

Cheryl Broom (8s):

Hi everyone. I'm Cheryl Broom, CEO of Graduate Communications, and this is one of my favorite podcasts of the year because I get to interview some of our grad com staff members to talk about what they've loved doing this year, what their favorite projects have been, so you're in for a real treat. We're gonna talk about mechatronics program marketing. We're gonna talk about non-credit consortium marketing, how we put together a brand tagline and what it was like to put together a campaign with 72 ads, six videos, two landing pages and emails and multiple languages in just five weeks.

Cheryl Broom (49s):

So you'll get a chance to meet with some of my wonderful team and hear what they've really enjoyed working on this year. It's a treat to talk to them, and I hope you like listening as much as I liked interviewing. All right, well, thank you so much for joining me. Rocco. Rocco is a wonderful part of our team. He is one of our client services managers, which means that he oversees projects for clients. He makes sure that everything gets done on time, on budget.

Cheryl Broom (1m 29s):

He's really the face of the company when we're working with our clients across the country. And he has a really cool project that he wants to talk about today, one that we did over the summer and one of my favorite projects as well. So Rocco, I'm gonna let you take it away and introduce Yeah. What the project was and what you loved about it.

Rocco Geppi (1m 49s):

Sure, yeah, it was, you know, thank you for having me. This is, this is really cool. It was actually my first project I started and two days later we met with the Mission College Medtronic program and created a marketing plan and recommendations for them. It was really a cool process as it, it was my first, you know, setting them up with some goals and we did a SWOT analysis for strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats messaging. We even mocked out some social and bulletin ad campaigns and, and social are in display.

Rocco Geppi (2m 30s):

And what, what was really cool about when we met with them, that was a, a different thing for me. Like I, I've never, you know, done a media buyer or anything like that or presented something like this to a client, but I had been in, in meetings with departments for marketing and the industry leaders that were a part of this meeting really were helpful in kind of driving a few things and giving the Medtronic program some direction. And for those that don't know, I, I kind of cheated and, and wanted to give an accurate description of what mechatronics is. And I guess the most simplest thing that I could find was it's, it's a branch of engineering and there's a lot of different disciplines that are in it.

Rocco Geppi (3m 13s):

The big ones namely mechanical, electrical, computer and robotics. And so as I was learning what Medtronic was, it was interesting to me to see how many different facets of, you know, everyday life that this type of technology touches on. And then I think what was the coolest part

of it is even though we didn't get to work with them beyond the marketing plan, the results that they got as a result of our marketing plan and then putting a few things in process and getting rolling on those really was, was cool to see. They had some increased enrollment and increased enrollment on classes that had only gone for the second time in the existence of the program.

Rocco Geppi (3m 56s):

So that was really cool. It was really cool to be a part of and then see that maturization of their campaign and the results of it.

Cheryl Broom (4m 3s):

Yeah, I think that your, your experience with this program touches on a couple really cool things about marketing. Like, first of all, you just, it's your second day with a new company and it's like, guess what? You get to, you get to work on a big plan, let's go Rocco. But that's the way it is in ro in in marketing. It's just like, let's go, go, go, go, go. It's, it's fast moving. And it also reflects on how a lot of the things we do, we don't have expertise in the subject. Like our expertise comes from putting together great messaging and marketing tactics. Like you and I didn't know what mechatronics was like, we're like, what is this?

Rocco Geppi (4m 44s):

No.

Cheryl Broom (4m 45s):

And what we discovered in the process is that potential students didn't know what mechatronics meant. So some of the recommendations we had for the college really centered around educating people in the marketing as to what skills you need to bring to the table to be successful in this career. And those are really interesting conversations that we had.

Rocco Geppi (5m 7s):

Yeah, and I think that's what led to increased enrollment. I think students knowing exactly what it was and you know, they, they may have heard that and were like, oh, I don't have an engineering background and you know, I don't have this prerequisite. But there are so many different ways to get involved in that program and you know, like, you know, when we met with our clients and they were giving us this information about different ways to get involved and you know, you don't, I think a lot of times what happens is, is again, this education part is students think they have to join it as a part of a a degree program and, you know, explaining what mechatronics was, showing them that you could take a class or two to just kinda dip your feet in the water and see, you know, if it's something that you think you're gonna like, I think all of that went a long way for them.

