

USAREC TECHNIQUES PUBLICATION 3-10.4 VIRTUAL RECRUITING ACTIVITIES



USAREC TECHNIQUES PUBLICATION 3-10.4

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SUMMARY of CHANGE

USAREC Techniques Publication 3-10.4

Virtual Recruiting Activities.

This administrative revision dated 20 February 2024

- o Adds updates to change out term/discussion/graphics about intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) for intelligence preparation of the operational environment (IPOE).
- o Updated grammatical errors.

Virtual Recruiting Activities

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Preface

USAREC Techniques Publication 3-10.4 provides concepts for virtual recruiting along with strategies and techniques to supplement recruiting tasks performed to achieve USAREC's recruiting mission. USAREC has the mission to find and recruit qualified men and women to join the United States Army. Leaders, staff, and recruiters improve the ability to achieve mission success by adopting and employing some or all of these prescribed tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) for conducting virtual recruiting activities and operations.

This publication describes virtual recruiting activities as key elements in the recruiting operational environment. It describes USAREC's view of how virtual recruiting activities aid the commander and the recruiting force to successfully gain access and recruit within market segments through virtual means. It develops the other principles, tactics, and procedures detailed in subordinate doctrinal publications.

The publication does not address every virtual-related capability used to help shape the complex operational environment. It should, however, generate thought and provide enough guidance to facilitate flexibility and innovative approaches to achieve the recruiting mission. It also provides guidance enabling the staff to plan and conduct virtual recruiting activities and achieve the desired effects that support the commander's intent and objectives.

The principal audience for USAREC Techniques Publication 3-10.4 are commanders, staffs, leaders, recruiters, Army civilians, and government contractors. Commanders, staffs, and subordinates ensure all decisions and actions comply with applicable Department of Defense, U.S. Army, and United States laws and regulations. The proponent for this publication is the United States Army Recruiting Command, Recruiting and Retention College. Send comments and suggested improvements on Department of the Army (DA) Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms) directly to HQ RRC ATTN: RCRC-DD, 2389 Old Ironsides Avenue, Fort Knox, KY 40121-2725, or by e-mail to usarmy.knox.usarec.list.rrc-doctrine@army.mil.

Introduction

INTRODUCTION

Since the early 2000s, information technology has undergone tremendous expansion and continues to evolve. The rapidly changing nature of information access and sharing has influenced societal changes and norms. Social media has become the main source of "information and facts." It is the primary means for how many people communicate and collaborate.

Information found online ranges from accurate to outright misinformation. Users may find it difficult to discern between the two. USAREC conducts virtual operations to counter misinformation and educate where a knowledge gap exists. This sets conditions enabling the recruiting force to successfully engage in decisive, shaping, and sustaining operations in the virtual domain.

Army advertising works in tandem with recruiting units to engage with and influence individuals to serve in the Army. Virtual operations contribute directly to tactical and operational success and support objectives at the strategic level. USAREC Techniques Publication 3-10.4 follows the tenets outlined in USAREC Manuals 3-0, 3-29, 3-30, 3-31, 3-32, and FM 3-13, Information Operations with modifications due to the unique nature of virtual recruiting operations.

Commanders develop and implement virtual strategies that aid in decision-making. This aligns themes, messages, and actions. While the term virtual recruiting is relatively new to USAREC, virtual operations have been an integral part of recruiting for several years. Expanding capabilities, changes to the operational environment, technology, and updates to policies allow for the implementation of several new virtual techniques. Proper employment of these techniques' aids in mission accomplishment.

The following is a brief introduction and summary by chapter.

Part 1 Virtual Strategy

- **Chapter 1** outlines the roles and responsibilities of virtual recruiting assets at the headquarter, brigade, battalion, company, station, and recruiter level.
- **Chapter 2** outlines the considerations for developing a virtual strategy, provides the source and location of official guidance, defines the scope of strategy by echelon, and aids in understanding the virtual landscape.
- **Chapter 3** outlines the planning process, and provides guidance on establishing standards, goal setting, campaigns, and creating a virtual recruiting plan.

Part 2 Branding and Presence

- **Chapter 4** outlines the establishment and maintenance of a brand.
- **Chapter 5** outlines the establishment and maintenance of a virtual presence. It describes the organization and structure in detail.
- **Chapter 6** defines the metrics used in virtual recruiting activities.
- **Chapter 7** outlines both the tracking and analysis of virtual recruiting metrics and how to use them to improve a virtual strategy and plan.

Part 3 Virtual Recruiting Activities

- **Chapter 8** outlines intelligence gathering with a focus on targeting the correct market in a digital space.
- **Chapter 9** focuses on the processes by which leads are gathered, refined, and distributed as a virtual recruiting activity.
- **Chapter 10** outlines the types of virtual prospecting. It addresses both direct communication and the proper response to digital communications.

- **Chapter 11** defines and describes shaping as a virtual recruiting activity.
- **Chapter 12** outlines the procedures used to process in the digital space.

Part 4 Virtual Content Creation

- **Chapter 13** outlines the strategy behind content creation. It expands upon the ideas of storytelling, marketing concepts, platform familiarity, posting calendars, and identifying the intended audience.
- **Chapter 14** outlines the preparation of content creation. It covers the sourcing and assembly of content. It describes enduring content and demonstrates the application of market research.

TERMINOLOGY

Virtual recruiting activities are an intricate part of information and influencing operations. It involves a myriad of social media and web-based technologies to perform market research and interact with markets. Although virtual recruiting capabilities continue to evolve, virtual prospecting has always been a recognized method of prospecting within USAREC doctrine. Virtual recruiting is a logical expansion of all aspects of recruiting activities and functions based on new technologies and population's attitudes and norms. See the glossary for a comprehensive list of terms and abbreviations relevant to this publication.

CONSIDERATIONS

Virtual recruiting activities occur with individual recruiters; recruiting stations, companies, battalions, brigades, USAREC; and external agencies. Each level has its own capabilities, resources, and considerations. It is important to have a shared understanding of capabilities available at each level, how to employ them, and the coordination required to synchronize and maximize efforts. This ensures that all virtual tactics remain consistent across all echelons and with the Army's brand.

PART 1

Virtual Strategy

Chapter 1

Roles

1-1. When developing a strategy, it is key to understand the roles and responsibilities of each team member. This provides structure when considering resources and capabilities in both strategies and plans. What follows is the role of each key virtual recruiting asset by echelon.

ROLE OF USAREC VIRTUAL RECRUITING ASSETS

1-2. **Role of the Army Chief of Staff (ACofS) G-7.** The ACofS G-7 is the principal staff officer responsible for integrating the outward face of Army recruiting through outreach events, marketing materials (paid and non-paid), and social media execution for external marketing. The G-7 develops and interprets education policy as it pertains to the enlistment eligibility process in coordination with Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) accessions policy on education. Functions include:

- Develop and execute annual advertising, education, marketing, outreach plans. Leverages research in the production of all released products.
- Manage the development, creation, production, and quality of advertising materials for the RA, AR, special missions, Army Medical Department (AMEDD), and local recruiting advertising programs.
- Ensure local marketing plans and locally developed creative materials are synchronized with the national strategy.
- Primary education advisor, conducting education outreach and education policy development to support recruiting operations.
- Develop and maintain USAREC sponsorships and outreach with academia organizations and associations.
- Provide technical guidance and training for education, advertising, marketing, and promotional, programs at brigades and battalions.
- Executive agent for Enterprise Marketing Management (EMM) system execution, Army Marketing Plan (VAMP) funds allocation/marketing analysis and compliance with the CG's marketing guidance.
- Provide traditional and non-traditional media planning and placement for USAREC Headquarters media support in support of the command's mission requirements.

1-3. **Role of the USAREC Public Affairs Office.** The USAREC Public Affairs mission is to establish and sustain a command-wide synchronized communication program that enables the command's mission and the commanding general's priorities, while informing the public, and fulfilling the Army's obligation to keep the American people and the Army informed as established in Title 10, USC. Functions include:

- Advisor to the commander and staff. Principal staff assistant and advisor to the CG, USAREC in execution of public affairs responsibilities, while assisting the commander in understanding the information needs and expectations of Soldiers, family members, and all other affected individuals or groups.

- Public information. Develops and sustains positive relations with traditional, nontraditional, and social media outlets; facilitates HQ USAREC engagements. Provides managements and oversight for all public-facing communication tools, to include the command website and social media pages.
- Command information. Synchronizes internal news and information to promote awareness and understanding of command-wide missions, initiatives, and successes to help members of the command understand organizational goals, operations, and significant developments.
- Community engagement. Develops and sustains positive relations with the community to enhance the understanding and support for the Army, Soldiers, operations, and activities. Orchestrates an effective command-wide community relations program to support the commander's communication objectives. Assists in identifying potential community partners and recommending opportunities for military engagement.
- Public affairs planning. Generates and implements strategic, operational, and tactical public affairs plans. Synchronizes an externally focused command-wide communication program in support of USAREC plans and orders.
- Public affairs administration. Serves as the functional public affairs chain of command between subordinate units, HQ USAREC, TRADOC, the U.S. Army Office of the Chief of Public Affairs and Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs.
- Public affairs assessment. Assesses the information environment with primary emphasis placed on identifying, measuring, and evaluating the implications of the external information environment that public affairs does not control, but can inform through a coherent, comprehensive public affairs strategy and its early integration into the commander's planning and decision-making process.
- Communications strategy. USAREC office of primary responsibility for developing and enabling a consistent communication strategy across the command.

1-4. **Role of the USAREC G-7 Virtual Recruiting Division (VRD).** The USAREC Virtual Recruiting Division is nested within HQ USAREC G-7. The VRD oversees the operational use of social media and virtual efforts to find, develop, refine, and engage leads in the digital space. The VRD provides guidance and counsel to the commander on all aspects of virtual recruiting operations. The VRD's core tasks are listed below:

- Provide support for virtual prospecting operations to Virtual Recruiting Stations (VRS), Social Media Specialists (SMS), A&PAs, and recruiters.
- Manage the Virtual Recruiting Center (VRC).
- Conduct analysis and refinement of social media operations.
- Augment HQ marketing content creation efforts for social media.

1-5. **Role of the Virtual Recruiting Center (VRC).** The VRC is comprised of contracted civilian employees that are responsible for Future Soldier retention efforts and the refinement and prequalification of leads from various sources. The VRC manages, monitors, and creates content for multiple social media platforms in support of Future Soldiers (Future Soldier Center), family of Future Soldiers (Family Information Center), and Special Operations Recruiting Battalion (SORB). The VRC also houses a Brigade Support Team, Army Career Explorer team, and Special Missions team for the In-Service SORB mission as well as WOFT.

ROLE OF BRIGADE VIRTUAL RECRUITING ASSETS

1-6. **Role of the Brigade Commander.** The Brigade Commander provides vision and guidance to establish a virtual strategy which is nested inside USAREC's strategy. They direct brigade staff to support and coordinate with subordinate units to provide funding, assets, and training. The Brigade Commander identifies targeted priorities based on information received in routine briefings from the fusion cell. These priorities include future events, audits, analysis, and return on investment (ROI) of funded activities.

1-7. **Role of the Brigade Advertising and Public Affairs (A&PA) and Marketing Officer.** The primary role of brigade level A&PA staff and Marketing Officer is to execute programs to support recruiting and accessions requirements and execute the brigade commander's vision. The A&PA assists virtual activities,

facilitates funding, negotiates contracts, collaborates with the fusion cell, and assists in targeting. A&PA operates the Enterprise Marketing Management system (EMM) to assign marketing activity codes (MAC) and tracks and reports on the ROI of virtual efforts. They act as a conduit for information from higher echelons ensuring branding compliance. They provide public affairs guidance to include official talking points and crisis management. They also serve as the review authority for all virtual content.

1-8. Role of the Brigade Content Marketing & Social Media Specialist. The Brigade Content Marketing & SMS is responsible for providing training, planning, implementing quality control, budgeting, and monitoring the brigade. They track each assigned battalion's social media strategy to increase brand awareness, lead generation, and improve marketing efforts required to recruit Future Soldiers. In addition, they measure, analyze, and report virtual data to improve performance, increase awareness, and interest. They analyze the effectiveness of communication and make recommendations to brigade leadership on improving marketing programs.

1-9. Role of the Virtual Recruiting Liaison (VRL). Assigned as an additional duty, brigade liaisons synchronize virtual recruiting efforts and operations across subordinate battalions. They coordinate with USAREC G-7 VRD and assist each VRS with decisive, shaping, and sustaining operations. The VRL position may be held by any DoD employee (NCO, Commissioned Officer, or DA Civilian).

1-10. Role of Brigade S-6. The information management specialist advises the commander, staff, and battalion information managers on all technical issues. The S-6 conducts formal information studies and mission analysis to determine information technology requirements and develops the recommended information architecture. The S-6 recommends any major changes in the information architecture to higher headquarters and confers with the commander, staff, and users to obtain input on local information management requirements. They participate in the Information Management Working Advisory Group, which performs long and short-range information management architecture planning and recommends information technology (IT) requirements. The S-6 plans, integrates, coordinates, and evaluates brigade and battalion information requirements to develop and maintain their information architecture and management plan. The Information Manager is the brigade advisor on all matters relating to information management hardware and software assets.

ROLE OF BATTALION VIRTUAL RECRUITING ASSETS

1-11. Role of the Battalion Commander. The Battalion Commander provides policy and direction to enable the VRS to execute the virtual strategy which is nested inside the brigade's strategy. They direct the focus for virtual campaigns based on the mission by facilitating targeting and fusion cells. They also receive routine briefings on the status of virtual recruiting activities and ensures compliance with current policy. These briefings include audits, analysis, and ROI of funded activities.

1-12. Role of the S-3 (Recruiting Operations). The operations section serves as a critical component in the execution of and compliance with the battalion's virtual strategy. This is accomplished through formal taskers and operations orders (OPORD). The S-3 uses data from various staff elements to develop the battalion's recruiting operations plan (ROP). They work in conjunction with the VRS to develop the virtual aspects of this plan. The S-3 is responsible for the operational control of the VRS and maintaining the commander's intent.

1-13. Role of the Virtual Recruiting Station (VRS). The VRS facilitates decisive, shaping, and sustaining operations within the battalion using virtual means. This is accomplished through market research, analysis, digital marketing, and content creation. VRSs are responsible for virtual lead generation, prospecting, lead refinement, lead distribution, and the management of the unit's digital accounts. VRSs conduct shaping operations in support of the commander's intent to build relationships with community partners, promote and support Army events, and increase awareness of the Army brand.

1-14. The VRS station commander works in tandem with battalion staff and receives direct guidance from the battalion commander. They work in conjunction with the S-3 to develop the virtual aspects of the battalion ROP. The VRS collaborates with battalion fusion and targeting cells by collecting, analyzing, and reporting the ROI of all digital efforts. They routinely partner with the battalion A&PA to ensure organic content creation and distribution across all battalion virtual activities. The VRS provides training and oversight to all

personnel assigned to the battalion in virtual prospecting techniques, social media security measures, regulatory guidance, and compliance of the battalion's strategy.

1-15. Role of the Advertising and Public Affairs (A&PA). The primary role of battalion level A&PA staff is to execute programs to support recruiting and accessions requirements. The A&PA assists virtual activities by facilitating event funding, collaborates with the fusion cell, and assists in targeting. A&PA operates EMM to assign MACs and tracks ROI of virtual efforts. The A&PA provides public affairs guidance to include official talking points and crisis management. They serve as the review authority for all virtual content. They also act as a conduit for information from higher echelons ensuring branding compliance. Delivering the right message in the right market at the right time in the right language is essential for the success of A&PA campaigns.

1-16. Role of the Battalion Social Media Specialist. The BN SMS is responsible for developing modern and engaging content to support the headquarters' engagement strategy for reaching its internal and external audiences as part of the recruiting mission. They report to the A&PA and collaborates with the VRS. They also assist with social media strategy development to communicate USAREC's focus areas and priorities. The BN SMS creates and provides content to support battalion, company, and station level social media pages. They establish and maintain working relationships with social media counterparts at the recruiting brigades and other battalions. They also remain up to date on industry techniques and trends ensuring all social media pages maintain consistent messaging and provide accurate, policy-compliant, engaging, and timely information. The BN SMS assists in developing training on virtual activities by completing audits and identifying trends.

1-17. Role of the Market and Mission Analyst (S-2). The S-2 is responsible for providing timely and accurate intelligence analysis and products in support of the commander, subordinate units, and coordinating staff. The analysis is determined using the four primary S-2 functions. The four functions are (1) market intelligence and analysis, (2) positioning the force, (3) distributing the mission to the force, and (4) supporting the targeting process. They apply market intelligence to identify changes in the market and help pinpoint the best time and place for operations. The S-2 conducts the Intelligence Preparation of the Operational Environment (IPOE) in support of the Military Decision-Making Process (MDMP). They also collaborate with the VRS to develop targeting and messaging strategies.

ROLE OF COMPANY AND STATION VIRTUAL RECRUITING ASSETS

1-18. Role of the Company. As a best practice, commanders complete memorandums for record to appoint individuals from each station as that station's social media manager (typically the station commander). Companies act as a conduit for funding, training, and any additional resources for assigned stations. They are responsible for creating a company virtual strategy and plan and ensuring compliance with guidance from higher echelons. Companies capture ROI from funded events to ensure future funding. They also monitor the status of leads obtained from virtual methods and ensure they are actioned in a timely fashion.

1-19. Role of the Station Commander. The station commander develops and implements a station virtual recruiting plan that is nested within the company's strategy and plan. They serve as or appoints the station's social media manager responsible for all station-level platforms and accounts. They also facilitate training, monitor individual recruiter accounts, enforce standards, and ensure compliance with current regulatory guidance consistent with Army messaging. The station commander maintains continuity by controlling access to all station accounts. Station commanders leverage all available information systems to lead the force to mission success. This includes staying up to date on the ever-changing digital landscape.

1-20. Station commanders develop cohesive relationships with the battalion VRS.

1-21. While serving as the station social media manager, responsibilities include platform management, access control, lead distribution, engagement, and managing funding requests.

1-22. Role of the Recruiter. Recruiters create a virtual recruiting plan that is nested within the station's virtual recruiting plan. They are responsible for maintaining individual virtual presence. Recruiters remain consistent with current Army messaging, policies, and brand guidance. Online resources enhance the ways

the force engages the target market, key influencers, and the community. The recruiter masters the numerous tools and techniques available to prospect and perform other recruiting activities virtually.

1-23. Recruiters use various lead generation techniques to find potential leads through virtual means. Examples of these techniques are virtual career fairs, hosting virtual events, Boolean searches, job listings, and MACs.

1-24. Although there is a designated VRS at every battalion, virtual prospecting is used by every recruiter. Virtual prospecting consists of contacting and engaging individuals through e-mail, text, and direct messaging. Virtual prospecting is highly efficient and enables the recruiter to reach large audiences to include in-service and professional markets.

1-25. Recruiters conduct virtual shaping operations through consistent digital content creation and interacting with users who consume their content. They ensure content is local, timely, and relevant.

Chapter 2

Strategy Development

2-1. Virtual recruiting activities require far more than a social media presence and direct prospecting. They require a clear codified strategy to ensure maximum efficiency. Implementing virtual tactics without specific goals is ineffective and is unlikely to produce consistently strong ROI. This strategy is used to create a virtual recruiting plan that includes many familiar concepts and elements found in a school recruiting plan.

2-2. Development of a strategy involves common processes, such as MDMP and IPOE. It ensures organizations properly allocate personnel and resources to set the stage for both short-term and long-term mission success. Data from a wide range of intelligence sources including historical data, local market variations, and population demographics are gathered and analyzed. This analysis is used to develop guidance for decisive, shaping, and sustainment operations.

2-3. A strategy is used to craft a virtual recruiting plan for unifying virtual efforts and tracking all forms of ROI. Leaders at all levels maintain a baseline understanding of the virtual environment. Each echelon actively engages in virtual recruiting activities while nesting strategies and plans within guidance from higher.

2-4. An effective virtual strategy includes the following elements:

- Commander's vision and intent
- Priorities and guidance
- Baseline
- Timelines and milestones
- Standards for compliance
- Goals for ROI
- Virtual recruiting plan
- Training and sustainment

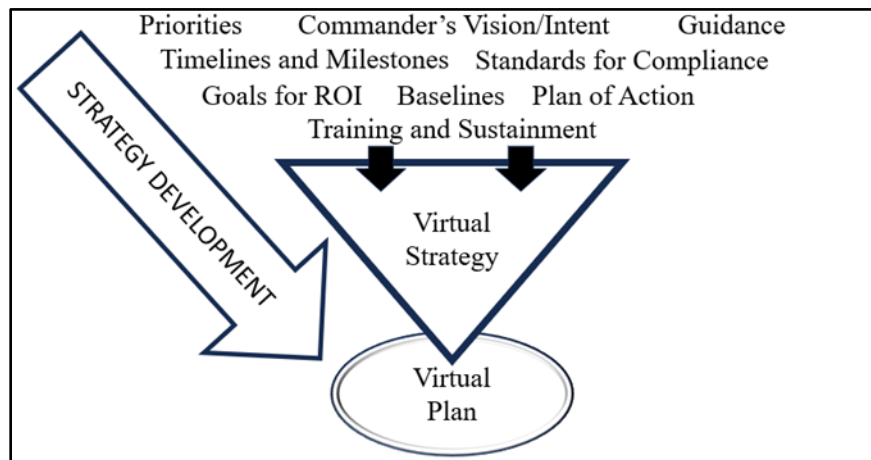


Figure 2-1. Strategy Development

OFFICIAL GUIDANCE

2-5. Reference the following resources to ensure compliance:

- USAREC Social Media SOP (2018) found in the Virtual Doctrine & SOPs section of the G7 VRD SharePoint page.
- Hatch Act: <https://osc.gov/Services/Pages/HatchAct.aspx>
- DOD Public Affairs Guidance for Political Campaigns and Elections, (11 Feb 2020). <https://dodsoco.ogc.osd.mil/Portals/102/Documents/Political%20Activities%20Docs/Toolbox/2022%20Public%20Affairs%20Guide.pdf?ver=QjomZcc8Qx943Ar-dytIkg%3D%3D>
- Department of Defense Directive 1344.10, Political Activities for Members of the Armed Forces.
- Official Army Branding Guidelines found at <https://usarec.ent.box.com/v/BAYCB-Army-Brand>
- Privacy Policy - <https://www.goarmy.com/privacy.html>
- PAO and A&PA channels.
- Social Media (ROE) found on the IKROme home page.

SCOPE OF STRATEGY BY ECHELON

2-6. A virtual recruiting strategy unifies virtual recruiting activities at all levels. It also sets the standards for a virtual presence, which reflects an organization's priorities, climate, and culture. Figure 2-2 below provides a visual representation of strategy and plan nesting by echelon.

2-7. **Brigade.** A brigade strategy provides vision and priorities. The expectations are broad and allow for lower echelons to execute command and control to modify as needed to meet local demands. This includes timelines, minimum standards, audits of virtual assets, benchmarks, milestones, and general ROI goals. This generally is disseminated in OPORD format, similar to the School Recruiting Plan. See Appendix A for an example virtual strategy OPORD.

2-8. **Battalion.** A battalion virtual strategy is nested within the brigade strategy. It provides additional details in its guidance to companies, with a more thorough virtual recruiting plan. It includes guidance on account access control, standards and compliance, metrics tracking and analysis, assessments, plan adjustments, training plans, MACs, funded activities, and advertising. It also details how the fusion cell coordinates efforts between the VRS, A&PA, company, and station.

2-9. **Company.** A company virtual strategy is nested within the battalion strategy and provides a detailed virtual recruiting plan to ensure effectiveness in local markets. This includes discussions on community partner (CP) engagements, systems discipline, posting schedules, compliance with standards, ROI expectations, and funding requests.

2-10. **Station.** A station develops a localized virtual recruiting plan to accomplish the company's virtual strategy. This includes current virtual posture, specific goals, content strategy for each platform, recruiter responsibilities, and systems discipline, and incorporates the Future Soldier program.

