



Recruitment In The Twenty-first Century: Second Year Results Utilizing Technology To Market A Program Applicable To General Recruiting

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PROGRAM SPONSORS

The University of Maryland, College Park
Department of Nutrition and Food Science
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Food and Nutrition Information Center



The Internship is part of a cooperative project between the National Agricultural Library (NAL), Food and Nutrition Information Center (FNIC) and the University of Maryland Department of Nutrition and Food Science.

LEARNING OUTCOME

To illustrate how Internet recruiting tools can increase an applicant pool and number of out-of-state applicants.

ABSTRACT

Effective recruitment involves "finding a fit" between what a facility offers and what the applicant can bring to a position. Optimal recruiting can only exist if potential applicants, nationally, are aware of existing vacancies. Industry is turning to the Internet to reach a broader national (or global) audience. To enhance recruitment, one internship combined the addition of an online Flash video to its website and applicant online open houses using web conferencing software to reach a larger out-of-state audience.

A twenty-five percent increase in unique visitors (3677 in '06-07 versus 4917 in '07-08) to the website has been recorded from September through

January. Four new online applicant open houses were attended by twenty-three out of state participants. Internship applications increased thirty-three percent (27 applicants in '06-07 versus 40 applicants in '07-08). In addition, eight of twenty-three out-of-state participants at the online open houses applied to the program.

The webmaster, a graduate of the internship, developed both the Macromedia Flash Video and facilitated the open house web conferencing. The latter provided out-of-state applicants with an online internship website tour including website highlights, links to various rotations, existing intern professional e-portfolios and photographs of the interns in action.



Location of program applicants in 2008

Current interns participated in audio web-casting to describe various internship experiences. Instant messaging allowed participants to ask questions and receive feedback. This approach, utilized by an internship, is equally applicable to the workplace setting and would allow facilities (or other internships) an opportunity to reach a wider applicant pool to increase the geographical diversity of program applicants.

THE PROGRAM

The University of Maryland College Park Dietetic Internship provides thorough training in general dietetics with an emphasis on Information Management and Communication.

Many learning experiences are planned for the intern to broaden his/her scope of the dietetics field with an emphasis on the application of information technology.

Through supervised practice at many off-site facilities, the intern develops a diverse range of skills, has an opportunity to meet many potential role models, and to develop a wide network of professional contacts in the Baltimore-Washington corridor.



Further, these varied experiences will assist interns in developing critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills, effective communication skills and collaborative, team-building skills.

The 43-week program consists of approximately 1100 supervised practice hours in clinical, community, food service management and information technology.

Improved communication about the program helps applicants learn if they are a fit with program goals

ONLINE OPEN HOUSES

A series of online open houses was conducted using web conferencing software. These events provided out of state participants an overview of the internship program.



Guided by a presenter, participants viewed a tour of the internship Website, internship rotations and past student e-portfolios.

A phone bridge allowed participants to speak directly to the internship director, current interns, graduates of the internship, and program preceptors. Instant messaging provided an opportunity to ask questions and receive feedback.

Utilization of web-based conferencing produced a thirty three percent increase in program applicants. Online conferencing participants gained a greater sense of the program's goals,



2008-2009 Internship Class

rotations and requirements to define if this internship would be a fit. More informed applicants enhance the chance for a better fit/internship match as well as more informed incoming interns, i.e. ones who better understand what the internship entails.

Internet tools allow dietitians and internship programs the opportunity to market their programs and potentially increase their applicant pool.

