Enrollment Management is an institutional response and organizational concept to the challenges and opportunities that recruiting and retaining the right student body presents to a school. It is highly research-based and encompasses four key areas: Admission management, Retention, Research, and Marketing. The research is organized by a strategic plan that supports the institutional goals which may include recruitment, admissions, parent relations, external scholarships, retention, financial aid, and other areas relevant to enrollment. Enrollment management is essential for revenue optimization.
# Budget Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recruitment Initiative</th>
<th>Projected Cost</th>
<th>Projected Activity</th>
<th>Additional Comments</th>
<th>Anticipated Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment Activities</td>
<td>$5,000/week Or $40,000/8 weeks And $10,000 for domestic travel</td>
<td>Making connections in-person and collecting leads</td>
<td>Multiple recruiters In-Country Virtual EducationUSA Domestic boarding/independent/community recruitment</td>
<td>Generating leads for further communication and interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yield Events</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>Connecting with parents, applicants/admits</td>
<td>In-Country Virtual ESL</td>
<td>Moving students through the admission funnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Marketing</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td>Brand awareness</td>
<td>Includes marketing material translations</td>
<td>Connecting with emerging/non-travel regions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselor Fly-Ins</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>Building relationships with counselors</td>
<td>Plan around conferences and events</td>
<td>Increase in applications from specific institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swag &amp; materials</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>Marketing to prospective students/parents/agents</td>
<td></td>
<td>More brand awareness, connection with parents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information on these services, please visit [https://gatewayinternational.org/gateway-leadership-institute-s2022/](https://gatewayinternational.org/gateway-leadership-institute-s2022/)
Metro Community College (MCC) is a community college located in a large metropolitan area that has a high population of immigrants. With a full-time staff of at least 2 international recruiters, MCC’s vision is to not only have a wide global presence, but also to become the region’s leading community college, recognized for its commitment to affordability and quality education. The development of an International Recruitment Plan (IRP) has been identified as a strategic planning goal for MMC.

As Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) begin to navigate through a post-pandemic world, it is important to revisit and reevaluate their recruitment strategies. The priority is to not only recruit, but also to yield and enroll international students. International students can be identified as any student who is required to obtain a visa to study in the United States. The IRP is to be a resource for other institutions at the community college level to use as a guide for their recruitment plans. The strategies in this IRP can be easily manipulated to fit the budget and goals of any 2-year institution.

With $120,000 in MCC’s budget, the overall goal is to increase the size of the international student population on the campus by creating and implementing a recruitment plan specifically for international recruitment. The following recruitment strategies along with projected cost and activity include:

1) Recruitment Events for both international and domestic travel,

2) Yield Events for both virtual and in person,

3) Digital marketing, which includes marketing material translations,

4) Counselor Fly-Ins to be planned around conferences and local events, and

5) Swag and print materials to market the institution.

Amidst the 2020 Coronavirus pandemic, institutions around the world reported a decline in international student enrollment. However, colleges report a 68 percent surge in new international student enrollment in this fall 2022 and the total number of international students grew by 4 percent across more than 860 U.S. HEIs that responded to a “snapshot” survey conducted by the Institute of International Education (IIE) and nine other higher education association (InsideHigherEd ’21). The COVID-19 pandemic prevented many international students from traveling to the United State due to travel restrictions. Throughout the pandemic, institutions were forced to rethink their recruitment strategies. Alternatives to traditional student recruitment moved the higher education world entirely online.

Careful research is highly recommended when creating a recruitment plan. International Higher Education resources such as EducationUSA, IIE Open Doors, Studyportal are reputable and legitimate sources of such information. It is also recommended to use benchmark institutions to assist in the guidance of creating a plan. Be sure to include the experiences of the professionals in this field to support all recruitment strategies.

RATIONALES, ALTERNATIVES AND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Enrollment Yield Events

MCC understands that yield is an important part of the recruitment funnel. To have a strong yield, MCC international recruiters must connect with students who are currently in the funnel in an engaging and powerful way.
Yield events are an effective way for MCC to get in front of students and their families in a friendly environment. This is a great space for students and families to ask questions and feel good about MCC, which is particularly important as parents and families are a large part of the decision-making process.

