recruitment funnel
- Focus on external audiences—placing the internal communication tools (personnel forms, financial information) in a location where they are available only to the campus community, or at least segregated from externally-focused content.
- Be an aesthetically pleasing and honest representation of the Colleges' atmospheres
- Deliver compelling content—creative, active copy and dynamic photos—that showcase the people, facilities, programs, and outcomes at the Colleges, and truly demonstrate what sets the District apart and the type of experience an individual will have at Grossmont and Cuyamaca
- Be an easy-to-access resource for all target audiences
- Be able to provide measurable results with insight to continually enhance the site in an effort to increase enrollment and donations
- Streamline the information exchange between audiences and the College (such as online registration for visits and program information requests) so that tasks can be easily completed through the site
- Guide users through the site with well-organized, intuitive navigation

### **Prioritized Target Audiences**

The Web is the most important marketing tool in your arsenal. Stamats' 2007 *TeensTALK*® survey tells us that almost 85 percent of traditional-age students use the Web as their main (and increasingly, *only*) source of information during the college search.

Identifying the prioritized audiences is one of the most important and often overlooked aspects of a Web site. Often, it can be one of the most debated. A challenge for

higher education institutions and their Web sites is that the site is a resource to several audiences all with different goals, with many individuals weighing in on needs of the site. A community college's challenge to meet that need is magnified by the wide array of students the institution serves. As an educational resource to the community, a community college can offer programming for individuals anywhere from ages 15 to 50 and beyond.

No institution has endless resources, and at some point, it will run out of time or money. For that reason, it is paramount that the Colleges' Web sites focus on the needs of the primary audiences first and foremost, understanding that parts of the site also need to serve secondary users.

Based on findings from our campus visits and the best practices we have developed through our work with institutions across the country, Stamats recommends that the following prioritized audiences are targeted on the Grossmont and Cuyamaca Web sites:

- Primary target audience:
  - o Prospective students, including
    - Traditional high school students
    - Transfer and international students
    - Nontraditional adult students
- Secondary audiences:
  - Current students
  - Alumni and donors
- Additional audiences:
  - o Current faculty and staff
  - Prospective faculty and staff
  - Parents of prospective students
  - Parents of current students
  - Guidance counselors and teachers
  - Area businesses and prospective employers
  - o Community members, including news media and governing board

#### Prospective Student Key Areas of Interest and Tasks

The following section identifies the key areas of interest by audience as identified during the campus visits. Accessing the key areas of interest should take three clicks or less—the fewer the better.

By outlining the topics each audience wants to find, as well as tasks they wish to complete on the site, the Colleges can identify holes in current site content. More interviews with each of the above audiences can help prioritize and further define the information and tasks for the site; however, the information provided here may be used as a base toward revising the site architecture.

Stamats has started the process of defining information and tasks for your external marketing audiences below. As the detail is reviewed, however, it is important to always consider the need to tell a complete story and bring personality to the site by showing the people (students, faculty, and staff) telling that story through their positive experiences. It is important to consider the balance between brand communication, marketing, and call to action objectives.

The Web is one of few mediums that can provide measurable results. As a part of the overall goal to make the Web site an interactive recruitment tool, suggestions for conversions are also included. Conversions are actions users can take that can be tracked and measured by the Colleges, and usually consist of filling out a form. Tracking conversions is an important part of measuring the success and return on investment of the Web site. Pages with conversions should continually be tested and revised to help increase the conversion rate.

The prospective students at Grossmont and Cuyamaca can be broken up into three distinct groups:

#### Traditional High School Students

In spring 2008, about 63 percent of the students at Grossmont and Cuyamaca were considered traditional. This group includes recent high school graduates who may choose one of the Colleges because it is close to home or because they are cost conscious and looking to save money before transferring to a four-year institution. While it may be their first year of college, many of these students have jobs in addition to their coursework.

As the most marketed-to demographic ever (and the most technologically-savvy), today's high school students are looking for straightforward information when researching institutions. In our focus group with area El Cajon high school students, they cited <a href="CollegeBoard.com">CollegeBoard.com</a> as one of the top sites they visit to learn about an institution because the information is clear-cut and to-the-point. This site also makes it easier to find what they're looking for because they don't have to guess how each and every site they visit is set up.

About 80 percent of students in the District express the intent to transfer, though the amount that does is much smaller. The top institutions students typically transfer to include San Diego State University, University of Phoenix, University of California—San Diego, National University, and California State University—San Marcos.

#### Transfer and International Students

Many individuals will transfer back into Grossmont or Cuyamaca for one of many different reasons. They may want to be closer to home than their previous institution, or they may have felt lost at larger institutions that didn't provide the personalized attention they were accustomed to during high school.

In addition, Grossmont in particular has a large amount of international students. In our focus group with current students, one international student

noted that the information she found on the Grossmont Web site was more helpful than any other she'd been on...and that greatly impacted her decision.

#### Nontraditional Students (a.k.a. Adult Learners)

The District recognizes that this group encompasses the biggest source of reoccurring customers—more so than any other audience. About 38 percent of
all District students were considered adult students (aged 25 and over) in the
spring of 2008. Their reasons for returning to college run the gamut. This
group incorporates individuals who have either returned to one of the Colleges
because of a major life transition (divorce, unemployment, empty nest, etc.),
career change, career advancement, requirements for a current position, or for
personal achievement or enjoyment. This audience is the largest moving
target for the institution in that they come from a variety of backgrounds and
levels of education.

While each of these individuals has a variety of reasons for choosing to attend one of the Colleges, they have the following in mind when visiting the Web site.

Key Areas of Interest	Tasks or Conversions
<ul> <li>Find out if the College offers desired program or course</li> <li>Obtain information about desired program or course</li> <li>Determine how easy it is to transfer</li> <li>Learn about admission requirements, the application process, and deadlines</li> <li>Learn more about visiting the campus</li> <li>Find costs, scholarships, and financial aid information</li> <li>Learn about the academic reputation of the school</li> <li>Learn about alumni outcomes and placement</li> <li>Determine if it's is a good fit</li> <li>See what current students say about it (i.e., testimonials, profiles, blogs, etc.)</li> <li>Evaluate the quality of faculty in students' desired program (e.g., faculty profiles)</li> <li>Evaluate the quality of the facilities</li> <li>Learn about the flexibility of the course schedules to determine if it meets their needs (online and distance, class times)</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Request more information</li> <li>Contact a counselor</li> <li>Apply for financial aid</li> <li>Submit an online application</li> </ul>

- Experience the campus through photos
- Find area housing
- Research nonacademic offerings and activities
- Get a feel for what it would be like to attend the College(s)

# **Review of Current Sites**

In addition to speaking with key stakeholders and target audiences, Stamats reviewed each of the three Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District sites to fully assess their strengths and identify areas for improvement. We recognize that many of the comments noted here are issues that the District and the Colleges are well aware of and will be taken into consideration with the next generation of the sites. This review addresses six categories: overall appeal, information architecture, marketing content, accessibility, search engine visibility, and site maintenance.

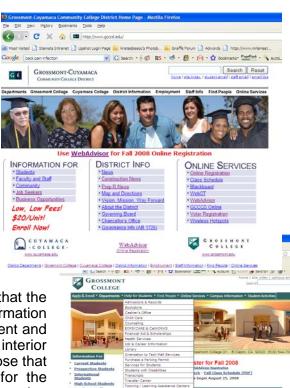
# **Overall Appeal**

The purpose of the District Web sites should be to serve external audiences, most importantly prospective returning and students, in order to become an interactive recruitment tool. As with any opportunity to make a good first impression, you want your home page to deliver a lasting impact. National research indicates that the average Web user spends about six seconds on a Web site page before moving on. That means a home page needs to be dynamic and engaging, providing easily digestible bits of information that grab the attention of clearly segmented audiences.

It is clear from the combination of these sites that the Web is used by the District as an information resource more so than an interactive recruitment and relationship-building tool. Very rarely do interior pages feature any images or graphics, and those that do are not always optimized appropriately for the Web. This results in a very text-heavy, un-engaging site.

As with every design, the sites have their critics. Both internal and external constituents feel as though the sites are a bit "stale" and generate little "wow" factor. Some tactics used on the site make it appear quite dated, such as:

Setting the site to expand to be 100 percent of the user's screen. Most Web
designers have abandoned this practice because it doesn't allow for control
over how information is displayed. Many sites, however, have adopted a 950pixel width to best use the space since the dominant screen resolution is
1024x768.



Purchase a Parking Perm

- Using tables for the page layout rather than cascading style sheets (CSS).
   Allowing CSS to deliver the page elements creates much cleaner code and lends itself more easily to future design updates.
- Using primarily text links that give all elements the same weight, rather than
  developing graphics that can present information in a hierarchical format. The
  links fight for attention rather than tell the user what is more important related
  to that area.

Despite two campuses full of activity, the sites appear quite stagnant. The stale feeling may also be a result of very little change on the home pages. Several individuals noted that the horizontal image on the District home page hasn't changed since the site was put live many years ago. One individual in the focus groups stated that "you have very few reasons to look for something new because you always see the same faces." Stamats strongly encourages the District to show images of people and to use profiles to demonstrate outcomes, but this image gives no indication of the lives of the people featured. In today's graphically sophisticated environment, the blending and sharp edges around the heads superimposed on the landscape shot would hopefully not be up to par with the quality

graphics created by graduates of the graphic design program.

Register for Fall 2008

WebAdvisor Registration
Fall Class Search - Fall Class Schedule (PDF)
Classes begin August 25, 2008

The Grossmont home page does give visitors some feel for what the campus looks like and effectively

uses people in the image; however, like the District site, it is not routinely updated. In addition, the home page boasts that "Classes begin August 25, 2008." Using "begin" in the future tense leads the user to believe that the College hasn't looked at the home page in almost two months. One of the largest announcements on the home page is the "New Designated Smoking Areas" which leads users to believe that there must be a lot of smokers on campus—is this really an impression you want to give prospective students?

The individual maintaining the Cuyamaca site has taken initiative to push the envelope when it comes to District standards for sites. The dominant element on the College's home page is a picture of one of the new buildings. In our focus groups, individuals felt this was a much stronger home page than that of the District or of Grossmont because this image allows users to get a stronger sense of the campus atmosphere. An architecturally interesting building leaves site visitors with the impression that the Cuyamaca campus is updated, but unfortunately this is the only image of campus they'll probably see within the entire site. Cuyamaca has made even better use of this large image by using it as a promotional area to boast a "Late Start. Special short-term courses that begin after Labor Day." Unfortunately that link is not clickable, so the user cannot find a list of courses that this applies to. It's apparent that the news and events area has become a political spot where bolding and coloring the text has been the answer to giving certain elements more exposure. This makes the links compete with each other rather than stand out. Keep in mind when you emphasize everything, nothing is emphasized.

#### Information Architecture

While design can be subjective, the navigation of a site is the driving factor in determining if a site can get people to the information they want. Navigation standards for Web sites change guite often as new technologies become available. The current navigation structure took over a year and a half to be completed, which is far too long by Web standards. It's apparent that the District and the Colleges spent too much time focusing on the naming conventions and groupings for global navigation buttons rather than sticking with standards in higher education. The differentiation between higher education sites and their navigation structure is why students tend to go to sites like CollegeBoard.com and Wikipedia.org, where they know they'll be able to find the information they need because it's presented consistently from institution to institution.

We applaud the District for setting and maintaining standards and suggest that it continues to a great extent; however, we see the need for revamping what the current standards set in place. When revising the standards, we suggest the District pay particular attention to some of the following concerns:

#### No continuity

A standard template is not applied to each and every page of the site, which makes for a confusing Web site experience. This does not help build the brand and name recognition for each College, nor does it make it easy to navigate. As community colleges, Cuyamaca and Grossmont serve a wide spectrum of individuals, all with varying levels of technology know-how. If a content author is not aware of the standards and has access to FrontPage or Dreamweaver, they take it upon themselves to build a site and risk having the professionalism and messaging lost. Instead, the Colleges become a collection of Web sites rather than a distinctive and compelling institution. To demonstrate, the following are a few examples of the various designs of the District:



Cuyamaca Foundation





Cuyamaca Env. Health Safety Mgmt



Cuyamaca Ornamental Horticulture



**Grossmont Regional Occupation** 



Grossmont Creative Writing

#### • Internal focus and jargon

As an interactive recruiting tool, it's important that the Web sites focus on providing content that will appeal to an external audience. While not everything would be necessary to be password protected, separating the areas of the site makes navigation simpler and provides content authors with a clear idea of who the target audience for that content is.

