Effective Use of Student Webmasters to Improve E-Recruitment:
A True Win-win Scenario for Admission Offices and Students Seeking

Para-professional Experience

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OVERVIEW

- Organizational Structure Strategies Needed to Embrace Student Webmasters
- Evaluation Processes
- An E-Market Evaluation: Enhancing E-communication Strategies & Homepages by Utilizing Students' Tech Talents, Systems Knowledge and market Insight

Organizational Structure Strategies Needed to Embrace Student Webmasters

If You Embrace the Web as the Center of Your Marketing Strategy, You Need Staff Who Know:

1. How to use today's internet

2. How today's student use the internet

Student Webmaster's Can Fulfill both Needs

- Generally, students pursuing technology or computer systems degrees are driven to know the most current software and tech/web applications

- Most often higher education IT professionals are generally "stuck" using/maintaining outdated or mainstream systems. Due to the lack of R&D on most campuses, they get limited exposure to the most current tech advances and market use studies.

- The best e-marketing organizations seek out and rely on student interactions and students surveys to learn how the web is being used.

- The student webmaster can provide the best of both worlds: knowledge of cutting-edge tech and an ability to implement communication systems similar to their daily lifestyles.

How to Find the "Right" Student Webmasters:
Skill Sets Needed

- **PREVIOUS WEBPAGE BUILDS:** Look at samples of work
- **PROGRAMMING:** Experience with the campus programming language for the web and databases (i.e. Perl, PHP, Java, ASP.net)
- **DATABASES:** Experience with database operations and table construction
- **DESIGN:** Have some designing background/skills
- **FLEXIBILITY:** Can be creative, take direction & constructive criticism – understand that a first draft is not a final draft. Any university has multiple, multiple stakeholders.
- **FUN:** This is a technical marketing position and can be frustrating getting started. Being able to ask questions, have fun & laugh at yourself is very important.

How to evaluate Webmasters:
Previous Performance Measures

- This cannot be a learning on-the-job position.

- Must have core tech knowledge and experience, paid or unpaid.

- Too much to learn in terms of recruitment strategy, campus politics, etc… to also try to learn tech skills.

Embracing the Para-professional Role

- Not easy to do in Academia: "student-workers" usually seen/treated as the "low rung"
- Must have the support and backing of the lead managers
- The hybrid role must be constantly supported and re-enforced by the lead managers

Student HR Resources

- Purdue's Leading Edition
  http://www.purdue.edu/hr/LeadingEdition/LEdi_704_hiring_students.htm

- Schoolcraft College – Basics of Student Employment
  http://www.schoolcraft.edu/cppc/guidelines.htm

- Honolulu Community College – Supervising Students
  http://honolulu.hawaii.edu/jobplacement/SupervisorsRole.html

Types of Jobs for Student Webmasters

Assuming they work 20 hours per week

- Landing sites
- Product Research
- Database analysis
- HTML emails
- Help writing and researching RFPs
- Special features: CD Roms, Help Agents, Screen Savers, FLASH features

Who Benefits from a Paraprofessional Student Webmaster

- Both the student and the institution gain significant benefits from this hybrid participation. But it does mean changing some of the traditional perceptions of student-workers, office organization, and pay/benefits.

Institutional Benefits

- Fosters needed interaction between administrators, educators and students to develop and implement student oriented web-sites which benefit the school's enrollment and student relations.

- Salary Savings. By using students, the salary expectations are much lower than hiring a professional staff member

- Cutting edge technology and application are more likely to be embraced and tried

- Encourages students and supervisors to set time priorities on job responsibilities.

- Provides an ongoing in-house "focus group" input and analysis – the student webmaster and their friends are part of your target market.

Student Benefits

- Improves a student's future job performance, knowledge, and skills – better when written job objectives can be provided.

- Helps the student develop a portfolio, career motivation and job satisfaction due to feelings of achievement and a successful completion of goals.

- Allows students to improve professional communication skills with their supervisors which fosters an improved working relationship for future jobs.

- Bridges the gap between classroom theory and practical on-the-job experience.

- Improves the student's opportunities for immediate job placement/advancement. Provides the student with additional exposure to potential employment opportunities by meeting and learning about various vendor organizations.

Evaluation Processes

Evaluating the Work
# and the Worker – Outcomes Based

- Projects Completed & Attendance
- Stakeholder Feedback on the Projects:
    - Prospective students & parents
    - Alumni
    - Staff, Faculty, & Administrators
    - General Public
- Opportunity to Provide Vision for the Future
    - Compare our work to other schools, vendors, etc.

What We Have Learned

- Assign only one project or process per semester/quarter. 6-8 week per project module works well.