At these yield events, MCC highlights university’s non-academic aspects such as student life, safety, graduation outcomes, and support services.

MCC hosts yield events within the local community for immigrant populations and students with immigrant families to promote ELL programs and pathway programs to 4-year degrees. Getting in front of families who may have a family member who has or plans to attend MCC helps identify the “low hanging fruit” recruitment opportunities.

MCC has the budget for yield events that have the potential to provide strong yield rates. This is a more effective way than attempting to develop alumni incentive programs for recruiting as MCC graduates are not as dedicated to their alma mater as someone who may have graduated from a four-year institution. Contracting with in-country representatives to host yield events on behalf of MCC is not necessary since MCC has international recruiters already recruiting in-country in their established markets and can plan and host yield events while they are recruiting. This capitalizes on MCC’s budget and resources that are already being used.

Virtual only yield events are more cost effective but not necessarily as strong as in-person events in their ability to produce strong yield.

Yield events are an amazing way to connect prospective students. Many recruiters use yield events to help push students through the funnel and past the point of inquiry.

Often this is done in the country on a recruitment trip. Usually, recruiters will have a space in the hotel rented out and food delivered to help with the event. Many yield events offer more intimate settings that encourage students to feel comfortable and ask questions that they would normally not ask at a fair. However, yield events can be useless depending on if those students and families show.

By using a KPI of Attendees per Yield Event, recruiters will be able to decide whether the time and money is worth the amount of people who show up to the event. If not many people show up, then the event may not be worth doing; however, if the opposite is true, then the event is worth the time and money allocated.

Another KPI that would be useful to a university is if the Yield Event was able to move students forward through the funnel. A recruiter will need to be sure that the students who show up to the event are moving forward through the application process. If students show and then leave the event without moving forward this could show the event was unsuccessful.

The final KPI that would be useful to track recruiters would be Attendee Experience Per Event. If many students show up and have an awful time at the event, they are then more than likely to not continue pursuing the university. A way to track attendee experience would be to distribute surveys after the event for the attendees to rate the experience they had.

**In-country/active Recruitment Activities**

MCC’s has allotted part of their budget to active in-country recruitment. In-country recruitment allows for in-person connection, visual representation at fairs, and high school
visits, and provides opportunity to visit EducationUSA offices for presentations and visits all while connecting with students at various stages in the funnel to improve yield and brand awareness. MCC works with EducationUSA as much as possible as they are often an affordable resource and can connect the institution with students, high schools, and counselors. EducationUSA often features community college presentations and is a valued resource for MCC, both virtually and in-person.

MCC focuses its in-person recruitment on countries where there are established markets with the institution based on historic and current enrollments to build up recruitment numbers to pre-pandemic numbers and beyond.

MCC also prioritizes opportunities for recruitment of local immigrant populations as a cost-effective way to capitalize on what is already established in the community and can add value to both the community and the institution. The local immigrant community is a great market to recruit for MCC’s Intensive English Program.

MCC brings swag and brochures for students, gifts for counselors; this is an excellent way to build rapport and make students feel valued/excited to connect with MCC.

MCC selected a target market for their in-person recruitment plan because traveling to non-target countries would go over budget and the need to rebuild pre-covid numbers is expected to be easier in previously established markets. Additionally, not traveling to established markets hurts the institution’s visibility to international students, particularly in areas that are known to produce strong enrollment numbers. While MCC knows that full “armchair” recruitment is more cost-effective, it is not necessarily as effective for producing a high yield rate. MCC is considering virtual recruitment for new or emerging markets as they are more cost effective, however, the current focus for MCC is rebuilding their numbers and wants to spend time doing so in previously established markets.

In-country recruitment is one of the best ways to recruit new students for a university. It offers many opportunities to meet with students and urge them to come to your campus. Unfortunately, many of these events can be cost heavy. Not only do you pay for the events but also the plane tickets, food, and housing while you are in the country. This makes the entire cost of the trip exceedingly high.