The District site is the biggest offender of making the site a tool for internal users. For example, the forms depot is a place where faculty and staff can download various documents they need or find information about payroll. No other industries use their externally facing Web sites for their employees. Placing information on an employee intranet site would put the District in a position to make the main Web site a tool that focuses on promoting key messages and online conversions (such as prospective employees submitting applications).

The Colleges also mix the information geared at current students in with that for prospective students. This complicates the list of options an outsider has to choose from when trying to find what they need. At that point they don't need links to WebAdvisor or e-mail; those should be saved for current students in their own area of the site. Students will most likely still need links to their resources from the external Web site; however, it can be geared toward their own area.

- o In addition, the site structure reflects internal organization. For example, to learn about what programs the Colleges offer, users must go through the "Academic Departments" page. Users don't want to drill down into each individual department to find out what is offered; they want a clear list of degree options, in alphabetical order, similar to its presentation in the catalog.
- Jargon is a constant concern in higher education. Terms like credit and non-credit may not have any meaning to individuals who aren't familiar with the Colleges. Community Learning may also be a department at the College, but that isn't necessarily intuitive enough to the outside audience. In addition, "WebAdvisor" is the new tool for current students and faculty and staff to access, primarily to register for classes or pay bills. Unfortunately, many individuals don't know that those are the tasks that can be completed via that link because it does not intuitively say what its purpose is—someone has to tell them. We also suggest the Colleges not use acronyms as navigational links on the site such as "EOPS" or "PDC."

#### • Everything of equal importance

As of now, the current sites act as a glorified sitemap presenting several lists of text links. The drop down menus "overwhelm you with the options and choices," as one focus group participant stated. As a complex institution, we understand that many individuals feel their piece of the puzzle always needs to be within one click of the home page. While that approach may appease

internal constituents, external audiences suffer, forced to sort through it all to identify what's most important. One example is the landing page that students are presented with after logging into WebAdvisor. They have links to register for courses, add or drop courses, change their password, update their contact information, and several others. A woman in the focus group pointed out that she uses it primarily for signing up for classes, so that needs to be the most dominant, while other options such as changing the password and updating contact information would be more appropriately grouped together by a "my account" link. We strongly suggest that the Colleges address how other areas of the site can be re-tooled to be more intuitive by presenting the user with what's most important to them.

#### Providing a sense of place

There are several redundant links throughout both College Web sites, leaving the user confused as to whether that link will take them to a different page than a similarly named page that's listed as a drop down in another area. For example, on the Grossmont site, "Help for students" includes a link to "Admissions and Records," which makes the user question—is this the same page as the "Getting Started" link under "Apply and Enroll"? Another example is on the Cuyamaca site, where "Wireless hotspots" is under both "Help for students" and "Campus information." It is, in fact, the same page.

When users are trying to find the information they need, the Colleges shouldn't require the users to sort through multiple links, but instead should enable users to find the information they need in the one area that makes the most

sense. The Colleges needs to create a global navigation bar that is intuitive enough that it doesn't include the same links under multiple areas.

While reviewing the site, we also found some minor issues that should also be addressed, including:

 Finding the programs offered is quite difficult. Users are allowed the ability to search for courses;



- however, they must know the department that offers it and the course number. Using the Dreamweaver course that was the example during interviews, if a visitor is looking to take the course, he or she must first know that it's a part of the Computer and Information Science department. Even individuals who know the course number will have a difficult time completing this form, since they must know the start and end date and the proper way to enter the date.
- Top tier pages are not used to their full advantage. Instead, they offer a list of links to the pages that appear in the rollover, when instead that space could be used to present the most important items in a hierarchical format.

- Employment should be added to the footer, since individuals may not realize they need to go to the District site to find openings.
- Consider offering refreshed content on text-heavy pages like that found on the <u>counseling site</u>. If someone is interested in a walk-in appointment, they click walk-in and the paragraph drops down to reveal more information. This approach should be more widespread across all the sites.
- On the Grossmont site, each department opens in a new page, requiring the user to close the page if they want to revert back to the academic department page. Today's best practices strong recommend that, unless the link is going to a page hosted outside of the College's server, it needs to stay within the same window. PDFs and DOCs are an exception and should always be opened in a new window to prevent the user from closing completely out of the site if they close the document.
- "Athletics" is counter-intuitively listed under "Academic Departments."
   This site (although one of the most up-to-date and picture-rich areas of the site) also loses the global navigation, which makes it difficult to navigate to other areas of the site.
- The "Apply and Enroll" link on Cuyamaca includes the 'getting started' page, and after clicking this link, the viewer gets a list of the promotional ads that the College is running. This page also has anchored links mixed in for "How do I enroll?" which links to the headline that is already on the page. Before clicking, the user is confused as to whether clicking that link will take them to a new page with new information.

## Marketing Content

Today's Web users are unwilling to read a great deal. They tend not to read a full page unless they are interested and engaged in the page content. They know what they are looking for and want to get in and out of the Web site quickly. The District has acknowledged that historically more focus has been placed on print, and the institution is in a transition to focus more on the Web site. In reviewing the site, the Colleges have the opportunity to make the next generation of sites a much stronger marketing and recruiting tool.

#### **Messaging and Tone**

The messaging on the site can be argued to be the most important factor. Do the messages the District hopes to convey come across on the site? The site should reflect the District and Colleges' brand markers, and all faculty and staff should be able to easily rattle them off.

As the sites stand, there is no marketing-driven copy communicating why an individual should choose to attend Grossmont or Cuyamaca or the advantages of community colleges in general. On both sites, the "getting started" page presents the user with information about who can attend, when instead it should provide the information about how to apply and leave this for the requirements page.

Stamats did not encounter a staff copywriter for the Web during our visit, which leads us to believe that most of the content is developed by departments and individuals who are not trained writers. The copy is quite dry, does not speak to the user with "you" speak, and lacks personality. It appears that some areas of the site need to be flushed out to offer navigation and content that present information that is more user-friendly to prospective students.

#### • Program pages

While all areas of the site could benefit from a stronger focus on marketing to external audiences, the dire need is in the academic programs pages. Stamats' TeensTALK® research tells us that the majority of individuals who visit your site want details about the programs you offer. As previously mentioned, the program and course offerings lack continuity and are difficult to find (a PDF of the catalog is the only way to get a succinct list of programs and to see a list of online courses requires the user to log into WebAdvisor). However, if an individual gets to the department site that offers what they need, they may find the department's mission statement, a picture of current students, news and events, or, in the case of the ornamental horticulture department, a listing that the department is looking for instructors. Is this what the District wants to communicate to individuals who are interested in enrolling? The reality is that faculty members are not trained marketers. Counselors we spoke to indicated they typically send URLs to students to help provide them with the details they need, but many times won't send them a URL because the information needed there isn't present or what is there is weak. Do the designers of clothes for Macys.com write the description of the product? Undoubtedly not. The marketing team needs to work with faculty

members on the content that should be presented on these pages to identify what details need to be presented to increase enrollment.

#### • Too much information

A common finding with higher education sites is that they tend to offer too much information. This is the case with the archived content. For example, the class schedule lists schedules all the way back from spring 2004. This information is no longer relevant and should be removed or at least placed in an archive folder so that it doesn't take up so much space on the page that could be used for other promotions.

#### News and events

The mainly static home pages give no indication that the campus has any activity, since the news and events require the user to click through. On Cuyamaca.edu, few of the items listed under "News and Events" on the site is actually news (such as the link to the Foundation and the \$20 per credit link, which links to the blank apply and enroll page). This area needs to be used for timely information.

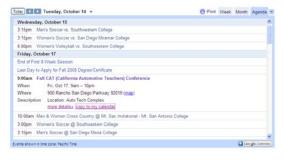
Clicking "events" first takes the user to an unnecessary page where they must select the type of event they're looking for. This area should give some indication that there is a Dinner Auction and Gala going on October 25 (which you will only find by clicking "advancement" from one of the global navigation drop downs). We strongly suggest that both Colleges implement a news feature that dynamically pulls the most recent news posting and upcoming events to display on the home page.

The Cuyamaca site uses Google calendar for up-to-date activities. This allows

a variety of individuals to make updates to keep it up-to-date, which has worked well. Users also have the option to "copy to my calendar," which helps ensure that they'll remember to go to it. This is a good example of using technology that already exists and works well on your site, rather than creating a custom code application.

#### • Maps and Directions

Cuyamaca again brings third party technology already available into the site to accommodate a need. The maps and directions page features an interactive Google map that Cuyamaca has developed to highlight each of the campus buildings. When one of the





buildings is clicked on, a pop-up appears that gives the name of the building. This approach makes it very simple for individuals not familiar with the campus to find a specific building, and Grossmont should also consider adding a similar Google map. It is a fabulous start to something that could be expanded to offer pictures and information about the types of activities that occur in that building. In addition to this map, a printable map is available for download with driving directions listed below.

#### Calls-to-Action

Few calls-to-action can be found through the site. Calls-to-action are usually graphic elements that call attention to a particular task or action item. As we've found through multiple usability tests, many educational institution Web sites rely heavily on the user to sort through a list of sub-navigation links to complete the tasks at hand.

As a primary medium to generate leads, actions can't be subtle. Most institutions focus on an obvious button to "apply online," but the chances are that once a student has decided to apply, they've already been to your Web site. Therefore, primary importance should be placed on getting that Web site visitor to request information or schedule a visit to campus. Web sites and program descriptions alone don't sell an institution—personal experiences do. The District needs to focus on building a site that is a relationship-building tool. The following are a few actions that are currently on the site:

#### • Request Information

Fortunately, due to the standards, requesting information is consistently found under "Apply and enroll." Unfortunately, the page that the form is on for both Colleges loses the global navigation, requiring the user to hit the back button or start over at the home page. The Grossmont "request information" form lists several FAQs before the first form field, giving the impression that they don't want people contacting the College. A better approach would be to include a link to FAQs or at the very least, to put them in a sidebar on the right hand side of the page, allowing the form to still be at the top of the page.

#### Ask a Counselor and Advising

The Cuyamaca site effectively uses a strong call-to-action for users to "Ask a Counselor." This addresses the need, rather than the service. The Grossmont counseling page instead refers to it as the "Web Counselor," which isn't quite as intuitive because it isn't action-oriented. The pages should also directly include the number for the counseling office for those who find it easier to pick up and call, rather than write out their question.

In addition, Grossmont offers users the option schedule an advising appointment to come in person, which will help build stronger relationships with the



people at the College. This is most likely a resource for current students; however, individuals looking to go back to College would also benefit from sitting down with a counselor, and this form needs to be revised for that function. For example, an individual might not have an ID number at this point, or they may not know for which English assessment they qualified.

These calls-to-action shouldn't just be found in the counseling part of the site, but should be present throughout the sites. If an outsider has a question about the programming or classes they should take, they may not recognize that "counseling" is where they need to go to get in touch with someone.

#### • Order a Catalog

Each of the College sites allows individuals the opportunity to order a printed copy of the catalog, but as of now, it is a manual process in which they must call and mail a check in to pay for it. Because this is one of the richest opportunities for the District and Colleges to get something tangible—and actionable—in front of a prospective student, we suggest creating an online form that will streamline the process and allow a simple transaction through a payment processing site such as PayPal.

#### Apply

The link to "Apply for Admission" is very easy to find. However, after clicking "Apply for Admission" on either site, the user must scroll to the bottom of the page to find the "Begin the application for Grossmont (or Cuyamaca) College" button. It would be better to have a strong graphic at the top of the page with this link that says "Apply Online." We recognize that this is a third-party site, and the Colleges may not have much control over the page; however, we suggest that the information found here be moved to the Grossmont.edu and Cuyamaca.edu sites, respectively, with a link to this page that just has the button to start the application and the instructions on how to complete it.

#### Video

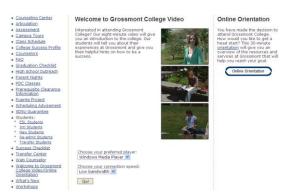
The Cuyamaca site features a virtual tour which is a video of the exteriors and interiors of buildings. The video is very well done and gives prospective students an idea of what the campus and classroom atmosphere is like. The video is currently a link found in various spots that goes to a page in which it's embedded as a QuickTime video. The video is also posted on YouTube, and we would suggest embedding that code on the page instead,



since the YouTube player is typically easier to use than other players. The YouTube page also has a transfer video and a career video, though we did not encounter them on the Web site. Also, consider embedding the video on a higher-tiered page such as

"Apply and Enroll," where it can be a sidebar, rather than requiring the user to make an extra click.