Cheryl Broom (5m 54s):

Yeah, for sure. And I think a another interesting thing about this project was marketing is a lot of listening. Like at the end of the day, like you have to ask a lot of questions. Like I think sometimes clients think you're gonna come to the table and like some great ideas just gonna like spring outta your head. But we had to ask a ton of questions and we asked the college to

get industry leaders to come to our meeting. And the industry leaders were phenomenal because they were telling us like, Hey, we need, we need people to work on the frontline and these are the type of skills that we love. We love people who like to like tinker with things like, if you are a mechanic, this might be a great career for you.

Cheryl Broom (6m 37s):

And who would've thought like a mechanic would be interested in an engineering type of degree, but it's because it's hands on and tactical in fixing things and building things. So we were like, well, what other skills do people like? And we learned that veterans are really like great candidates for the mechatronics program because of their experience in the military. And right. So our, our ad campaign was like, if you are, if you are a veteran, this is the program for you. If you like to fix cars, take a look at this program. If you like robotics, if you like building things, if you like solving problems. So it really was about like, what is it in a person that would make them successful in this career that helped us educate, you know, potential students about the program.

Cheryl Broom (7m 25s):

So it was really, it was really a fun pro fun project to work on.

Rocco Geppi (7m 28s):

It was, and I think a part of that communication in getting that out to the students and the industry leaders, letting us know, and then ultimately the program that, you know, these are, like you just said, the aforementioned skills, but it's, it's something that once you get in the door with us, you can continue to build from there. You can take classes, we have reimbursement programs, you know, things of that nature. And, and that's a, that's a big deal for a lot of students, specifically students that are gonna get into these types of industries because more than likely they're doing something related to this field while they're going to school. So they, they want to know that they can move up and that as they move up it'll be taken care of it in least, you know, a small part.

Cheryl Broom (8m 13s):

Well, really cool project. And just to wrap up, we had sent the marketing director at the college, I believe you had emailed him and you had asked him a couple months later, Hey, how's the project? How, how's the enrollment going? What was the response?

Rocco Geppi (8m 30s):

The response was great. It was, you know, they had, I believe it was a total of four classes that they had communicated to us that had seen numbers climb in enrollment, which is, which is always good. And like I said earlier, you know, one or definitely one, but it could have been two of those classes were only being offered for the second time. And so when you can see those numbers climb in a class that's only, you know, being offered to students for the second time, I mean, that's, that's pretty impressive. That's, that's really cool.

Cheryl Broom (9m 0s):

Really cool. And this is a college in the Silicon Valley, so the, the employment opportunities were endless. Alright, so it was your second day and now you've been with us for about a year.

Rocco Geppi (9m 12s):

Can I, can

Cheryl Broom (9m 13s):

I, can I stick you on another surprise marketing plan project?

Rocco Geppi (9m 19s):

I think it's something we could talk about.

Cheryl Broom (9m 23s):

Well great, well thank you so much Rocco, and if anyone's interested in seeing the work that we did for the mechatronics program, just shoot Rocco an email or reach out to me and we'd happily show you some of the sample ads and some of the tactics we put together for the college.

Rocco Geppi (9m 38s):

Absolutely. Thanks for having me. Fun.

Cheryl Broom (9m 41s):

We'll talk to you later, Mike. Right. Michael, thank you so much for joining me on the podcast today. For those of you who haven't had a chance to meet Michael, he is Greg Comm's creative director. So he is the creative catalyst behind our campaigns and our creative work. And his job is to help us uncover what makes colleges special, what makes programs unique, and to really bring to life the marketing that we do for our clients.

Cheryl Broom (10m 24s):

So Michael, I'm excited to have you and I'm really excited about the project that you're gonna be sharing with us today. I, I played a small role in this project myself and it was so much fun and I loved every minute of it, and I think our listeners are gonna really enjoy hearing about it. So take it away, tell us about what

Michael Mahin (10m 41s):

It was. Yeah. All right. I want to talk about CISO's tagline, take Flight Now. The truth is like, this is really a testament to like our team and how everybody worked together. So I'm excited to talk about it. Take Flight is the tagline we came up with, and in my personal humble opinion, it's pretty much the perfect tagline. It, it has a built in call to action, gives students agency that idea of taking or seizing the day. It's also aspirational and it sets our sights on the horizon, kind of both literally and figuratively. Chris d our, you know, art director came up with a killer, hand drawn word mark for it. And really what excites me is that in the end, it's proof that our process works.

