City of San Marcos
Graphic Design - Print
“San Marcos Recruitment Brochure”
2019 CAPIO EPIC Awards
IMPLEMENTATION OVERVIEW

The strategy was to mirror the recruitment of top innovative employers like Google and Airbnb—strategies that attract corporate leaders. After sizing up the competition, it was clear top talent wants to connect with a worthy mission; prefers a workplace where they can have an impact, and values work-life balance—all things that the City of San Marcos offers.

These naturally became the brochure’s message points. To entice private-sector candidates, the City needed to speak their language. There would be no room for government jargon.

The tactic was to give the brochure a tone that is fresh, forthright and at times, even cheeky. For example, the brochure opens by plainly saying that San Marcos wants “more than a bean counter” for its next Finance Director. You will not find that sort of language on government job boards, and that is precisely the point.

Just as the City wanted “more than a bean counter” for its Finance Director, the recruitment piece needed to be a complete departure from the text-heavy descriptions and qualifications of yesteryear. Instead, the design of the brochure embraced infographic-style illustrations and highlighted phrases to make for a quick and engaging read.

The clean and simple graphics, combined with curved shapes and circular photos, echoes San Marcos’ circular rose compass, which is a central part of its newly minted brand, “Discover San Marcos.”

With a solid piece in place, the City distributed the brochure to 435 people—and strategically targeted that outreach to the city’s ideal candidates.

By partnering with the League of California Cities, the City was able...
to target every finance directors at municipalities across the state. The City also used LinkedIn Jobs, the platform’s online recruiting tools. These tools allowed the City to target candidates outside the traditional city pool and make direct contact with desirable candidates. When candidates interests were piqued, the City could then point them to the brochure.

**Budget Breakdown:**

- Consultant costs: $4,900  
  This included: Revise job description for content, social media digital assets, print-ad, digital ad, social media content and content, design and project management of brochure

- In-house city costs  
  Printing: $450 (printing)  
  Internal staff time for program coordination, review and implementation, not budgeted as part of regular job duties

- Total: $5,350

HR analyst and communications officer staff hours were used to oversee campaign development and manage program implementation.

**RESULTS**

This project has seen tremendous success. According to the City’s HR team, this recruitment outreach helped bring in 97 unique applications, and 54 qualified candidates. This exceeds the project’s stated goal by more than 115 percent.

“The application volume was much more than expected, with a wide reach including East Coast candidates,” remarked HR Manager Janelle Laughlin. “The number of qualified candidates also was more than expected, with a good mix of public and private sector professionals. The reach to the private sector impressed me. We got some Ivy League candidates and well-tenured employees in top-level finance jobs who were interested in this opportunity.”

This confirms that in addition to meeting the brochure-specific goals, it also met the bigger campaign goal of attracting a new type of candidate from the private sector.

In addition, this helped earn advocates for communications. The City’s leadership was able to see its worth in a new way. As the Deputy City Manager Michelle Bender put it: “This taught me communicators aren’t just the press release people. They deserve a seat at the table when discussing key strategies.”
Campaign Collateral

Recruitment brochure for finance director distributed to 435 people—targeted specifically to the city’s ideal candidate
Campaign Collateral

Supplemental advertisement placed in Western City Magazine - publication is distributed to every city in California

Discover where your talents can take you next

Now Recruiting for Finance Director

$135,541 - $184,131

The City of San Marcos runs more like a business than a bureaucracy. So, if you’re more of an innovator than a bean counter, consider this exciting opportunity to head up our finance department.

Learn more about our unique environment and apply at: san-marcos.net/jobs
Success Summary

By the Numbers:

Exceeded stated goal by 116%

In their own words:

“The reach to the private sector impressed me. We got some Ivy League candidates and well-tenured employees in top-level finance jobs who were interested in this opportunity.”
~ Janelle Laughlin, San Marcos Human Resources Manager

“This taught me communicators aren’t just the press release people. They deserve a seat at the table when discussing key strategies.”
~ Michelle Bender, San Marcos Deputy City Manager
Thank you!

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