Grossmont also features a welcome video. The page that it is on has quite a bit of trapped white space in the center, and the user is left trying to click on the pictures or the text to launch the video because the download is below the fold. Once the user realizes they need to scroll down, there is a form that must first be submitted to select bandwidth and player preference before it will play. Like Cuyamaca, Grossmont should also consider posting this video on YouTube



and embedding that player directly on a page higher up in the site. The video is about eight minutes long, which is a bit too long to be used effectively, though it could be shortened and repurposed to move along faster for the online version.

### Accessibility

#### Web Accessibility Review (W3 and Section 508)

The World Wide Web Consortium (W3) is an organization that addresses standards for accessibility. It is good practice to make your Web site fully accessible, for both business reasons and legal ones. By following basic standards, organizations can ensure the Web site will be used by a broad group of people, including those who are visually, mobility, or hearing impaired. As a part of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the United States requires compliance through Section 508 standards.

Being 508 compliant increases the number of people who can benefit from the information on your site. Since the Web is an important method to communicate with the public, it is important to be sure that people who are disabled are able to interact with your Web site. An additional advantage to an accessible Web site is that several of the factors taken into consideration to ensure accessibility also help search engine spiders better understand the content on your Web site, giving it a higher quality score.

As a result of a California lawsuit against the state chancellor's office, the District is more in tune with 508 compliance, and stresses meeting the priority one obligation. This is something both Colleges and the District site do very well. However, with several individuals and departments creating their own sites without any approvals or standards, many pages aren't up to this standard.

### Site Accessibility:

- GCCCD.edu has failed the 508 validation checks:
  - 508 Standards, Section 1194.22, (a) A text equivalent for every nontext element shall be provided (e.g., via "alt," "longdesc," or in element content).
- Cuyamaca.edu has passed all validation checks.
- Grossmont.edu has failed the 508 validation checks:
  - 508 Standards, Section 1194.22, (a) A text equivalent for every nontext element shall be provided.

All three sites currently use graphics for the global navigation buttons which is becoming increasingly rare, as more emphasis is placed on accessibility. While the links are compliant, the text cannot be resized for an individual who has a larger text setting on their browser. Newer browsers allow individuals to zoom; however, that can make the graphic pixilated.

In the future, content managers need to continue to be aware of how important ALT tags are when updating their sections. For the unimpaired Web user, these are the small strings of text that appear when a graphic is rolled over with their mouse. For the visually impaired, this string of text can be read aloud by their screen reader to help them better understand what is contained in that particular graphic. Having these

ALT attributes (also referred to as ALT tags) is taken into consideration for search engine optimization when evaluating the quality of a Web site.

Accessibility in Web design means the particular elements will be built into all pages, so visitors using screen readers, specialized input devices, or other assistive devices and techniques can access content. The following are standards Stamats abides by to ensure a site is accessible:

- Charts and tables must have an extended description that accurately communicates their content.
- For images, text equivalents can be provided in a figure caption—content in the surrounding text that describes the image or descriptive ALT tags.
- For photos and graphics that illustrate a tone or mood, Stamats recommends a three- to five- word ALT tag and a caption of one to three sentences. This gives visitors the best description the first time the page loads, but doesn't require they hear it on subsequent visits.
- It is best to use CSS (cascading style sheets) to serve up images that are part
  of the site's consistent design elements (lines, bars, spacers). If you don't use
  CSS, and if an image's only function is as a design element and not to
  communicate information, providing a verbal description for a text reader
  would be a distraction; however, to meet W3 requirements, these images
  require an ALT tag. Therefore, you can improve usability and meet
  requirements by leaving the text portion blank: ALT.
- It is not necessary for every form element to have a label, though it is recommended when tables are used. Care needs to be taken in building the form to ensure that the explanatory text appears in the same cell as the field itself, or immediately adjacent, so screen readers appropriately associate the two items.
- Keep in mind that when a screen reader finds a <strong> tag, the computer voice becomes louder, but when it comes across the <b> it makes no adjustment. If the content is important and meant to be emphasized, use the <strong> tag. Also note that many packaged HTML editors opt for one tag or the other without making a distinction.
- The same rules apply when choosing between <i> and <em> for italicizing text. Note that the <em> tag adds emphasis to text, which is rendered in nearly all browsers as italics.
- When possible, use headings <H1>, <2>, etc., to reflect the outline of the page. These tags are an important navigational tool that can greatly improve the usability of the Web site for visitors who employ screen readers or textonly browsers.

The District's Web teams will want to continue to build Section 508 standards into its style guide and ensure pages are being developed appropriately from now on. More detailed information can be found at <a href="https://www.section508.org">www.Section508.org</a>, or to view a full listing of standards, visit <a href="https://www.access-board.gov/sec508/standards.htm">http://www.access-board.gov/sec508/standards.htm</a>.

## Search Engine Visibility

Search engine marketing is a process that targets searchers through frequently searched phrases. Through this practice, a Web site can appear higher in search results and aid in driving additional traffic to the site. This is a very cost-effective way to market the Colleges' programs, as it reaches an audience that is looking specifically for you.

Search engines play an important role in your recruiting process. One of the first steps users take is to search the Internet for institutions that match their needs. Whether they are searching by keywords based on geography, a course offered, or typing in the institution name, maximizing your Web site pages for good search engine rankings is a great investment to ensure your target audiences reach your site.

#### **Keywords**

As a foundation, we analyzed how well pages on the Web sites appear in the top three search engines (Google, MSN, and Yahoo!) for particular search terms with an average search volume. The following terms were used to measure current rankings and represent a basic, high-level search a user could perform to find the institution:

San Diego college

San Diego colleges

Horticulture course San Diego

Horticulture program San Diego

College in San Diego

Colleges in San Diego

Automotive training san Diego

San Diego community college

San Diego community college

San Diego community colleges

Nursing programs san Diego

San Diego colleges and Nursing program san Diego universities

Nursing continuing education San Diego

Colleges San Diego CA

College in San Diego CA

El Cajon colleges

El Cajon College

Biotech training San Diego

Biotech course San Diego

Biotech program San Diego

Vocational colleges san Diego

As you can see, the first column identifies terms that have a geographic modifier such as San Diego or El Cajon. "San Diego college(s)" has one of the highest search volumes; however, this list is meant to show that there are other terms that can be targeted that are variations of those terms that will still help drive traffic. By targeting the lower-hanging fruit (the less competitive terms) first, the Colleges can start gaining traffic that will put the sites in a better position to tackle the more difficult terms. The second column includes various types of programs the Colleges offer. Trying to gain rankings for all programs is unrealistic, and therefore the Colleges should select programs and courses that are a niche or for which the College is well known.

#### The Rankings

According to our findings, both Colleges rank well for the terms with "El Cajon" and "college"; however, they do not show for variations of the terms "college" and "San Diego." "Nursing programs San Diego" is the only category term that shows a ranking—it appears on page three of Yahoo!; however, the page it directs users to is a list of helpful nursing links, which includes links to many other higher education institutions. For a full list of results, see Appendix A.

The current sites don't fully utilize title and meta-tags for every page. The Grossmont site meta-description tag is the same on every page, which states "FW MX DW MX HTML." This text needs to be a description about the content that is offered on the page. The home page also has two title tags. Cuyamaca has done slightly a better job. The title tag on the home page effectively communicates "Cuyamaca College—30 Years and Growing, Rancho San Diego, California" with a meta-description that boasts "Cuyamaca College is a Community College in Rancho San Diego, California that provides a wide variety of occupational, transfer, and general education programs." This is effective use of this data and is probably why the site has gained some rankings for "San Diego College"; however, our results show that it is still not within the first three pages. Each of the interior pages has its own specific title tag, but the description is the same, stating that "Cuyamaca College is a Community College in El Cajon, California." The description can strategically include targeted terms; however, it needs to describe the content that is offered on that page.

To increase search engine visibility, we recommend that both Grossmont and Cuyamaca:

- Perform a comprehensive keyword analysis to research search volume and competitiveness to determine keywords to target. This should include evaluating your Web statistics to see which terms are currently driving traffic to the site.
- Carefully select keyword phrases that are relevant to the community to position it as a resource (i.e., Dreamweaver course).
- Select one to two pages that are ideal for having a keyword (or related keywords) within the content. Optimize those pages further, finding additional opportunities within that page to insert keywords and phrases.
- Use the keyword within the meta-tags, headers (also known as H1, H2, etc., tags), sub-heads, and page content as necessary within a page. Do not overload the page, but insert the keyword phrase where it makes sense.
   Search engines give more importance to keywords that are in header and subhead tags, as well as those that are first on the page.
- Search for additional opportunities to increase quality Web sites linking to your Web site pages. Search engine spiders take into consideration how many links are coming into a site to determine if the information it offers is relevant. This can be done, for example, by submitting press releases online or sending links for articles written by students and staff to bloggers. This will encourage bloggers to write about you and link to the Web site.

Update your robots.txt file to provide a better quality site that directs search
engines to not index folders and files that are not relevant (such as script
folders). An XML site map is also preferred by search engine spiders, and
various search engines have agreed to recognize it immediately if it is
referenced in the robots.txt with such as that included in this sample:

User-agent: \*

Disallow: /images/
Disallow: /scripts/

Sitemap: http://www.WebsiteURL.com/sitemap.xml

#### Site Maintenance

The majority of staff members who play a role in coordinating and updating the site maintain a "can-do" attitude and are willing to tackle the issues at hand and be involved in improving the online experience to make the site a success.

Site maintenance is difficult to accurately assess and varies widely; however, it is apparent that the current site has outgrown its original structure. As one alum stated, "[the Web site] has grown legs and no one is weeding to make it a garden."

When visiting the site, a user is likely to run into dated content quite quickly, which leaves them with the impression that the institution itself is dated and behind the times. We have noted some dated content previously; however, here are a few additional examples:

#### Grossmont.edu

- <u>Degrees</u> link within Admissions home page links to a PDF page from the 2005–06 Catalog
- "College Times Publication" on the <u>Prospective Students page</u> links to a June 2007 issue
- Financial aid home page has a sidebar that promotes the FAFSA workshops, which eventually links to a PDF file listing past dates, the most recent being two months ago
- "News Releases" on the home page links to a page where the most recent news release is from February
- Link from the home page for "Construction news" is broken in multiple areas
- "What's New" in the counseling page features information that hasn't been updated in over a year

### • Cuyamaca.edu

- Academic calendar includes calendars all the way back to Fall 2004, which is unnecessary
- Cashier's office lists office hours for August 4–September 4
- Financial aid has a flashing new button that links to a page that is under construction and has been since March 2008, according to the time stamp—this is a very dated practice: if the information isn't available, don't provide a link to it
- <u>Dining</u> encourages people to "check out all of the new services beginning January 28, 2008" and also offer specials of the week that are from September—this shows that there was some initiative to keep the site updated, but it has quickly been forgotten

#### **Staffing**

Site maintenance was one of the most strongly expressed concerns from individuals involved in updating the sites. They recognize that "we don't have someone in charge to be proactive; we're constantly focusing on trying to maintain the site." The day-to-day detailed updates and requests for the sites leave little room to focus on the bigger picture, preventing the team from moving the site forward in its evolution as a strong marketing tool.

During our campus visit, it was very obvious that the marketing team operates in a separate world from the Web team—a painful mistake in our Web-centric environment—and there is no communication to ensure that key messages and campaigns are consistent or that they even support one another. The site must be recognized as a marketing function rather than an IT function in order for it to evolve as a recruiting and relationship-building tool.

If the Web site is going to be a priority, the District needs to provide adequate resources to take it to the next level. We recognize that the District doesn't have the resources that a four-year institution does for these needs; however, it is paramount that the District support the site, as it is only going to become an even more important driving factor to recruit students. Stamats strongly encourages the District to have at least two full-time Web marketing positions focused solely on the external site at each College. It's paramount that these individuals report to and work closely with the marketing team to ensure online initiatives coincide with offline initiatives. A team that we find works well at other institutions includes a Web Communications Manager and a Web Programmer. The Web Communications Manager is the strong, strategic owner, who will take full responsibility for the evolution on the site and its emphasis on marketing, keeping the site fresh, lively, and engaging for target audiences. A Web Communications Manager works with the marketing team to ensure that key messages are integrated with the Web and that online initiatives coincide with other marketing efforts. In addition, this individual should set Web site priorities, understanding that sometimes requests from internal audiences may not fit the overall direction of the external site. While this person should be well-versed in various Web technologies and can assist in carrying projects out when necessary, their responsibility will remain the bigger picture. The Web Programmer should be the individual to help carry out the projects, receiving assistance from IT when necessary (such as setting up a new CMS and how it communicates with back-end databases and systems).