Michael Mahin (11m 27s):

And people tend to think that creativity is magic. That you just kind of pull ideas out of the air and you hope that something sticks right. But that isn't really how you create something. Something my dad used to say to me, my dad was a Methodist minister, which you may not think as a performance artist, but ministry is performance in many ways. And so what he always used to say to me is that great spontaneity requires great preparation and not always seemed like a total contradiction, right? But it's absolutely true. And the same is true for creativity. So here's what happened. I give the pitch for the tagline and pitching, no matter how many times you do it, is completely nerve wracking.

Michael Mahin (12m 10s):

I've not sure I've done countless pitches of these, but it's always a little bit scary, right? No matter how much I believe in the idea that I, that I'm bringing in. And you know, to be frank, I've pitched, you know, taglines and Cheryl and I have pitched taglines before so many times and I've never had anyone reject a tagline that we brought to them. But there's always that sense of fear, right? There's always like one VP who's kind of already had a bad day and they got like an unhappy face on and you're just trying to like, oh my gosh, you're sweating and you're giving it. So I gave the pitch and the first comment I got was, you pretty much nailed it.

Michael Mahin (12m 52s):

And of course, like, you know, the angels of singing in my head I hear hallelujahs, you know, like all the, the the, the pressure goes away. But what he goes on to do is to tell a story that I found really kind of profound and you know, it made me believe that we were doing this the right way. And he tells a story about how they had gone to Irvine Valley College for, I think it was a guided Pathways type retreat. And there had been a brand exercise and after much discussion about their identity and their mission and what they stood for, that they came up with ideas around soaring and launching careers and reaching for the sky.

Michael Mahin (13m 37s):

And of course that's exactly what Take Flight says, only I think Take Flight says a little bit better, but for us it was this great kind of affirmation that we had done this right. You know?

Cheryl Broom (13m 50s):

Awesome. Well, and I remember that too because you and I after the presentation we're like, wow, we just came up with their own tagline, except for ours is like a lot better.

Michael Mahin (13m 59s):

Yeah, right.

Cheryl Broom (13m 60s):

But I think I wanna ask you a little bit about the process, but yeah, before I do, just for those listeners who might be outta California, Sara COSO is in this rural area of California that has a lot of really cool attributes. So it has one of our biggest ski resorts, mammoth Mountain, that's really famous for people like launching themselves. It's got a huge half-pipe Olympic training

goes on there. They have an Air Force base, they have a NASA area. They, I think they actually have like a, like some program with NASA or something with NASA that they do. Yeah,

Michael Mahin (14m 33s):

They have a, they have a, a campus on Edwards Air Force.

Cheryl Broom (14m 37s):

Yes. I believe on the Air

Michael Mahin (14m 38s):

Force base. An outreach center or something.

Cheryl Broom (14m 39s):

Yeah. So we, so this whole idea of flight isn't just a metaphor for like accelerating your own career or your own goals or reaching for the stars, but it's actually like descriptive of what you can do like in the area. And then there's like dune

Michael Mahin (14m 56s):

Buggy, literally. Yeah, literally. Yeah. That was, that was Kara's Cheryl's like exciting ideas that we had been mulling around the, the take flight tagline and Cheryl's like, I got this image of a snowboarder jumping off a mountain with take flight underneath it. And you know, I think we all kind of had that moment, you know, that goosebumpy moment, you're like, ah, I get it, I get it, I see it. It gives them that aspirational kind of, you know, feel. Right.

Cheryl Broom (15m 23s):

And we wouldn't have ever known all these things about this college without following a process. Yes. And so that's what I wanted to, to ask you about is, you know, what is the importance of having a brand process and and what do you think works so well about following it?

Michael Mahin (15m 40s):

Yeah, I think like it goes back to this idea that creativity isn't magic and that you need to lay a foundation for real creativity because you need to focus that it's easy to just come up with ideas and hope something sticks, which is why, you know, every college in the country uses start here, go anywhere, right? It like it works, it makes sense, we get it. But coming up with something that is, you know, that works in that way but is specific to the college is the real art of what we do. And for this particular client, we used several focus groups as well as tons of individual interviews.