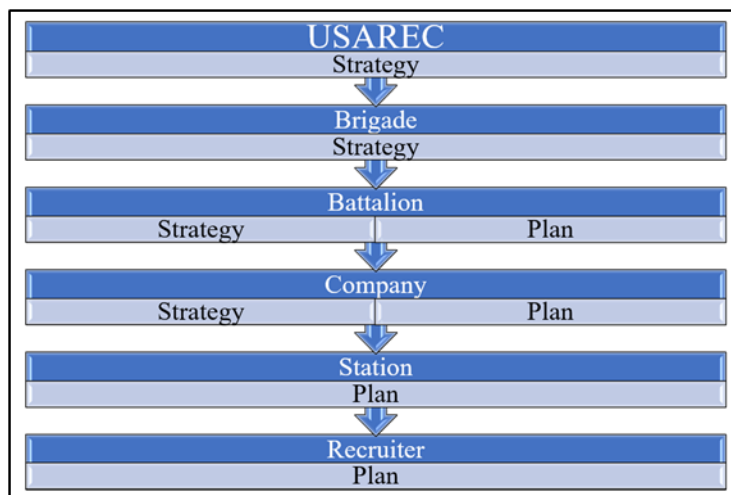


Figure 2-2. Strategy and Planning Echelon

UNDERSTANDING THE VIRTUAL LANDSCAPE

2-11. Nearly every facet of modern culture has been affected by the everchanging virtual landscape. Communication, commerce, education, and entertainment have radically evolved. While the term "virtual" is very broad, it is often used in a narrow context within USAREC.

2-12. Leaders that think beyond prospecting and social media create and implement virtual strategy more effectively. All eight recruiting functions are supported by virtual tools, assets, and accounts. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Websites
- Mass texting platforms
- Blogs
- Photo and video editing tools
- Social media management such as Sprinklr
- QR code generators
- Discussion forums such as Reddit
- Education platforms such as Handshake and college specific networks
- Live streaming platforms such as YouTube and Twitch
- Job sites such as Indeed and Practice Match
- Communication applications such as WhatsApp or GroupMe
- Search engines such as Google and Bing
- Fitness trackers such as RunKeeper and Fitbit
- Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and X (formerly Twitter)
- Video chat and conferencing such as Zoom, Teams, and Facetime
- Cloud document storage such as ERM and Office 365
- E-mail to include mail-merge capabilities
- Professional networking platforms such as LinkedIn
- Business location and review sites such as Yelp, Google Business, and Apple Maps

2-13. Due to the massive number of available resources, leaders need to be strategic in selecting those tools that will be most beneficial. There will be wide variance in which ones are employed based on the user's competence and experience. Some are more universally beneficial for broad use across the entire force, while others appeal to smaller niche markets.

2-14. While many tools are free, there are instances where funding is required for essential items. Leaders should explore alternatives and ensure all funding requests use the most cost-effective methods and make every effort to maximize ROI.

2-15. While lead generation and contracts are preferred metrics for measuring ROI, not all virtual recruiting activities are lead generating. There are a wide variety of other metrics that are used to show effectiveness (activation, engagement, and awareness). It is important to set goals from the start to manage expectations of success.

VIRTUAL PRESENCE

2-16. While the virtual landscape is extremely broad, a virtual presence encompasses all places that an organization or individual exists. This primarily includes USAREC websites, social media accounts, Google Business, and any other official online presence. The virtual presence enables communication with both internal and external audiences, awareness campaigns, marketing, lead generation, and engagement.

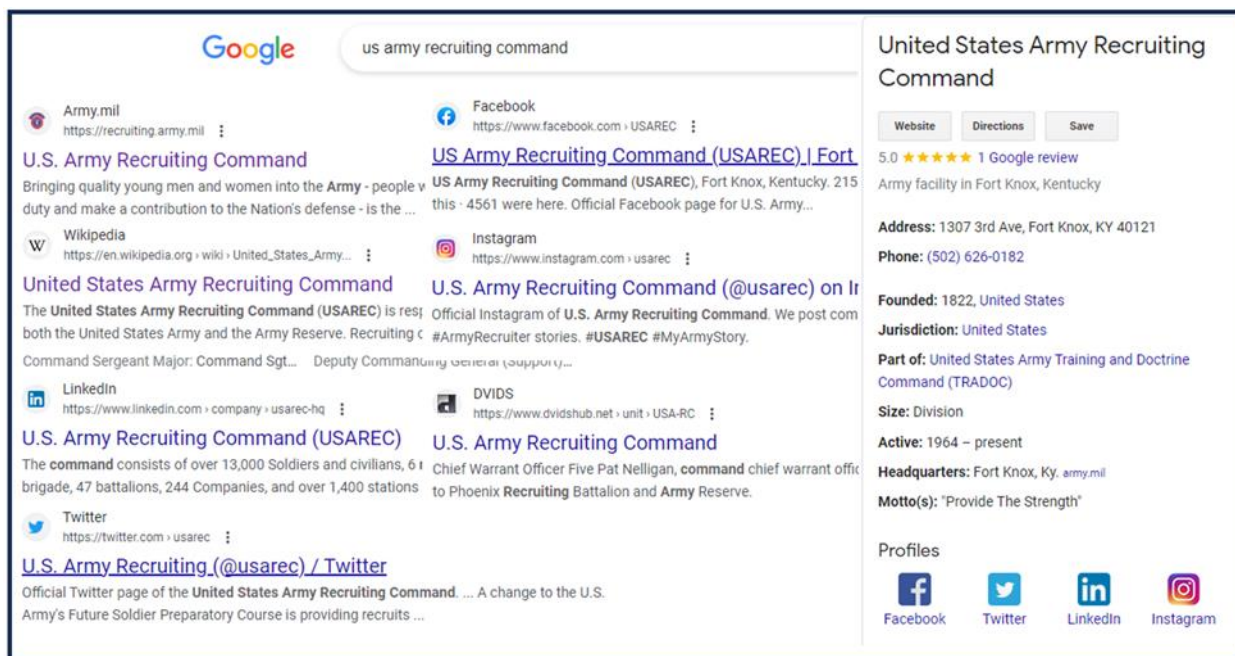


Figure 2-3. USAREC's Virtual Presence

VIRTUAL ASSETS

2-17. Any official organizational account is a virtual asset that belongs to the commander. There are policies in place to maintain control, access, and accountability of physical assets. Commanders also have policies regulating virtual assets. Ensure compliance with applicable regulations and guidance as virtual assets represent the organization and the Army.

Chapter 3

Planning

3-1. The planning phase of strategy development includes market research, identifying the target audience, and auditing. Extensive planning allows leaders to gain valuable insights and make informed decisions while building a virtual strategy. The strategy includes a detailed plan with associated goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time bound.

3-2. Market research involves collecting and analyzing relevant information of the operating environment. Historical data provides a retrospective view of previous virtual recruiting activities and outcomes. Identifying patterns, trends, and successful strategies that have yielded a strong ROI in the past provides a framework for determining future operations. Analysis of social media platform metrics, MAC performance, BiZone reports, and market segmentation reports identify strengths as well as areas needing improvement.

3-3. Market research also provides insights on emerging trends in the virtual landscape, social media usage patterns, demographic data, online behaviors, and analysis of competitors. This is accomplished through use of social media listening tools, sentiment analysis, keyword research, and trend analysis. At its core, market research combines various data points and converts them into actionable intelligence.

3-4. Developing a target audience profile enables leaders to provide a clear virtual recruiting plan and focus efforts on reaching and engaging local markets. Segmentation data such as demographic, geographic, and behavioral factors vary widely between areas of operations. Examples include educational background, income levels, race and ethnicity, culture, political environment, values, and beliefs. Additional sources of information include social media platforms, online forums, and virtual communities. Data provided by these platforms identifies the online spaces where the target audience is most active. This information is critical in selecting channels and platforms for virtual recruiting activities, ensuring maximum visibility, and engagement. Establishing a connection on these platforms requires understanding the user base and delivering content that appeals to individual motivations.

3-5. Conducting an initial audit of the organization's virtual presence is critical as it takes inventory of available virtual assets, verifies access controls, and identifies duplicate accounts. The audit ensures that accounts or profiles are created and updated in accordance with applicable branding standards, policy, and guidance. An example audit checklist can be found in Appendix D.

3-6. Establishing a baseline for virtual presence metrics involves describing current posture and setting a "starting point". Future metrics are compared to the baseline to measure progress, track improvements, and assess the ROI. Examples of metrics used include total followers, average monthly reach, average monthly engagement, and per-post averages. These benchmarks and performance indicators create a data-driven approach that enables leaders to set goals, refine strategies, optimize resource allocation, and make decisions for future virtual recruiting activities.

3-7. The planning phase sets the stage for a proactive and results-oriented approach to virtual recruiting strategy. This lays the foundation for the execution and evaluation of virtual recruiting activities.

ESTABLISHING STANDARDS

3-8. By setting clear guidelines and expectations, organizations cultivate a virtual presence that aligns with organizational goals and resonates with targeted audiences. These standards contribute to consistency, professionalism, and effective engagement. Essential areas that require specific guidelines include but are not limited to:

- Battle rhythms
- Daily requirements (log on, responding to messages, interactions)
- Posting frequency

- Branding

BATTLE RHYTHMS

3-9. Leaders ensure an appropriate amount of time is allocated for virtual recruiting activities in daily and weekly schedules by establishing a battle rhythm. Guidelines are provided on managing the virtual presence during holidays, weekends, and off-duty hours to maintain an appropriate balance between personal and professional life. Many social media platforms have built-in tools that allow for scheduling posts in advance which help alleviate these conflicts. See UTC 5-01 Chapter 1 for more information on developing a battle rhythm.

DAILY ACTIVITIES

3-10. Establishing expectations for daily log on, posting, and availability helps organizations demonstrate commitment and responsiveness. Timely and professional responses to messages and inquiries are essential for building trust and establishing effective communication. Prioritizing urgent and critical communications helps teams manage virtual interactions efficiently. This fosters positive engagement and conveys a strong sense of professionalism. A best practice is establishing specific standards regarding response times.

POSTING FREQUENCY

3-11. Posting content consistently enables an organization to capture the attention of a targeted audience while conveying an image of reliability and dependability. The frequency of content directly impacts the visibility and reach due to algorithms used by many social media platforms. Algorithms determine the content that appears in users' feeds based on past interactions, preferences, and engagement patterns. These algorithms typically prioritize content from specific accounts that users actively engage with.

3-12. Regularly delivering valuable content builds trust and cultivates a relationship with the audience. Increased interactions trigger affinity algorithms to recognize the connection, which leads to expanded visibility and exposure in the user's feed. By contrast, posting infrequently or not at all disrupts the algorithm's recognition protocols, thus reducing visibility and reach.

3-13. Establishing a posting cadence with minimum standards for each platform ensures accounts are properly maintained and maximizes effectiveness. This increases the chances of converting user interest into actionable steps (clicks, requests for information, and direct messages).

BRANDING

3-14. Organizations enable the force to achieve a robust digital presence by establishing standardized requirements across all owned virtual accounts or platforms. Branding guidelines ensure that units maintain a recognizable and trustworthy image in the virtual space while remaining in compliance with organizational policies, regulations, and legal requirements.

GOAL SETTING

3-15. A shared understanding of organizational goals is essential for developing a comprehensive and effective virtual recruiting strategy. Goal setting is important for managing expectations of various types of ROI across the spectrum of virtual recruiting activities. Virtual platforms and tools yield different types of ROI. For example, shaping operations on social media offer metrics such as likes, comments, and shares. Lead generation tools have different metrics tied directly to enlistments. It is essential to recognize this variability and understand the unique benefits and limitations of each. By acknowledging these distinctions, leaders tailor strategies and allocate resources accordingly to ensure platforms and tools align with the desired ROI.

3-16. Examples of ROI includes but are not limited to:

- Lead generation: the quantifiable number of new leads.
- Enlistments: the number of applicants successfully enlisted.
- Referrals: the number of recruits referred from applicants, Soldiers, Future Soldiers, or CPs.

- CP cultivation: evaluates the success of establishing partnerships with educators, business leaders, or other centers of influence (COIs).
- Awareness: gauges the reach and impact of virtual recruiting efforts.
- Increased propensity: assesses the influence on potential recruits' interest and willingness to serve.
- Social media metrics involves analyzing platform-specific engagement and performance metrics.

3-17. While leads and enlistments remain top priorities, it is important to understand that additional data points are considered ROI in support of the recruiting mission. Each provides unique insight into the effectiveness of virtual recruiting activities. Organizational goals serve as the guiding framework for the virtual recruiting strategy. It is crucial that goals and ROI are aligned. This alignment ensures that virtual recruiting efforts contribute to broader organizational objectives.

VIRTUAL RECRUITING PLAN

3-18. Developing a comprehensive virtual recruiting plan that discusses methods, tactics, and execution based on the virtual strategy is essential for successful virtual recruiting operations.

3-19. Leaders ensure that subordinate personnel have a clear understanding of the expectations by conducting counseling sessions. These address any questions or concerns and provide guidance on aligning individual goals with the virtual strategy. These counseling sessions also assess the proficiency levels of personnel involved. It is important to recognize an individual's virtual recruiting accomplishments during counseling sessions and annual evaluations. See Appendix C for sample NCOER bullets relevant to virtual recruiting.

3-20. Consider best practices and TTPs when developing the virtual recruiting plan. These are housed on the Recruiting ProNet found at <https://www.milsuite.mil/book/community/spaces/apf/recruitingpronet>. Additionally, as new TTPs are developed, they are submitted to the ProNet for use in future plans.

3-21. Development of a training plan enhances skills and addresses any knowledge gaps. It identifies relevant training resources and subject matter experts in support of creating a continuous learning environment. Video conferencing and document sharing on platforms such as Microsoft Teams helps facilitate this.

3-22. Implementation of the virtual recruiting plan requires a well-defined timeline that serves as a roadmap by outlining the sequence of activities and establishing realistic deadlines. Timeline elements include assigning target dates for completion of tasks and establishing frequencies for recurring reports. These requirements provide transparency and accountability while ensuring key leaders are informed about the progress, challenges, and successes of virtual recruiting activities. Leaders continuously monitor progress against the timeline, tracking milestones, and adjusting the plan as needed.

3-23. To support the execution, organizations allocate necessary resources, funding, technology, and equipment. Examples include purchases of green screens, software subscriptions, platform access, and paid advertising.

3-24. Leaders identify and mitigate potential disruptions during implementation by incorporating risk management and contingency planning. This includes technical issues, security concerns, adverse publicity, changes in market dynamics, and unforeseen events such as natural disasters. Regular reviews and updates of these plans ensure relevancy and alignment with changing circumstances. This provides leaders the flexibility to adapt and respond to any challenges that arise.

3-25. Ensuring that all virtual efforts are unified without duplication or redundancies will foster a culture of cross-functional collaboration between sections and echelons. Clearly defined roles promote teamwork and shared responsibility. This improves information sharing and open communication. Leaders leverage the diverse expertise and perspectives within the organization to drive innovation, creativity, and efficiency. The plan's detailed instructions are relevant, adaptable, and responsive to changing circumstances or emerging opportunities. See Appendix B for the components of a virtual recruiting plan.

CAMPAIGNS

3-26. All aspects of a virtual recruiting strategy are needed to create an effective campaign. A virtual campaign is a coordinated marketing effort across various platforms to achieve specific goals over a given timeline. They are typically conducted in conjunction with events and can include physical assets, paid advertising, and a mix of lead generating techniques. Likewise, a variety of goals are set with different types of ROI. Campaigns require more detailed planning and coordination compared to typical recurring virtual recruiting activities. Effective campaigns exercise experimentation, adaptation, and the ability to remain abreast of the latest trends.

3-27. Specific objectives for a campaign include increasing brand awareness, driving online traffic, generating leads, or engaging with the target audience. Some campaigns have a single target audience, while others reach a variety of audiences across multiple platforms. Audience demographics, interests, behaviors, and preferences enable recruiters to select the most effective social media platforms and tailor key messages that resonate.

3-28. Effective messaging is clear, concise, and compelling. Examples of high-quality content that grabs attention and encourages audience interaction include blog posts, videos, infographics, contests, and user-generated content. Modify the content to suit the requirements and features of each social media platform.

3-29. A posting calendar will outline specific dates and times for campaign elements and ensure a structured and consistent stream of content. A schedule that includes when to make posts, share updates, or launch promotions will ensure the campaign maintains the attention of the audience. Consistency is a key part of cultivating brand awareness and brand loyalty.

3-30. It is vital to actively engage with the audience throughout the campaign and respond to comments, messages, and mentions promptly. Encouraging user-generated content and running interactive activities to foster engagement builds a sense of community. Performance is tracked using social media analytics tools and metrics such as engagement rate, reach, impressions, click-through rate, conversions, or ROI. Monitoring the data in real time allows for adjustments to be made as needed.

3-31. Once the campaign ends, leaders evaluate its overall success against predefined objectives. The After-Action Review (AAR) includes feedback and data analysis. Insights from a campaign guide decision-making for future campaigns, as well as other ongoing virtual recruiting activities.

PART 2

Branding and Presence

Chapter 4

Branding - Establishing and Maintaining a Brand

4-1. At the strategic level, national advertising, messaging, and branding provides the foundation of subordinate information operations and virtual activities. As a recruiter, establishing a strong personal brand that aligns with the Army's brand remains a crucial task. Effective branding builds credibility with the community while simultaneously differentiating the Army's image in a competitive operational environment (OE). Brand communication is comprised of two fundamentals: how the brand communicates its content and how that content connects with its targeted audience. The recruiter's ability to establish a connection with an audience is an integral component to ensuring the success of both the personal and the Army's brand.

TYPES OF BRANDS

ARMY BRAND

4-2. The Army brand is used both internally and externally Army wide. It redefines what it means to "Be All You Can Be". It is a series of overarching themes and messages meant to convey the lifestyle and benefits of service. It standardizes visual elements to include color scheme, font, and logos. Figure 4-1 below is the preferred official logo of the U.S. Army Brand.



Figure 4-1. Army Official Logo

PERSONAL BRAND

4-3. A personal brand is the unique combination of skills and experiences that comprise an individual and sets them apart from everyone else. A recruiter that enjoys outdoor activities like hunting and fishing would find success when posting content relevant to those activities. The audience attracted to this recruiter would share similar interests.

4-4. Recruiters employ available assets such as market intelligence, personnel, historical data, segmentation, and other analytical tools to define a target audience. Recruiters create a compelling brand identity that aligns with the target audience and supports the value proposition. Once developed, recruiters tailor messaging and marketing efforts on relevant social media platforms to attract qualified leads. They cultivate relationships by focusing on building strong networks with enlistment candidates, influencers, and

community partners. Ensure both personal and organizational brand identities are current, professional, and trustworthy.

4-5. Building a strong brand to generate a following requires time and consistency across all digital efforts. Virtual activities maintain brand integrity while simultaneously promoting the Army's image to engender future commitments. Monitor online traffic, social media engagements, and user feedback to identify areas of improvement or indicators that change is necessary.

AUDIENCE

4-6. An audience is a group of users who are available on a specific platform to view content. This can be narrowed by defining a target audience. For example, an audience would be every user on Facebook and a targeted audience would be Facebook users who are currently in high school. Part of building a brand is appealing to a targeted audience. The population of an audience presents the opportunity to shape, generate leads, and prospect. A recruiter's audience includes some users outside of the target market, however, the more precise the audience, the higher the ROI.

FACTORS

4-7. Factors determine the most effective way to interact with a potential audience. Some of these factors include:

- Age
- Geographic location
- Platform selection (i.e., social media, job board, discussion forums)
- Platform activity (i.e., time of day, day of week, frequency)
- Interests
- Up-to-date market intelligence

4-8. Incorporating these factors into virtual recruiting activities creates a targeted audience. This is a unique group of individuals that are more likely to interact with content. Determining the ideal audience in conjunction with the right message is key to effective interaction.

4-9. When funding is available, multiple target audiences can be created and saved on certain platforms for advertising purposes. This allows users to easily switch between them when introducing a new theme or campaign. For example, an ad on Facebook has a targeted audience set to 17 to 24-year-old individuals within a specific region that have displayed an interest in gaming. Once the audience is set, it can be saved and shared as a template for future ads. When building these, it is important to routinely evaluate and update them using current market intelligence. This is one of the most important tasks performed in preparation of funded virtual recruiting activities.

4-10. When funding is not available, target audiences can be cultivated by being selective on who to accept as a "friend" or "follower" on social media. Invitations and recommendations from members of a target audience increases the size and growth rate of an audience. Using relevant tags or hashtags is a good technique to draw in members of a target audience.

SOCIAL PROOF

4-11. Social proof is a powerful psychological concept that influences consumer behavior and decision-making. Individuals tend to rely on the actions and opinions of others as a measure of what is correct, desirable, or trustworthy. When users see that others have engaged with and positively responded to content, it instills confidence and validates the credibility of the brand or organization. Social proof is demonstrated through signals of approval and popularity and can be measured by metrics such as likes, shares, comments, reviews, and testimonials. Recruiters can capitalize on the law of reciprocity to increase social proof. Leveraging social proof effectively can enhance online reputation, attract new followers, and ultimately influence behavior in a positive way.

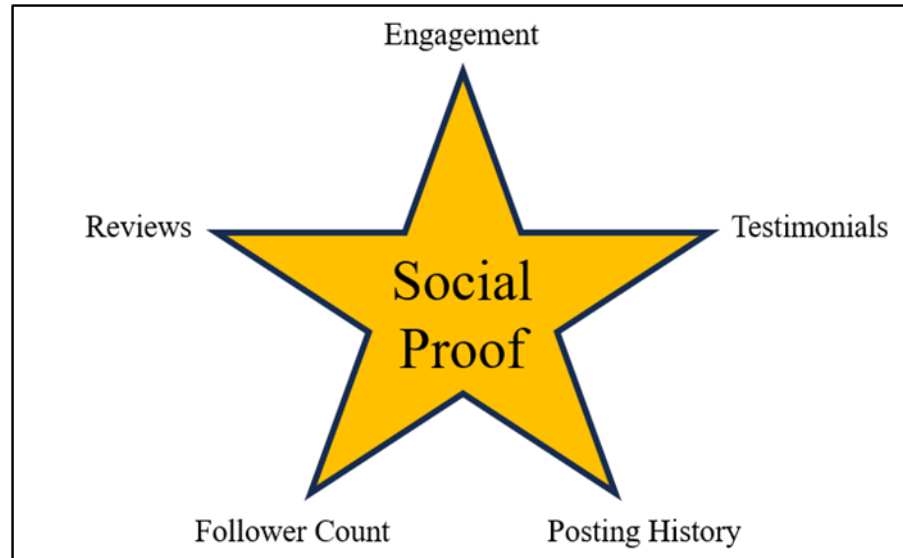


Figure 4-2. Social Proof

LAW OF RECIPROCITY

4-12. The law of reciprocity is a psychological concept that describes the tendency to reciprocate an action. When an individual receives a favor, act of kindness, or positive interaction from another person, they feel obligated to reciprocate in a similar fashion. An example of this is when a recruiter follows a member of the targeted market with the expectation that the member will follow back.

Chapter 5

Establishing and Maintaining a Presence

5-1. It is important to establish a presence on social media platforms where the target audience spends time or consumes content. A presence is established using a combination of organization, metrics, tracking, and analysis. Once achieved, maintain a presence by frequently publishing high-quality organic content that presents an image of expertise while remaining relatable. Examples of this include starting a blog, sharing motivational insights, discussing current opportunities, giving career advice, or broadcasting success stories. An integral part of this approach is to maintain consistency by creating a schedule when publishing content on social media. This can most easily be achieved using a posting calendar (reference Chapter 13, posting calendar for more information). Cultivate a following by responding to comments and messages promptly, engaging with the audience, and by discussing topics that are important to the audience.