#### **Broken Links**

Part of ensuring quality content requires fixing and updating broken links. After reviewing the Web site, we found that collectively there are 95 broken links among the three sites. This is an exceptionally high amount of broken links, which exemplifies how the current site has been outgrown. We strongly encourage the District and the Colleges to update these links and continually monitor broken links in the future.

See **Appendix B** for a listing categorized by each site.

#### Site Maintenance Principles

The following are site maintenance principles to keep in mind as you work toward developing and updating the Web site and empowering authors to update their own site content.

#### **Static and Dynamic Content**

**Schedule to change content:** Allow all authors to know what expectations exist when managing pages on the site. Timely review of pages may differ from page to page or section to section. Timelines need to be documented and a system set up for the Web manager to notify authors that they have pages that need to be reviewed, so outdated content doesn't languish online. This is of particular importance for the campus calendar—an outdated calendar will reflect poorly on the institution.

**Responsibilities and type of information:** Understanding each page's purpose throughout the Web site will allow the assigned authors to target content for the user.

We recommend having a printed master for each page that outlines the target audience(s) and objective for each page. This will help to remind authors what the purpose is and who it is speaking to, and focus the page on its objective. Long content covering every aspect of a topic, in most cases, is not necessary.

**Archiving:** Allowing information to be stored both for authors and end users can be helpful. Dynamic content such as news releases and events will keep an archive available to the public.

**Web content author agreement:** We have found it helpful to have content authors sign agreements during their initial training sessions. These agreements could include acceptable use of the logo, color and palette restrictions, and content restrictions. This raises the importance and can bring to light acceptable uses of the institutional Web site.

#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

"Part of my job": Authors for the Web site usually have a full set of responsibilities outside of page authoring. Setting limits and responsibilities will help an author to understand the amount of effort required to keep their portions of the site up-to-date. There is usually an initial period of time to get the new content edited and up and running, and then a smaller period of time on a pre-determined schedule to update content on the site.

#### **Policies and Procedures**

Rules on certain content or images: Each author or administrator will need to understand the limits to content. Content areas and properties should be outlined for each template. The next step is for each author to be assigned what can and cannot be done in those areas. Different levels of restriction

should be created; some authors across campus will be able to add optimized images, whereas others may only be involved with updating text within pages.

How a new area of the site is developed: The procedure for a new area on the site, whether it is a page or an entire section, should be outlined. These procedures would include how to request a new area, how it will be mapped from other locations within the site, and the author(s) responsible for maintaining the content.

**Training and tips:** As authors are assigned new tasks and responsibilities to maintain the Web site, in-depth training should be the starting point. Each author should be shown not only how to create content, but also what the processes and procedures are. After initial training, scheduled periodic sessions to go over new development and procedures and refresher tips should be scheduled on a rotating basis.

**Web standards guide:** This guide should be a one-stop information source for your content authors. This could include:

- o Branding elements
- Web conventions
- o Review of strategy and architecture
- o Process guidelines—who to contact
- Template content properties and wireframes
- Design overview
- Online version of training guide
- o FAQs for authors
- Accessibility guidelines
- Style guide

# **Competitors and Comparisons**

To help the District understand the position of its Web site in contrast to others in the industry, Stamats has reviewed three sites that represent either a direct competitor or a close comparison as determined on campus. While community colleges can have several competitors, these three sites have been chosen in part due to their location and competitiveness with the District, and because they are examples of institutions similar in size and structure, which allows the District to gauge their own sites effectively. For each Web site, Stamats has compiled an initial list of recommendations for the District to consider based on findings for that particular site.

With external audiences such as prospective students as the primary Web site audience, this analysis not only takes into consideration the Web site as a whole, but addresses the online experience offered particularly for those target audiences. Stamats has reviewed the following three Web sites:

- Southwestern College
- Mesa College
- Ventura County Community College District

To organize and evaluate the Web sites, Stamats has benchmarked each on the criteria as addressed within the following sections:

- Overall appeal: addressing the overall branding and design
- **Information architecture:** addressing navigation, site organization, and usability
- Marketing content: addressing copy, calls-to-action, and features

# Southwestern College – SWCCD.edu

Southwestern College is a community college in Chula Vista, California. In reviewing the site, it is apparent that Southwestern has placed only slightly more importance on the Web site acting as an interactive marketing function than GCCCD. It appears to be relatively up-to-date for an educational institution site; however, there is nothing in particular that stands out.

The home page is completely static, with no movement other than a rotating spotlight image that updates when the



page is refreshed. The home page features four main graphics on the top, three of which are promotional areas with links, and the fourth is a picture of campus that changes when the page is refreshed. The interior pages have a template in which the images rotate out when the page changes or is refreshed, giving the visitor a small sense of the College's atmosphere. It would be even better if the pictures had captions to depict what's happening and tie it into key messages.

#### Information Architecture

Eighteen links in the left-hand side bar is far too many. This shows that the area is a hot political topic on campus. The same can be said for the "Quicklinks," which aren't so quick because they require the user to scroll through a daunting list.

Southwestern site visitors will find themselves reverting back to the home page to navigate. The site features no global navigation, with the exception of community relations, faculty and staff, and student info at the top of each page, which results in quite a long list of links when the user rolls their mouse over one. Like the District sites, this Web site also suffers from focusing on providing content for internal

audiences. It appears to be organized by internal structure (i.e., "community relations"), addressing the department rather than what the community audience may actually be looking for.

A link under "What's new" on the home page informs visitors that 2009 applications are being accepted. If the visitor clicks the link, they are then taken to a release that states "Apply online at today for their innovative efforts to http://www.swccd.edu/ or in person at the Chula increase... L Vista campus or the Higher Education Center in National City or Otay Mesa. Spring classes will Spring 2009 Applications start Wednesday, January 14, 2009." This is pretty Applications are now being useless to a user who is already on the site, and it accepted for Spring 2009...

What's New

First Annual Program Identifies Criteriafor Success in Basic Skills Education

California community colleges received statewide recognition

is most likely an oversight of the Web team, who should know it would be more appropriate to link to the application form itself.

#### Content

One thing the Southwestern site does well is updating the home page with timely content. The news all appear to be fresh and up-to-date, and even the graphics at the top of the page provide exposure to more pressing items. One element communicates that there are still open classes and links to a PDF that lists all of the options still available.

The site does list "programs" versus "departments." Information presented on the program pages is mainly text and could make a much stronger case. However, every single program links to a new site that has a completely separate look and feel and direction.

Virtually no calls-to-action are found within the site other than the ability to apply. Unlike Grossmont and Cuyamaca, there appears to be no drive to get a prospective student in

touch with a counselor or advisor. The admission application can be completed online, but it does require Internet Explorer for a browser, which is a very dated requirement.

The site is quite short when it comes to convincing marketing copy. It does, however, include "<u>fast facts</u>," which is a short page with to-the-point tidbits of information (as opposed to <u>Grossmont's Fast Facts</u>, which is a much longer page).

Southwestern does have two areas of the site that show

they are forward-thinking in their Web initiatives. The first is the use of a polling feature on the home page to engage site visitors. During the time of this report, the poll asks visitors if they would like to see student blogs on the site, to which the majority have answered no. While the results may only make part of an impact on the College's decision to move forward with student blogs, they have already gathered some data as to whether



current site visitors would find that content compelling. The second forward-thinking

**SWC Poll** 

O No

Submit

Would you be interested in

blogging if it was offered at Southwestern College?

View Results | Disclaimer

idea is the iTunesU page that the College has developed. Southwestern's <u>iTunesU</u> page includes videos with everything from the President's welcome message to performances to football games. Having this content on iTunesU is just a starting point. Hopefully their faculty will also embrace this outlet, and will post course lectures and other useful types of content that students will be able to download to their iPod or iPhone. The videos featured here should also be placed in other locations where appropriate (such as the video of the President's message on his bio page).

#### **Tactics the District Should Avoid**

- Allowing internal constituents to dictate the links placed on the home page with little consideration for the target audience's needs
- Inconsistent look and feel amongst various department Web sites

#### **Best Practices the District Should Consider**

- Listing academic programs in an A-Z format
- Using home page graphic elements as promotional areas
- Creating an iTunesU site to allow students to download movies and videos to their iPods or iPhones

# Mesa College – <u>SDMesa.edu</u>

Mesa College is a part of the San Diego Community College District and was chosen because its location makes it one of the top community college competitors for the District. Even though it is a part of a larger district, comparison with other sister sites indicates there are no standards for layout or links shared across the San Diego Community College District. The site does clearly have links and a logo for the District, though nothing else appears to be consistent with the other sites. The disadvantage of this is



that each individual college appears to be following their own best practices, rather than having a collegial exchange, sharing tips and ideas for making the sites stronger. An advantage of attending a college in a multi-school district is that the individual can more easily take classes at the sister schools; however, the setup of the current San Diego Community College District sites requires them to learn an entire new site structure before it can be used as a research tool for courses.

The general graphic design of the site is traditional and expected. Very little is done to energize the visitor about enrolling in Mesa College. The page is dominated by several text links and offers four images at the bottom of students that are always the same.

#### **Information Architecture**

Mesa uses both audience- and category-based navigation. The audience-based navigation remains constant throughout the site, though it continually directs the user to the category-based navigation, which can be challenging to maneuver.

The site also lacks breadcrumbs, and the sub-navigation links are random, making it difficult for the user to have a sense of where they will most logically find the information they seek.

Standant Tour
Velcome to San Diego Mesa College

As one of the largest and most successful of California's 100 community colleges, Mesa College Lases prids in its high academic standards, its excellent programs and services, and its personal approach to helping each individual student success.

Mesa College Offers:
Programs leading to the Associate in Arts Degree Programs leading to the Associate in Arts Degree Programs leading to the Associate in Actionate Certificates of Completion
One of the highest student transfer rates in California to four-year institutions

Dientations

Dientations

Learn more about Mesa College below or continue the Student Tour

College Information
About Mesa College below or continue the Student Tour

College Information
About Mesa College Delow or continue the Student Tour

College Information
About Mesa College Campus Map

President's Message

San Diego Mesa Cellege \* 228 Mesa Cellege Delow or San Diego, California \* \$2221-698

A dominant element throughout the Mesa site is the search feature. It runs almost the width of the Web site and from a tertiary review and test, it appears to function quite well. According to eMarketer, about 50 percent of all Web site visitors will completely bypass a site's navigation and go straight to the search function.

#### Content

Mesa's site does have a rotating element on the home page that includes promotions that link to more information. It rotates through five different banners, some of which are timely. This can be a solution to a variety of individuals vying for prominence on the home page.





Like Southwestern, Mesa drives students to the program list, which is an alphabetical format. Unlike Southwestern and the Grossmont-Cuyamaca District, however, the resulting page describing the program maintains the same look and feel of the rest of the site, which doesn't risk jarring the site visitor. While the consistency is strong, the page offers no more than the name of the degree that can be obtained and the courses required—not the most compelling content.

Although most of the content found throughout the Mesa site is very dry, the <u>admissions page</u> uses a clear, numbered list of steps to identify how individuals can enroll. Grossmont and Cuyamaca should consider a similar approach, since quantifiable lists are much easier to digest than paragraphs of text.

#### **Tactics the District Should Avoid**

- Too much text with too few images
- A bare bones site with nothing but the facts and virtually no marketing copy

#### **Best Practices the District Should Consider**

- A well-functioning search feature
- Maintaining a consistent look and feel through templates

#### Ventura County Community College District – VCCCD.edu

The Ventura County Community College District was chosen for this review not because it is a direct competitor of the Grossmont-Cuyamaca District, but because it exemplifies another approach to continuity through District Web sites using the exact opposite approach than that of the San Diego Community College District.

The overall appeal for each of the four sites is very consistent. While the basic design has been individualized by each College, it still maintains the same general layout with the swoosh as well as the global and audience navigation links. The elements that change are the logo, the color, the pictures and the information in the text and news and events area. The advantage of this approach is that it provides consistency and common use of best practices. Users don't have to re-learn how each individual site is organized because they should be relatively similar, making it easier for individuals looking at multiple sites in the same district.

#### **Information Architecture**

While the global navigation and audience navigation are consistent, the second tiers are customized to meet the needs of the individual College. While some consistencies can be found in the drop downs, it shows that the Colleges have taken the suggestions from the District and revised as necessary to make it work best for them.

Most likely by no accident, the Grossmont-Cuyamaca District sites and the Ventura District sites have very similar approaches to navigation, which unfortunately departs from the more commonly found navigation links in higher education. Like Grossmont and Cuyamaca, the site includes an "Apply



Ventura County Community College District



Moorpark College



Oxnard College



and Enroll," which differs from the more traditional "Admissions" button. These sites also have departments, services for students, and online services in the global navigation. Because of this navigation, the Ventura Colleges also have a site that is dominated by content for current students.