Michael Mahin (16m 20s):

And these were all opportunities to ask questions about, you know, they're basic questions. It's like, what are the first three words that come to your mind when I say Syso community collagen kind of brainstorming and involving insiders and internal stakeholders in that brainstorming process was really revelatory. And it's a critical part because you need that baseline. We need

something to control, like focus theory, creativity, right? So what I love is this, we came to the same like conclusions about identity that we got to know them, which means a couple things. One, it reflects on us, I think we listened, which is hard to do sometimes.

Michael Mahin (17m 0s):

It's as a creative, it's easy to come and say, Hey, I have the right answer. I know what's gonna work. But there's a real trick to and talent I think, and the importance of just listening and saying, okay, I'm starting to get it. And that's where we came up. Like everything that you mentioned, right? There's a campus on Edwards Air Force Base, they're located in kind of a regional aerospace hotspot. You got Bishop, which is known across California for its super killer dunes and off-roading and hey, those people get air too, you know, and you go to Mammoth Mountain and you get air there, it's all about big air and open spaces and suddenly you have a sense of identity that isn't just start here, go anywhere generic.

Michael Mahin (17m 43s):

It starts to feel like, oh wow, SSO is a really special place. And that's true for every community college in the country. It's just kind of, it's real easy. Community colleges all kind of feel the same and there's kind of this mentality that they're all the, we're all the same. But once you start getting to know college, you start to get to know those beautiful little intricacies that make things unique and help you stand out. And that really, like for us is the process helps you suss that out. And then our expertise comes in and we give it to the creative heads and they start spinning and throwing ideas and that's when you start like having fun with what you know, what's gonna stick. So

Cheryl Broom (18m 21s):

Yeah, we see the tagline, actually, if you go to our website, we have this up on our website, right? We have

Michael Mahin (18m 27s):

Our, I think it's a one of our case studies. Yeah,

Cheryl Broom (18m 29s):

Yeah. So I encourage people to go and see the tagline, the hand drawn tagline, cuz it's real, it's like nothing you've ever seen. It's really cool. It's

Michael Mahin (18m 37s):

Cool, it's super simple, but it's super like it just does it right? It does work.

Cheryl Broom (18m 41s):

It works. And if you see that you're like, duh, of course. And you don't realize that that took like four months and focus groups and a survey and meeting. That's right. And discussion.

Michael Mahin (18m 51s):

That's, I love about, you know, the, like the best taglines are kind of like, it's like a, I dunno, it's a funny analogy. It's like a, a good fitting pair of jeans. Like you put 'em on, you don't have to ask for anybody's opinion about whether or not they fit. When it doesn't fit, you're like, Hey, does it, do I look good in these? Do I look good? But when they fit you're like, Hey, this really works. And that was the response we got from, you know, all their people was like, oh yeah, that fits. You know, it makes sense.

Cheryl Broom (19m 15s):

Well it was a great project, a lot of fun. They're still a client. We're actually in the process of now booking ads. Oh yeah. Using the tagline, which is really cool to see how those do and how they perform. If anybody wants to talk to Michael about the process, reach out to him. We are doing a couple other taglines that have had equal success, really creative things going on. And take a look at the, at the CISO case study on our website. You can read a little bit about how, how we did it. And then you could see the artwork and the tagline that we came up with at the end. Well, thank you, Michael. Get back to work.

Michael Mahin (19m 52s):

All right, back to work. Have a great day.

Cheryl Broom (19m 54s):

You too. Right, Jamie. Well thank you so much for, for joining the podcast. And for those of you who haven't met Jamie, she is our director of client services. So Jamie is in charge of our wonderful client services team who oversees all client work. So they're the ones that make sure everything gets done. They have extremely high expectations, they make sure that our creative team is on task, they work with our clients, they represent the company.

Cheryl Broom (20m 35s):

So Jamie's got a really important job here at grad com. And she also, besides supervising our client service managers, has her own clients that she works with. And so today she's gonna share with us one project she did this last year that turned out really well. I don't know if it's your favorite project, you'll have to tell us that, but it's definitely a project that's had a lot of impact. So with that, I'll let you take it away.