By using a KPI of Cost per Leads, the recruiter will be able to look at the entire cost of the country visit and divide it by the number of students who they were able to get to inquire to the university. This number would be the return on the investment of the trip. If the cost per student is low then the trip was worth going on, as it would show that many students in that area were interested in the university. However, if it was high then the trip may not be worth the resources given.

**Digital Marketing Contract**

MCC has contracted with a digital marketing company that specializes in digital and in-country marketing to increase brand awareness in emerging markets, through translated materials, social media outreach, and in-country marketing opportunities. MCC has selected markets in which students and parents may need to read materials in their native language or have unique social media platforms, such as WeChat. Additionally, the reach a digital marketing contract provides is much greater than that of in-house digital marketing opportunities and improves the efficiency for the international recruiters to focus on events and yield conversions.
Digital marketing also allows MCC to test out markets that are not in their established market groups without devoting additional resources to in-country recruitment and yield events.

Using print materials only that are created in-house at MCC is limited by how to get the materials to markets in which MCC’s international recruiters are not planning to travel or send print materials to. MCC is capable only of producing English language materials and their social media reach is limited for several reasons, including that they use only Instagram for their entire international education operation. Planning content that aligns with the MCC brand and creating the content that is regularly published is time consuming and requires a level of expertise that international recruiters are not necessarily hired for or have experience with.

Digital Marketing is a wonderful way to connect with students and have your university’s brand shown all over the internet. Many third-party vendors will help in the creation and distribution of your ads. One amazing thing about digital marketing is that a lot of analytics can be seen from these ads.

The KPI that recruiters should use with digital marketing is Marketing Cost Per Student Interaction. As the digital marketing field grows, many universities opt for multiple vendors. Using this KPI will help ensure that the partnership is worth it. If you are working with a vendor and the cost is high and few students are interacting with the ad, then the partnership may not be worth the money allocated to it.

A second useful KPI for digital marketing would be a point in time analysis. Before signing with a third-party vendor, a recruitment team could check and benchmark the numbers they are currently achieving with their own digital marketing efforts. From that point, they can track how much they grow as they begin work with the new vendor.

A personal anecdote would be how SNHU uses the digital software Unibuddy. Every 3 months the recruitment team reviews and pulls the number of signups, conversations, and leads from the platform. This then will show the growth of the program and the marketing they use to help grow SNHU.

Counselor Fly-In

MCC plans to fly counselors in after the NAFSA conference. This allows MCC to pay for domestic airfare while capitalizing on bringing international counselors to campus who are already in the US. MCC finds this to be both cost effective and presents a unique opportunity to show campus to counselors who will go back to their schools and help students apply to US institutions. MCC swag and brochures will be provided to counselors to take back and share with students. MCC views this as a way to build rapport with international high schools with counselors who can connect with students year after year. This is a sustainable approach for long-term recruitment.

If flying counselors after a US based conference is not an option, MCC Representatives can plan to alternatively host a reception at a conference abroad and invite counselors to attend. This is not as ideal as a fly-in visit as counselors are not able to experience the campus firsthand, but it still provides an opportunity to build rapport and provide materials to counselors.

A virtual event is also an option to share campus with counselors who may not be able to attend international conferences or are unable to attend in-person events.
Case Study #4

Two Year Institution
Annual Recruitment Budget: $120,000

This is a cost-effective solution for both MCC and counselors but is not as exceptional of an experience as an in-person or on-campus visit. Physical swag and materials are not able to be shared this way, either.

Many universities have now been taking advantage of flying in counselors and partners to see their campus. This is a wonderful way for counselors to see the university and everything they have to offer. There are a few KPI’s worth using when deciding if this is a useful option for a university.

To begin with, a general baseline KPI should be set. Before flying in the counselor, the recruitment team could check how many applications they have received from the prospective high school. With this information, they could compare it to the amount they receive 6 months to a year after the counselor visits.

Another KPI would be the Attendee Experience Per Event, which may be the best way to see if this is something that the university would like to continue. Issuing a questionnaire after the event would be the best way to receive data and it would give universities ideas on how to be better.