Although applying for admission uses the same site and similar steps as Grossmont and Cuyamaca, some of the sites from this district have a setup that makes it much more difficult. While Oxnard links directly to the <a href="http://www.cccapply.org">http://www.cccapply.org</a> page, Ventura College first sends the user to <a href="Student Central">Student Central</a>, where they have to click "apply for admission" again and then select the College of their choice. Like Grossmont and Cuyamaca, which use the same third-party site, the button to begin the application is at the bottom of the page in a spot that is the least likely to be found.

#### **Marketing Content**

The program pages on each of the various sites all use the same template. While these pages could be enhanced to offer more robust content, the first step has been taken to treat the sites as marketing and recruitment tools by establishing consistency.

Like all the other sites reviewed in this report, the Ventura sites offer little marketing copy. For example, a link



under "Apply and Enroll" suggests "Paying for college," which would imply that the content found there would address the affordability of the college and address it as an investment. Each of the Colleges uses that page differently. Moorpark drives the user to a page with a list of links, the first of which being "tuition and fees," which takes the user to a page with an unwelcoming tone that states "all fees are due and payable immediately. Students who do not pay their fees in a timely manner may have one or both of the following actions taken: be dropped from their classes and required to reenroll, or have a financial hold placed against their records, which until paid, will prevent all enrollment..." This is much more likely geared toward current students who need to pay their bills, rather than individuals wondering how they're going to finance their college education.

The main district site does, however, offer externally-facing information with an "Employee portal" meant to serve internal constituents. This is a best practice to present a strong presentation for outsiders interested in learning more about the district.

By comparison, the strong customer service of Grossmont and Cuyamaca stands out in



comparison to the Ventura district. The Ventura sites offer no other option and calls-

to-action for current or prospective students to get in touch with a counselor to ask a general question.

#### **Tactics the District Should Avoid**

 Focusing on "applying" as the first step and offering no other customer service oriented elements

#### **Best Practices the District Should Consider**

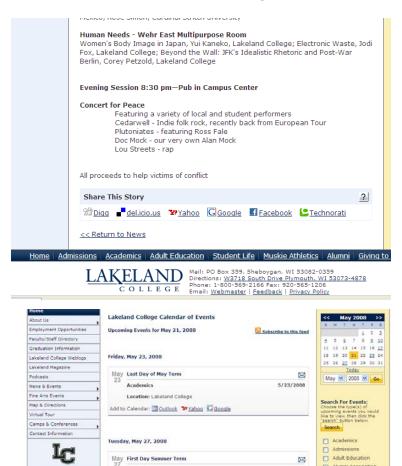
- Consistent program pages using the same template and providing similar types of details
- An employee portal for current faculty and staff

### **Best Practices**

The following are a few best practices as evidenced in higher education. Stamats has highlighted these Web sites for an outstanding aspect of their site that serves as a strong marketing tool. We understand some of these best practices demonstrate features or paradigms far beyond GCCCD's current sites, and would take long-term strategic planning to implement. It is our intent in this section to demonstrate the possibilities; the role of the Web in higher education will only continue to strengthen, and concepts that seem far from reality today will (or should) be tomorrow's expected features.

#### Social Bookmarking for News and Events

Lakeland College (Lakeland.edu)



Location: Lakeland College

Add to Calendar: Outlook 19 Yahoo Google

Lakeland College is one of few higher education institutions to treat its online press releases and events the way many other industries do. Embracing the idea of Web 2.0, the College has built in more interactivity for news stories by allowing the user to add the news story to his or her Digg, Del.icio.us, Yahoo!, Google, or Facebook accounts.

Promoting news releases through social bookmarks drives traffic to the site. In addition, social bookmarking transforms the more traditional viral marketing concept into an online format, giving individuals the ability to "tag" the bookmark with terms they find relevant. This helps make the content more relevant to other users as well.

Similarly, the events calendar includes links for the user to add particular events to their Outlook, Yahoo!, or Google calendar. This addition may be simple, but it's an important way to connect online traffic into offline action so that the College makes a connection with its Web site users.

Athletics
General
Giving
Student Life

#### Robust Program Pages and Use of Video

#### Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD.edu)



As mentioned earlier in this document, before assessing other aspects of an institution, prospective students usually look first at the program pages. This is why higher education institutions should treat the program pages as the most important part of the site.

The Savannah College of Art and Design has put many resources and much effort into creating strong program pages. SCAD offers students a description of each program with expandable text areas, potential careers and employers, several pictures of work completed by its students and students working in the facilities, related news, courses, and faculty members. Several of these program pages also offer video components.

Due in part to the nature of its programs and skills of the College's students, SCAD has been able to develop compelling online videos. Some were offered through their "On Demand" interface that shows primarily student work. More recently, SCAD has developed a branded YouTube channel with 36 assorted videos covering topics as varied as a general overview of the school to upcoming events.

Where some institutions have been apprehensive to create a presence on the various Web 2.0 sites, SCAD has been busy owning it. Although YouTube does have other SCAD-related videos from various users who've

uploaded them, individuals who search for SCAD will find a page dominated by interesting videos created by the College. By posting videos on YouTube, the College takes advantage of the user-friendly video controls the site offers (such as jumping through to different parts) that their own system doesn't provide.

### Sortable Program Listing and Dynamic Forms

University of Phoenix (Phoenix.edu)



University of Phoenix is an organization that treats its site as an e-commerce site, a vastly different approach than many institutional Web sites. Unlike the usual recruitment model, their Web site business conversion model focuses on driving people to call or submit their information online and talk with a counselor who can better assess their needs, rather than posting all information and expecting the individual to sort through what's applicable to them.

The program listing is most impressive in that it doesn't require the user to filter through several pages. Instead, it allows them to filter directly on the page, choosing the variables they know, such as the degree, location, and program area. This functionality is ideal because it allows users to choose where they want to go and bypass where they don't.

In addition, a clear call-to-action is found throughout. A graphic button stating "Get Started Today. Find Out How." directs the user to the request information form. A particularly refreshing element of the site is that they offer dynamic forms. The request information page simplifies the process by pre-populating fields as the user fills out the form. For example, if you enter the zip code, the city and state automatically update.

To make the form appear shorter, they separate it into two steps. Step one is basic contact information; step two is educational background information.

The program drop down also updates automatically based on the user's selected highest level of education. This allows them to show appropriate programs for each individual. For example, high school graduates have the option of associate's and bachelor's degrees, while college graduates have the option of masters programs.

#### Focused on the Action

#### **Central Michigan University** (CMich.edu)

Central Michigan University (CMU) copy editors write tight, but make key points in short order while directing visitors on their way with "I want to" boxes. The site has very little text on higher levels. It serves as a good example of developing graphic-heavy global navigation pages, using little text while identifying the clear options for visitors to take action or move to the next stage. For example, the



research page provides a 40-word sentence about CMU research including that they're proud of the level of involvement of our undergraduate and graduate students in major research initiatives. This is consistent with what students find in the undergraduate admissions site.

#### Tours and Student Life

#### Furman University Admissions (EngageFurman.com)

Engaged truly describes the Furman University admissions microsite. It's the place to go to see best practices in video tour, virtual tour, use of video, and general engagement. The main page moves constantly, directing prospects toward interesting content, and highlighting options they may not have noticed. Then as they mouse over various content, additional information appears—like a warning that the campus tour requires some bandwidth, or simply a notation that Ashley's tour comes with tips on volunteerism while Julius will spotlight the nightlife. You'll want to check out the features highlighted below.

<u>Campus Tour</u>: Furman's virtual tour is, first of all, easy to find. The tour is in the center of the admissions home page, and there's no way to miss it.

It comes with a warning about bandwidth and that it's "extremely addictive." The features found in here are what makes it a best practice. The opening video may be deceptive, once past that, the options flow. An interactive map allows visitors to move around Furman at will, or they may opt to follow the tour through its route. During each stop on the tour, visitors may sift through photo slideshows, and view videos of faculty and students in their element, and sometimes see additional slideshows appropriate to page content. The tour features the actual buildings as an afterthought, instead choosing to show how students use the buildings.

In addition to the buildings-based tour, <u>video guides</u> help prospective students to sample life at Furman through the eyes of various current students. One guide takes students through the library, study rooms, and Greenville hangouts where Furman students gather after hours. Another gives viewers a taste of the fraternities and sororities on campus. The quarterback of the football team explores athletics on campus, and the student leader

of Furman's formidable community outreach programs talks about the value of a balanced schedule. Shot in an improvisational style, these videos allow students to see the unscripted life that Furman students value so deeply and show student life in a completely different, and sometimes more believable, format.

A more recent addition, students can see how four sets of freshmen roommates tackle move-in day and realistically organize their shared rooms in "Extreme Dorm Room Makeover." One video pointedly opens with the quip, "The only place you'll see a dorm room with all the space you'll need is on TV." Prospective students can click through the short clips (reminiscent of television's "Trading Spaces" highlights) and see how students new to Furman and to each other tackle the challenge of moving in and decorating.





Another place Furman's student voices resound is through their journals. These online journals are well-written, current, and all include photos. (One has video.)

They're often humorous, relevant to students considering coming to Furman but obviously not written by the Admissions office. One story started out informing on the university, essentially, how the school <u>condoned stealing</u>. (Turned out to be a Furman tradition, told in light-hearted fashion.)



One last thing we like about Furman's site is

the continual push to action. The links to arrange a campus visit, apply, ask questions, take a tour, and more appear as rotating images throughout and in text links. This gives a sense of vitality on the site and helps ensure visitors see everything that Furman wants them to see while they are on the site. This promotion of features and options puts Furman more in charge of the visitor's experience and crafts a well-rounded experience on the site. Plus, as you can see, content is created with the reader in mind. Bullet points, clickable links, all finely crafted to answer prospective students questions with easy navigation.

#### **Admissions Site**

#### **Butler College Admissions Web Site (Go.Butler.edu)**



The Go Butler admissions site targets its largest audience: traditional undergraduate prospective students. The site is highly engaging with movement from Flash and video features.

The easy-to-promote URL can be more clearly pushed in printed publications and online campaigns. The site also uses cross-promotion of this site through YouTube and iTunes.

Strong calls-to-action, such as apply to Butler, visit campus, forward to a friend, and sign up for e-mail, are featured throughout the site and make it a recruitment tool, rather than just a brochure. The site also effectively uses teasers to connect with the reader, such as "Is Butler right for me?"—much more effective than the typical "Why

should you attend Butler?"

Streaming video found on the site allows the user to control it and fast forward through video clips if desired.

#### Reaching Alumni

#### Appalachian State University (Alumni.AppState.edu/Blog)

Appalachian Alumni Association

an leave a response, or eack from your own site



Maddyn is the latest addition to our online photo album of Young Mc

Since 2005, visitors to the alumni blog have steadily grown. Operated by the Appalachian State University Alumni Association, the site, as reported by Assistant Director of Alumni Affairs, Rob Robertson, scores an impressive average of 400 visitors each day. Robertson attributes the success to focusing on what interests alumni most—what's happening.

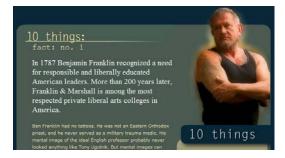
In addition to some details about what's happening on campus, posts include photos of "young Mountaineers" wearing Appalachian State garb, pictures of alumni on their travels around the globe, plus class notes touting promotions, awards, marriages, and other good news. All of this not only builds strong alumni relations, it also benefits recruitment efforts. Alumni involved in their alma mater and proud of their degree are more likely to send their sons and daughters (and contributions).



#### Faculty Introductions

#### Franklin & Marshall College

While it's no longer available on the Franklin and Marshall site, we still consider it some of the College's most personable faculty profiles available, and the material is still accessible online, so we urge you to take a look at "10 Things." This unassuming title opens the world of amazing introductions to Franklin & Marshall's faculty and administration. Here, visitors aren't subjected to a dry litany of accomplishments, a roster of



published works, and a lengthy curriculum vitae. Instead, faculty come to life on the page, sharing their amazing vitality, energy, and passion that leads them to bring excellence to the campus. The writing is vivid, descriptive, engaging, and captures the imagination, drawing readers closer so they're sure they want to be on the F&M campus come next semester.

Here is a sampling from some F&M profiles:

- A professor who is an Orthodox priest and Vietnam vet and combat medic, who now teaches English: "Teaching English at F&M has given me the opportunity to explore, in a really exciting way, all kinds of questions and issues with incredible students. For me, it's about self-expression, joy, and imagination..."
- A director for Donor Relations who is described as "the virtual Willy Wonka of higher education...he personifies the adage that, while academic rankings are important, a little nonsense now and then really is cherished by the wisest men."
- A professor who sets expectations high—for himself first: "If I'm not enthusiastic or intellectually excited about what I'm teaching on a particular day or the aspect of research that I might be focusing on, how can I legitimately expect my students to be fully engaged in the activity?"