ORGANIZATION

OVERVIEW

5-2. The Department of Defense and USAREC provide policy and guidance on social media to include naming conventions, training requirements for administrators, archiving requirements, and privacy policy through the Department of Defense Instruction (DODI) 5400.17 and USAREC Social Media SOP 2018. Additional policies and guidance are provided by each brigade and battalion. Organization is accomplished by establishing clear roles at all echelons, defining clear branding, and messaging guidelines, and creating maintenance standards for all official accounts. For an organization to be considered fully operational within the virtual space they must at a minimum have the following accounts live, connected to Sprinklr, and properly managed:

- Google Business
- Facebook
- Instagram

5-3. Local policies may include additional platform requirements (i.e., LinkedIn, X (formerly Twitter), YouTube) in support of the element's virtual strategy.

IN-PROCESSING

5-4. Members of the VRS, SMSs, and recruiters maintain social media accounts to begin establishing a personal brand or maintaining the organization's brand. Admin or user (access) rights are provisioned during in-processing with the unit. A way to visualize this is the battalion is the owner of the building (page) and issues keys (rights) to the renters (users). All Soldiers and civilians are briefed on social media best practices, policies, and standards by the VRS. They are also be briefed on Army branding, messaging, and professional conduct by the A&PA section.

ADMINISTRATORS

5-5. Ownership and administrative rights are maintained at the battalion level. Users at subordinate units will be provisioned with administrator or "admin" access accordingly. This allows the battalion to maintain access and oversight on all accounts ensuring compliance with current regulatory guidance.

USERS

5-6. A user is defined as anyone that uses social media or virtual platforms for official purposes. It is important to note that once an account is created for official use in recruiting, ownership transfers from the individual to the Army.

OWNERSHIP

5-7. Battalion elements maintain ownership and oversight of all official pages, profiles, and accounts of subordinate units. Figure 5-1 below provides an example hierarchy.

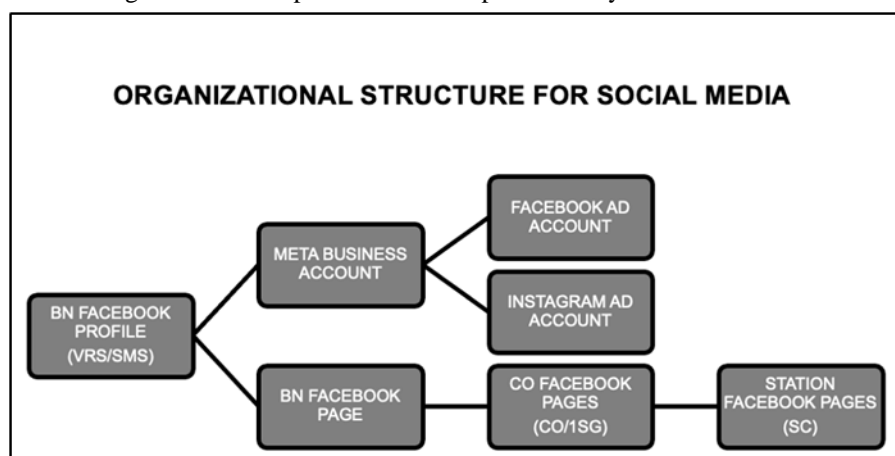


Figure 5-1. Meta Hierarchy

MAINTENANCE

5-8. Account maintenance refers to responding to messages, comments, and other engagements across all virtual platforms. This will be done by users at all levels. For example, battalion will respond to engagements on battalion accounts and stations will respond on station accounts. This also entails periodic audits, keeping contact information up to date, and ensuring all links are functional.

TWO FACTOR AUTHENTICATION

5-9. Two factor authentication is a requirement to manage a social media account. A best practice is to list both a phone number and an email address for two factor authentication. This prevents lockout from the account in the case where access to the phone or email address is lost.

ACCOUNT LOSS

5-10. If an official account is lost, use platform specific username or password recovery procedures. Accounts lost for misuse or violating terms of service are reported to higher for actions dictated by local policy.

DATA CAPTURE AND ROI

5-11. Data capture for the purpose of reporting to higher headquarters will use current authorized resources such as Sprinklr, BiZone, and EMM. This allows for transparency in the reporting process as this information is available to all users from top to bottom.

5-12. When retrieving data from social networking sites or platforms that are not connected to Sprinklr, include the original data pull that was used to complete the report. This enables the work to be validated.

OUT-PROCESSING

5-13. Soldiers regularly PCS (Permanent Change of Station), Exit the Service (ETS), or retire from recruiting. The VRS or SMS removes a departing Soldier's access from all unit level accounts and releases them from Sprinklr if needed. Accounts belonging to Soldiers planning to ETS are archived and set for deletion.

PRESENCE

FACEBOOK

5-14. Facebook is the most used social media platform in the world. It generates 53% of all social media site visits in the United States. While user demographics show a downward trend for usage by younger generations, it remains a priority platform to focus on when establishing a strong virtual presence. Facebook is used to connect with friends with a focus on communicating, sharing content, and participating in community groups. Facebook contains both profiles and pages. Profiles are designed for individual users and pages are for organizations or influential individuals.

5-15. Facebook Profile (represented as an individual user)

5-16. Facebook policy only allows for one profile per user. If a recruiter does not use or maintain a personal Facebook profile, a military profile is necessary to manage a page. Initial setup for an official Facebook profile consists of using a military email address and government issued mobile phone number for registration. The following items are taken into consideration when creating an official government account.

- Professional profile picture.
- Army branding and messaging guidance.
- Listing only professionally identifiable information (keep the "personal" out of "professional" social media).
- Linking all professional accounts within Meta.
- Establishing a brand.
- Posting cadence.

5-17. **Facebook Page** (represented as an individual, group of individuals, or organization).

5-18. Recruiters need a profile to create or manage and edit a page. Individual pages are only created using a Facebook profile as the owner. Organization pages are created and owned within the Meta Business Suite (see next paragraph). The following items are taken into consideration when creating an official government account.

- Professional profile picture.
- Army branding and messaging guidance.
- Listing only professional information (keep the "personal" out of "professional" social media).
- Link to other professional accounts.
- Establishing a brand.
- Posting cadence.
- Jabber and government cell phone number.
- URL directing users to an electronic business reply card (eBRC) or another official external site.
- Business hours
- Soliciting reviews

META BUSINESS SUITE

5-19. Meta Business Suite is a tool provided by Meta to manage all Facebook and Instagram pages owned by an organization in one dashboard. This is the basis for organization, management, and routine maintenance on all Facebook pages and Instagram profiles. Creating a Meta business profile is done by following these steps.

- 1) Login to a Facebook profile (Meta business can only be created using an existing profile)
- 2) Go to business.facebook.com/overview.
- 3) Click Create account.
- 4) Enter a name for the business, the owner's name, and work email address, and click Next.
- 5) Enter the business details and click Submit.

5-20. Create all Facebook pages under a business. For example, all company and station pages are created under the battalion's Meta business page. This enables the VRS and SMS to manage all official pages and profiles with one set of login credentials. Areas of focus for those assigned to manage social media pages are listed below.

- User's profile (not page) listed as an admin.
- Maintain a live document for all organizational pages (username and login).
- Create subordinate unit pages (company and station).
- Manage subordinate unit pages ensuring that all content and posts are within current regulatory guidance and are consistent with Army Values and Army branding.
- Assign subordinate level users with admin or editorial access to pages as required.
- Perform quarterly audits on performance of all posts, content, and compliance with local policy.
- Brief leadership during fusion and targeting cells.

META AD MANAGER

5-21. Meta Ad Manager is a tool provided through Meta to run campaigns and ads on both Facebook and Instagram. This is managed at the battalion level as it is tied to government funding. Ads initiated through Meta Ad Manager must be tracked until the event or activity is complete and an AAR has been submitted.

INSTAGRAM

5-22. Instagram has over 150 million users in the United States that spend an average of 30 minutes per day on the platform. It is popular among younger audiences, with 60% of its user base between the ages of 18 and 34. The platform is used to edit, upload, and share photos and videos. It has various options such as reels, stories, galleries, direct messaging, and live streaming. It is a popular way for users to connect with brands, celebrities, and friends with a heavy emphasis on hashtag usage as a means of content discovery.

INSTAGRAM PROFILE (IS REPRESENTED AS AN INDIVIDUAL USER OR ORGANIZATION)

5-23. Initial setup for an official Instagram profile consists of using a military email address, government issued mobile phone number, and a professional username for registration. The following items are taken into consideration when creating an official government account.

- Accounts must be switched over to professional accounts after creation to have access to insights.
- Recording username and password for organization accounts.
- Professional profile picture.
- Army branding and messaging guidance.
- Listing only professional information (keep the "personal" out of "professional" social media).
- Link to other professional accounts.
- Establishing a brand.
- Posting cadence.

GOOGLE BUSINESS

5-24. A Google business account is created at the battalion level and manages all company and station level Google Business pages. Once the business account is created, a Google ad account can then be attached. This allows ads to be run either battalion-wide or to specific stations and areas.

GMAIL

5-25. It is a best practice for individual recruiters and organizations to create and maintain a professional Gmail account. Organizational Gmail accounts facilitate the transfer of access when necessary and allow for multiple users. Gmail accounts provide access to an organization's Google Business page. Lastly, when a social media platform does not allow a .mil email address to be used, a professional Gmail account functions as a backup.

Chapter 6

Metrics

6-1. Local policy establishes guidelines on the metrics used to determine the ROI of virtual recruiting activities executed by all subordinate units. Metrics will vary based on the activity and online resource used to complete it. Often, there are multiple metrics used in tandem to determine the success of an individual event or activity. The items defined below are commonly used metrics and systems used for metric evaluation.

UNITS OF MEASURE

6-2. Reach. Number of unique individuals who have viewed a specific piece of online content. This metric is natively tracked by each online platform.

6-3. Impressions. The number of times a specific piece of content has been viewed. This differs from reach by counting the total number of views opposed to unique viewers. An impression is counted each time the content is shown. This metric is natively tracked by each online platform.

6-4. Engagement. Any interaction with online content or profile. Examples include likes, shares, follows, subscriptions, clicks, and comments. This metric is natively tracked by each online platform.

6-5. Following. Following is a group of people with a declared interest in a brand or an online account. It is the total number of followers, subscribers, 'friends', or connections.

6-6. Audience. A group of users who are available to view your content. This can be narrowed by defining a target audience. For example, an audience would be every user on Facebook and a targeted audience would be Facebook users who are currently in high school.

6-7. Click-Through Rate. The ratio of clicks on a specific link compared to the total number of unique users that have viewed the content.

6-8. Demographics. Qualities used to describe a certain population such as age, sex, location, education, and income. These can be used to create a target audience for a specific theme or message.

6-9. Response Rate. The number of unique individuals that viewed the message or content and responded. For example, an individual responding to an email campaign with, "I'm not interested" counts as a response despite not being a positive outcome.

6-10. Conversion. The number of unique individuals that complete an action in response to a call-to-action (CTA) used during a virtual recruitment activity. This differs from the response rate as it is the number of individuals that complete the desired action after interacting with your content. For example, filling out an electronic lead card and becoming a lead.

6-11. Marketing Activity Code (MAC). This is a four-character alphanumerical code that is assigned to both paid and unpaid activities created in Enterprise Marketing Management (EMM). This enables the Army to generate specific metrics on any virtual recruitment activity. Reports are obtained from EMM or BiZone and show information such as lead source, contact information, and relevant dates. These reports follow leads through each stage of the recruitment process.

SYSTEMS

6-12. USAREC employs systems used specifically for tracking the metrics of virtual recruiting activities. These include Sprinklr, Enterprise Marketing Management (EMM), EMM Connect, and BiZone. All echelons exercise system discipline when interacting with these systems. Accurate tracking and analysis (see tracking and analysis in chapter 7) of these metrics are vital to accurately measuring the ROI of virtual

recruiting activities. This process determines the success of an activity or event and provides justification for future virtual operations by providing quantifiable data to make informed decisions. This data is available at all echelons.

6-13. Sprinklr. An online social media management tool that is used to measure, analyze, report, and optimize virtual recruiting efforts. Serves as a hub for all assigned virtual platforms.

6-14. Enterprise Marketing Management (EMM). An online system used for managing the Army's marketing budget. It is used to verify ROI on both paid and unpaid activities that have been assigned a MAC.

6-15. EMM Connect. A mobile application available to all recruiting personnel on government issued cell phones. Allows users to complete digital lead cards connected to a MAC while conducting virtual recruiting activities.

6-16. Business Intelligence Zone (BiZone). An online system used by the Army as a focal point for all recruiting data. This includes but is not limited to market intelligence, mission command, and prospecting. Both the Leads and Prospecting Analysis (LPA) and the MAC Leads reports found in BiZone provide valuable information on the tracking of all virtual prospecting efforts and where each individual lead falls within the recruitment process.

6-17. By using these metrics and systems, units establish clear guidelines for virtual recruiting activities and events that are nested within the overarching virtual recruiting strategy and virtual recruiting plan. These metrics then become part of the required analysis (fusion process) of events. The purpose of setting these metrics is to easily measure ROI. These metrics become normal running estimates to provide predictability for the funding and execution of future events. Metrics are measurable, quantifiable, and an important part of tracking and analysis. Figure 6-1 below demonstrates the flow of metrics.

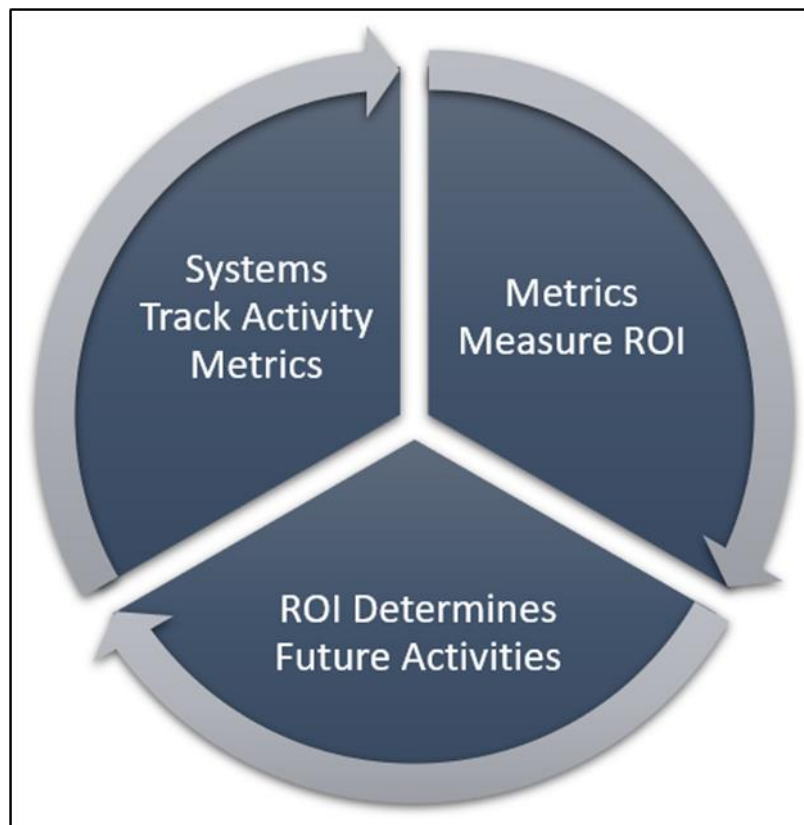


Figure 6-1. The Value of Metrics

Chapter 7

Tracking and Analysis

TRACKING

7-1. The virtual recruiting strategy facilitates a plan to track all virtual recruiting activities. This plan is mirrored by all subordinate units to provide seamless reporting between echelons. Tracking refers to the process of collecting, identifying, and categorizing data points on virtual recruiting efforts to be used in analysis. Examples include MAC reports, platform insights, or entering information into excel in preparation for creating a cost-benefit-analysis (CBA). Tracking is executed using resources such as Sprinklr, EMM, and BiZone. A best practice is to track metrics monthly. Figure 7-1 below visualizes the path from metrics to analysis. See Appendix D (Audits) for more information.

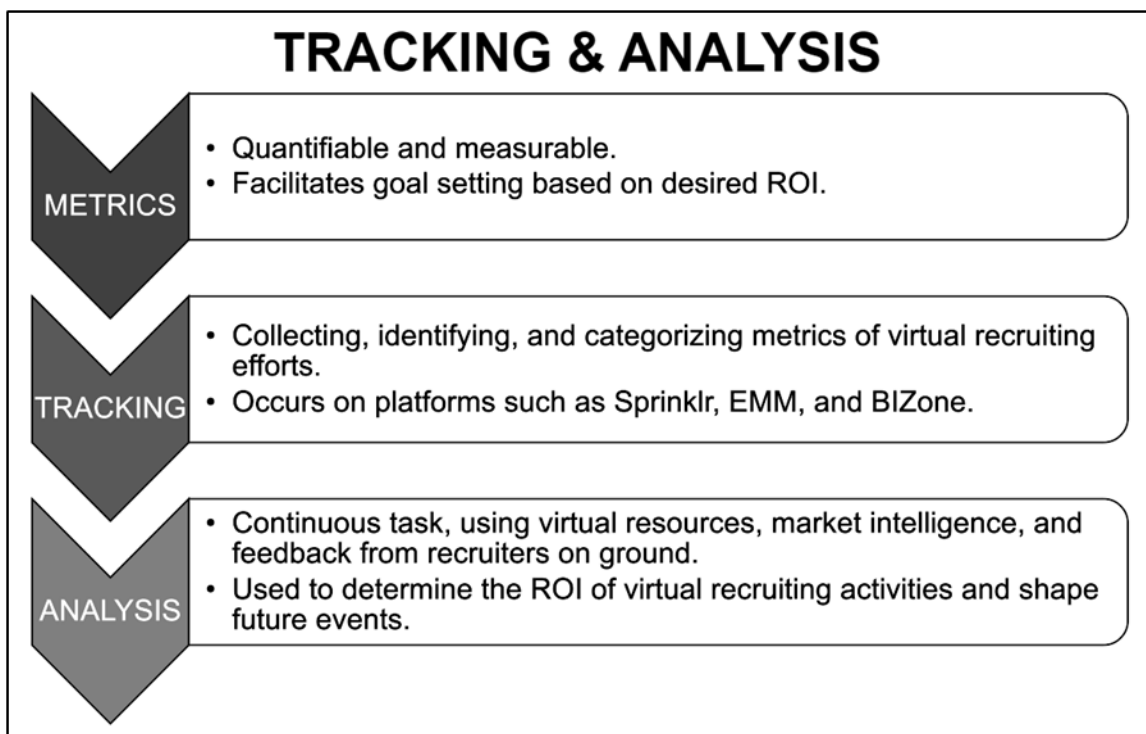


Figure 7-1. Metric to Analysis Flow.

ANALYSIS

7-2. Analysis of virtual recruiting activities is a continuous task performed by all levels. Additionally, it is important to execute a formal, comprehensive quarterly analysis. This is accomplished using virtual resources, market intelligence from the S-2, and feedback from recruiters on the ground.

7-3. The local virtual recruiting strategy and plan dictate the parameters by which data is analyzed. Synchronization of tracking and analysis methods across all echelons is important and enables a consistent and reliable product. Analysis is conducted on all virtual recruitment activities to set goals and determine ROI.

7-4. Analysis serves as a powerful tool to influence virtual recruiting activities when used with accurately tracked data. It allows a unit to determine the success or failure of an activity by measuring the ROI. Analysis of past virtual recruiting activities contributes to long term planning by identifying how or when an event will repeat in the future and how funding is allocated. A historical analysis can be used to identify strengths and weaknesses of ongoing operations and provide training opportunities for current best practices to be implemented in a unit's virtual strategy or plan.

7-5. Each platform requires a unique analysis as they vary in the metrics offered. It is important to establish clear goals and metrics for use during different types of operations (decisive, shaping, sustaining), even when they are conducted on the same platform. This allows the success of the operation to be accurately measured against the goals that were set, while remaining in line with the commander's intent and the overarching virtual strategy. See Appendix F (Quarterly Reports) for more information.

PART 3

Virtual Recruiting Activities

Chapter 8

Intelligence Gathering

8-1. In virtual recruiting, intelligence gathering is done in the digital domain. This assists the recruiter in determining the virtual OE. A solid IPOE ensures that virtual efforts target the right audience, on the right platforms, with the right message. Intelligence gathering is the first step in developing a virtual recruiting plan that results in mission success. It is important to note that intelligence is an ongoing process and changes in the market may dictate a subsequent assessment.

VIRTUAL INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES

DIGITAL BLUEPRINTING

8-2. Digital blueprinting is using social media to gather valuable information and insights about the target audience to better understand needs, preferences, and behaviors. The first step is to determine which social media platforms are relevant to the target audience. Keep in mind that younger generations are likely to use different social media platforms than the older, working professional market. All information gathered during blueprinting is used during targeting. Digital blueprinting at the individual level occurs prior to prospecting and includes searching a lead's digital presence for check-ins, likes, and who or what they follow (see Figure 8-1 below).

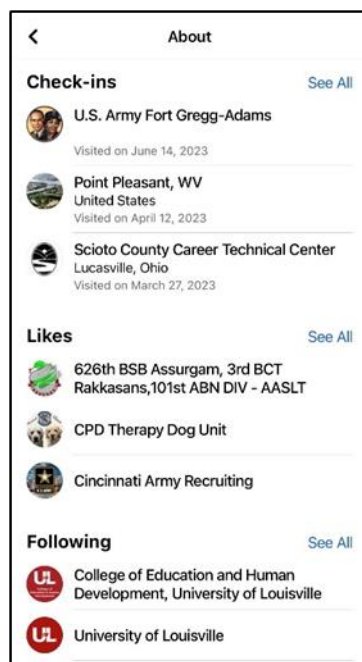


Figure 8-1. Digital Blueprinting

COMPETITOR COMPARISON

8-3. Virtual intelligence involves monitoring competitor's social media presence and job listings. Professional recruiters use specialty specific job boards and forums to identify how civilian competitors are messaging and incentivizing target markets.

TARGETING

8-4. Once intelligence gathering is complete, targeting and formulation of the virtual plan occurs. This involves identifying the target market, the locations in the virtual space they frequent, and their motivations or buying motives. BN S-2 provides additional information on segmentation during the targeting process. The recruiter develops a message, decides when to deploy the message, and selects the platforms where that message will be delivered. Effective targeting directs the message to the correct audience.

Chapter 9

Leads

LEAD GENERATION

9-1. Virtual means, if used correctly, is invaluable to lead generation. Lead generation is what makes prospecting possible (UM 3-32). Virtually, this occurs by using social media, search engines, professional license lists, job posting sites, virtual webinars, virtual career fairs, and organizational websites. Enlisted, professional (medical and chaplain), and special operations recruiting use these resources.

MARKET INTELLIGENCE

9-2. IPOE is important in any Army operation. Conducting virtual recruiting activities requires gathering intelligence using digital means. Examples include visiting social media pages of potential prospects to gauge interests or visiting a hospital website to determine the population of medical residents. Additionally, this includes visiting civilian job boards to understand how other organizations recruit individuals in the target market. Identify which key words are repeated in job listings (i.e., work life balance, remote, insurance, bonus) and then use them to craft a message that resonates with the market. Knowledge gathered digitally enables recruiters to appeal to potential prospects.

JOB SITES

9-3. There are a multitude of job posting sites across the internet that are useful to spread the message about Army opportunities. Many sites include the option for users to upload resumes. This assists with blueprinting potential candidates before contacting them. Prominent examples of sites that are helpful in virtual recruiting include Indeed, BetterTeam, SnagAJob, and ZipRecruiter. Many job sites allow a few job posts for free or offer a free trial period. Recruiters ensure that messages are varied and track each job post's ROI. Use this to adjust the messaging as needed. Refer to Appendix G for templates of job listings.

9-4. Professional recruiters use job sites as well. The job sites used for professionals are different than those used by enlisted recruiters, as many of them are specialized. For example, many nurses and physicians post resumes on specialty-specific sites. Recruiters use search engine terms to find these specialty job sites. For example, a search query of "nurse jobs" displays results that lead to previously unknown job sites. Examples of professional job sites include PracticeMatch, PracticeLink, LinkedIn, and CareerMD.