- Clearly define the deliverable and due date

- Build in a project evaluation schedule and performance evaluation schedule

- Strongly consider traditional professional development opportunities for the student

Understanding Prospective Student Use of Your Homepage

Total Trend for Page Requests to the www.umr.edu Domain from Individual Off-Campus IP Addresses
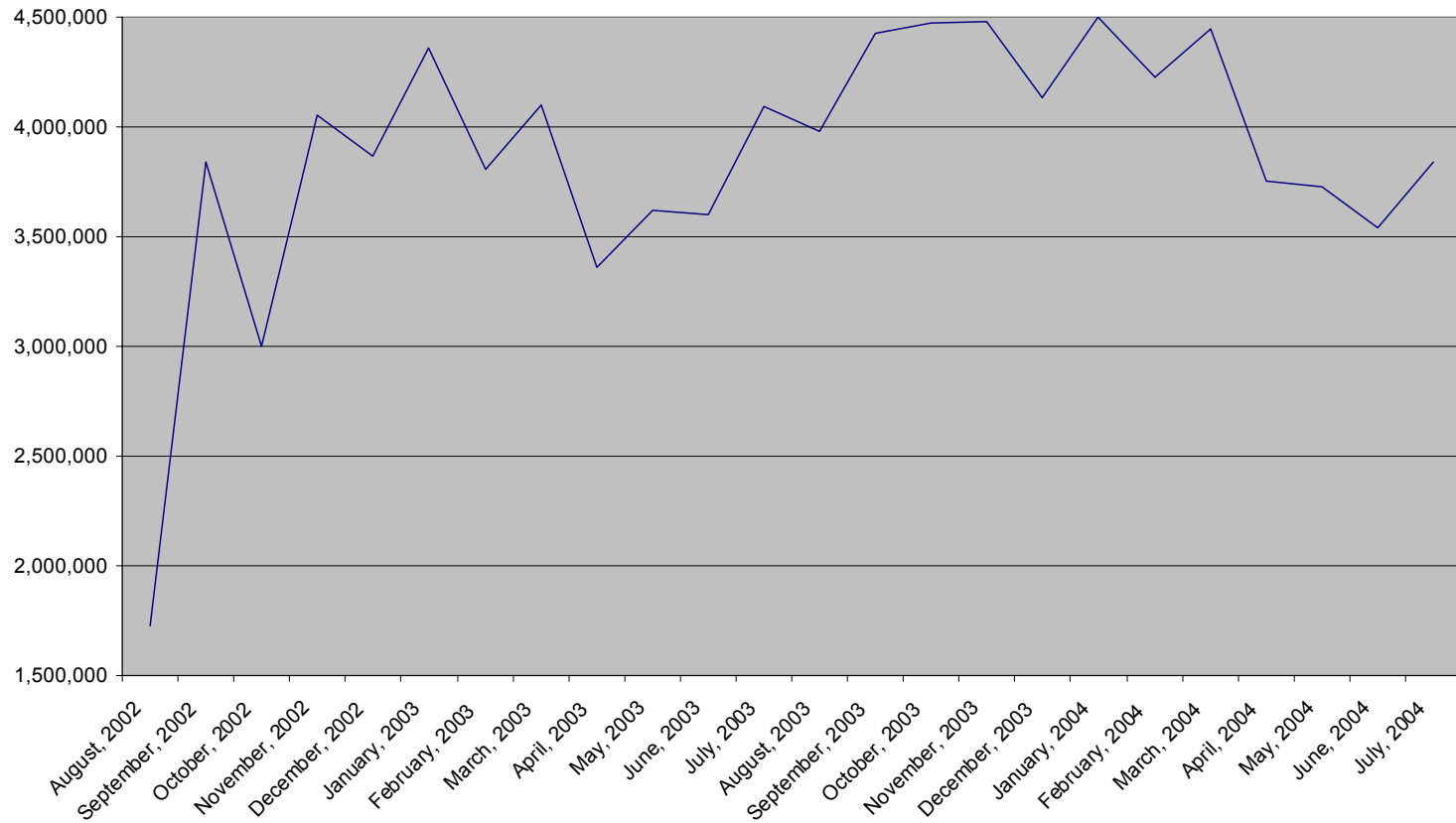
Recruitment Cyclel Trend for Page Reuests to the www.umr.edu Domain
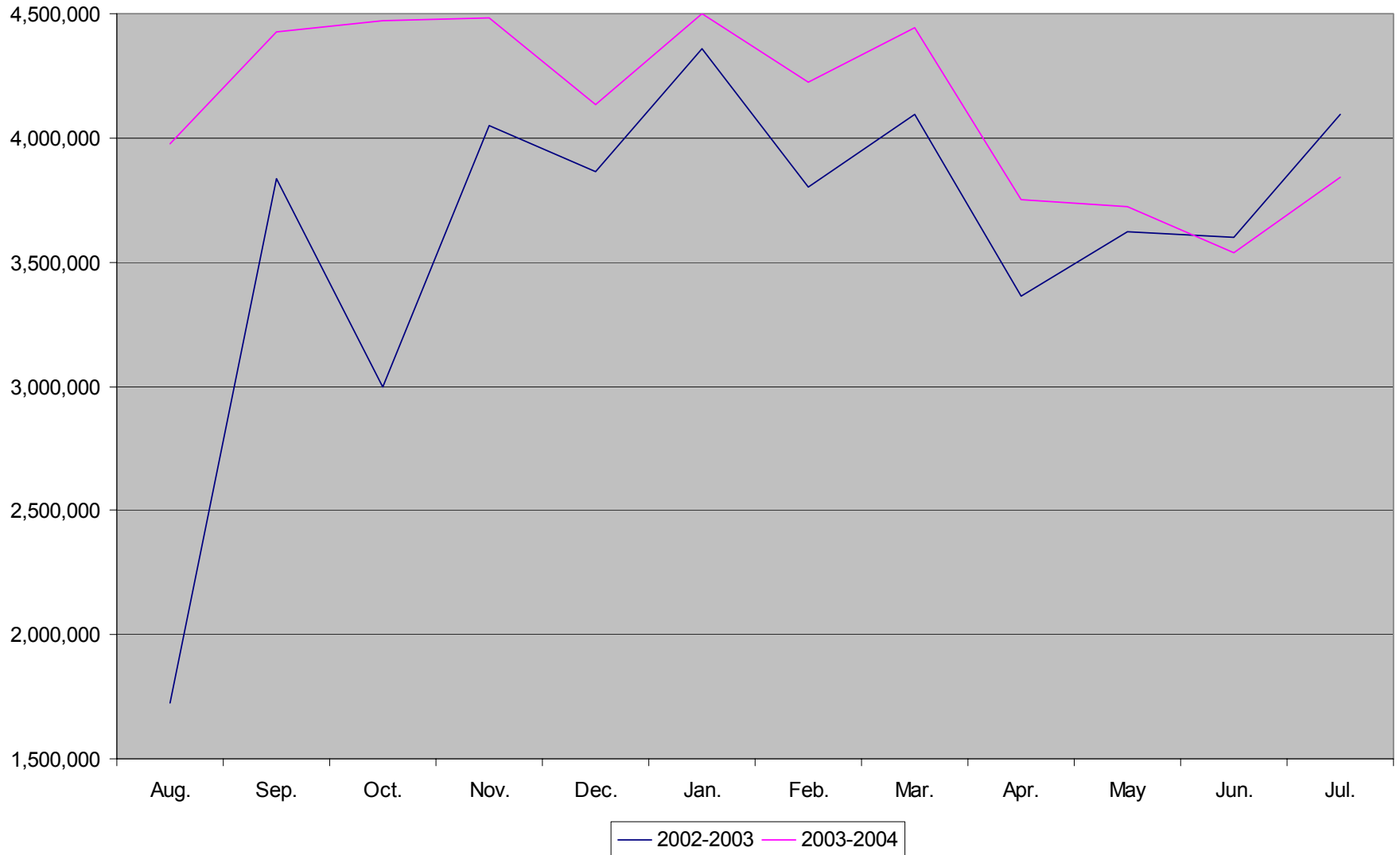
Enrollment Increases After Trying New Electronic Recruitment Projects