Jamie McNinch (20m 59s):

Well, thank you Cheryl. It's hard to say if I have a favorite project, but this project is a little bit unique and different from some of the other work that we do. And so that's the reason that I chose this one to talk about the client that I've been working with this last year is Tri-City Adult Education Consortium. And they're a group of four schools that come together to make this consortium of facilities are providing adult education services in their region. So their, their adult schools primarily, they have one community college within the consortium. But what we found when we started working with this client is that their logo and their brand was very old and outdated and maybe even made of clip art.

Jamie McNinch (21m 50s):



And so when we started the project with them, we embarked on a brand project to create not just a logo, but a brand with an identity and a tagline so that when we started to make their website and future marketing initiatives for them, they had an identity that they could be proud of.

Cheryl Broom (22m 10s):

Excellent. And I think for those of those people who are outside of California, and probably some people in California too, these adult education consortiums have been formed around the state to unify what community colleges and K-12 s are doing in non-credit education. So the consortiums focus on high school diploma, g e d, high set preparation, English is a second language, some career in technical education. So we've been approached by a number of consortiums that wanna market. They're like, Hey, let's, we wanna market, we want people to take our programs. And then we come in and we look at like what they have. And like Jamie said, it's like clip art logo or no website.

Cheryl Broom (22m 51s):

I don't think Tri-City had anything set up right. Nothing. So we were able to do something unique in that start really kind of at the very beginning, which we don't get to do very often.

Jamie McNinch (23m 2s):

Correct. We, we often come in and they have brand guidelines and they, they have colors and they have, you know, an idea of what they wanna do. So it's really fun with this group to take their mission and values and what was important to them as a, as a, as a group, as a consortium and start to build a logo and a brand and a tagline that supported everything that was important to them. But when we build the logo specifically, we, I mean, we were able to pick colors, which was something that was really fun. And we were able to choose colors that you don't typically see within colleges and schools. So they're, they're bright, they're energetic colors.

Jamie McNinch (23m 45s):

We were, we were able to attach those colors to meanings so that it's not just, you know, here's our color and we don't know why, you know, we picked this really bright purple, rich, purple color and, and it represents wisdom and passion and future. And we picked this vibrant green to represent growth and life and prosperity, and then an another vibrant orange for creativity, energy, and vitality. So you can start to see how their, their identity and their brand has meaning behind it. It's not just, you know, just colors that were chosen out of nowhere.

Cheryl Broom (24m 25s):

I remember when we talked about the brand presentation, I didn't get to go to that. So you had done the presentation yourself and I remember you saying that they asked you why did you pick these colors and you were able to explain the representation and the meaning behind each color. And I also think that you had taken some of those colors directly from each institution as well, right. To line those up. And that really resonated with the group. And I think that shows how

important storytelling is in design. You, you have to have a rationale and a meaning behind what you're putting together.

Jamie McNinch (25m 0s):

Yeah. Sometimes when organizations are using a, a brand or a logo, especially if they don't like it, which I didn't, is not the case with this one, we wouldn't wanna be making something like that. But they, they often say, we need a new one because the other one has no meaning. They're logo that they're not happy with, doesn't have a, any feeling behind it. And so we built, we built a logo with purpose, we developed a tagline that took their mission of, you know, which is just a long sentence about what they, what they are going to focus on and made it something that was really tangible and created a connection between the organizations and their communities.

Jamie McNinch (25m 41s):

So their tagline compliments their, their brand and their logo and really starts to come together really nicely when we move on to other pieces of this project was, which was making a website for them and then ultimately helping them launch a marketing campaign to support enrollment in their institutions.

Cheryl Broom (25m 60s):

And I loved the website project too, cuz we have all these different institutions and we wanna market together. So we want to tell people in the, this is an a pocket of Los Angeles, like, hey, if you wanna learn English, you have all these options. There's all these options. So instead of being like, we're, we're close to your house and you can learn English here, it's like if you have all these different options to choose from, if you live in the Los Angeles area and here's how we're gonna support you. And we were putting together and mapping out all these programs they have in common. I remember some of them were like, we didn't know you had that program, or we didn't know you were doing that over at your school. So it was, it was such a great opportunity just to educate each other other on what, what they're doing and how they can support each other's enrollment.