ONLINE CAREER FAIRS

9-5. Recruiters find it beneficial to register for career fairs that take place in the virtual space. These events are generally attended by students who will soon be graduating high school or college and are making plans for a future career. Additionally, many states host free virtual job fairs designed to reduce adult unemployment. Although these activities are a good opportunity to garner leads, they also facilitate networking and interaction with the target market. Individuals in a virtual career fair visit a recruiter's virtual "booth" and ask questions about Army service and opportunities. A major benefit to career fairs is that multiple vendors are present which increases the overall volume of participants. Figure 9-1 below provides an example social media post used to invite attendees to a virtual career fair.



Figure 9-1. Example Virtual Career Fair Post

WEBINARS

9-6. Webinars are beneficial and are often done at no cost using social media or communication platforms like Zoom, Teams, or GoTo Meeting. Recruiters send a text, direct message on social media, or email invite referencing a planned live stream. These streams often use subject matter experts (SME), recent Basic Training graduates, or giveaways to increase interest and volume of participants. A key benefit of webinars is the ability to answer questions from potential prospects interested in Army service in real time.

ONLINE FORUMS

9-7. Online forums have grown in popularity in recent years. Reddit is a well-known example that allows recruiters to search for threads related to the Army or locate users asking questions about Army service. This offers recruiters an opportunity to post in those threads, answer potential prospect's questions, and private message those individuals to garner an appointment. As an Army representative, it is important to ensure that all communication on a forum is professional, appropriate, and grammatically correct.

9-8. Professional recruiters also find forums useful. There are many forums specific to physicians, nurses, as well as medical and pre-med students. Students post in these forums asking questions about military scholarships for school or direct commission positions. One of the most popular forums is Student Doctor Network. Recruiters establish a presence on these forums to directly engage with these users. A good strategy is to create new threads for professionals and pre-professionals to ask questions about Army service.

BOOSTING SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

9-9. Boosting a post amplifies its reach or impressions in exchange for funding. Boosted posts are tied to and tracked by a MAC. Many social media platforms allow boosting to an audience who meet specific criteria such as age or zip code. Simply boosting a post does not translate to lead generation. It is necessary to include a call-to-action in any post intended to generate leads. Boosting a post with a call-to-action provides the best chance of generating leads. Ensure content for boosting is professional, relevant, and in line with the Army's brand and values. Boosting random pieces of content without a specific plan or expected ROI is ineffective.

PAID ADVERTISING

9-10. Stations, companies, and battalions use paid advertising on social media to promote a campaign. For lead generation, the paid advertising always contains a call-to-action. This takes the form of a link to a MAC or through the media or message. Paid advertising campaigns are associated with a MAC and are tracked through EMM to measure ROI. Good candidates to select for paid advertising media include:

- Recruiting presence at major local events.
- Events hosted by recruiting units.

- Successful organic content.
- Register To Win.
- New Army benefits or features (i.e., guaranteed first station of choice).

9-11. Paid advertising through Google includes the above mentioned as well as selecting key words for search engine optimization (SEO), target audiences, and promoting specific locations. Advertisements on Google have the capability of appearing on third party sites, mobile apps, and games affiliated with Google.

ORGANIC SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

9-12. Creating organic social media posts is a no cost method to generate leads. Effective social media posts are relevant, useful to the audience, and engaging. The only way to generate leads with organic posts is to include a call-to-action. Common calls-to-action are referencing users to the link in the biography, asking users to comment below the post, and soliciting direct messages.

REGISTER TO WIN

9-13. A register to win (RTW) is an event that uses specific promotional items purchased with unit funds to solicit leads. RTW's are most effective when efforts are focused on specific targets and demographics. RTW items vary based on audience. For example, an item targeted at high school students will differ from items targeted at doctors. When choosing an item for a RTW, a cost comparison is done to ensure that the Army is not showing favoritism to any specific business. All requests go through a formal JAG review before initiating and must follow the laws of the state the RTW will be executed in. All RTWs are assigned a MAC. For more information on RTW, review the current USAREC Message referring to Register to Win, AR 601-208, and UR 601-208. Figure 9-2 below displays an example RTW post.



Figure 9-2. Example Register to Win Post

9-14. Once a RTW item is obtained, develop a plan to market to a specific audience for a specific period of time. The price paid for the item determines the minimum number of leads required to be generated. Plans ensure the RTW campaign runs long enough to meet the minimum lead requirement. Individuals outside the target audience are eligible to win. They cannot be specifically excluded. Future Soldiers, members of USAREC, and their families are ineligible to win.

9-15. The winner is identified from the list of leads generated from the RTW MAC. A best practice is to assign each lead a number and then select the winner by random number generator (see Figure 9-3 below). Transparency in the selection of a winner builds trust and credibility in the organization and the Army.

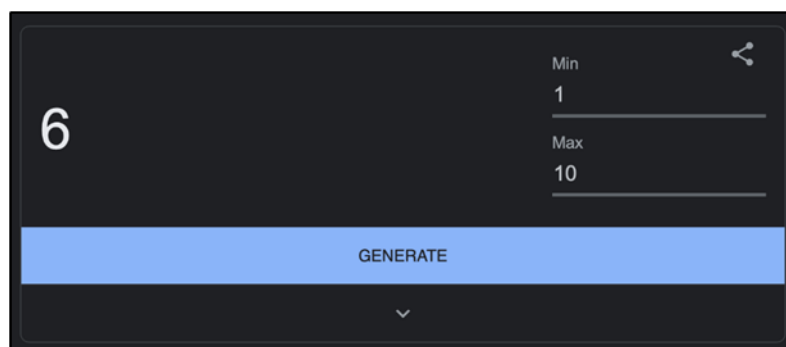


Figure 9-3. Random Number Generator

PROFESSIONAL LICENSE LISTS

9-16. Most states allow for purchasing lists of professionally licensed individuals. Coordinate the purchase of these lists with the A&PA. These lists are typically broken down by license type, name, address, and email address. These lists are used by enlisted recruiters to send Army Civilian Acquired Skills Program (ACASP) messages to individuals qualified for MOSs like 68W, 68C, or even 27D. Information on ACASP is found in AR 601-210 chapter 7 and DA Pam 611-21. Professional recruiters use these lists to prospect for the medical recruiting mission.

BOOLEAN SEARCH AND SEARCH ENGINE USE

9-17. When using a search engine, Boolean uses specific words or symbols to limit, widen, or define the search. This is especially useful in the context of professional recruiting when seeking leads of specialists not found on typical lists. Boolean allows for the search of specific file types, specialties, and professionals within specific healthcare facilities. This is accomplished using special terms and search strings. See Table 9-1 below for Boolean key words and symbols. Appendix H contains an in-depth Boolean search example.

Table 9-1. Boolean Key Words and Symbols

Boolean	Google	Bing
AND	(a space)	(a space)
OR	OR	OR
NOT	-	-
" "	"exact phrase"	"exact phrase"
Keyword in the title	intitle:	intitle:
Keyword in the URL field	lnurl:	N/A
Search for files	filetype:	filetype:
XRay	site:	site:

LEAD REFINEMENT

9-18. Lead refinement is the act of engaging a pool of leads and narrowing them down to a workable list of those who have the propensity and eligibility to convert into a Future Soldier. Initially, leads are refined by indicators such as age, education status, citizenship, and location. Once leads meet these criteria, they are virtually engaged through personalized communication, such as email, texting, or direct messaging. This enables direct conversations, exposes needs, and facilitates the qualification process.

9-19. There are various methods used to identify and prioritize leads to maximize prospecting efforts. These include but are not limited to:

- Lead scoring: Implementing a lead scoring system to prioritize and rank leads based on level of engagement, interactions, and fit with the organization. This identifies the most engaged and interested leads.
- Monitoring social media interactions: Pay attention to how leads interact with a brand on social media. Monitor their engagement with posts, comments, and messages. Engage in conversations and respond promptly to inquiries. These interactions provide valuable insights into their level of interest and engagement.
- Initial screening on lists by age, location, education status, and citizenship.
- Additional screening on moral and medical issues.
- Reviewing lead's social media accounts for disqualifications (tattoos, weight, drug use, etc.).

9-20. When conducting lead refinement, it is important to ensure leads meet the criteria to be considered qualified. By establishing these criteria, efforts focus on leads that have a higher likelihood of agreeing to process.

LEAD DISTRIBUTION

9-21. Lead distribution happens after the lead refinement process. Distribute leads to the appropriate recruiting station and ensure proper handoff with an email and phone call. The proper distribution of leads includes, but is not limited to, VRS to station commander, station commander to recruiter, and professional or SORB recruiter to enlisted recruiter, and vice versa.

9-22. The VRS refines leads to determine eligibility. The VRS then distributes the leads that meet basic eligibility requirements to the appropriate station. A good practice when distributing leads is the two-method approach. An example of this is to both call and email the lead's information to ensure receipt. This information includes blueprint information and lead details. If the station commander is unavailable, the VRS sends the lead information to the acting station commander.

Note. If no phone contact is made, the lead information is sent to station email distribution list to ensure all recruiters in the station are aware of the lead.

9-23. If the lead is determined to be eligible for professional or in-service recruiting, the VRS follows the receiving organization's guidelines.

9-24. The station commander is responsible for distributing leads within a station. This is done in a timely manner to ensure leads are contacted immediately to set initial or follow-up appointments.

Chapter 10

Prospecting

10-1. Virtual prospecting is a method and activity where the recruiter attempts to contact a specific lead through digital means with the intent to schedule an Army interview. Digital means refer to direct messaging through social and online platforms, email, and texting platforms.

10-2. Lead generating activities are frequently confused with virtual prospecting. Prospecting takes place after lead generation. Posting on social media, listing jobs, and engaging with accounts (like, comment, share, etc.) is not considered prospecting.

10-3. The station commander ensures all virtual prospecting delivers a message consistent with the Army values and current Army social media policies to include local and federal laws and regulations.

10-4. Though the intent is to make direct contact with a specific lead, this is not limited to reaching out to one person at a time. There are tools and techniques to reach many unique individuals simultaneously. By leveraging these available digital tools, it is possible to connect and communicate with multiple leads in a short amount of time. Examples of these tools are explained below.

Note. The methods and examples below are made from the current available resources and guidance. It is the reader's responsibility to be familiar with the most up to date guidance, policy, and direction from USAREC and the DoD.

TYPES OF VIRTUAL PROSPECTING

TEXT MESSAGE PLATFORMS

10-5. Although texting is traditionally a form of telephone prospecting, the introduction of text message platforms expands the definition. Text prospecting is accomplished through either a telephone or computer. Texts sent via telephone are a method of telephone prospecting and texts sent via computer are a method of virtual prospecting.

10-6. Text messaging platforms send texts via computer. They are used to reach leads who have expressed interest in learning more information about the U.S. Army and Army Reserve. It is important to note that any program or platform used must be approved according to current USAREC guidance and all federal and local laws and regulations.

EMAIL

10-7. Similar considerations to texting are used when selecting individuals to prospect via email. Like texting, it is equally important to have multiple templates. As with any prospecting effort, consider message, message length, and the audience. Of particular importance in email prospecting is the subject line of the email. The subject line is the one portion of an email guaranteed to be read. The subject line "Move Your Resume to the Top of the Pile with this Opportunity" is more likely to be opened and read than one that says, "Army Recruiting Opportunity". Some paid platforms such as PracticeMatch, Indeed, and Handshake include the option to email leads. Sending emails with a predetermined audience, message, and intended outcome is considered an email campaign. Ensure all emails are sent in a personalized, professional, and specific manner. Appendix J contains email templates for enlisted, medical, and SORB recruiting.

10-8. Email campaigns are particularly effective when prospecting in the professional market. Working professionals like healthcare providers are more likely to read and respond to professional email correspondence than texts or social media messages.

MAIL MERGE

10-9. Multiple personalized emails are sent simultaneously using the Microsoft Office 365 mail merge process. Once a list of individuals is obtained, follow the step-by-step instructions to coordinate a mail merge using Microsoft Word and Outlook found at this link:

<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/use-mail-merge-to-send-bulk-email-messages-0f123521-20ce-4aa8-8b62-ac211dedefa4#:~:text=1%20Go%20to%20Mailings%20%3E%20Preview%20Results%20to,if%20you%20have%20not%20selected%20...%20See%20More>

EMM EMAIL CAMPAIGN

10-10. EMM offers a service that conducts email campaigns for recruiters. This service includes the ability to select from high quality, professional templates, sends up to three separate messages, and delivers analytics on emails sent (read rate, open rate, click rate). Lists submitted to EMM for campaign creation must be in .xlsx format and include at a minimum: first name, last name, and email address.

10-11. Requests are submitted to usarmy.knox.hrc.list.aemo-email-request@army.mil.

10-12. The email template catalog is found at:

<https://www.goarmy.com/content/dam/goarmy/emm/templates/index.html> and a complete user guide is found at <https://www.goarmy.com/content/dam/goarmy/emm/templates/guide.html>.

DIRECT MESSAGING

10-13. Direct messaging (DM) is done by sending a message to an interested lead through virtual platforms or applications. DM is also known as Instant Message (IM) or Private Message (PM). When using social media or any online account that has direct message capability, it is important to not allow the exchange of any personally identifiable information (PII). Direct messaging builds trust and credibility and facilitates a follow-up face to face or telephonic engagement to determine eligibility. While DM is ideal for casual conversation and rapport building, it is always good to transition the conversation outside of the platform.

10-14. Some paid platforms afford the opportunity to send messages as texts or emails. It is important to follow the same guidance and practices.

10-15. It is important to connect with an individual on social media before messaging. This is typically accomplished by friending, following, or similar actions. This prevents messages from arriving in a spam folder or other less visible inboxes (see Figure 10-1 below). A best practice for messaging on social media is to keep the message short, simple, and end with a question. Two example messages would be:

- Hello, this is Sergeant <NAME> and I'm the Army Career Counselor for <LOCATION>! How are you doing today?

- Hello this is Sergeant <NAME> and I'm the Army Career Counselor that works with <SCHOOL>. I give students information about college and career benefits the Army offers. Have we had the opportunity to speak this year?

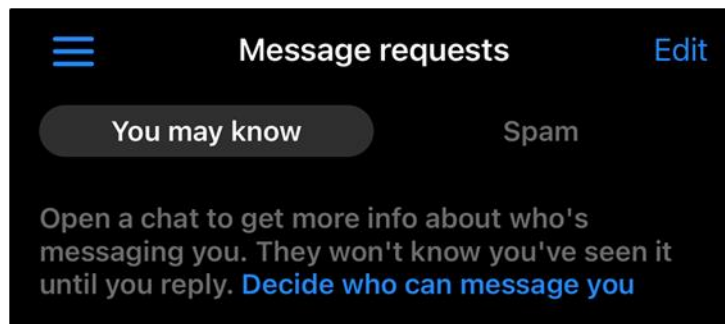


Figure 10-1. Facebook Messenger Spam Inbox

CAN-SPAM COMPLIANCE

10-16. Recruiters ensure that any email prospecting complies with the Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) CAN-SPAM Act. This is imperative as each violation can result in a fine of up to \$50,120. There are a few things that recruiters do to ensure this government policy is not violated. A few examples are:

- Avoid deceptive subject lines.
- Provide a physical location and phone number in the signature block.
- An "opt out" method is required in the email. Ensure that leads requesting to "opt out" are immediately removed from the email list.

10-17. For more information on how to remain compliant with all FTC rules visit <https://www.ftc.gov/business-guidance/resources/can-spam-act-compliance-guide-business>.

DIRECT COMMUNICATION

10-18. Direct communication is the process of exchanging information, engaging in conversation(s), and maintaining any open line of communication through virtual means. It occurs when any person responds, reacts, or reaches out to any member of USAREC. It is important to remember that guidelines apply in the virtual domain as they would in any other recruiting environment. This includes all interactions with subjects of recruiting efforts (SRE).

10-19. Direct communications occur with an individual or a specific group encompassing a wide range of methods. It is used to increase event awareness, support virtual prospecting, facilitate applicant processing, and maintain contact with FSs. As the digital landscape continues to evolve, so will the platforms used to conduct direct communication. This is as simple as leaving a comment or as complex as conducting an interview through a video conference.

10-20. Direct communications are either public or private. If a recruiter replies to a specific comment on a post, it is a form of public communication. If a recruiter attempts to contact that person through a direct message with no other visibility, then it is considered a private communication.

RESPONDING

10-21. When a response is received by digital means, a professional reply is used to continue and maintain an open line of communication. As a best practice, responses are addressed immediately when possible or no later than 24 hours after receipt. Every message requires a response. Read the entire message prior to responding. This identifies the intent of the message and will aid in crafting a response. Occasionally, recruiters receive negative messages or replies. Negative comments require responses with facts, evidence, and tact. For messages that are particularly inflammatory, consult with the A&PA or PAO before responding.

Chapter 11

Shaping

11-1. The design of a shaping operation in the digital landscape is to prepare the digital battlefield for future lead generating and prospecting efforts. This is accomplished by developing awareness, expanding reach, and maintaining a continuous presence. They affect the perception and understanding of the Army's brand for potential leads and influencers. They create a positive image of the Army, build relationships, and engage with prospective candidates. Shaping operations use content that is engaging and informative such as videos, posts, and podcasts. They provide valuable insights, show success stories, and highlight the diverse opportunities available. This increases propensity.

11-2. Using specific branding and messaging establishes a presence online and conveys targeted messaging. Shaping an image that emphasizes the Army's core values, missions, and opportunities attracts individuals with similar objectives and values. It involves maintaining an active presence online to share relevant content. This fosters a sense of connection and generates interest.

11-3. Online advertising supports shaping operations. Strategic online advertising reaches a wider audience and targets specific demographic segments and areas. Placing ads on websites, social media platforms, and search engines captures the attention of those who may not have been actively seeking information about Army opportunities.

11-4. Promote the Army to the followers of influential individuals and organizations (social media influencers, businesses, agencies, centers of education, and well-known public personalities) through collaboration. Partnering with respected figures increases the Army's credibility, expands reach, and generates interest with respective audiences. These collaborations are initiated and maintained at all levels and managed by battalion or higher.

POSTING

11-5. Posting in accordance with the posting calendar and content strategy is the primary activity for maintaining an active presence. It shapes the environment by building awareness, conveying the desired messages, and cultivating relationships. It is important to note that creating content and posting content are distinct activities from each other. Individuals that post content will modify captions and make use of platform specific features (such as tags and hashtags).

REVIEWS

11-6. Soliciting reviews on social media is an effective way to build credibility, trust, and social proof. Identify the social media platforms that are most relevant to the target audience and where the organization's brand has an active presence. Create and optimize business profiles on popular review platforms such as Google Business, Facebook, Yelp, Glassdoor, or industry-specific review sites. Identify touchpoints in the enlistment journey, especially where a positive experience has occurred, and encourage reviews. Simplify the process of leaving a review by providing direct links or buttons to social media profiles or platforms. Acknowledge and respond to every review received, whether positive or negative. Express gratitude for feedback, address concerns, and display value towards opinions. Engaging with reviews demonstrates the Army's commitment to trust, credibility, and professionalism, while reinforcing an online presence. It is critical that reviews contain the following information (if applicable):

- A personal experience.
- The recruiter's name.
- School attended.
- MOS and incentive(s) received.

11-7. A five-star review without a testimonial does not carry as much weight as one that does. Figure 11-1 below provides an example of both a substandard and ideal review.

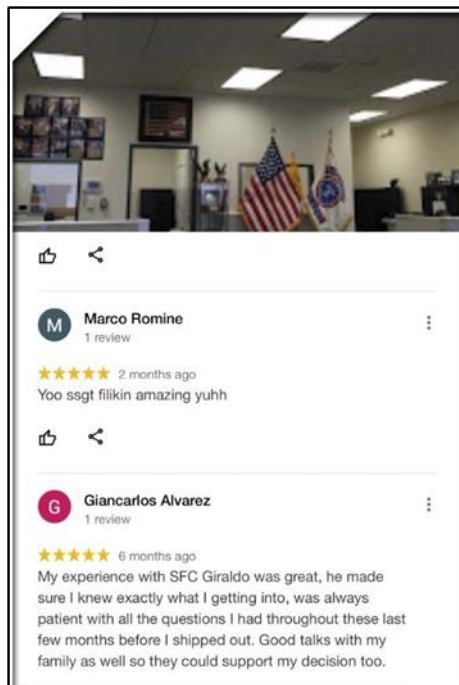


Figure 11-1. Google Review Examples

LIVE STREAMING

11-8. Live streaming takes place on a multitude of platforms. Situational awareness is key during any live streaming activity. Ensure the stream conveys a message consistent with the Army Values as well as educates, empowers, engages, or entertains. This will increase awareness, reach, and propensity while strengthening connections. Validate collaborators or special guests for a stream do not have a negative online presence, perception, or history. For more information, refer to the collaboration section later in this chapter. Live streaming is recorded for future content creation. Live streaming is done with government issued devices, but professional equipment enhances production quality (microphone, camera, lighting, headset, etc.).

11-9. Procedures for executing a live stream:

- Determine the purpose of the stream.
- Identify the target audience.
- Select the platform best suited to host the stream.
- Choose the individual or organizational account hosting.
- Assign roles (host, guests, moderator).
- Schedule the stream (date and time).
- Promote the stream to the target audience.
- Execute the stream.
- AAR

11-10. It is a best practice when performing any live stream to assign an additional team member as a moderator. Moderators' tasks include evaluating the quality and strength of the live stream, responding to participants in comments and chats, assisting in audience question selection, and handling any disruptive situations.

EVENT LIVE STREAMING

11-11. Examples of streaming events include announcing a register-to-win winner, a high school table set up, and recruiter presence at large in-person events. Although event streaming is primarily for shaping, it is also for lead generation.

11-12. The most common platforms for this type of streaming are Instagram and Facebook. This is typically created as a planned or scheduled activity but can be done spontaneously.

VIDEO CONFERENCE PLATFORMS

11-13. Microsoft Teams or Zoom are examples of platforms used for video conferencing. These platforms are useful for hosting a virtual event. Postings and invitations for these events are done through email, social media, or through a specific organization's website.

ONLINE GAME STREAMING

11-14. Twitch and YouTube are examples of platforms used for game streaming. When streaming, ensure that the game is appropriate for the audience targeted and is in line with Army Values. It is important to note that additional software and hardware may be required to perform certain capabilities.

VLOGGING

11-15. Vlogging is informal streaming that is personable and frequently features hobbies, interests, and trends and challenges. It can be performed on all major social media platforms. Vlogging videos are typically short and engaging.

LIVE VIDEO PODCAST

11-16. The most prominent platform for live podcasts is YouTube. It is advantageous to be familiar with the software, features, and terms of service of the platform. Video podcasts follow a specific format and are episodic. While video podcasts have grown in popularity, audio quality is paramount when producing podcasts.

NETWORKING

11-17. Networking involves establishing connections and fostering relationships. Robust networks facilitate access and placement for recruiters to carry their message to various forums including community leaders, business leaders, influencers, organizations, and education leaders. Networks in the digital domain facilitate shaping by expanding reach, providing testimonials, generating support, and increasing social proof. Network building tactics include:

- Frequently monitor direct messages on social media and be sure to check spam and request folders. Ensure to respond to messages, comments, and reviews in a timely manner.
- Ask to connect during any interaction outside of social media. When asking for referrals, provide the option to share or tag on social media.
- Use other profiles within the community or market to build and expand the network.
- Encourage CPs to display contact information.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

11-18. A Community Partner is an influential individual or organization who actively boost the Army's reach, message, and brand. Examples include organizations, nonprofits, influencers, or individuals in your community who share similar goals and have a vested interest in raising awareness of the recruiting effort. In the virtual domain, recruiters connect with pre-existing CPs on social media and seek to connect with new CPs. Once connected through social media, these partnerships collaborate.