- 2000 – 2004, Increased new undergraduate enrollment by 11%: communications focused on admit to enroll yield.

- Freshmen increase by over 200 per year

- Transfer students increase by 80 per year

- Total UG enrollment up:

  Fall 2000: 3698 undergraduates

  Fall 2004: 4120 undergraduates

Due to Low Market Interest in STEM Majors, UMR Embraced a System to Increase Enrollment by Improving the Yield of Admitted Undergraduate Applicants who Enroll

		FS2000	FS2001	FS2002	FS2003
4TH WEEK CENSUS	Beginning Freshmen	41.9% 696	43.5% 715	46.4% 815	51.4% 897
w/ Admit to Enroll Yield %	New Transfers	60.7% 195	62.2% 231	68.9% 261	73.0% 281
	Graduates	43.0% 348	32.7% 395	28.1% 423	25.5% 348
	TOTAL	1,239	1,341	1,499	1526

General University/College Homepage Assumptions
i.e. the "Must-haves" that are Possible Student Projects

- ✓ Online forms for requesting admission by mail
- ✓ Online applications
- ✓ Information about campus tours
- ✓ Detailed admission information, including requirements, deadlines and admission options
- ✓ Online chat rooms/Instant Messaging Abilities
- ✓ E-mail newsletters
- ✓ Information for high school guidance counselors
- ✓ Information for parents
- ✓ Online course catalog
- ✓ Online course registration
- ✓ School profile/snapshot for freshman class academic qualifications
- ✓ College cost information

What we are doing now: Functionalities

- Capture and store contact data from visitors to your institution's Web page. (through the VIP page umr.myvippage.net)
- Create personalized interest, event, and workflow-driven Web portals for each contact.
- Use information collected from ACT, PSAT, other third-party data providers, and SIS (People Soft)
- Build and execute unique communication plans for multiple target groups.
- Export data for direct mail and tele-counseling lists.
- Build queries—or "filters"—to divide prospect pool into meaningful market segments for targeted communication.
- Schedule & automate personalized e-mails to thousands of contacts at a time (without spamming); or send out spontaneous e-mails when needed.
- Manage information collected from incoming phone calls, inquire cards and e-mails.
- Conduct e-surveys
- View activity history of all contacts to measure engagement levels.

QUESTIONS?

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