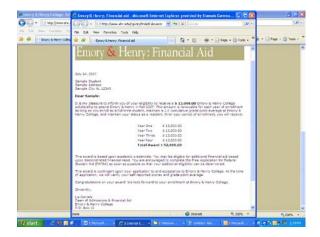
#### Online Scholarship and Financial Aid Calculators

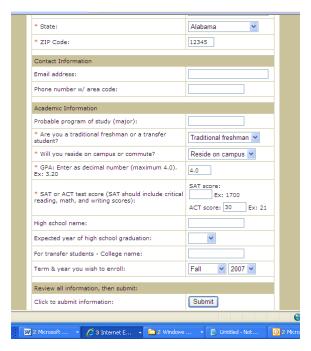
#### Emory and Henry College (EHC.edu/Admissions/AidCalc.html)

In today's financial-stressed world, the cost of attending college is a relevant concern among prospective students and their parents. Online calculators can help alleviate concerns by providing concrete answers. Emory and Henry College offers both an online scholarship and financial aid calculator. There are two major reasons why these online calculators work for the College:

- They require only a short form that is easy to fill out.
- They automatically respond with a "thank you" page that includes a
  personalized scholarship offer letter with the exact amount (to be verified
  during the application process) the student will be awarded.

Making such an offer in a personalized letter lends credence to the offer and encourages students to print the letter and have something tangible they can bring with them when they visit campus.





### Social Bookmarking and Ranking for Top Level Marketing Pages

#### Baltimore City Community College (bccc.edu)

Taking the importance of marketing and social media to a distinctive level, Baltimore City Community College has embraced Web 2.0, building interactivity for the top marketing pages of the site. Users are encouraged to add BCCC Web pages to their Digg, MySpace, Facebook, Del.icio.us, Live, Google, or Reddit accounts, or email links directly to friends. This relatively simple addition to top-level pages adds a viral



marketing element, allowing visitors to highlight, bookmark and "tag" specific pages on third party social networks.

By promoting social bookmarking, the College is asking its users to play a part in the marketing of the institution, increasing traffic and

providing it with additional metrics with which to measure pages' impact. Internally-bound links can also play a positive role in search engine marketing, adding another benefit to the practice.

Many social bookmarking sites give individuals the ability to "tag" the bookmark with terms they find relevant. This helps make the content more relevant to other users as well.

This is not to be outdone by allowing all visitors to rank the page and its content from 1 to 5 stars. The College is trying to learn what pages visitors like or don't like, allowing the

institution to understand visitor preferences. Monitored regularly, this can help drive immediate copy and imagery improvements on those pages that receive a low ranking.

#### Sense of Action

#### Salt Lake Community College (firststepslcc.com)

Salt Lake Community College's (SLCC) admissions microsite is straight and to the



point; take the next step and request more information. This is supported by short snippets of text on each of the top level pages. The intention of this site is to:

- First, grab your attention
- Second, provide you with some quick information about the institution
- Last, drive users to fill out the form for more information about the institution and what it can offer

The form allows SLCC to gain address and phone information about the visitor as well as their desired degree. This way, they can send out information and call the prospective student to give them the personal attention that will encourage those individuals to take the next step and apply or visit.

#### Linking into Existing Technology...ITunes University

#### Westchester Community College (sunywcc.edu)

Westchester Community College's utilization of existing technology provides the institution an easy way to promote itself. ITunes University allows visitors to download faculty lectures, student/faculty projects, campus events and more to their phone or computer. Then, when it is convenient to them, the user can listen and learn about



75 Grasslands Road, Valhalla, NY, 10595 • 914-606-6600 Site Map • Disclaimer/Privacy Policy your institution. Content hosted on other sites, including iTunes University, YouTube channels and more are particularly attractive to prospective students who seek immediate information and wish to "demo" their education before they make final decisions.



#### Showcase Points of Pride

#### Passaic County Community College (pccc100.com)

In the low-resources world of community college marketing, it's easy to make the Web about the absolute basics: getting students in and out. But community colleges seeking to elevate their reputation beyond a commodity should take a hint from Passaic County Community College (PCCC). In addition to a distinctive, compelling design, a microsite, pccc100.com, invites visitors to explore the top 100 reasons to consider PCCC as their educational choice. Some messages are basic—price, academic choices—but others demonstrate a sense of personality and pride that goes beyond expectations for a community college, from a professor researching lemon slice contamination in restaurants to the medical dummies used in nursing education. This fun and creative way to showcase the institution's points of pride will go a long way in getting visitors interested and excited about PCCC. Also, it is good to note that many of the reasons link back to that information on the main site so they can get more about that fact.



#### Creating Relationships

#### Austin Community College (austincc.edu)

Austin Community College does an admirable job of reaching out to alumni and students in order to help promote the institution. The current main page allows the user to click on the profile and learn more about

i am acc home

view the videos

are you acc?

量 〇 是 國 

workforce education access programs

that student or alum.



i am acc - View the Videos

My Videos // ACCDistrict // (50 vid

i am acc videos

The reader may click on one of the many links on the right-hand side of the page to learn more about that program and to allow them a link to an alum or student involved in the program.

In addition, visitors can click on any of the thumbnails to learn more about that person, or choose View the Videos and learn about ACC via YouTube.

> Adding to the interactive nature of the site, alums and current students have the ability to enter their story, photo, or YouTube videos for consideration to be included on this site.

> All in all, this feature does a good job in building that relationship with the visitor throughout their

entire site experience.



## Recommendations

These recommendations are meant to serve as a road map for priorities on the District's Web sites. These recommendations, combined with addressing the more tedious details presented in the current site review, will aid the District in building a strong online experience. Each of these recommendations aims to help the District better support and communicate key messages to external audiences.

Throughout this report, Stamats has provided recommendations in the areas of look and feel, navigation, and content. The core information for audiences is available, but how it is organized and presented to users will make a significant difference in how the Web site pushes them through the recruitment funnel.

Stamats recommends that the District take the following steps to enhance the Web site experience. Although the principal recommendations are higher in the list, the subsequent points are in no specific order of importance, and the teams will need to determine which are priorities based on current resources.

1. Adopt a marketing-centric paradigm to the Web sites. We understand this will be one of the most difficult recommendations to implement—particularly in the face of tight budgets and enrollment successes that might imply marketing is unneeded. However, we strongly believe a marketing-focused model for the Web sites is the key to a number of the problems with the Districts' sites, from hierarchy to usability, and will have innumerable long-term benefits.

What does this mean in reality? We recommend a number of steps:

- a. **Marketing Leadership:** There must be a high-level marketing individual providing strategic leadership and responsibility for the Web sites. This could exist either at the district level, in a position such as Director of Web Communications, or on a college basis at the marketing communications manager director level; the position should be significant enough within the organization to ensure his or her voice is heard, respected, and fulfilled. Key responsibilities would include:
  - i. Link the overall marketing strategy of the District with that of the Web site
  - Serve as an integrated marketing voice in higher-level District discussions
  - iii. Lead the Web Communications Committee (see next item)
- b. Establish a Web Communications Committee. A community of techsavvy individuals is necessary to ensure the Web site is forwardthinking in its online initiatives. This committee should be comprised of experts with marketing or technical skills who can bring value with tactical recommendations; however, Web Communication Managers at each College can make the final decisions.

The task of this committee isn't to discuss the links and navigation and day-to-day part of the Web site (which is a responsibility of the Web Communications Managers), and it's not necessary for various departments to be represented. Instead, the core responsibility of this group will be to focus on the overall strategy, integration, and areas for improvement to demonstrate the key messages. This committee can brainstorm features that meet the qualifications of being both unique and relevant to targeted audiences. It will also allow the District and College sites to benefit from the sharing of knowledge.

We recommend keeping the group small with no more than five people to ensure that topics stay on task. This group will then assign responsible parties to stronghold each initiative and manage recruiting resources to make it happen. The first agenda should involve jump-starting feature ideas and recommendations made in this report.

Please note, however, that we do not recommend any institution go through the Web redesign process by committee, as it tends to unnecessarily lengthen the process and leads to overanalyzing topics, which results in internal audiences identifying what's important, rather than recognizing what's most important to the end user. Instead, we suggest each site have a strategic owner who will share pieces of the process with the appropriate individuals as they see fit.

- c. Create a content author users' group. Some of the issues mentioned in regard to content authors are going to continue to be issues for the life of the Web site. That said, the Colleges should each consider establishing a content author users' group to encourage wholehearted buy-in for the new system, and to show that there is a primary importance on updating content. At first, information will relate to training on how the content management use of the new system and how to effectively write for the Web. Soon it will be time to refresh the look and discuss individual tips and tricks, providing insight on strategies used within their own areas of the site. Meetings such as these benefit the Colleges in a number of ways—workshops and topics that can be discussed at this meeting are endless. With a collegial exchange, everyone can feel free to share "lessons learned" and can benefit from the Web manager's specific technical knowledge, as appropriate. If people feel they belong and have a voice, they're more likely to work with you than against you.
- 2. Delineate between internal and external content by separating the external audience needs from internal data. Be clear about the purpose of the Web site, and communicate that purpose, managing expectations with the campus community. The site serves multiple audiences and functions, but reaching and recruiting prospective students is at the top of the list. Ensure that the campus community understands that the top levels of the site will be used for marketing the Colleges and that these pages are the front door to the world for many who enter, from prospective students to potential new colleagues, donors, community members, and others.

We suggest establishing a non-public area or intranet where routine forms and other internal documents can reside. Human resources and payroll, as well as updates and news for faculty and staff, can be maintained here. This area could also include guidelines for Writing for the Web for the content authors and the new guidelines for logo usage. The general public shouldn't have access to the internal documents via search.

Likewise, separating "business" functions of current students (register for classes, complete forms, request for transcripts, perform degree audits, pay bills, drop classes, check grades, etc.) into a current student area, rather than incorporating it into several of the global navigation links, would make the site easier to navigate. We recognize that both audiences may use certain areas of the externally facing site (i.e., financial aid assistance), but this would become a simplified place current students would become accustomed to going to.

3. Revise and update site architecture, and design and establish more consistency. The current site review has found many concerns with the current architecture and design that make for an unpleasant user experience. The reality is that the Web is a medium that, by nature, is constantly changing as new technology and findings become available. The current site has reached its peak as a helpful resource, and it's time to revisit how we can take what isn't working and modify it.

The standards need to be further applied to individual sites. To present a clear and consistent message and to make the site easy to navigate, all pages need to use the standard College template. (One exception would be faculty pages that are used as a teaching tool. We recommend having a standard directory and biography page for each faculty member with contact information, a picture, degrees, qualifications, projects completed, and books written; however, if that faculty member also has a page they maintain that has its own look and feel, it can be linked on the directory page.) This will help avoid the variety of designs representing the Colleges, and will avoid trapping site visitors within the page due to lack of navigation.

We suggest developing an architecture and template that simplifies navigating between the various sites, but that still allows individuals to access higher tiers. A newly developed template should strive to create a hierarchical order of importance to present information to cut down on pieces of information fighting for the eye. It's quite obvious that the College home pages are a political topic among campus constituents. The Web and marketing teams will need to reduce efforts to appease various internal members by adding new links as they're requested, and a new template will allow the institution to visit the topic and determine what is absolutely essential to be on the home page and what can be saved for subsequent pages.

In order to update the overall information architecture and ease of navigation, the Colleges should consider:

• Expanding the list of sites that must adhere to the Web site standards.

- Displaying links that are housed in a section differently than those that link to another area, lessening the redundancy and guesswork by the user.
- Using a standard horizontal global navigation that remains constant throughout both College sites (allowing subsequent tiers to be customized).
- Using nested navigation up to three tiers to help provide a sense of place (instead of rollovers).
- Offering RSS feeds for news and events that dynamically update the home page and allow users to subscribe and choose what they want to receive.
- Developing areas of the site that can load without refreshing the page. This
  can be particularly helpful for long pages of content, as well as for loading
  parts of the navigation.
- Performing usability testing for the top tasks identified for the target audience by testing those tasks with individuals to see how easily they can be completed.