COLLABORATIONS

11-19. Collaborations take the form of joint campaigns, content co-creation, or cross-promotion. This generally occurs when the Army and the CP's goals and values align. It is a best practice to tag collaborators in any post, story, or video for awareness and sharing. This expands the reach of both profiles, exposing that content to a larger population within your community.

ONLINE INFLUENCERS AND PERSONALITIES

11-20. The most important aspect of working with individuals who have a large online following is verifying the individual does not have a negative online presence, perception, or history. Ensure the influencer's brand aligns with the Army's brand. Influencers with a significant following require oversight from A&PA and PAO.

SOCIAL MEDIA ORGANIC GROWTH

11-21. On some platforms, followers affect how the algorithm displays content in others' feeds. It is important to ensure that those who follow and those followed are not all internal to the organization. A surplus of military followers and or following multiple accounts of the same type suggests the profile to fellow military members rather than the target market. It is a good practice to regularly check and manage followership. Knowing how to track reach and growth on preferred platforms helps adjust tactics when necessary. It is important to note algorithms and platforms are ever evolving and to keep up with latest updates.

11-22. Keep up on current trends and hashtags. Trends include popular audio for reels and video shorts, current pop culture events, challenges, and current topics.

Chapter 12

Processing

12-1. Processing starts when a prospect agrees to join the Army (enlist or commission) or reclassify. Many processing steps have the capability to be completed virtually. Cloud-based systems have become more prevalent and secure. The modernization of the Army's IT capability ensures the safety and security of an applicant's PII and Protected Health Information (PHI). Virtual processing expedites the enlistment process in a geographically dispersed environment.

VIRTUAL INTERVIEW

12-2. Conducting a virtual interview requires careful preparation and attention to detail. Select a reputable video conferencing platform such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Facetime, or Google Meet. Share the interview time, date, and video conferencing link with the prospect in advance. Include any additional instructions such as the duration of the interview and any necessary materials or documents required. Set up a quiet and professional environment. Minimize background noise, distractions, and potential interruptions. Prior to the interview, test internet connection, webcam, and microphone to ensure vital equipment is operational. Establish rapport and create a comfortable atmosphere, use clear communication, and active listening. Other items of consideration to facilitate a seamless virtual interview is listed below:

- Present a professional appearance (in uniform and well groomed).
- Use slides or other digital materials to assist the interview.
- Ensure adequate lighting.

12-3. Close out professionally, ensure that any follow up information or deadlines are clearly communicated. Remember to treat virtual interviews with the same level of professionalism and respect as in-person interviews. Being well-prepared, creating a positive atmosphere, and employing the available technology effectively will assist recruiters with executing a successful virtual interview.

AFQT PREDICTOR TEST

12-4. This test allows recruiters to predict performance on the ASVAB. Individuals with higher scores typically have a better chance of qualifying for entry into the military. Testing is completed by applicants virtually after registration at the following link: <https://apt.dpac.mil/>.

PRESCREEN ASVAB

12-5. This is the full Pending Internet Computerized Adaptive Test (PiCAT). This is completed at the user's own pace at any computer where the individual can work uninterrupted. After completion of the PiCAT the score is valid for 30 days and must be verified by taking the verification test (Vtest) at a Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS). Testing is completed virtually after registration at the following link. <https://picat.dpac.mil/>.

ARMY CAREER EXPLORER RECORD

12-6. To initiate a recruiter sponsored ACE record, portions of the application must be filled out in Recruiter Zone prior to registration. Check that the record is in an applicant status (agree to process) and that the applicant has read, acknowledged, and signed the application instructions. Once the applicant has completed the instructions, it is necessary to fill out the "person" screen. ACE records are only able to be completed if the email address entered is correct. The following steps outline the process after all necessary information is in the system:

- Select the option to “Verify/Register ACE Applicant” on the right side of the screen (see Figure 12-1 below).

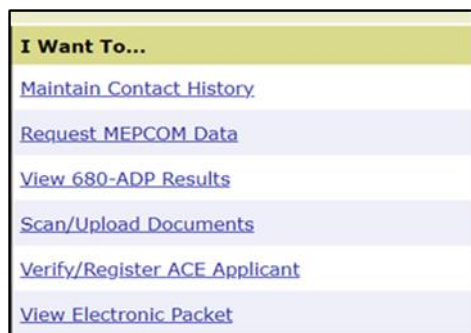


Figure 12-1. Verify/Register ACE Applicant

- Check for any messages that indicate critical information is missing.
- Once confirmed, click “register.”
- Inform the applicant of the registration email and confirm receipt. It is common for the email to arrive in a spam folder. Additionally, brief the applicant on the importance of remembering log-in information to ensure re-entry to the application is possible.

12-7. Recruiters monitor the status of an ACE record by reviewing each section’s status. The status of a section will be marked one of three ways.

- **Not Started.** The section has not been started by the applicant.
- **Incomplete.** The section has not been completely filled out or has yet to be verified by the recruiter.
- **Completed.** The recruiter has verified and marked complete. Once marked complete, the applicant will not be able to gain access to that section. If needing to allow access for the applicant to make a change, the recruiter enters the section, makes a change, and saves (ensuring not to click mark complete). This allows the applicant to make changes.

12-8. Keeping open communication with the applicant is imperative to ensure the application is filled out in a timely and accurate manner.

COLLECT SOURCE DOCUMENTS

12-9. Collecting source documents is done virtually by using the DoD SAFE (Secure Access File Exchange) website (<https://safe.apps.mil/security.php>). DoD SAFE is a web-based file transfer service that allows Common Access Card (CAC) users (recruiters) and guests (applicants) the ability to securely send and receive files. Applicant packets contain a large amount of PII and Protected Health Information (PHI). Every effort is made to ensure that this information is always kept safe. In the virtual operating environment, there are many commercial applications to share files. These applications do not meet the DoD standards of encryption to safeguard PII and PHI. The only authorized means of transferring PII and PHI between recruiters and applicants is the DoD SAFE website.

12-10. DoD SAFE allows recruiters and applicants to send and receive up to 25 files with a combined size of up to eight gigabytes per transaction. The number of transactions is unlimited. Delivery of files may take up to four hours. The sender receives a notification email when files are picked up by the intended recipient(s). Files are automatically deleted after seven days. After the seven days have elapsed, the files cannot be downloaded by the sender or recipient(s). All members of USAREC have access to DoD SAFE through CAC authentication. Applicants only receive files and drop off files once an authenticated user submits a request code. They cannot request that files be sent.

12-11. For additional guidance and instructions on how to use DoD SAFE click the following link: <https://safe.apps.mil/help/dod-safe-help.xml>.

SIGN DOCUMENTS

12-12. Digital signatures enable recruiters to process applicants virtually. It is necessary that recruiters be in a video conference with applicants during the digital signature to bear witness to the signature. Applicants and recruiters sign each required block and CANNOT use the copy/paste function at any point in time.

12-13. Per UR 601-210, Chapter 3-12.4, Recruiter Misconduct Defined, Sub paragraph (e) Falsification of Documents, "Recruiting personnel will not intentionally falsify, assist in falsifying... This includes the use of any documents bearing forged or unauthorized signatures to include the copy/paste of any written or digital signatures with or without consent." Signing with a finger or stylus is acceptable but NOT copy/paste.

PARCHMENT VIRTUAL TRANSCRIPT DELIVERY

12-14. Most undergraduate and graduate universities no longer issue paper transcripts. These transcript requests are now requested by the student on the university's website. The student enters the recruiter's email address for transcript delivery. The university then sends an email to the recruiter with a link to download the student's transcripts. This greatly speeds up the process of compiling an applicant's source documents.

PART 4

Virtual Content Creation

Chapter 13

Strategy

13-1. A content strategy is a deliberate approach to planning, creating, distributing, and managing content with specific goals in mind. It serves as a guiding framework for crafting compelling and relevant content that resonates with the target audience. Unlike simply producing content to maintain activity, content strategy focuses on aligning content with the needs, preferences, and interests of the intended audience.

13-2. The significance of content strategy lies in its ability to establish a strong virtual presence, capture attention, and cultivate meaningful connections. Well-defined content strategies consider various elements, such as:

- Storytelling
- Marketing concepts
- Platform familiarity
- Posting calendars
- Intended Audience

13-3. By thoughtfully planning and executing content, organizations can effectively communicate the Army's values, mission, and opportunities. Well-made content represents both the individual's and the Army's brand. This nurtures engagement from the desired audiences and drives success in all virtual recruiting activities.

STORYTELLING

13-4. Virtual storytelling uses multimedia tools to bring narratives to life through a participatory and immersive experience. Virtual stories can be used to explain a concept, to reflect on a personal experience, to retell a historical event, or to make an argument.

13-5. Storytelling is an intrinsic part of human communication. It is a powerful tool that transcends time and connects people on a deeper emotional level. When creating content for virtual recruiting activities, harnessing the art of storytelling can ignite imagination, foster empathy, and inspire the audience to envision themselves as part of the Army.

13-6. Examples of storytelling include:

- A Future Soldier's weight loss journey
- A family tradition of service
- First or second-generation immigrants' path to service
- Personal Army stories
- Furthering personal and professional education
- Humanitarian efforts

TAPPING INTO EMOTIONS

13-7. Storytelling has the unique ability to evoke emotions, making it an effective means of connecting with the target audience. Many individuals are more influenced by emotion than logic when making decisions. Organizations can forge an emotional bond with the audience by crafting narratives that elicit excitement, pride, and inspiration.

AUTHENTICITY

13-8. Stories and content that convey authenticity directly support the two foundations of Army recruiting: trust and credibility. Audiences respond favorably to content that they deem to be authentic, as opposed to disingenuous sales pitches. Content that showcases diversity and inclusion within the Army creates a broader range of authentic connections.

STRUCTURE AND NARRATIVE ARC

13-9. A well-crafted story follows a defined structure. It has a narrative arc that engages the audience in a logical sequence from beginning to end. It takes the audience on a journey, captivating attention and guiding through a series of events that lead to a satisfying resolution. The narrative arc consists of several components:

- **Introduction:** This serves as the starting point of the story and sets the stage by providing necessary context and capturing the audience's interest.
- **Conflict or Challenge:** This central obstacle or problem that the story revolves around creates tension and captivates the audience's attention, driving them to seek a resolution. Examples include a personal struggle, a societal challenge, or a specific problem.
- **Overcoming the Challenge:** The story builds anticipation and maintains engagement as showcases the skills and resources used to overcome the challenge. The narrative creates a sense of excitement and possibility, motivating the audience to continue following the story.
- **Resolution:** The climax of the narrative arc demonstrates the impact and presents a satisfying conclusion. This is an opportunity to showcase success stories, achievements, or transformative experiences.

13-10. Structuring content requires considerations for pacing, transitions, and the overall flow of the narrative. Smooth transitions between different sections of the story help maintain coherence and keep the audience engaged. Incorporating elements of suspense, surprise, or emotional resonance can further enhance the experience. Organizations will ensure that the narrative aligns with the intended goals and values of the Army. Captivating and memorable stories resonate with the audience, spark curiosity, and motivate individuals to act.

VISUAL STORYTELLING

13-11. In the digital realm, visual storytelling is far more effective at capturing attention than text alone. Compelling visuals include videos, images, infographics, reels, carousels, gifs, and emojis. Visual elements help convey emotions and provide deeper context, providing a dynamic and immersive experience for the audience.

MARKETING CONCEPTS

HUMANIZING CONTENT

13-12. Showcasing the human side of the Army breaks down barriers and forges a deeper bond with the audience. Personal stories of challenges, triumphs, and growth can evoke empathy and inspire the audience. Humanizing content allows individuals to envision themselves as part of the Army, fostering a stronger emotional connection and motivation to explore further.

LOCALIZING CONTENT

13-13. Localizing content is tailoring content to resonate with a specific region or community. It considers the unique characteristics, interests, and cultural nuances of a region. Organizations customize content to ensure it speaks directly to the correct audience, understands local context, and is relatable. This incorporates region-specific references, landmarks, sports teams, language, slang, and cultural elements that resonate with the local community.

13-14. It also showcases success stories, initiatives, and events that highlight the Army's impact. By demonstrating an understanding of the local environment, organizations build trust, relevance, and a sense of belonging.

APPEALING TO SEGMENTS

13-15. All audiences are composed of diverse segments, each with unique interests, backgrounds, and aspirations. When interacting on social media, users tend to engage with members of the same segment. This includes segments with identities tied to schools, sports teams, hobbies, businesses, or geographic regions.

13-16. Fostering a deeper connection and relevance with segments will ultimately increase the likelihood of attracting individuals who align with the Army values. Understanding the distinct interests of segments allows organizations to develop content that appeals to specific motivations. Highlighting the camaraderie and sense of belonging within the Army is relatable to those who are passionate members of a segment. Engaging with segments can greatly enhance the effectiveness of virtual recruiting activities.

CONTENT STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

13-17. The framework for content strategy consists of four pillars (Uniqueness, Trust, Influence, and Relevance) and the four E's of marketing (Educate, Empower, Engage, and Entertain). The pillars provide an overarching strategic approach, while the E's provide detailed tactical guidance.

THE FOUR CONTENT STRATEGY PILLARS

13-18. **Uniqueness.** Three categories used to measure effectiveness compared to competitors is whether content is greater than, less than, or different than. Ideally, content is “greater” or “different” than. Engaging content highlights the unique aspects of the Army, showcasing what sets it apart from other career options or organizations. This attracts individuals who seek distinct experiences and challenges.

13-19. **Trust.** This is one of the foundations of recruiting. Content conveys credibility, authenticity, and transparency. Addressing potential concerns or misconceptions with accurate information establishes trust.

13-20. **Influence.** Leveraging influence involves using the power of social proof to amplify the Army's message and enhance its perceived value and desirability. This is accomplished by collaborating with influencers, partnering with reputable organizations, or showcasing endorsements from respected figures.

13-21. **Relevance.** Strong content remains relevant to the target audience's interests, aspirations, and needs. Staying up to date with trends, understanding preferences, and actively listening to feedback enables organizations to create content with relevancy.

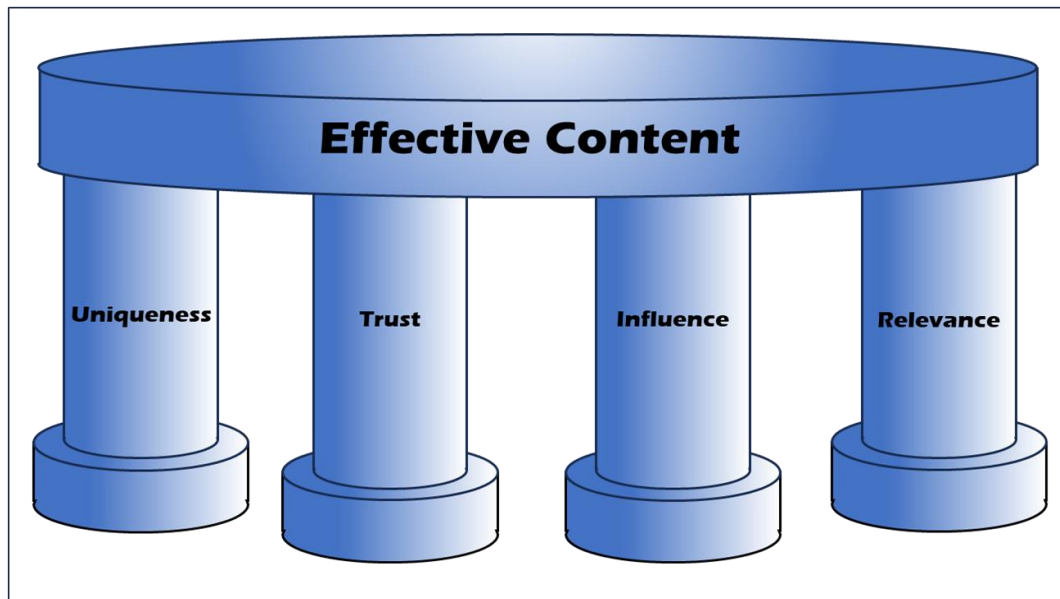


Figure 13-1. The Four Content Strategy Pillars

THE FOUR E'S OF MARKETING

13-22. These four concepts are used in planning each new piece of content to ensure that it accomplishes desired goals.

13-23. **Educate.** Educational content serves as a valuable resource that provides information and insights about the Army's mission, values, opportunities, and benefits. It guides the audience in making informed decisions and understanding the Army's role in personal and professional growth.

13-24. **Empower.** Empowering content inspires individuals by displaying how the Army provides skills, resources, and support to achieve goals. Organizations highlight success stories, advancement opportunities, and personal development experiences to motivate potential recruits and instill a sense of self-belief.

13-25. **Engage.** Engaging content captivates the audience and encourages interaction. It uses elements such as polls, quizzes, live chats, or virtual events that facilitate direct communication and connection. By fostering engagement, organizations establish a two-way dialogue, address questions and concerns, and build relationships with the audience.

13-26. **Entertain.** Entertaining content is enjoyable to consume. By leveraging storytelling, creativity, humor, or captivating visuals, organizations capture attention and interest. Entertainment value creates a positive perception of the Army.

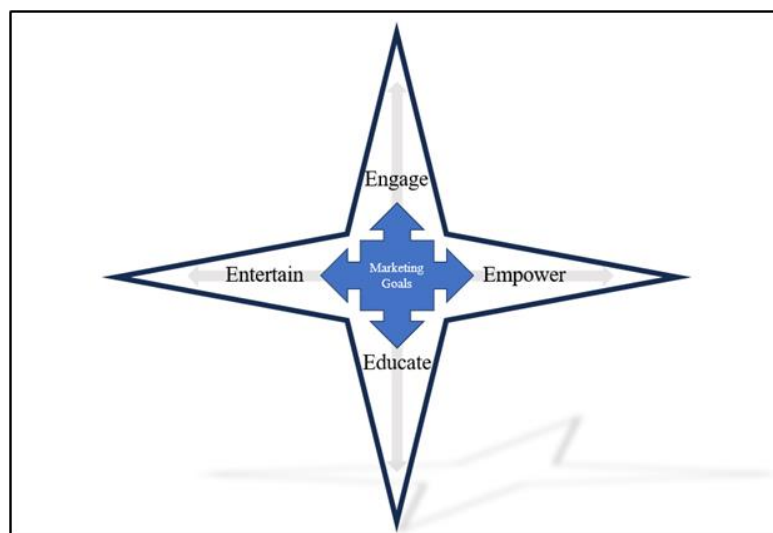


Figure 13-2. The Four E's of Marketing

MARKETING BENEFITS OVER FEATURES

13-27. It is important to understand the difference between benefits and features, and how to effectively prioritize them in content creation.

13-28. **Benefits.** Benefits refer to the intangible positive outcomes, advantages, or solutions that an individual can derive from joining the Army. Benefits highlight how these features contribute to personal growth, leadership development, educational opportunities, career advancement, financial stability, or a sense of purpose.

13-29. **Features.** Features are tangible and objective, highlighting what the Army possesses or offers. They are the technical aspects, incentives, attributes, or characteristics of the Army. These can include state-of-the-art equipment, specialized training programs, cutting-edge technology, opportunities for travel, health insurance, bonus money, or global deployment capabilities.

13-30. Effectively communicating the value proposition of the Army relies on knowing the distinction between these two concepts. For instance, the specialized military training (feature) can lead to enhanced leadership abilities, discipline, and problem-solving skills (benefits) that can be applied both in and out of the Army.

13-31. Market research indicates that benefits are more effective than features in generating interest and driving decision making. As an example, a discussion of the details of the Veterans Administration (VA) home loan program (feature) would be less effective than promoting home ownership (benefit) with a photo of a Soldier in front of a newly purchased house.

13-32. Highlighting the array of benefits the Army offers shifts the focus from showcasing technical specifications or incentives to demonstrating how the Army positively transforms lives. This resonates with audiences on a deeper level and inspires them to envision the positive impact that a career in the Army has.

PLATFORM FAMILIARITY

13-33. It is essential to be familiar with the distinct characteristics and purposes of different platform categories to effectively tailor content. Each social platform has its own culture, user demographics, and audience. Thus, each platform has different goals and ROI in support of the virtual strategy. Before using any platform, ensure its use is authorized under current policy.

TYPES OF PLATFORMS

13-34. Examples listed below are a select list of current industry leaders within each category and is not meant to be all inclusive.

SOCIAL NETWORKING PLATFORMS

13-35. Social networking platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram, revolve around connecting individuals and fostering social interactions with an emphasis on visual content. These platforms allow users to share updates, engage in conversations, and build communities. These platforms are used for shaping, lead generating, and prospecting activities.

PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING PLATFORMS

13-36. Professional networking platforms, exemplified by LinkedIn, are designed for career-oriented connections and industry insights. These platforms serve as virtual resumes, where professionals can showcase their skills, experiences, and professional achievements. These platforms can be leveraged to establish relationships with community partners, expand the external network, and promote career opportunities. They are used for shaping, lead generating, and prospecting activities.

MICROBLOGGING PLATFORMS

13-37. Microblogging platforms, like X (formerly Twitter), focus on concise and real-time content sharing. A common use of these platforms is to learn about and share current events (breaking news). With limited character counts per post, microblogging platforms encourage quick and impactful messaging that can be easily shared. The use of hashtags helps to guide conversations and identify trends. These platforms are used for shaping and lead generating activities.

13-38. Threads is a microblogging platform, similar to X (formerly Twitter). It was released by Meta in 2023 and garnered 100 million users in its first week. It has a 500-character limit and focuses on short, text-based updates and conversations. Posts also contain links, photos, or videos up to five minutes in length. It allows users to import profile information, contacts, and followers directly from Instagram. Threads posts have the ability to be shared on Instagram as a story, or as a link for other platforms. Once a Threads account is created and linked to an Instagram account, it cannot be deleted without deleting the Instagram account. At launch, it did not feature any advertising options. Future updates may allow social media managers to run advertising campaigns across all Meta platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Messenger, and Threads) via Meta Business Manager. The Threads application is not authorized for use on government devices at the time of publication, however the site is permissible. Check current policy before downloading any application to a government furnished device.

VIDEO-SHARING PLATFORMS

13-39. Video-sharing platforms, such as YouTube, Twitch, and Vimeo, enable the creation, sharing, and discovery of video content. These platforms offer a wide range of content formats including vlogging, podcasts, reacts, tutorials, unboxings, interviews, testimonials, and immersive storytelling. Examples of how organizations can leverage video-sharing platforms include showcasing Army experiences, providing informational videos about training programs, and sharing inspiring stories of current or former recruits. These platforms are used for shaping and lead generating activities.

13-40. Short-form content options like TikTok, YouTube Shorts, and Instagram Reels have gained immense popularity since 2020 with a focus on entertaining and engaging short videos. They are known for viral challenges, creative storytelling, and quick, bite-sized content. Organizations can leverage short-form content options to showcase the Army's vibrant culture, highlight unique training experiences, and participate in trending challenges. These options are used for shaping and lead generating activities.

TikTok is not currently authorized for recruiting purposes or on government issued devices.

NICHE-SPECIFIC PLATFORMS

13-41. Niche-specific platforms cater to specific interests or industries such as communities or industry-specific social networks. Examples include Discord, Handshake, military lifestyle and veteran communities, or school specific platforms like University of Florida's "Gator Network". These platforms gather like-minded individuals and provide a space for focused discussions and networking. Organizations engage with niche-specific platforms that overlap with the Army's areas of expertise or target audience interests. These platforms are used for shaping, lead generating, and prospecting activities.

JOB BOARDS

13-42. Job boards are platforms specifically designed for job seekers and employers to connect and facilitate the hiring process. Platforms such as Indeed, ZipRecruiter, and BetterTeam serve as centralized hubs where organizations post job openings, search for qualified candidates, and communicate with potential recruits. Specialized job boards like PracticeMatch and PracticeLink are of particular use to professional recruiters (medical, chaplain, and special operations). These platforms are used for lead generating and prospecting activities.