Jamie McNinch (26m 47s):

Yeah. I think when they realized, you know, oh, we all have these programs, we can, we can come together and, and take a united stand on this. Instead of you market yours in a silo and you market yours in a silo or you promote enrollment of yours and you don't talk to anybody. We are talking about a region that's only, you know, few miles big, although it's very densely populated. So there are a lot of options for individuals in these communities to get the enrichment or the education or the career prep or whatever it is that they need to, to thrive and grow.

Cheryl Broom (27m 24s):

Now I think we're still working on the website, right? It's not done yet.

Jamie McNinch (27m 27s):

Yeah, the website's close, it's almost ready for launch. We're just buttoning up a few pieces of debuting soon and from that we'll be able to start talking to people in the community about what these, what these schools are offering, which is really exciting.

Cheryl Broom (27m 43s):

And for those who are following higher education trends, not for credit programs and the short term career education certificates that don't cost any money and are quick, are super popular right now. So we're other credit programs are seeing declines in enrollment. These are the programs that people in the community are looking for. So it's a really exciting time to launch this project. Cause I think we're gonna see really great results from it.

Jamie McNinch (28m 10s):

I think so too.

Cheryl Broom (28m 12s):

Yeah. So any tips as we wrap up our conversation for anybody else who's maybe starting from ground zero, any tips that you'd like to give them?

Jamie McNinch (28m 22s):

Oh, you know, let us help you. I think we talked about this before when we've met, you know, you, you look at a project like this and you think we'll never be able to implement anything like this. We're too busy, we have too many priorities. And that's what an agency partner's all about, right? Somebody who can help you look at everything, you know, take a couple steps back, look at everything, look at who your audiences are, look at what's important to you, look at your mission, your values, your goals, your budget, and help you. It's an extension of resources that

Cheryl Broom (29m 5s):

Here I am joined with Mr. Chris Walker, who is our chief operating officer. And Chris's job here at greg.com is to keep this ship afloat. So he oversees all of our operations. He's pretty much everybody's boss except for mine. I don't have a boss, But he does amazing work. He does our, you know, our finances, our oversight, our management, but really Chris's expertise lies in digital strategy. And that's been his background for almost his entire professional career is running massive digital campaigns for our clients and then before us for big pharmaceutical companies and all sorts of different brands.

Cheryl Broom (29m 53s):

So Chris does work with clients and he has a huge project that I am taking him away from right now to do this podcast. But I'm really excited to have him talk a little bit about the podcast or talk about the project and to share with you the listener, some of the great takeaways that you might be able to apply to your own marketing campaigns. So with that, Chris, I'm gonna let you take it away. Tell us about your project, who the college is and what you're in the middle of doing right now.

Chris Walker (30m 21s):

All right, well thanks for having me. This is a lot of fun. So the project that I was gonna talk about, maybe it's a bit of recency bias because we've been kind of thick in the weeds of it recently. But I think that the Saddleback project, as many of you may or may not know, Saddleback is a, is a very good large community college here in Southern California. They're up in Costa Mesa, Irvine area and they're a great client for us. We really love working with them. They let us do a lot. And this spring we put together a pretty big project for them that brought together multiple funding sources. So they had grant funds and general funds and a lot of different audiences that they want to reach.

Chris Walker (31m 7s):

And what I love about this project is really two things. Number one, it really let us spread our wings as far as the amount of tactics that we're able to employ. So we're, we're really using all of the major networks for this particular spring campaign. It's an enrollment campaign. We're doing some applied but not enrolled and marketing to stop out students. We're marketing to the adult education community, we're marketing to Spanish speakers in the area. And we're also marketing career education. So we've essentially got five different campaigns running at the same time and each one of them has a lot of tactics.

Chris Walker (31m 47s):

It's pay per click, it's Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat's, YouTube, Spotify, it's displayed geofencing, O t t, TikTok, retargeting, really the kitchen sink and both English and Spanish. So that to me is really fun when we get to, you know, put together a portfolio that is really comprehensive and just really attacks our demographics, like where they're at, like we're really targeting them and, and getting that message out there for, for spring enrollment. So that's really kind of the first reason why I chose this one. And the second one is because there is so much campaign surface area, there was a lot that had to be done to get the creative together.