Print Materials and Swag

MCC has budgeted for both print materials and swag to market the institution. This is both low effort and low cost, but can have a strong impact, especially for brochures that are translated for specific markets. MCC has also included a QR code on print materials so students and parents can easily access more information about MCC by using their phones. Print materials are easy to send ahead of time or print in country and swag can also be sent ahead of time or easily travel with the recruiter.

Online versions of brochures are more cost effective but can get lost in the clutter of digital information that students, parents, and counselors may be overwhelmed with. Physical materials are easy to access and are a tangible reminder of the student’s experience with MCC. Similarly, digital swag is not a tangible reminder of MCC, but can be more cost effective or useful in times of digital or remote connection. Digital swag also requires a level of collaboration and expertise with the marketing team and is not always a feasible or efficient option as it requires time and implementation.

Swag Materials are a must have for recruitment. They help ensure that the universities’ brand is everywhere. They also have the added benefit of enhancing the relationships the university has with its partners and students. However, many universities buy a lot of materials and only use a few of them.

Use of Material would be the best KPI for this. If the university buys many materials and notices that one of them is not being used as much, if at all, they could remember to not buy those materials the next year.

A personal anecdote would be from Raghvendra Singh during his time at the University of Missouri Columbia. Here he used many varied materials to recruit. One of the materials that he expected to be popular were Arabic translated documents. Since his university had such a strong presence in the middle east, he ordered many brochures for the trip he was taking.

However, these materials were not as popular as anticipated and he realized that it may not be something he would want to do in the future, as the cost of the material was not worth it.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Recruitment Activities

As educational institutions re-open for international recruitment in a post-pandemic world, it is important to build relationships with high school counselors, prospective students, parents, alumni, and education agents by re-starting in person recruitment travel to various regions of the world. Additionally, part of this budget would be utilized on virtual recruitment, since there are regions of the world that are relying on online technology and the COVID-19 pandemic remains a major concern for international travel. As a large community college located in an urban location, the focus for Metro Community College will be on connecting with immigrant communities for supporting international recruitment of family or friends overseas. Domestic recruitment to boarding schools as part of the K-12 recruitment strategy in collaboration with the domestic admissions team will be conducted as well.

Yield Events

Considering that major student sending countries to US community colleges are in Asia and North/South America, Metro Community College will be holding yield events/receptions/visits to better connect with admitted students/parents/counselors and education agents that the students have applied through. Understanding that parents are an important source of decision making for students at the undergraduate level, yield events will provide the opportunity to communicate with parents directly and connect them with alumni in the country as well as current students from that part of the world. Yield events will be held both in person and virtually to connect several campus stakeholders such as faculty, current students, and international team with incoming students.

Digital Marketing

In the post-pandemic world, digital marketing through various social media channels and others will play an important role in connecting with prospective international students for study abroad opportunities. Working with third party vendors and agent aggregators, Metro Community College will focus on digital marketing in several emerging countries where in-person recruitment may not be achieved, and thus utilize mobile technology and other digital resources to connect with prospective students. The development of virtual tours, videos and other digital marketing opportunities will be explored for recruitment in the metaverse. Showcasing campus resources through student ambassador stories and experiences will be shared with videos and brochures in different languages to better connect with prospective students and parents in different parts of the world.

Counselor Fly-In

Working with state consortium higher education institutions, Metro Community College will organize counselor fly-in around the time of international conferences examples (NAFSA, IACAC, AIRC etc). Working with other higher education institutions will add a variety of educational institutions for counselors to visit, as well as cost sharing will make the recruitment initiative more economical. Metro Community College will also build virtual counselor visits/sessions with other higher education institutions (in a small group effort) and upon successful completion of the virtual session will send out print materials and swag to high school counselors in attendance.
Print Materials and Swag

With 10+ weeks of international and domestic recruitment, Metro Community College will support its recruiters with enough materials and swag during their in-person recruitment, including brochures in different languages to connect with parents/high school counselors and education agents. Similarly, materials will be shipped to various Education USA and high schools across the world as needed for reaching out to prospective international students.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

With sincere gratitude to the generous sponsorship of the following organizations, Gateway was able to offer the Spring 2022 Gateway Leadership Institute and produce these case studies focused on international enrollment management. These inspiring organizations are truly committed to preparing the next generation of international education leaders.