DISCUSSION FORUMS

13-43. Discussion forums provide a space for users to engage in discussions, ask questions, share insights, and exchange information on specific topics of interest. Examples like Reddit, Student Doctor Network, and Quora facilitate in-depth discussions and foster a sense of camaraderie among participants. There are dedicated sections or threads for different topics, ensuring that conversations remain organized and easily accessible. Users can participate in ongoing discussions, post their own questions or contributions, and receive responses from other members of the community. These platforms are used for shaping, lead generating, and prospecting activities.

LOCATION OR MAP PLATFORMS

13-44. Location platforms are virtual platforms that allow interested parties the ability to call, visit, or seek more information on a recruiting location. Keeping these platforms up to date drives an increase in the walk-in and call-in market. Examples of these platforms are Apple Maps, Bing Maps, Yelp, and Google Business.

13-45. With Google Business, organizations can update location, hours, and contact information. When maintaining a relevant account, it is key to respond to reviews, questions, and direct messages. Additionally, users can post event information, highlight Future Soldiers for the community to see, and upload pictures of recruiting stations and staff. Asking Future Soldiers to fill out reviews after enlistment that share the experience and recruiter's name is a good practice. Google Business is also a great resource for analytics in terms of tracking calls, search history, and map utilization for the station. Keeping up to date on these options builds trust and confidence as an active business. Google Business is used for shaping, lead generating, and prospecting activities. Figure 13-3 shows a list of actions that Google Business facilitates, and Figure 13-4 shows the type of information users update on Google Business.

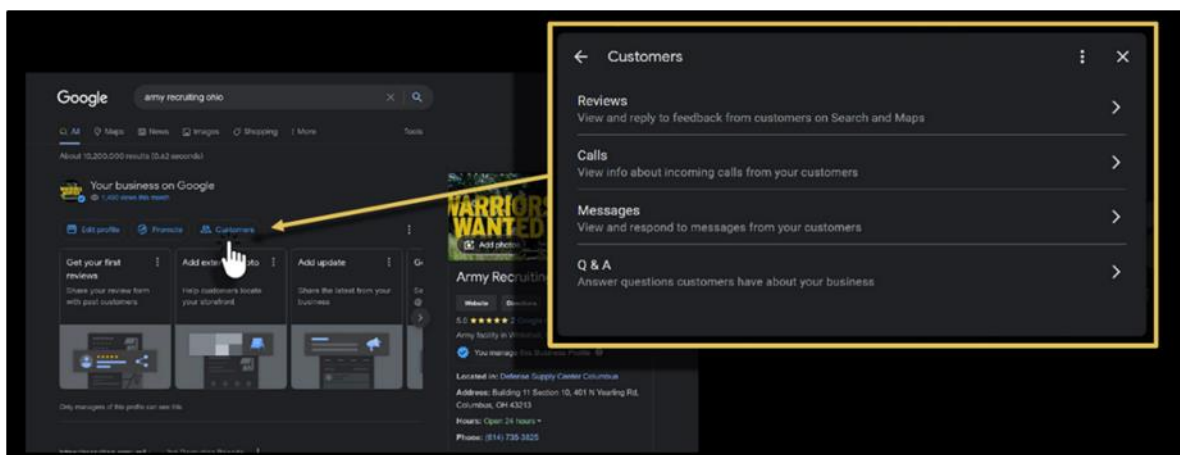


Figure 13-3. Google Business Actions

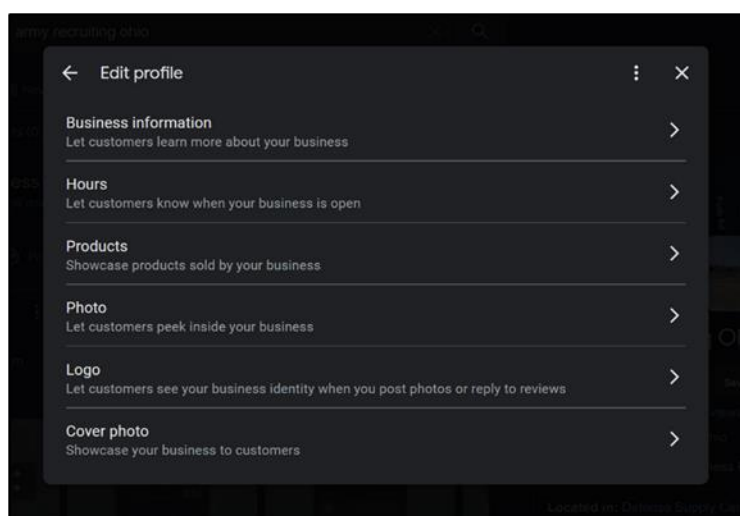


Figure 13-4. Google Business Information

13-46. Understanding the nuances of platform categories and adopting a platform-specific approach allows organizations to tailor their content effectively and ensure it resonates with the intended audience. This involves understanding needs, preferences, and interests specific to the platform used. Content aligns with the platform's unique features and user expectations to maximize the impact of virtual recruiting activities.

13-47. Content format, length, and posting frequency are considered when selecting a type. Types such as text, images, videos, and live streams will be used based on the preferences and requirements of each platform. The ideal content length and posting frequency will also vary widely across platform types. By optimizing content through a clear platform specific content strategy, organizations can avoid overwhelming or underwhelming followers.

13-48. Leveraging platform-specific features such as hashtags, schedulers, captions, tags, filters, and stories maximizes content impact and visibility. Staying attuned to platform-specific trends and relevant trending hashtags boosts visibility and connects those who are actively participating.

13-49. Current guidance and policy apply to content of every type on every platform. It is important to remain consistent, aligned with Army values, and representative of the Army's brand.

POST CALENDARS

13-50. A posting calendar is a tool used to plan and schedule content for publication on various platforms. Planning content in advance allows organizations to adopt a more thoughtful and deliberate approach to content creation. It includes elements such as recurring themes, discussion topics, and distribution channels. The calendar incorporates seasonal trends and upcoming events to enhance relevance and impact.

13-51. A consistent posting frequency ensures that the audience receives a regular stream of content while also providing predictability for social media managers and content creators. Working on a structured timeline allows creators to focus on high-quality content rather than constantly scrambling for ideas or rushing to meet deadlines with subpar content. The predictability enables time for brainstorming ideas, review, and refinement of content, conducting research, and acquiring any necessary resources or funding.

13-52. By maintaining a centralized posting calendar, different teams within an organization or across echelons can align their content creation efforts. For example, a battalion level posting calendar assigns a particular week for company to post original content and highlights that content during the company's assigned week. This minimizes time requirements for the companies while providing a continuous stream of fresh content for the battalion.

13-53. Collaboration and coordination are essential components of a successful content strategy and posting calendars facilitate these processes. They serve as a central reference point for leaders, social media managers, and content creators enabling teams to exchange ideas, provide feedback, and contribute to the overall content strategy.

CREATING A POSTING CALENDAR

13-54. The calendar will determine the optimal posting frequency on various platforms to maintain audience engagement while avoiding excessive content volume. Platforms have different algorithms that prioritize content based on factors such as recency, engagement, and relevance. Understanding these helps to optimize posting frequency. Posting content at different times and days and comparing the results with platform analytics helps fine-tune the posting schedule.

13-55. Content themes are overarching concepts that align with the organization's values while content topics are specific subjects that fall within these broader themes. Themes serve as guiding principles for content creation and ensure consistency across different pieces of content.

13-56. Diversifying topics to cater to different segments of the target audience will maintain engagement. Offering a mix of content types allow organizations to provide value to the audience and keep them engaged.

13-57. Available resources and content production capabilities are key considerations for leaders. Allocating resources and assigning responsibilities is essential for effective content creation and distribution. Developing a posting calendar involves considering the availability of resources such as time, budget, and personnel. It is crucial to allocate these resources strategically to ensure the smooth execution of the posting calendar. Increasing posting cadence requires a higher volume of content, which strains resources if not managed effectively. It is important to strike a balance between maintaining a consistent presence and ensuring the quality of the content produced.

13-58. At the station level, assigning responsibilities to the team streamlines content creation and distribution processes. For example, all recruiters are tasked to assist with content creation by taking photos and videos while the social media manager is tasked with creating captions and posting the content. Content creation and social media management is a team effort. When clearly defined it allows for accountability and ensures that the workload is evenly distributed.

13-59. Key takeaways for creating a posting calendar are:

- Consistency is Key: Successful posting calendars rely on consistent and regular content delivery. Establishing a routine and sticking to it builds audience trust and engagement.
- Audience-Centric Approach: Understanding the target audience's preferences, behaviors, and online habits is crucial for optimizing posting schedules and content formats.

- Variety and Creativity: Incorporating diverse content types, formats, and approaches keeps the audience engaged and interested.
- Flexibility and Adaptability: Posting calendars remain flexible to accommodate changes, emerging trends, and unexpected opportunities.

INTENDED AUDIENCE

13-60. It is important to consider the audience when developing a content strategy. More information can be found on audiences in Chapter 4.

Chapter 14

Preparation

MARKET RESEARCH

14-1. Virtual market research is conducted to see how civilian counterparts are attracting professional employees. It helps determine what the struggles are for individuals in the civilian sector that the Army could relieve. Content is created based on this research.

14-2. Outside normal intelligence channels (S-2, A&PA, recruiting systems), the digital domain provides an opportunity to conduct independent market research.

14-3. Recruiters review competitor's features and benefits to identify job-seeker's motivations. This information drives the creation of content targeting the portion of the market lost to competitors. This is accomplished using job listings, websites, and social media posts. The review of competitor's job listings is particularly beneficial in professional recruiting for comparing benefits.

14-4. Recruiters review members of the target audience's social media profiles. This gives insight on current trends, interests, and group memberships. An example of this is reviewing a high school senior's Instagram account and finding pictures of them fishing, rebuilding a car, and playing on the school's football team. This enables the recruiter to create content that aligns with these interests.

14-5. Online search techniques are employed to gain intelligence about events taking place in the assigned footprint. Recruiters create content highlighting Army features and benefits relevant to these events.

14-6. While only a few tactics are listed above, there are a wide variety of creative intelligence gathering methods accessible through the digital domain.

THE THREE P'S OF SOCIAL MEDIA

14-7. It is important to consider the three P's of social media (People, Platform, and Purpose) when creating content.

- People. This is the "who" the message is intended for. This can be intended for a generalized audience or a specified group. An example of this is identifying recent high school graduates.
- Platform. This is the "where" in the process of identifying which platform or digital space the intended audience is present and active. An example of this is identifying what platform recent high school graduates use the most.
- Purpose. This is the "why" the content will resonate with the intended audience. It is important to consider what reaction or emotion is intended to be elicited from the target. An example of this is identifying which feature or benefit motivates recent high school graduates to complete a call-to-action.

14-8. When put together, a complete example would be a post on Instagram (Platform) with a message directed to recent high school graduates (People) highlighting quick ship bonuses and adventure (Purpose).

SOURCING

14-9. Sourcing is the process of finding and obtaining relevant and reliable information as resources to create content. Categories of sources are USAREC generated, audience generated, network generated, and recruiter generated. It is important to use sources that are approved, reputable, and verifiable.

USAREC GENERATED CONTENT

14-10. USAREC generated content is brand compliant, follows all current regulation and policy guidelines, and is intended for mass distribution. It is not intended to take the place of localized content. Examples of this content can be found at the following locations:

Multimedia Dropdown (IKROme)

14-11. The “Multimedia” dropdown menu is found on the IKROme homepage and contains a multitude of social media resources. See Figure 14-2 below:



Figure 14-2. IKROme Multimedia Dropdown Menu

Branding Guidelines

14-12. Located at <https://usarec.ent.box.com/v/BAYCB-Army-Brand>, the information here provides specific guidance and resources for all content containing elements of the Army’s brand.

Social Media content (IKROme)

14-13. Located at <https://usarec.ent.box.com/v/socialmediacontent>, the content here contains a wide variety of images and videos for careers, programs, incentives, testimonials, and templates.

AUDIENCE GENERATED CONTENT

14-14. Audience generated content is commonly referred to as user generated content (UGC) in the marketing field. It refers to any form of content created and shared by the audience or users of a brand or platform. It is a valuable source of diverse and creative content that supplements an organization's content creation efforts resulting in a more dynamic and engaging content strategy. This includes customer reviews, testimonials, social media posts, videos, and blogs. UGC holds significant value for organizations as it provides authentic and unbiased content that resonates with the audience while building trust and credibility.

14-15. Encouraging UGC expands audience participation as value is added when a user's content is shared or featured. It serves as social proof, showcases real experiences and opinions, and helps others make informed decisions. A strengthened relationship leads to brand loyalty and advocacy.

14-16. Strategies for encouraging and selecting and displaying UGC include:

- UGC contests inspire users to create content related to the brand.
- Creating a brand hashtag and promoting it across different channels encourages users to share content and enables easy discovery.
- Collaborating with influencers or brand advocates to generate UGC and amplify its reach.
- Showcasing and featuring UGC highlights the contributions of the audience and creates a sense of community.

14-17. Responding to UGC, whether through comments, likes, or shares, demonstrates that the organization values and appreciates user contributions. Once selected, UGC can be repurposed and shared across various platforms. Tagging and acknowledging the creators of UGC maintains transparency and fosters a sense of authenticity that strengthens the bond between the brand and its audience.

NETWORK GENERATED CONTENT

14-18. Network generated content refers to any content that is selected and sorted from various sources within a network or community. Leveraging the collective knowledge and expertise of a network provides a way to discover, share, and engage with content that aligns with specific interests. This allows organizations to filter through the vast amount of information available and present the most valuable and interesting items.

SELECTING AND DISPLAYING CONTENT

14-19. Handpicking, organizing, and sharing relevant and high-quality pieces of content is critical to growing and retaining an audience. Content examples include articles, videos, images, or infographics from different sources that resonate with the target audience. Selecting and displaying network generated content involves understanding the target audience, staying up to date with the latest trends and developments, and choosing the most valuable content to share. An example of this is creating a meme. A video or image is taken from an outside source and then words are added to create a new piece of content.

SORTING CONTENT

14-20. Content sorting involves consolidating content on a particular subject from various sources into a collection. This creates a centralized hub of information that offers users a diverse range of perspectives, opinions, and insights, fostering a comprehensive understanding of that subject. An example of this is the weekly email from USAREC PAO that gathers all news stories related to USAREC in one location.

NETWORK GENERATED CONTENT SOURCES

14-21. Content comes from various sources, to include:

- News sites and publications: News sites and publications are valuable sources for current and up-to-date information. When selecting news sources, it is important to consider credibility, reliability, and adherence to journalistic standards.
- Blogs, Vlogs, and online magazines: Blogs, Vlogs, and online magazines cover a wide range of topics and provide insights from industry experts, influencers, and enthusiasts. Influential blogs and niche publications like TechCrunch, Mashable, Army Times, and National Geographic can offer unique perspectives and in-depth analysis. Organizations evaluate the credibility and expertise of the authors or contributors when using these content sources.
- Social media accounts: Social media platforms such as X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, and LinkedIn are rich sources of network generated content. Following accounts or searching hashtags related to specific interests allows discovery of valuable content. When sourcing from social media, exercise caution and verify the information is from reliable sources before sharing.

- Sprinklr: Battalions have access to find, repurpose, and share an extensive collection of content from a variety of U.S. Army organizations through the Sprinklr platform.
- Templates: Templates provide a framework or structure for content like social media graphics or emails that can be easily replicated and customized. The use of templates efficiently produces new content across platforms while maintaining consistency in presentation and branding.
- Defense Visual Information Distribution Service (DVIDS): DVIDS is a Defense Media Activity owned and operated multimedia platform. DVIDS contains interviews, articles, images, videos that are authorized for recruiting use on all virtual platforms. DVIDS notably contains b-roll (supplemental) footage that is used to produce custom content pieces.
- Media Collections: Media collections like Flickr contain photos, videos, and graphics. The official U.S. Army Flickr's content is authorized for recruiting use on all virtual platforms.

ATTRIBUTION AND COPYRIGHT COMPLIANCE

14-22. When selecting and repurposing content, organizations prioritize copyright compliance and proper attribution. Obtaining permission from content creators, crediting original sources, and adhering to fair use guidelines are essential to maintain ethical and legal standards. This not only demonstrates respect for intellectual property rights but also fosters collaboration and positive relationships with other industry professionals.

14-23. Drawing network generated content from diverse sources provides a well-rounded and comprehensive view of a particular topic or area of interest. Careful selection and evaluation of content sources is critical to ensure quality, accuracy, and relevance.

RECRUITER GENERATED CONTENT SOURCES

14-24. Recruiter generated content is original content created by the user with the intent to resonate with the local market and community. Through photography, video, written creations (articles, stories, etc.), and graphic creations the user catches the eye of viewers with identifiable local landmarks and landscapes. A common misconception is that the latest equipment and software are necessary to create quality content. Modern cellular devices and a variety of applications enable users to capture high quality pictures and videos. Additionally, these devices facilitate editing and assembly of content.

14-25. It is good practice to habitually capture photos and video regardless. Content from special events as well as every day activities are of value as recruiter generated content. Though the user may not have an instant use for the media, they build a portfolio to pull from when need or inspiration arises. The more media available to work with the better.

Pictures

14-26. Make a habit of taking pictures with the "live" setting if available. These photos enable manipulation if the subject of the photo is actively moving. Additionally, live photos can be employed as small clips in Instagram reels. For still shots, "portrait" mode gives the user a professional touch. It focuses on the subject of the photo providing clarity while slightly blurring the background to accentuate the subject of the shot. When in a controlled environment take lighting, distance, and framing into consideration.

Videos

14-27. It is important in terms of capturing video to know on which platform the video is intended to be deployed. The first consideration is to determine which orientation to capture the video. For example, if the video is intended for Instagram or similar platforms, it is best to capture while holding the phone in "portrait" or vertically. If creating longer content that would be better suited for sites such as YouTube, it is best to capture in "landscape" or horizontally. When selecting a location to film, consider lighting as well as background noise.

14-28. Using transitional movements when filming helps make transitions smoother (panning, zooming, tilting, fading to black). For example, moving the camera towards the subject if intending to use a zoom effect

later in post-production simplifies the process. If capturing b-roll footage, it is a good idea to shoot from multiple angles and styles to have more options to choose from in the future.

Editing Capabilities

14-29. A large number of editing programs and software are available to edit photos and videos. When using government devices, it is important to know the current list of approved applications. From time to time, the authorization status of applications changes. Be sure to revisit the approved list periodically. When using a government issued iPhone to transfer media to a desktop or share with others in the organization, use OneDrive or Teams. When recruiter generated content incorporates media from other sources, it becomes network generated. A prime example of a free editing program is Photopea (<https://www.photopea.com/>). This browser-based site is similar to Adobe Photoshop, is accessible on a government computer, and has the capability to open and edit Photoshop files (.psd). Other examples include:

Free Software

- •iMovie – <https://www.apple.com/imovie/> (predownloaded on GOV phone)
- •Poster My Wall - <https://www.postermymwall.com>
- •Canva – <https://www.canva.com> (Free version available)
- •Blender - <https://www.blender.org/features/video-editing/>
- •Mematic- <https://www.mematic.net/>
- •CapCut - <https://www.capcut.com/>
- •Native device photo and video editing.
- •Social Media Platforms – most social media platforms provide the user with a limited ability to edit photos and videos through their application.

Paid Software

- •Adobe Editing Suite: Spark, Premier Pro, Audition, Lightroom, Photoshop
- •Sony Vegas - <https://www.vegascreativesoftware.com/us/vegas-pro/>
- •Splice - <https://spliceapp.com/>

14-30. A good practice for requesting training and assistance when creating recruiter generated content is to reach out to subject matter experts at higher echelons such as the BN Social Media Specialist and the VRS.

ASSEMBLY

14-31. After content is sourced, assembly occurs. There are four elements to social media content and posting (media, caption, call-to-action, and tags or hashtags). Assembly is the process of combining the four elements into a post or piece of content. These are listed below.



Figure 14-3. The Elements of a Social Media Post

MEDIA

14-32. Media is the heart of content. This is typically a link, image, or video but can also include text and articles. It is important that media remains consistent with Army branding and any text embedded is readable, concise, and grammatically correct.

CAPTION

14-33. The caption highlights the media included in the post or piece of content. It is critical that the caption is grammatically correct and remains consistent with Army branding and overall message. The call-to-action is often located within the caption.

CALL TO ACTION

14-34. A call to action creates a sense of urgency or challenges the reader. In Figure 14-4 below, there are two calls to action. The first is a challenge to the reader to "step forward and make a difference with the Army Medical Department". The second drives lead generation by asking the reader to click a link for more information.

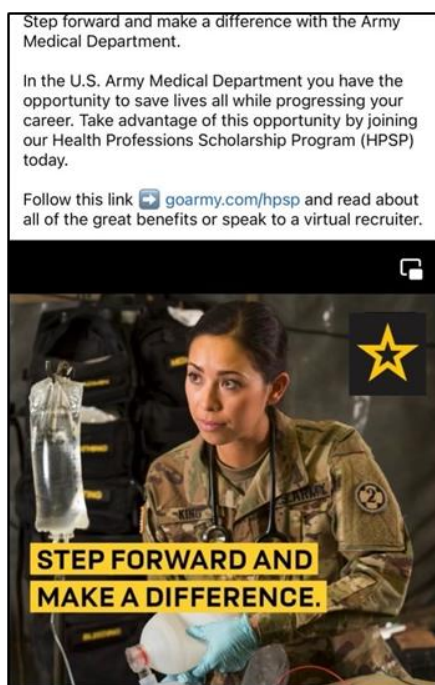


Figure 14-4. Sample Call-to-Action Post

TAGS AND HASHTAGS

14-35. Tags and Hashtags are tools used on most digital platforms but prominently on Facebook, Instagram, and X (formerly Twitter). Tags are used to directly connect with a user, organization, or location within a post. Hashtags are used to connect conversations and trends or to identify the themes of a post. Hashtags are followable and searchable, and clicking a hashtag will present a list of all posts that include that hashtag. In Figure 14-5 below, the hashtags #GoArmyHealthcare and #ArmyHPSP are used. Additional helpful hashtags for medical recruiters are #pre-med, #futurephysician, and #futuredoctor. These hashtags are likely to be frequented by pre-medical or medical students which are the target market for that post.



Figure 14-5. Sample Hashtag Post

QUICK RESPONSE CODES

14-36. Quick Response (QR) codes are valuable tools to promote campaigns, events, and drive traffic. QR codes are generated with a predetermined destination such as a website, a specific landing page, product page, video, social media profile, survey form, or digital lead card. There are numerous online tools and applications that enable recruiters to generate QR codes for free. A best practice when using QR codes is to modify the color, add a logo, or incorporate a call-to-action to make it visually appealing and on-brand.

14-37. Ensure the QR code remains scannable and easy to recognize. It is important to be aware of where QR codes are placed. A QR code placed on Instagram is unlikely to be scanned as most of its users view Instagram on mobile devices. Advanced features of QR codes include the ability to track metrics such as the number of scans, conversion rates, user demographics, and popular scanning locations. This enables command and control elements to analyze data, gain insights, and refine future virtual recruiting strategies.



Figure 14-6. QR Code

EVERGREEN CONTENT

14-38. Evergreen content refers to timeless and enduring content that retains its relevance and value over an extended period. Unlike timely or seasonal content, evergreen content remains useful and informative, regardless of current trends or events. It continues to attract traffic, engagement, and organic search visibility long after its initial publication. It can also be reposted and repurposed multiple times across various platforms.

14-39. It typically focuses on educational, informative, or instructional content that answers common questions, offers solutions to problems, or provides valuable insights. Evergreen content can take various forms such as comprehensive guides, tutorials, how-to articles, FAQs, glossaries, and resources.

14-40. Topics that address fundamental concepts, core principles, or timeless challenges are prime candidates for evergreen content. Examples include videos about Basic Training, Airborne and Ranger schools, and map reading instructions. Organizations should revisit and update evergreen content periodically to ensure its accuracy and relevance.

