

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

BUSINESS OBJECTIVES

Orbital South Colleges (OSC) is a leader in Further Education, striving to market and communicate our offerings through our values and achievements of all our students to various stakeholders, including prospective students, current students, parents/carers, employers and the wider community. We have a strong reputation in the local communities we serve including links with University of Chichester to support in our Higher Education offering.

TARGET AUDIENCE

OSC comprises of East Surrey College (ESC), John Ruskin College (JRC), Reigate School of Art and Orbital South Colleges University Centre.

ESC is based in Surrey, with JRC located in South London. Both Full-time provisions attract audiences ranging from 15-18, looking for vocational courses, Entry Level upwards.

Our Apprenticeships are offered from Intermediate to Degree Level to students aged 16 plus.

Both sites also have an adult course provision. These are predominantly aimed at people 19 plus, looking to upskill, take up a hobby or further their career.

Our growing HE department attracts students aged from 18 years upwards. These students are looking to further their career in a supportive and local environment.

We also target employers, businesses, local authorities, secondary schools and civic partners including Local Authorities and The Department for Work and Pensions.

BRAND POSITIONING & MESSAGING

Orbital South Colleges (OSC) is a leader in vocational education, offering two sites to students with extensive facilities and experienced staff across the Group. This means courses can be developed quickly to suit sector trends.

OSC continually upgrades their sites to meet the needs of the courses. JRC recently had a new construction workshop and electrical installation workshop installed, meeting local needs for employers. OSC prides itself on offering courses for key industries which other Colleges locally are not able to.

There are strong links with employers and the Apprenticeship Team. OSC now offers a degree in Quantity Surveying, accredited by RICS – the first College in the country to achieve this. There is also a growing Higher Education provision.

Our key message is one of supportiveness, inclusive and high-quality vocational education and training for all. You can read our mission and values in our Strategic Plan [here](#).

INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

OSC uses digital communication channels to build a strong online presence. The websites are informative and enable students to find out what they need to make important decisions about applying to our Colleges. Optimised for SEO, the website is user-friendly and mobile optimised.

Social media platforms form a key area of marketing. Growing the online community allows us to share updated content about events, accolades and even respond to enquiries. Utilising advertising platforms online reduces advertising costs and allows us to monitor and respond to the analytics effectively.

Traditional marketing still plays a role in brand awareness and therefore some elements of outdoor advertising and printed materials will continue to support the department.

Using email marketing, OSC ensures touchpoints with students before and during their time with the OSC community. Emails also support communications to stakeholders.

The Employer Services team and wider stakeholder teams use an internal CRM system to communicate and record correspondence effectively with employers.

CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

OSC continues to develop content which is engaging and informative, using mediums to suit the story from blogs, profiles, videos and social media posts and adverts.

Social media is planned via a content calendar and includes days of observance which are relevant to our students and their wellbeing.

Much of the information comes from people connected to the Colleges for example, students, employers and alumni, who we celebrate through case studies and relatable content.

PUBLIC RELATIONS & MEDIA RELATIONS

OSC has strong relationships with local media, influencers and journalists and continues to strengthen these connections.

This supports the capability to release good news stories that are celebrated but also these associations form part of the crisis communication plan so negative situations can be addressed effectively.

OPEN EVENTS & EVENTS

OSC organises open events, employer events, careers fairs, Higher Education events, graduation and awards ceremonies and general information events for current and prospective students. Events allow prospective students the opportunity to meet teaching staff, understand the courses, gain careers advice and guidance and visit facilities. Events for internal students allow them to further progress their studies, develop their understanding of business sectors, support progression and celebrate achievements.

Collaboration with industry partners allows OSC to offer workshops, seminars, guest speaker events and continue to support progression while ensuring the Colleges stay relevant to the job market.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT & RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

Regular communications with stakeholders is key to ensure strong relationships. Stakeholders include:

1. Young people, adults, parents, carers and guardians
2. College Staff – teaching and non-teaching
3. Employers
4. Local authorities – Croydon Council, Surrey County Council, Reigate and Banstead Borough Council, Mole Valley District Council and Tandridge Council
5. Surrey & London Chamber of Commerce and Industry
6. Local Enterprise Partnership (EM3, Coast to Capital, South London Partnership)
7. Key Community Groups
8. Strategic educational partners including Heads/Principals of our key partner schools
9. Business representation groups and networks
10. Careers Enterprise Hubs
11. Local MPs
12. Alumni
13. Local media outlets

OSC continues to understand the needs of different sectors to support ongoing employee pipelines to strengthen partnerships with relevant stakeholders.

OSC facilitates events for stakeholders to be involved in College events where they can contribute to the community and supporting young people and adults who are looking to further their careers.

MONITORING & EVALUATION

To continue to develop marketing and communications for the OSC brand, ensuring we are targeting the correct audiences through platforms relevant to them, OSC marketing monitors and analyses all data from campaigns. This includes google, digital ads and event feedback. This allows metrics to be analysed and future campaigns to be optimised to meet the needs of current trends.

Stakeholders are key for feedback and will be monitored through surveys, interviews, focus groups and group discussions to ensure OSC are meeting their needs. This continues to develop the marketing and communications plan and allow changes to suit the needs of everyone.

CONCLUSION

This Marketing and Communications Strategy embodies OSC's mission, vision and values. OSC will effectively engage with target audiences, promote all the brands and offerings, grow strong relationships with stakeholders and enhance student's experience at one of the OSC sites. This will continue to grow reputation and foster valuable partnerships with employers and the wider community through increasing student enrolments.

SUPPORTING RESOURCES

OSC Strategic Aims

OSC Communications Plan

OSC Marketing Plan

OSC Curriculum Strategy

OSC Accountability Statement

EM3 and Surrey Local Skills Plan

South London Partnership Skills Plan