In order to update the up-to-date look and feel of the site, the Colleges should consider:

- Using CSS to deliver page layout, rather than tables.
- Adopting a wider site layout (e.g., 960 px) to use more of the space, as the 1024x768 screen resolution now dominates the market. Several institutions have gone toward this standard.
- Using the home page for a rotating news and events feature to keep the sites looking fresh.
- Assessing the qualities and graphic depth of sites awarded EduStyle's Best Overall Site Award in 2008 to college and university sites such as the University of Tennessee–Knoxville (<a href="http://www.utk.edu">http://www.utk.edu</a>) and Virginia Tech (<a href="http://www.vt.edu">http://www.vt.edu</a>).
- 4. Implement a Content Management System. Most individuals must go through one individual at each College to make even minor updates to the site. It's a responsibility they take on with a positive attitude, and they make every effort to get changes made quickly; however, the task has become overwhelming in terms of determining priorities. In addition, some use Microsoft SharePoint Designer for updates, and most faculty members use FrontPage (since it's free as a part of the Microsoft package). Some departments use interns to make updates, but the minute their internship is over, they move on, and the site sits without being monitored or updated.

These issues will remain unresolved in the next generation of the Web sites unless a content management system (CMS) is put in place. When properly implemented, a CMS can:

 Aid in rolling out a more unified look through templates that offer departments a consistent design to follow, while providing flexibility for creative expression

- Provide the Web and marketing teams with control as to what and how content can be updated
- Assist non-technical content creators to develop pages with a much shorter learning curve than traditional HTML authoring tools
- Eliminate the need to purchase licenses for those authoring tools
- Help to ensure pages contain key elements as defined by the District, following a style guide
- Require entry of search terms, page title, and other metadata
- Provide robust functionality, such as automatic home page updates for news and blogs, etc., through RSS feeds
- Allow users to set an expiration date or notifications on any material uploaded, thus avoiding outdated site content
- Give authors the ability to copy and paste information from Word
- Provide an approval process
- Offer spell check
- Remind authors to check for 508 compliance

While the tool itself would be an upgrade for the institution, the Colleges will find themselves dealing with culture issues as a result of implementing a CMS that changes individuals' job functions and shifts to a larger decentralization of Web site maintenance. This applies particularly to staff members whose responsibilities relate to the business of the institution (such as financial aid, admissions, etc.). However, details about the programs and the key messages need to be a responsibility of the marketing team that will work with various faculty members and departments to create compelling content for prospective students, so they will consider enrolling at one of the Colleges.

**5. Develop robust program pages.** Stamats' *TeensTALK*® studies and usability testing prove the first thing prospective students search for on an institutional Web site is the program page. They want to know if the programming the Colleges offer fits their needs and expectations. The College is missing a crucial opportunity to recruit future students because they can't determine whether a class is offered and choose to go to a place where the site was able to tell them that information. According to one counselor, "most academic areas are not updated or lack important information about their programs," which is why many times the counselors will not send a prospective student to the URL for the department. The Web sites need to be a tool, not a place to post department mission statements.

Just as <u>BarnesandNoble.com</u> sells books online, the Colleges are selling an education—the difference is that the purchase process is not point of sale and is much lengthier. Still, the Colleges need to position their offerings as a product or service. Unfortunately, faculty aren't trained marketers and don't recognize the site as a recruiting function.

The marketing and Web teams will need to work closely with faculty to pull out important pieces of information and construct them in a manner that appeals to the target audience. Each page should have a description about the program, courses, faculty members, careers, an alumni profile, and special news. To make the pages short and easy-to-read, Stamats encourages the Colleges to include a "Top 5" list that features the strengths of that program. By offering the strengths in a quantifiable list, Web site readers are more apt to scan through, knowing they only have a total of five quick points to read. Studies have shown that users are more likely to click on pages featuring number "top"-type lists. These should incorporate personality and pizzazz.

By working with the individual faculty members, the Colleges will find that there are resources available for particular programs that could be added to the page to make it stronger. Some departments even have video to promote their program, but they are clueless as to what they need to do to get it online.

6. Create stronger calls-to-action for each conversion and allow those tasks to be completed online. Web site visitors must feel the need to "do" something on a site in order to avoid clicking the back button. Through the Web redesign process, the Colleges will want to carefully outline each of the key areas of interest for the target audiences and identify the main tasks or conversions that can be completed through the site. Conversions play a role in making the Web site an interactive relationship-building tool for the Colleges to connect with prospective students and parents before they reach the application stage. As the site stands, most pages rely on users to read through the sub-navigation, which is not eye-catching enough to encourage conversions.

Chances are that individuals who are earlier on in their selection process might not be ready to apply, but are open to having a packet or catalog sent in the mail for them to review at their leisure, or they may want to talk with a counselor.

Calls-to-action should be blatantly obvious, leaving no doubt what the intended action is on that page. The clearer the call-to-action, the more people will convert. Placeholders for these calls-to-action should be determined during template development. In addition, any time a form can be embedded within a content page as an above-the-fold sidebar, it should be taken advantage of. Constantly revisiting the graphics and layout of the pages with the calls-to-action is essential for receiving optimal results.

7. Increase tracking of Web site activity to gauge overall performance, and measure the true return on investment. The Colleges use a combination of WebTrends and Google Analytics. It needs to be increasingly analyzed by the Web editor and marketing team to provide value and meaning of the data in order to understand the whole picture and determine steps for improvement going forward. Stamats recommends creating a monthly report to benchmark statistics such as visits, top entry and exit pages, top referrals, time spent, page views, keywords, and conversions, as well as notes as to activities that occurred that month (e.g., a direct mail piece sent) that may have affected Web site activity.

Part of managing the information from the Web statistics software will include tracking changes made to the Web site and traffic-driving campaigns that may

impact the performance. It is important to constantly monitor activity and make sense of that data to provide true return on investment for the time and money spent maintaining and improving the Web site. Knowing which factors impact the Web site performance will help the Colleges change or recreate those factors to increase Web site traffic.

8. Create an engaging photo gallery and incorporate larger photos throughout the site. The next generation of the site should focus on more pictures and less text. According to individuals we spoke with, much of the content that is on both sites is a result of printed copy reused on the Web with little modifications. The current sites feature virtually no photography, which is surprising considering it's one of the degrees offered.

The Colleges should each consider developing a photo gallery to showcase the best event and activity photos to tell their story. The gallery doesn't need to include an endless array of photos, but those selected should give someone who is not familiar with the Colleges a well-rounded idea of its offerings and atmosphere. An outsider needs a quick glance at the best photos that represent your institution supported through captions. During past Stamats usability tests, participants marveled over photo galleries they found at other institutions, solidifying the idea that these are the areas of institution Web sites that offer compelling content.

#### Future Ideas for Consideration

The recommendations outlined above are high priorities to tackle on the sites for their continued improvement. With all of the various options in online media to focus efforts, the Colleges will want to select projects that improve the functionality of the site or help better communicate key messages. We suggest the District focus on managing the primary recommendations; however, ideas for future initiatives may include the following:

1. Create alumni profiles to demonstrate outcomes. Prospective students from all walks of life want to know what the Colleges are all about directly from the people who have been there. Additionally, we know that outcomes are an increasingly important component of the college choice process for traditional-age and adult audiences; they want to know how the experience may impact their lives by seeing how it's affected others and can show the success that students can expect to enjoy upon graduation.

Profiles allow visitors to gain information as they identify with people on campus, and add a personal element to the search process. They can also help demonstrate the quality of the programs by showing results. One faculty member mentioned that she has spoken to students who transferred to four-year institutions and found that the quality of the faculty was better at Cuyamaca than the four-year—communicating that to other prospective students from the voice of a fellow student will help make the case for attending the College.

Whether profiles are presented as captioned photos, text, video, or a mixture of all three, the message needs to be conveyed in a way that makes people relate to

and believe the content. Profiles should touch on why students chose the College originally, their perceptions of the curriculum and the faculty, the types of activities and organizations they are involved in, how the College has helped them grow as a person, and what career they're in now. All of this enables the prospective students to imagine what the College will do for them.

A mix of recent graduates and alumni from the past 10–15 years can effectively communicate the real-world benefits of an education from Grossmont or Cuyamaca. The selection of profiles should include individuals with an array of backgrounds and interests, while still giving a valid representation of the diversity of the campuses. It can include students who have transferred, who went directly into the workforce, or those who returned to advance in their career. We suggest that the marketing team work with deans and faculty to identify individuals to be profiled; however, the content should be written by someone who understands the voice and tone the institution wants to portray.

2. Set a strategy for search engine marketing. As noted in the <a href="search engine marketing review">search engine marketing review</a> of the sites' current rankings (<a href="Appendix A">Appendix A</a>), the majority of the Web sites' search engine traffic stems from terms related to the institutional names. The District is missing out on a large opportunity to recruit students for individual programs and courses because they aren't aware that it's offered.

Each College will want to perform a keyword analysis to determine which words to target both through paid and natural search, assessing the search volume, competition, and current standing for those terms. Terms may relate to the geography of the Colleges (i.e., colleges in San Diego) and eventually should be used to promote niche programming. Identifying the terms up front will help the institution have a clear direction and goal.

Stamats suggests both paid and natural search engine marketing as a comprehensive approach. The Colleges will want to begin by developing a regionally based pay-per-click campaign that will allow you to target more generic keywords. This method allows you to show ads, based on the users' IP addresses, to target individuals within a certain radius of the campus or in highly targeted geographic areas. Through this method, the Colleges will begin driving traffic to the site through sponsored advertising while the natural rankings are enhanced. The data collected from the paid campaign can help drive decisions for terms to target in the natural campaign. Natural search rankings, although "free," take much more time and effort, and should therefore focus on a smaller list of keywords. It will be essential to optimize on the page content of the site, as strategic keywords need to be integrated into content appropriately to increase keyword density. This strategy should also take into account off-the-page factors, such as link popularity and directory submissions.

3. Incorporate Web 2.0 features and continue to use social networking to make the Web site a personal experience for users. We recognize the return on investment for social networking and user-generated content is still being measured, thus the lower priority of this initiative. However, we believe Web trends toward Web 2.0 elements will only strengthen in the coming years. The Colleges should continue to monitor emerging technologies and develop ideas

and experiment with how the site can facilitate user-generated content (such as the ability to leave comments on various sections) within the site itself, and how the institution can use third party sites as relationship-building tools. Owning your presence on various social networking sites can only help. This can include, but not be limited to:

- Developing a branded YouTube page, as videos become a stronger component of the Web site.
- Creating a Facebook page that offers fresh content, including pictures and events. Grossmont College group currently exists, which on members post a variety of topics. The pages the Colleges develop be а resource prospective and current students to connect with other individuals who attend. (For example, others might want to know who is going to be in the incoming class.)

comment (like Lakeland College).



- Allowing users to be able to share news stories and events, as well as
- Offering subscription to RSS feeds for upcoming events or news.
- Encouraging faculty, staff, and students to submit their personal blogs to the institution. The site can offer a searchable resource should prospective students want to read personal blogs from students, faculty, and staff. This allows the Colleges to show off an individual's personality without taking the time to develop and maintain profiles and without being fully responsible for the content developed.
- Consider showing a dedicated page on the site that connects to all these various applications.
- 4. Offer live Chat or Instant Messaging. In trying to generate more leads from the Web site, the Colleges may consider offering a way for visitors to ask questions while still maintaining an air of anonymity. Many colleges and universities offer live chat or instant messaging (IM) as a way for prospective students to ask questions on their own terms without having to pick up the phone.

We recommend adding a live chat option on the site, to be staffed during office hours, as a key component to build relationships with prospective students. This can easily be done through software such as LivePerson, or a free option that combines several different IM accounts (AIM, MSN, etc.) under one program. This means that a staff member would only have to log in to one program and would be connected to several different IM clients.

We understand that the personal connections gained by talking to prospective students on the phone are still very important. During IM discussions, staff should (when appropriate) ask to explain something in more detail by giving the person a call (thus asking for their number) or invite them to schedule a campus tour. The addition of IM as a communication tool can be used to connect with people who will not likely pick up the phone until they have had an initial anonymous engagement.

5. Incorporate more streaming video. During the current site review, we encountered a few different videos that are currently found online. Video is becoming increasingly popular and makes a college Web site more enticing. Sites like YouTube eliminate concerns about server space and user-friendly players. We applaud Cuyamaca's use of YouTube; however, videos posted there need to be embedded in higher tiers on the main Web site to ensure that they will be seen.

Video can be used in a variety of ways, so the Colleges will need to focus on what's useful and relevant to the target audience. Both could benefit from having short clips of the students describing their experiences and highlighting facts about each College.

#### 13 Simple Online Marketing Tips

The following are tactical tips and best practices that apply not only to higher education, but to the Web in general. Each of the following are key ideas that should be expanded and tested continually to provide a better Web site experience for the user. The Web site graphic standards manual on the Web site should post helpful Web site tips such as these for content authors across campus.