14-41. Incorporating evergreen content provides lasting benefits to the content strategy. It establishes the organization as a trusted source of information, drives consistent organic traffic, and serves as a valuable resource that can be shared across different channels and repurposed in various formats.

Appendix A

Operations Order Template

A-1. An Operations Order (OPORD) follows a specific format. Like a School Recruiting Plan OPORD, a virtual strategy OPORD is published at brigade level with a battalion FRAGO providing modifications and guidance.

EXAMPLE ORDER

1. SITUATION. In a dynamic virtual environment, with social media advancements and extensive online platform options, the focus of the public continues to shift. The influence of the virtual environment has changed engagement, marketing, and advertisement strategies. The 11th Recruiting Brigade will continue to adapt and adjust its strategies to meet the recruiting mission.

2. MISSION. 11th Recruiting Brigade establishes an integrated virtual strategy to dominate the virtual domain and enhance effectiveness of all recruiting functions.

3. EXECUTION.

a. Commander's Intent. Dominate recruiting operations in the virtual domain by developing and implementing a virtual strategy that enhances existing capabilities and modernizes virtual efforts.

(1) Purpose. The purpose of this program is to provide direction, tools, and training for the creation and maintenance of a robust online presence. Ensure effective online communication.

(2) Key Tasks.

(a) Establish and enhance relationships with influencers and community partners utilizing social media platforms.

(b) Generate interest and awareness for the Army targeting markets through an integrated online presence.

(c) Create innovative lead generation tactics and support effective virtual prospecting efforts.

(d) Synchronize efforts between echelons to maximize efficiency and further streamline virtual operations.

(e) Establish and enforce baseline standards for creating and maintaining social media platforms supported by sustained analytics and ROI expectations.

(f) Provide training, clear guidance, and funding for virtual efforts.

b. Concept of the Operation. The 11th Recruiting Brigade efforts are conducted in three phases.

(1) Phase I: Preparation. This phase begins on 01 July 2023. During this phase, all necessary tasks are completed to establish and audit a virtual presence IAW this OPORD in preparation for FY24. Training is provided; uniform standards and strategy are developed. Battalion FRAGOs and company and station plans are developed. The conclusion of this phase is on 30 September 2023.

(2) Phase II: Execution and Sustainment. This phase begins on 01 October 2023. All echelons will execute finalized CONOPs and comply with all minimum standards. Weekly reporting is implemented to ensure compliance. There are quarterly requirements for training, reporting, and analysis. This phase ends on 30 September 2024.

(3) Phase III: Reset. This phase takes place from 01 July – 30 September 2024. During this phase, an AAR is completed and a new OPORD is published for the FY25 Virtual Strategy that takes effect on 01 October 2024.

(4) End State. 11th Recruiting Brigade produces and sustains the most influential online military recruiting presence across all branches.

(5) Suspense. (Expand on suspense dates and requirements)

c. Task to Brigade Staff. (This breaks down responsibilities of the various BDE staff elements, to include A&PA, BDE S-3, MMA, S-8, and ESS).

d. Task to subordinate units: (This breaks down responsibilities, requirements, and deadlines for battalions)

e. Coordinating Instructions. (As appropriate)

4. SUSTAINMENT. No Change

5. COMMAND AND SIGNAL.

a. Command: N/A

b. Signal: Point of Contact (POC) is BDE S3

Enclosures: CONOP includes enclosures that provide additional details. Examples of enclosures include:

- Timelines
- Standards and requirements
- Battalion FRAGO template
- Company and station key tasks
- Company virtual recruiting plan template

Battalion FRAGO: Battalions develop a virtual recruiting strategy with a FRAGO to the brigade OPORD. This FRAGO provides more detailed guidance and tasks for companies. Additional topics include:

- Tasks to BN Staff, including VRS, A&PA, and S-3
- Password control

- Standards and compliance
- Metrics and analysis tracking requirements
- Assessment and plan adjustments
- Training plans
- Funded activities and advertising
- Fusion Cell coordination

Appendix B

Virtual Recruiting Plan

B-1. The virtual recruiting plan, like a concept of operations (CONOP), provides specific guidance for implementation of the virtual strategy.

B-2. At the brigade and battalion levels, the virtual recruiting plan is broad and focuses on standards:

- Minimum posting standards for each platform.
- Training plan.
- Metrics that will be tracked for each platform.
- Reporting requirements.
- Commander's vision and areas of emphasis.

B-3. At the company and station levels, the virtual recruiting plan addresses specific and localized items. This includes a current assessment and goals to strive for. The goals are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time bound. Areas to address include:

- How will individual recruiter accounts be incorporated into virtual strategy implementation?
- Systems discipline.
- Posting calendar.
- ROI goals for each platform.
- Engagement, growth, and other metric goals for each platform.

B-4. An integral part of a virtual recruiting plan is a content strategy for each platform. A content strategy factors in goals, target audience, and local market. Each platform's content strategy is unique, as each platform has variances in goals and targeted audiences. Examples of strong content strategy items include:

- Use of local hashtags that are prevalent (i.e., those associated with cities, schools, sports teams, and colleges).
- Use of tags.
- List of local community partners, businesses, and influencers to collaborate with.
- Targeted high schools and colleges.
- Planned Army and community events.
- Future Soldier involvement.
- Generating reviews and recommendations.
- Posting calendar.
- Designation of duties.

B-5. The designation of duties ensures all personnel are involved with the virtual recruiting plan. For example, a station with eight personnel tasks each individual recruiter to provide the station social media manager with one piece of content per month. This ensures the social media manager then has enough content to modify, caption, and post across the station's various accounts in accordance with the minimum requirements and posting calendar.

Appendix C

NCOER Bullet Examples

C-1. The below NCOER bullet examples are designed to be used as a starting point when recognizing a Soldier for virtual efforts. It is important to ensure that bullets built from these examples are accurate and relevant to the rated Soldier's accomplishments.

- Directed the efforts of 28 NCOs in their management and maintenance of over 100 social media accounts.
- Oversaw BN virtual recruiting efforts that resulted in over 200 enlistments: a 36% increase from virtual sources in previous FY.
- Effectively managed a budget of \$25,000 to maximize online marketing efforts across BN's area of responsibility.
- Created localized and innovative content that resulted in a reach of 300,000 across target market.
- Conducted audit of BN virtual presence to ensure 100% compliance with new branding campaign and USAREC standards.
- Oversaw 49% growth of company's virtual presence that included 35 accounts across six platforms which reached over 200K.
- Displayed mastery of virtual recruiting operations and provided content creation training to over 30 Soldiers in the company.
- Commended by BDE Marketing Officer for social media presence; station recognized with company's virtual marketing award for FY 21.
- Developed innovative marketing strategy that involved all team members and increased virtual lead generation by 50%.
- Selected by the battalion commander to serve as Virtual Recruiting Leader; generated 13 new prospects across the AO.
- Devised a strategic virtual prospecting plan that was adopted across the company footprint resulting in 27 more enlistments from virtual means than same period last year.
- Innovated virtual recruiting techniques; directly resulted in the boarding and selection of five Medical Service Corps direct officers.
- Used critical thinking to generate four "virtual" recruiting stations via Google throughout the OE to expand outreach.

Appendix D

Audits

ACCOUNT AUDIT CHECK LISTS

D-1. The creation of audit checklists allows for the effective setup and maintenance of a consistent online presence. While some items are consistent across all platforms, it is important to create a unique checklist for each platform or account. The following examples are not all inclusive but include many of the major items to check for. It is a best practice to complete a full audit every six months (battle rhythm).

FACEBOOK

- Profile photo and cover photos are in accordance with Army branding.
- Address.
- Phone number.
- Email address.
- Website link.
- Include “This is the official account of...” in the profile.
- Linked to Instagram account.
- “Service Area” updated to reflect all major cities covered.
- Social links updated to other accounts.
- Make note of any duplicate pages or pages not under control.
- Battalion controls Meta Business Suite, as well as admin rights for all page users.
- Link to USAREC’s privacy policy
(https://www.goarmy.com/privacy.html?fbclid=IwAR1D8U_0bFKNkQEM_YaxXbMY8KLwJ0L0jGP9pms4kjK96Ox84Z_s3s3Zdg).
- Legal terms listed under “Impressum.”

Example legal terms: “Comments and posts that violate any of the guidelines listed below may be removed: • Do not post graphic, obscene, explicit, or racial comments. We also do not allow comments that are abusive, hateful, vindictive, or intended to defame anyone or any organization. • Do not post any solicitations (i.e.: asking users to “like” your Facebook page, visit your website, sign a petition, contribute to a fundraiser). • Do not post advertisements, prize contests or giveaways. This includes promotion or endorsement of any financial, commercial, or non-governmental agency. Similarly, we do not allow attempts to defame or defraud any financial, commercial, or non-governmental agency. • Do not post details about an ongoing investigation or legal or administrative proceeding that could prejudice the processes or could interfere with an individual’s rights. • Apparent spamming or trolling will be removed and may cause the author(s) to be blocked from the page without notice. • Do not post copyrighted or trademarked images or graphics. Imagery posted on the Facebook wall should be owned by the user. • Do not post comments, photos or videos that suggest or encourage illegal activity. • Do not post political propaganda. • Do not post documents of any kind. • All information posted to social media sites will be unclassified.”

X (FORMERLY TWITTER)

- Profile photo and cover photos are in accordance with Army branding.
- Account is set up as a “professional profile”.
- Category set to “Recruiting Agency” or other appropriate selection.
- Under “Profile Spotlight” address, phone number, business hours, and website are updated.

- Bio states “This is the official account of...”.
- Battalion maintains password control.
- Recovery email set to an account that can be accessed by multiple people (no point of failure).
- Make note of any duplicate pages or pages not under control.

INSTAGRAM

- Profile photo and cover photos are in accordance with Army branding.
- Battalion controls Meta Business Suite, as well as password control for account.
- Recovery email set to an account that can be accessed by multiple people (no point of failure).
- Bio states “This is the official account of...”.
- Website listed.
- Account set up as a “professional account”.
- Account linked to corresponding Facebook page.
- Category set to “Armed Forces” or other appropriate selection.
- Address, phone number, and email are listed and correct.
- Make note of any duplicate pages or pages not under control.

GOOGLE BUSINESS

- Battalion has ownership of Google Business profile.
- Bio states “This is the official account of...”.
- Profile photo is in accordance with Army branding.
- Address, phone number, and website are updated.
- Photos of inside and outside of office are posted.
- It is a best practice to post photos of assigned personnel.
- “Service Area” is updated to include all cities covered.
- Battalion grants admin rights to appropriate personnel in the organization and maintains access roster.

BATTALION WEBSITE: EXAMPLE ([HTTPS://RECRUITING.ARMY.MIL/9THBDE/99BN](https://recruiting.army.mil/9thBDE/99BN))

- Every battalion website has three pages that battalions keep up to date by sending update requests to brigade.
- Main Page: Typically has vision statement, objectives, mailing address, and contact info updated for all HQ sections and key personnel.
- About Page: Typically has photos of current command team, links to their bios, battalion overview, battalion history, and resource links.

POSTING COMPLIANCE AUDITS

Compliance audits are completed to verify whether organizations are maintaining an active presence in accordance with the minimum standards and directed posting schedule. It is a best practice to complete a compliance audit of all accounts monthly.

During a monthly compliance audit, the following items are tracked for each platform:

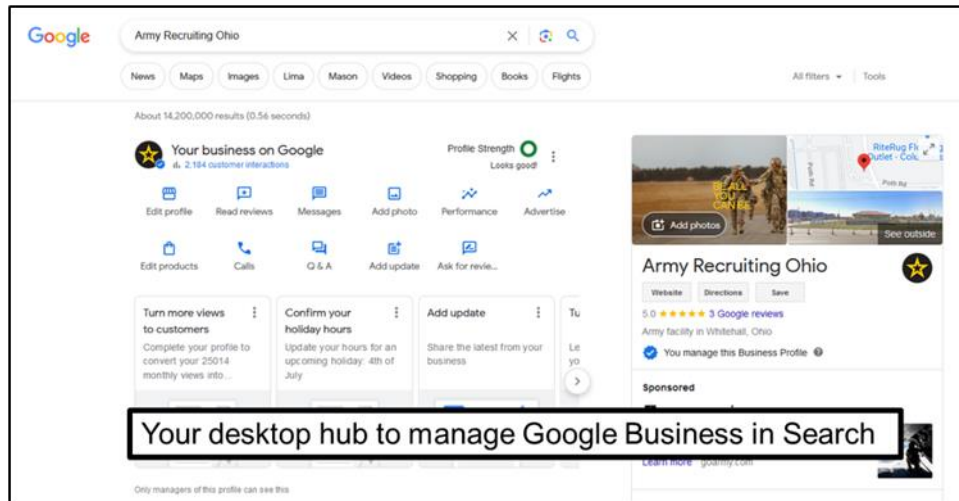
- Date of last post.
- Number of total posts for the month.
- Verification of compliance with posting consistency standards. For example, a station may have posted four times in a month with a standard of once per week. If the station posted all four posts in a single week, then it would be noted as non-complaint.

Appendix E

Google Business Guide

MAINTAINING A GOOGLE BUSINESS

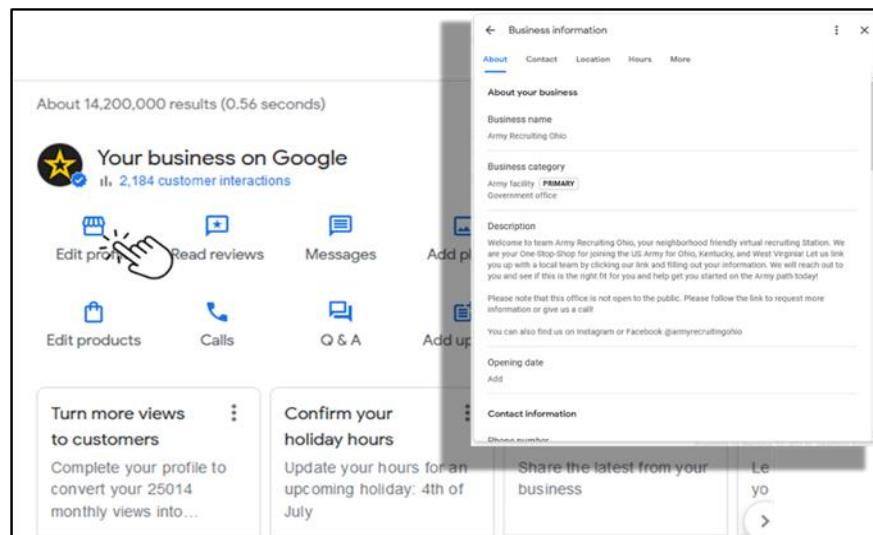
E-1. This appendix contains guidance intended to familiarize users with Google Business pages to keep them up to date and maximize ROI.



Appendix E-1. Google Business Hub

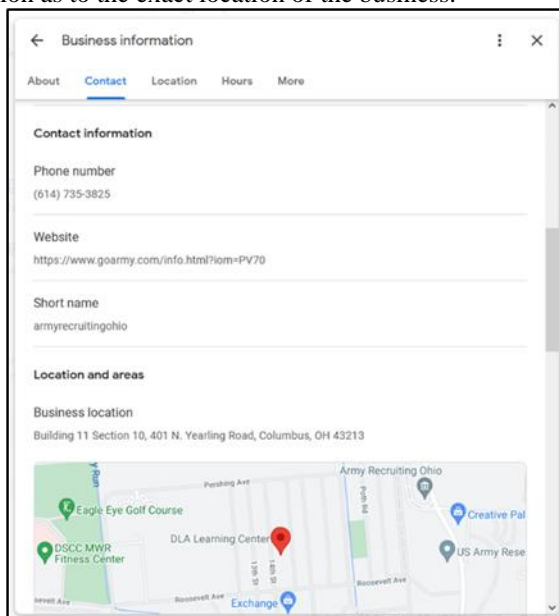
EDITING PROFILE INFORMATION

E-2. In edit profile the Google Business Manager or owner can edit basic profile information. The first tab allows editing of the business name and description.



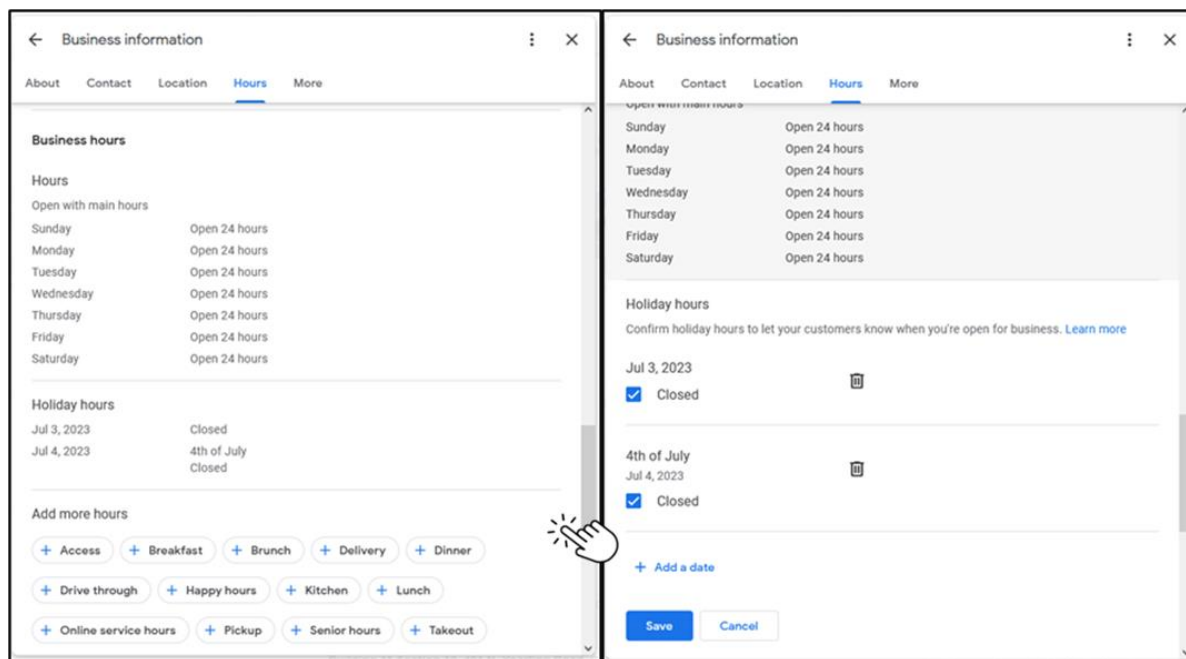
Appendix E-2. Edit Profile

E-3. Contact information and location are crucial to the call-in and walk-in market. Ensure the phone number listed is active and monitored regularly. Verified that the address listed is current and that the red pin is located on the exact location of the entrance. Editors can change the location of the pin if it is incorrect to ensure there is no confusion as to the exact location of the business.



Appendix E-3. Business Information

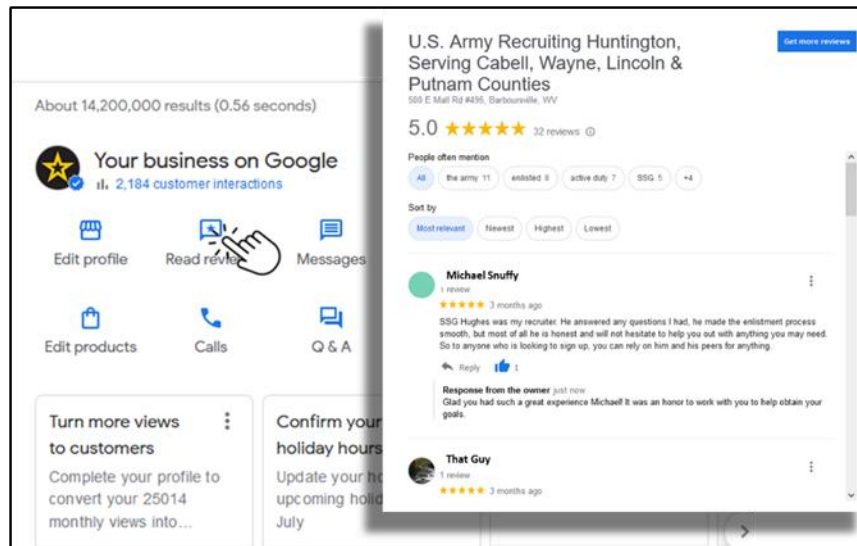
E-4. In the edit profile section, the hours of operation require the most frequent updates. Ensure the general hours of operation are accurate and guarantee personnel will be present. Any day of no schedules activities (DONSA), training, or holiday that will remove all personnel from the office is updated in "Holiday Hours."



Appendix E-4. Hours of Operation

REVIEWS

E-5. To access and respond to reviews, select “read reviews”.

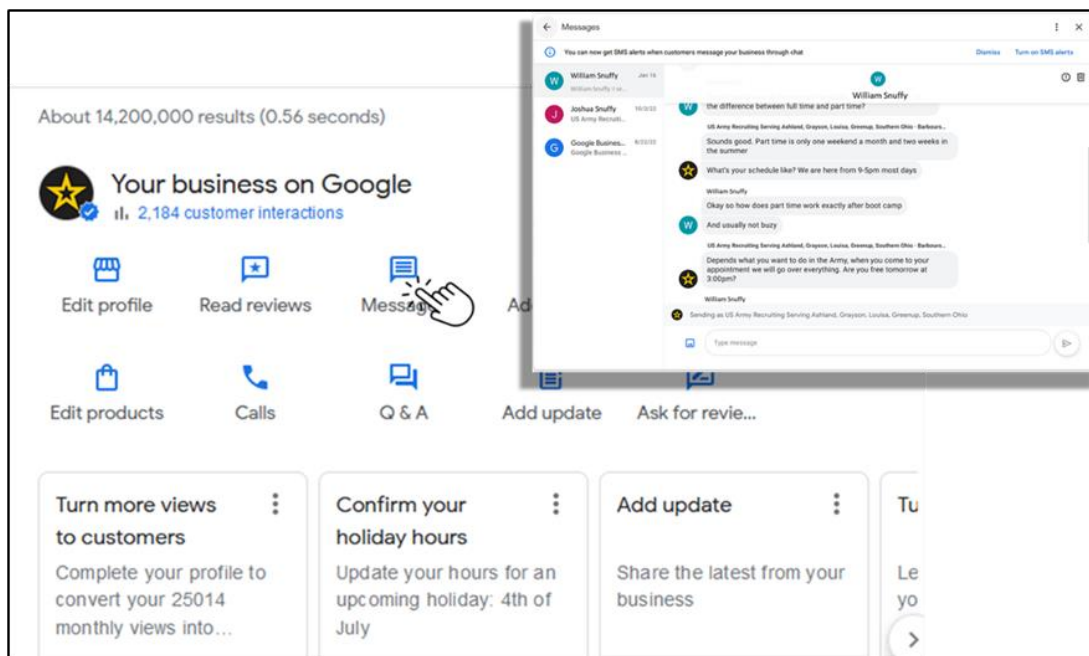


Appendix E-5. Read Reviews

E-6. This section allows a user to respond and react to reviews. It is critical that reviews contain the following information (if applicable): A personal experience, the recruiter's name, school attended, MOS, and incentive(s) received. Additionally, including the reason for joining or sharing a personal story makes a review more impactful.