Chris Walker (32m 30s):

And so what was really fun, and it was a little bit of a stress test honestly for us to produce this much in such a short amount of time. But this, this project, I think pretty much everybody in the company had some part in which I thought was really cool. So like you and Jamie kind of worked on the planning and then we had, you know, Jake going to do video work and our designer working with Jake to, you know, get the videos to where they were and the students were amazing at the filming. The videos came out really good. All of the banners across all of the different tactics, looking at various landing pages, you know, so it just, there there was so much that happened from videos to banners to landing pages.

Chris Walker (33m 16s):

It just really was I think a testament to our team's capability to produce a lot of really great work in a pretty short amount of time. I wouldn't necessarily say that that's optimal for us to try to cram that much into such a short period cuz it really did kind of take over the operations for a little bit. But when you stand back and you look at the, you know, the final product and you know, if you're able to look at it all in like one screen and say, wow, we really did a lot. So really

marrying the amount of creative, the, you know, how well it all went very smoothly. Multiple languages, multiple tactics, multiple campaigns. And that's the stuff that really gets me going.

Chris Walker (33m 57s):

I love when we really get to spread our wings and show the team's capabilities across a lot of different disciplines.

Cheryl Broom (34m 5s):

Yeah, I know and it, this one was really cool because like I don't, I I actually think we perhaps did every digital tactic you could possibly do. I, we didn't do podcasts podcast advertising, but we did streaming radio. So I I I think we did it literally like every single like retargeting, geofencing, email, everything, anything and everything. But we didn't do it all with the same message. So every campaign had its own audience, its own message and its own tactics. And I think that's where the value of having an agency partner comes in is that we know that for Spanish speaking adults who don't have a high school diploma, certain tactics are gonna work better to reach that population than to reach high school students who we might wanna encourage to, to take dual enrollment or to look at the promise program.

Chris Walker (35m 6s):

Yeah, yeah, that's a really good point. And I, what I really like about working with Saddleback and, and we have other clients that we do this for too, is that getting to work with students, potential students, current student, past students, all along their journey with the college to really kind of keep them, you know, a make 'em aware of the college and then provide the ease of getting to the website and to actually applying and then marketing emails and text messages to students who maybe applied but but didn't enroll or who were in school and they stopped out or they just, they were in school last semester and they just haven't registered yet. You know, there's value in getting those students to register earlier for the college so they understand their seat counts and things like that.

Chris Walker (35m 52s):

So it really just, you know, from, we've talked about this kind of array of tactics and then creative and now we can talk about the array of kind of where they are in their student journey and the ability to have touchpoints all along that way I think is like one of the reasons why Saddleback is, is such a successful college cuz they see the value of that and they, they work on it and then they let us work on, you know, really getting those messages out to students.

Cheryl Broom (36m 20s):

Yeah. One of the cool things about this campaign that I've really liked seeing come together is the largest funding source. Like as you mentioned, all these different sub campaigns are being funded by grants or most of them are. So they have like very specific requirements that need to be met. And one of the sub campaigns is for career education, which is being funded by strong workforce dollars or Perkins Funds. I'm one of the two, I'm not sure which one. And so we really wanna focus on, on certain programs that prepare students quickly for, for great career. And so we found three students, interviewed them for videos.

Cheryl Broom (37m 0s):

All three are just fantastic, amazing students. We used those students in the videos, we used them on the landing page, we used them in the digital ads and even the streaming radio ads used their voices. So now you have this like really comprehensive rich campaign that features actual people that are going to the college. And I, I just love how it turned out

Chris Walker (37m 26s):

They were wonderful. I had emails back and forth with them as we were coordinating and afterwards thanking them and they were all just so enthusiastic. And if anybody wants to take a look at it, it's saddleback career education.com. That's where the landing page is. You can see their bright faces and their messages. They just love the college, they love their program and it was just really a pleasure to get to work with them.

Cheryl Broom (37m 49s):

Yeah, we did something fun this time where we actually, we interviewed each of the students separately, so they each have their own 32nd video, but then we ac we wrote a script and we had them each use a teleprompter to read the script. So the radio ad and the longer one minute ad is this montage of the students speaking and it's just really powerful. It turned out great. It, that was a new approach for us and it was, we were lucky to have a client that was like, let's try it, let's go for it and see what happens. Yeah.