- Increase conversions by embedding registrations forms on the highest level page as a sidebar.
- **Ensure forms are short**, requiring only fields that are absolutely necessary.
- Use action verbs as links, such as <u>Schedule a Campus Visit</u>, rather than "<u>Click here to schedule a campus visit</u>."
- Always include page title, meta-description, and meta-keywords when creating a
  new page to help search engine spiders better understand the page content and
  maintain Web site accessibility standards. Each page should target an identified
  keyword or set of keywords.
- Continue use of friendly URLs (such as <a href="http://www.cuyamaca.edu/start.asp">http://www.cuyamaca.edu/start.asp</a>) push prospective students through other marketing efforts such as print material and online campaigns because they are simplified and easy to remember.
- **Use intuitive page and image file names** when possible (such as "art\_program.jpg") to help search engine rankings.
- Place a Web site-only 800 number on the Web site to help track offline conversions.
- Use more images throughout the Web site content areas to display the experience and help potential students, faculty, and staff picture themselves on campus or actively using a building.
- Write short captions with each picture to explain what is depicted in the picture and how it relates to the content on the page (that may be an event, a place, a project, etc.).
- Open external Web sites, PDFs, Docs, etc. in a new window to ensure the main Web site is still available when the user closes that other site or document, or if they want to multitask and have the ability to navigate both at the same time.
- Avoid writing "Welcome" sentences for various pages of the site—while the copy needs to be welcoming, this practice is outdated. Instead, identify the paramount information your target market needs, then bring those points to the forefront.
- Make sure graphics, such as news pictures on the home page, are clickable.
- Offer a printer-friendly version for pages that do not accommodate this need.

# In Closing

This document has outlined key areas to address on the District Web sites and within your internal Web team. Stamats will be returning to present our findings to key stakeholders.

We recognize that the recommendations made will need to be weighed by the team in order to set an action plan for next steps and priorities presented here.

Thank you for the opportunity to perform this audit. We look forward to future opportunities to make other recommendations outlined here a reality.

# Appendix A: Search Engine Rankings

- Not in the first 30 means none of the sites were found in the top 30 positions
- NA means Non-Applicable or no prior day's positions to report yet
- NM means No Matches were found for that keyword search

		Google	Yahoo	MSN
Keyword / Domain Name		Best Position	Best Position	Best Position
San Diego college (0 item, Best Position: Not in first 3	30)			
No page found.		Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.
San Diego colleges (0 item, Best Position: Not in first	30)			
No page found.		Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.
College in San Diego (0 item, Best Position: Not in first	st 30)	N-4:- 6400	N-4:- 5100	N-4:- 5400
No page found.	rot 20)	Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.
Colleges in San Diego (0 item, Best Position: Not in fi No page found.	15( 30)	Not in first 30	Not in first 30.	Not in firet 30
San Diego community college (0 item, Best Position:	Not in first 30)	NOT III III ST SU.	14011111115150.	NOT III III ST SO.
No page found.	1400 111 111 00 00 7	Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.
San Diego community colleges (0 item, Best Position	n: Not in first 30)	11011111110100.	Trocini mococ.	Trocini mococ.
No page found.	,	Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.
▼ San Diego colleges and universities (0 item, Best Po	sition: Not in first 30)			
No page found.		Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.
Colleges San Diego CA (0 item, Best Position: Not in	first 30)			
No page found.		Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.
College in San Diego CA (0 item, Best Position: Not in	n first 30)			
No page found.		Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.
▼ El Cajon colleges (4 items, Best Position: 2)				
http://www.cuyamaca.edu/		2		1
http://www.grossmont.edu/		3	_	'
http://www.cuyamaca.edu/library/ http://www.grossmont.edu/intlprograms/		21 24		
▼ El Cajon College (4 items, Best Position: 2)		24		
http://www.cuvamaca.edu/		2	18	1
http://www.grossmont.edu/		3		1
http://www.grossmont.edu/intlprograms/		13		'
http://www.cuyamaca.edu/library/		25		
▼ Horticulture course San Diego (1 item, Best Position	: 7)			
http://www.cuyamaca.edu/ohweb/		7	7	7
Horticulture program San Diego (1 item, Best Position	n: 25)			
http://www.cuyamaca.edu/ohweb/faculty/1monroe.		25	5	6
Automotive course san Diego (0 item, Best Position:	Not in first 30)			
No page found.		Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.
Automotive training san Diego (0 item, Best Position	: Not in first 30)			
No page found.	-ti- 5t20)	Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.
▼ San Diego nursing schools (0 item, Best Position: No	ot in first 30)	Not in first 20	Not in first 20	Not in first 20
No page found.  Nursing programs san Diego (0 item, Best Position:	Not in first 30\	NOT III III St 30.	Not in first 30.	NOT III III St 30.
http://www.grossmont.edu/nursing/hl.asp	NOT III III St 30)	Not in first 30.	29	Not in first 30.
▼ Nursing program san Diego (0 item, Best Position: N	ot in first 30)	NOTHI HIST SU.	25	NOTHI III ST SO.
No page found.	ot in mot oo,	Not in first 30	Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.
▼ Nursing continuing education San Diego (0 item, Be	st Position: Not in first 30)	14011111110100.		
No page found.		Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.
Biotech training San Diego (0 item, Best Position: No	t in first 30)			
No page found.		Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.
Biotech course San Diego (0 item, Best Position: No	t in first 30)			
No page found.		Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.
▼ Biotech program San Diego (0 item, Best Position: No page found.  ■ No page f	Grossmont-Cuvamaca Comm	unity Colleg	e District	68
No page found.	© 2008 Stamate Inc	Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.
▼ Vocational colleges san Diego (0 item, Best Position)	POHPHY SUAMALS, MC.			
No page found.		Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.	Not in first 30.

## Appendix B: Broken Links

The following are broken links from the three various sites. Please address these links and monitor them in the future, as it will provide better quality sites.

#### www.GCCCD.edu

http://www.gcccd.edu/map.directions/ (403 Forbidden)

http://www.gcccd.edu/purchasing/ (403 Forbidden)

http://www.gcccd.edu/news/ (403 Forbidden)

http://www.gcccd.edu/intergov/bond/ (403 Forbidden)

http://www.gcccd.edu/students/ (403 Forbidden)

http://www.gcccd.edu/community/ (403 Forbidden)

http://www.gcccd.edu/co/ (403 Forbidden)

http://www.gcccd.edu/hr/ (403 Forbidden)

http://www.gcccd.edu/governingboard/ (403 Forbidden)

http://www.gcccd.edu/faculty.staff/ (403 Forbidden)

http://www.gcccd.edu/online/ (403 Forbidden)

http://www2.gafcon.com/gcccd/

http://www.gcccd.edu/students/CourseOutlines/cuyamaca-disciplines-include.htm

https://web1.gcccd.net/

http://facilities.gcccd.net/sitenet

http://www.rebrac.org/sandiego/

http://facilities.gcccd.net/actwarecs/

http://www.gcccd.net/intergov/news/2003.Archive/GCCCD.approves.tentative.budget.for.200

3-04.06182003.htm

http://www.gcccd.net/intergov/news/2003.Archive/HS.wins.rocket.competition.CC.06052003.

htm

http://www.gcccd.net/intergov/news/2003.Archive/2003.commencements.Grossmont.Cuyama

ca.06032003.htm

http://www.gcccd.net/intergov/news/2003.Archive/cc.spring.garden.festival.05122003.htm

http://www.gcccd.net/intergov/news/2002.Archive/Enrollment.up.sharply.at.GC.CC.09.16.200

2.htm

http://www2.gafcon.com/gcccd/outreach/outreach home.htm

#### www.Cuyamaca.edu

http://www.cuyamaca.edu/socials/Pys.asp

http://www.cuyamaca.edu/es

http://www.cuyamaca.edu/socials/pol.asp

http://www.cuyamaca.edu/counseling/academic\_counseling.asp

http://www.cuyamaca.edu/articulation/default.asp

http://www.cuyamaca.edu/ascc/ASCC.asp

http://www.cuyamaca.edu/ascc/Assessment.asp

http://www.cuyamaca.edu/admissions/intercur.asp

http://www.cuyamaca.edu/counseling/matricday.asp

http://www.cuyamaca.edu/library/periodicals

http://www.cuyamaca.edu/library/distancelearners

http://www.cuyamaca.edu/careerserv/career\_fair.asp

http://www.cuyamaca.edu/ascc/Discproc.asp

http://www.cuyamaca.edu/cc/chairs2k.asp

http://www.cuyamaca.edu/ascc/ascc\_site/ascc\_homepage.asp

http://www.cuyamaca.edu/promo.ads rar.asp

http://www.cuyamaca.edu/htpp:/www.cuyamaca.edu/cc/schedules.asp

http://students.gcccd.net/exchange/logon.asp

https://web1.gcccd.net/

http://www.southlanftechnology.com/GCCCD/

http://www.ridelink.org/index.asp

http://www2.gafcon.com/gcccd/

http://www.bkstore.com/cuyamaca/

http://www.factoryschool.org/lsc/

http://160.227.170.11/sfan/

http://www.cuyamaca.bkstore/

http://www.colegesoftware.org/

http://opac.gcccd.edu/uhtbin/cgisirsi/hGFlrcnU1O/0/0/36/485/X/BLASTOFF

http://cis3.cuyamaca.net/chemistry/

http://cis.cuyamaca.net/baker

http://www.ridelink.org/Commuter\_Services/Carpooling/Index.asp

http://www.baycongroup.com/win98/windows\_98

#### www.Grossmont.edu

http://www.grossmont.edu/prospective\_students/default2.asp

http://www.grossmont.edu/library

http://www.grossmont.edu/www.grossmont.edu/library/otherlibrarycatalogs.asp

http://www.grossmont.edu/www.grossmont.edu/library/libraryinstruction/faculty.asp

http://www.grossmont.edu/www.grossmont.edu/library/libraryinstruction/handouts.asp

http://www.grossmont.edu/www.grossmont.edu/library/libraryinstruction/further\_details.asp

http://www.grossmont.edu/www.grossmont.edu/library/libraryinstruction/help\_with\_research.asp

http://www.grossmont.edu/www.grossmont.edu/library/luci

http://www.grossmont.edu/www.grossmont.edu/library/reftools.asp

http://www.grossmont.edu/www.grossmont.edu/library/asklibrarianintropg.asp

http://www.grossmont.edu/www.grossmont.edu/library/libraryinformation/default.asp

http://www.grossmont.edu/www.grossmont.edu/library/libraryinformation/address\_maps.asp

http://www.grossmont.edu/www.grossmont.edu/library/libraryinformation/circulation.asp

http://www.grossmont.edu/www.grossmont.edu/library/hours.asp

http://www.grossmont.edu/www.grossmont.edu/library/libraryinformation/ims.asp

http://www.grossmont.edu/www.grossmont.edu/library/libraryinformation/interlibrary.asp

http://www.grossmont.edu/www.grossmont.edu/library/libraryinstruction

http://www.grossmont.edu/www.grossmont.edu/library/libraryinformation/media\_desk.asp

http://www.grossmont.edu/www.grossmont.edu/library/libraryinformation/phone\_numbers.asp

http://www.grossmont.edu/www.grossmont.edu/library/libraryinformation/reference.asp

http://www.grossmont.edu/www.grossmont.edu/library/libraryinformation/reserves.asp

http://www.grossmont.edu/www.grossmont.edu/library/online\_book\_order\_form.htm

http://www.grossmont.edu/www.grossmont.edu/library/libraryinformation/wireless.asp

http://www.grossmont.edu/admissions/application.asp

http://www.grossmont.edu/music/New%20Web%20Site/GSO%20Brochure%20Windows.htm

http://www.grossmont.edu/healthprofessions/DevDisWebPage/Default.htm

http://www.grossmont.edu/esl/index.htm

http://www.grossmont.edu/faculty\_staff/faculty\_handbook/default.asp

http://www.grossmont.edu/healthprofessions/OTAWebPage/Default.htm

http://www.grossmont.edu/bot/OPT.htm

http://www.grossmont.edu/healthprofessions/OrthoTechWebPage/Default.htm

http://www.grossmont.edu/healthprofessions/RTWebPage/Default.htm

http://www.grossmont.edu/healthprofessions/SpeechPatho/Default.htm

http://www.grossmont.edu/admissions/visa.asp

http://www2.gafcon.com/gcccd

http://www.grossmont.net/home/disclaimer.asp

http://opac.gcccd.edu/uhtbin/webcat

https://web1.gcccd.net/

http://www.gcccd.net/research/instresearch.html

http://www.gcccd.edu/schedule/