Chris Walker (38m 19s):

And they had a blast. That's what was really fun about it, is that the students had a good time. We had a good time. We got to kind of stretch out creatively a little bit and the end product just, it sounds amazing.

Cheryl Broom (38m 31s):

Great. Well I know you're still building out ads right now as we we speak

Chris Walker (38m 36s):

Still going, almost done. Last little remnants are going out.

Cheryl Broom (38m 42s):

So how many ads total do you think that we've done? Just, I know you can't count, but do you have a guess

Chris Walker (38m 46s):

One? Wow. So I'm gonna say we did six videos and at least 72 ads, something like that, plus emails designed and landing pages. So it, it was a lot

Cheryl Broom (39m 8s):

And in two languages

Chris Walker (39m 10s):

And in two languages those translations too. So it was, you know, I I really appreciate your ability to write proposals and get these deals. So it's really, you know, it's a really testament, it's a real testament to your abilities and your strategic thinking and saying like, this is all the stuff we're gonna need. But man, when you stack it all up on, you know, a Google sheet and start trying to peck through, it's like, wow, this is a lot. But you know, the team did great and we got through it and you know, it all looks really, really great. You know, they got a new concept and the new video concept, it's just, everybody's thrilled with the outcome.

Cheryl Broom (39m 45s):

And I think the most impressive part of it all is that, you know, two landing pages, multiple languages, 72 ads, six videos, all of it done in five weeks, including the Thanksgiving holiday. So

Chris Walker (39m 59s):

Mm. Yep.

Cheryl Broom (39m 60s):

I have to have a, a big hats off to the college for being organized Yes. And responsive. And then also to our team for being such hard workers and so talented

Chris Walker (40m 12s):

And flexible. Yeah, Saddleback was great. They just even said like, you weren't very clear like, if we're gonna make this happen, like we gotta come to campus like the day after this contract get signed. Unfortunately they allowed that to happen. And yeah, everybody, you know, just really focused in, dialed in and and and knocked it out of the park.

Cheryl Broom (40m 31s):

Right. So last question for you, for colleges who are looking to do a giant campaign themselves or if they're working on an agency, like how did you keep yourself organized? What tips can you give to keep something like this going to keep it on time?

Chris Walker (40m 47s):

Well, I installed a coffee maker right here, so a lot of coffee. No, I, I really think, you know, for me I'm pretty visual and so we have all of our project management software and all of that stuff and I just have to put it all in a single page where I can look at it in one place because I was going crazy because we've got, you know, everything has multiple statuses like this is waiting for that and that's waiting for this and so on. And so I think just a simple list and a status of what, where things are along in the process. Like for us, we have to write and then we have to design and then we have to animate or we have to write and then film and then edit and then, you know, post to YouTube, et cetera.

Chris Walker (41m 33s):

So every single one of the deliverables has its kind of own workflow. And so to stay organized I just suggest putting it onto a Google sheet. I put the whole digital campaign so I can keep an

eye on what's live and what's still waiting to go live or you know, waiting, what is it status and what is it waiting for? And then all of the deliverables on the other side, like what is everything that we're contractually bound to deliver and that at least let me sleep at night instead of letting all those details rattle around in my head all night because I'm worried that I'm gonna forget something. So just, you know, just keep it simple and you know, keep up to date, keep it visible and just know that it's always there waiting for you.

Chris Walker (42m 17s):

So rather than, you know, stressing out it, I think having something visual that keeps everything in one place is really helpful.

Cheryl Broom (42m 25s):

Excellent. Well thank you so much Chris. Great work and

Chris Walker (42m 29s):

It's my pleasure.

Cheryl Broom (42m 30s):

I can't wait to see the results of all these campaigns. I'm really excited to come February to see how everything did. So excellent work. Me

Chris Walker (42m 38s):

Too. Thank you so much. Thank you so much.

Cheryl Broom (42m 45s):

That wraps up this month's episode of Higher Education Coffee and Conversation. I hope you enjoyed the discussion and learned something new. And if you like the podcast, I would love it if you would leave us a review and make sure to take a screenshot and email me or hit me up on LinkedIn and I'll send you one of our fantastic grad com shot glasses and a little something, something to go with it. On behalf of all of us at GradCom, thank you for listening and thank you for working hard to make higher education a reality for students across the nation. Until next time.