MESSAGES

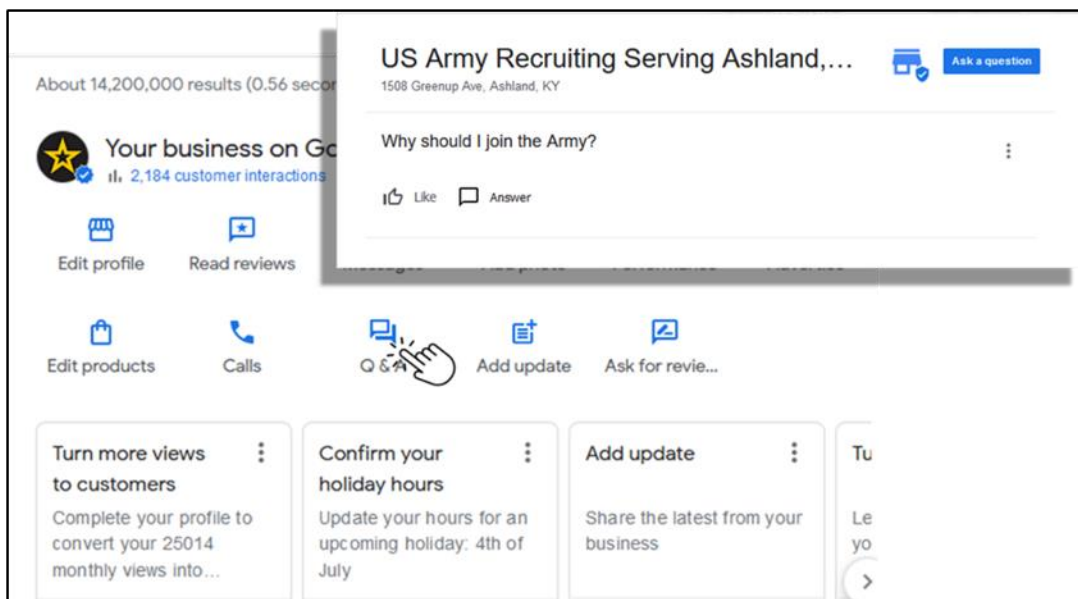
E-7. Turning on messaging allows leads to contact the station through direct messages. Ensure not to ask the lead to share any PII over the platform and move the conversation to a call or in-person when possible.



Appendix E-6. Messaging

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (Q&A)

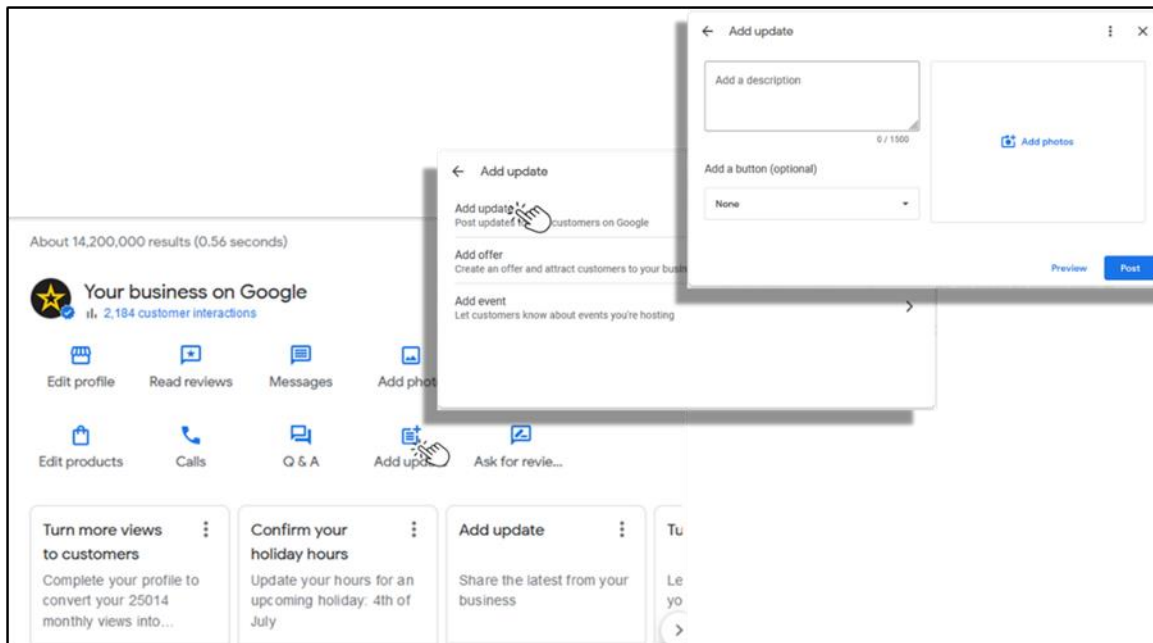
E-8. Customers (leads) have the ability to ask questions via a station's Google Business page. A useful tactic is posting commonly asked questions. Ensure to answer all the questions for the benefit of potential customers.



Appendix E-7. Questions and Answers

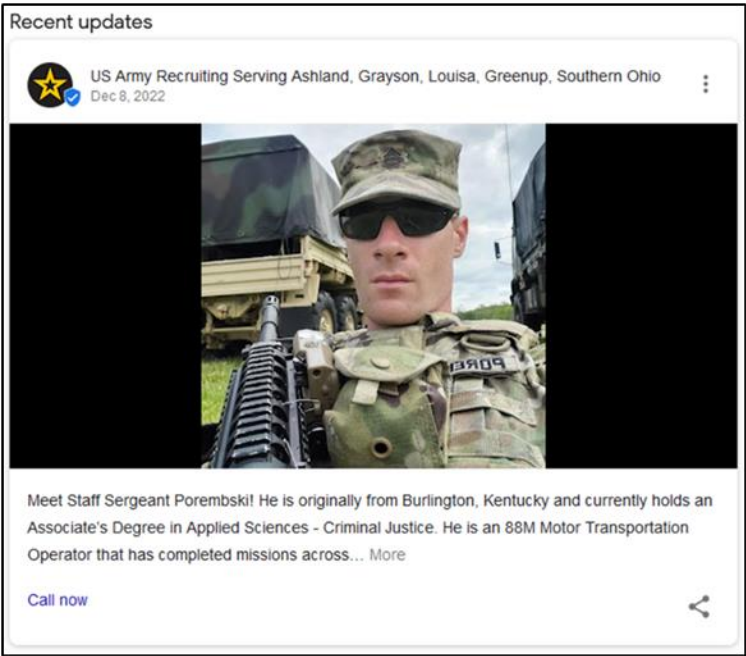
POSTING

E-9. Similar to posting on social media, the “Add update” feature provides the station with an opportunity to share community involvement, events, Future Soldiers, and photos of current staff.



Appendix E-8. Add Update

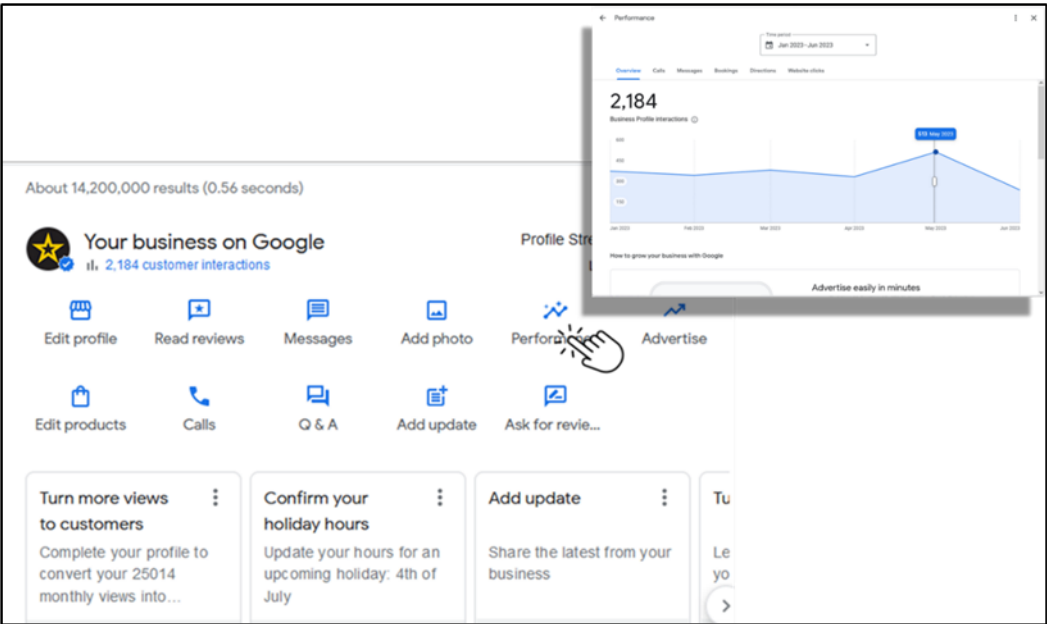
E-10. Figure E-9 below demonstrates how Google Business posts appear when viewed online. When posting on Google, follow the same guidelines as posting on other social media sites and applications. Ensure all posts contain media, captions, tags, and a call-to-action (when prudent).



Appendix E-9. Google Business Post Example

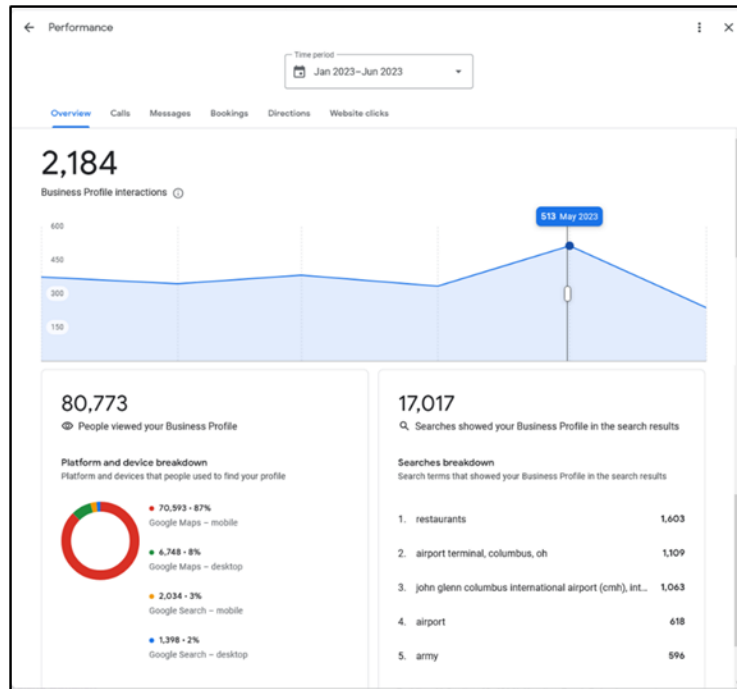
PERFORMANCE

E-11. In the “Performance” section, users track analytics from Google Business.



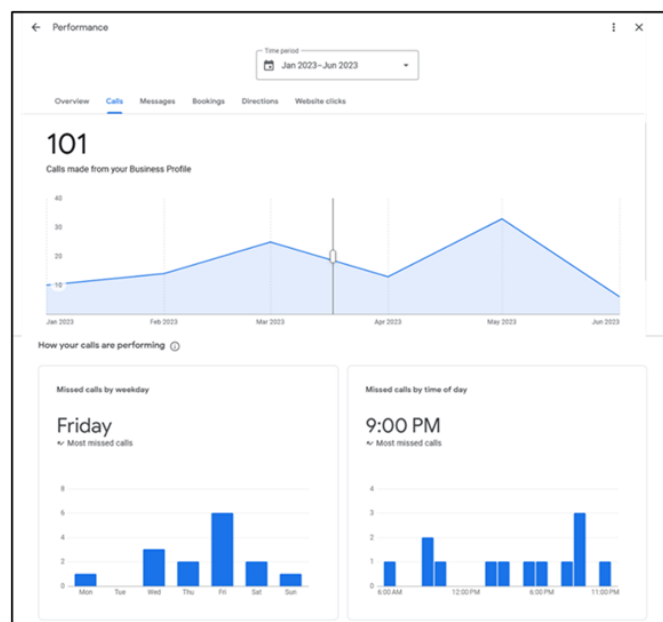
Appendix E-10. Performance

E-12. The “Overview” tab displays an overall look at the performance of the Google Business page containing a variety of useful analytics. This includes showing how many users visit the page via desktop and how many via mobile device.

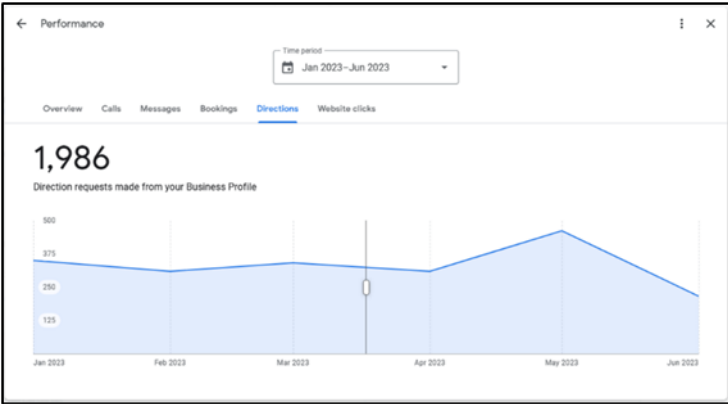


Appendix E-11. Performance Overview

E-13. The remaining tabs (calls, messages, bookings, directions, and website clicks) break down individualized data to provide an understanding of a range of user actions from phone calls to direction requests.



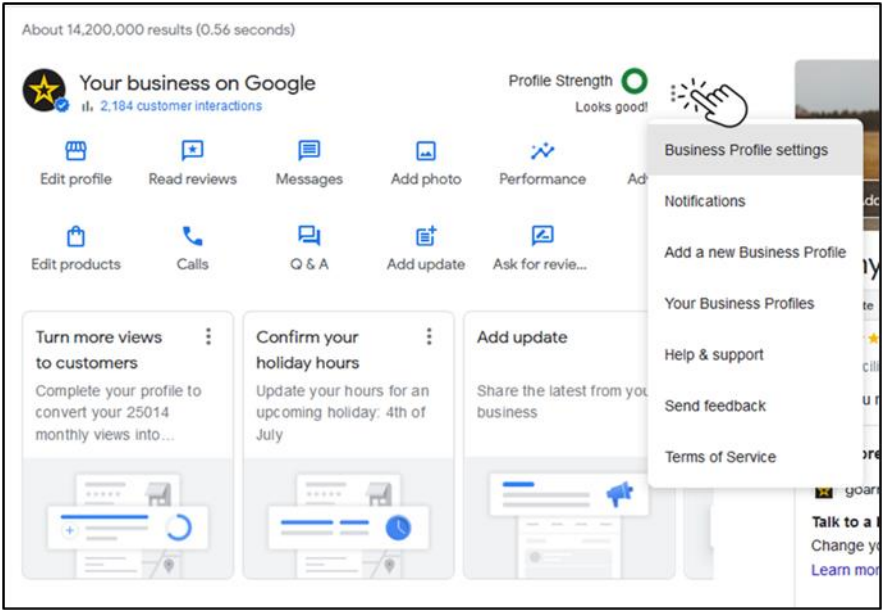
Appendix E-12. Call Data



Appendix E-13. Direction Request Data

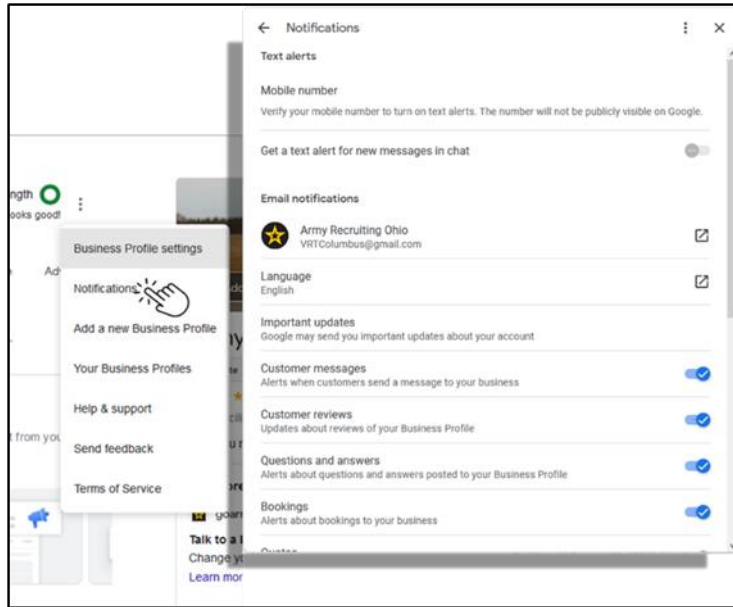
ADDITIONAL SETTINGS

E-14. Additional settings are accessed via the three vertical dots seen below in Figure E-14. They allow the owner or manager to make further changes. It is important to be familiar with all available options.



Appendix E-14. Additional Settings

E-15. It is important that all notifications are turned on and to respond to reviews, messages, questions, bookings, and any updates in a timely manner.



Appendix E-15. Notifications Settings

Appendix F

Quarterly Reports

F-1. It is a best practice to track all key metrics monthly, but at least quarterly. Metrics tracked will vary by platform based on the platform and the established goals. The following are examples:

FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM:

- Number of posts.
- Number of stories.
- Reach.
- Likes.
- Median post reactions, comments, and shares.
- Median stories reactions, comments, and shares.

X (FORMERLY TWITTER):

- Total tweets.
- New followers.
- Impressions.

GOOGLE BUSINESS:

- Views.
- Calls.
- Messages.
- Directions.
- Website clicks.
- Total ratings.
- Star rating average.

F-2. Every quarter, an analysis is conducted to track progress, goals, and ROI. Items in a quarterly analysis address:

- Social media follower growth.
- Social media engagement.
- MAC performance.
- Email and social media appointments, conducts, and enlistments per the LPA in BI-Zone.
- Paid advertising ROI.
- Compliance with minimum posting standards.
- Highlights.
- Areas to improve.
- Best practices.
- Training plan.
- Upcoming events and campaigns.
- Updated priorities and goals.

F-3. Conducting the analysis is key to turning raw data into actionable recommendations. This analysis guides the evolution of both the virtual strategy and virtual recruiting plan.

Appendix G

Job Listing Templates

G-1. Job listing templates are used as a starting point when posting or listing jobs online. It is important to ensure all information is relevant and up to date at the time of listing. Templates capture former successful listings and facilitate the creative process. Below are templates for enlisted and medical job listings.

ENLISTED RECRUITING JOB TEMPLATE

IT Helpdesk Technician
<CITY>, <STATE>•Full-time

About the Job

Enlist as a soldier into the **United States Army** and become a certified **Information Technology Specialist** who is responsible for maintaining, processing, and troubleshooting military computer systems. This is **not** a civilian contractor position. **No experience necessary.** The position is **entry-level**.

Job Duties:

- Maintenance of networks, hardware, and software.
- Provide customer and network administration services.
- Construct, edit, and test computer programs.

Organizational Requirements:

- Between 17-34 years old.
- No felonies. (Defer Adjudication included).
- Current High School Senior, High school graduate or GED equivalent.
- Permanent resident or U.S. citizen.
- Meet physical standards based on gender and age.
- Pass the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test.

Paid Training:

- 10 weeks of Basic Training.
- 20 weeks of Technical School with on-the-job instructions.

Benefits:

- 30 days paid vacation annually.
- Full Healthcare coverage for you and your family.
- Educational benefits worth over \$72,000.
- Obtain Industry-standard recognized certifications.

MEDICAL RECRUITING JOB TEMPLATES

1) General Surgeon

U.S. Army Medical Corps

PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN THE LIVES OF OUR NATION'S DEFENDERS

As a General Surgeon on the U.S. Army health care team, you'll be at the forefront of medical innovation in a wide range of surgical procedures. From groundbreaking work in regenerative medicine to the development of 3-D anatomical models to aid in surgical pre- and post-op planning, the surgical advancements being pioneered right now by the U.S. Army Medical Department are improving outcomes for their patients and changing the practice of medicine. As part of the U.S. Army Medical Corps, you may conduct research, participate in graduate medical education, perform special functions in health support, conduct and supervise patient care and health promotion programs and examine, diagnose, and treat patients requiring surgery.

Additionally, you'll be making a difference in the lives of our Soldiers and the country at large while gaining access to invaluable opportunities, like supporting humanitarian missions, leadership training and competitive benefit packages. Join us and work alongside professionals at the top of their fields while helping expand the boundaries of general surgery.

Benefits may include:

- Health professions special pay for physicians in eligible specialties.
- A monthly stipend through the Financial Assistance Program (FAP) for physicians currently enrolled in an accredited residency program.
- Health Professions Loan Repayment Program (HPLRP) which repays qualifying education loans to lending institutions.
- Travel opportunities.
- Enrollment in the Uniformed Services Blended Retirements System.
- No-cost medical and dental care for you and your family.
- Commissary and post exchange shopping privileges.
- Specialized training to become a leader in medicine.

Requirements:

- Doctor of medicine or doctor of osteopathy degree from an accredited U.S. school of medicine or osteopathy; foreign graduates may apply with permanent certificate from the Educational Council of Foreign Medical Graduates.
- Current license to practice medicine in the United States, District of Columbia, or Puerto Rico.
- Eligibility for board certification.
- Between 21 and 42 years of age (waivers granted on a case-by-case basis).
- Citizenship.
- Permanent U.S. residency.

2) Emergency Medicine Physician (Practice Match Duties and Responsibilities)

As an emergency medicine physician and officer on the U.S. Army health care team, you will have access to the latest and most advanced technology and techniques. You will lead a well-trained critical response team when patients require immediate medical attention. Working alongside many dedicated professionals at the top of their fields in one of our state-of-the-art medical facilities. As an Emergency Medicine Physician on the U.S. Army health care team, you will be on the frontline in treating patients who require immediate medical attention. You will also perform staff functions in health support, participate in the education and training of personnel, examine, diagnose, and treat the initial phase of disease or injury.

You will train to become a leader in your specialized field while enjoying the privileges that come with being an officer. In addition, with the support of our collaborative health care professionals, you can build your career without concerns about overhead costs and malpractice insurance premiums.

When you join the Army Medical Corps, you will be making a difference in the lives of our Soldiers and the country at large while gaining access to invaluable opportunities, like supporting humanitarian missions, leadership training and a competitive benefit package. Join us and build a distinguished career while helping expand the boundaries of emergency medicine alongside professionals who share your passion.

As part of the U.S. Army Medical Corps, you may conduct research, participate in graduate medical education, perform special functions in health support, conduct and supervise patient care and health promotion programs and examine, diagnose, and treat patients.

Unique duty positions:

Chief, Department of Emergency Medicine; Consultant to the office of the Surgeon General; Medical School Faculty Appointment.

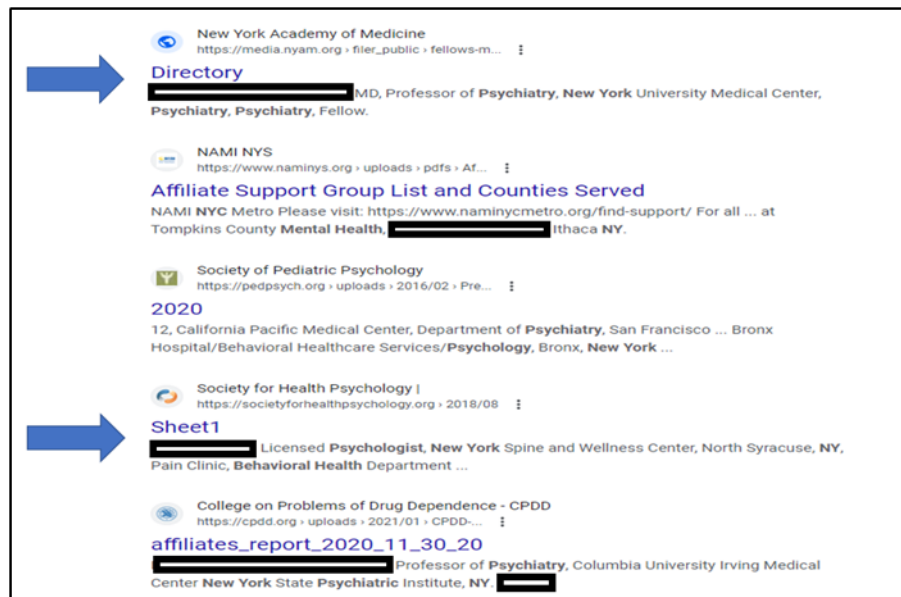
Appendix H

Boolean Search Example

H-1. An example of a Boolean search string when seeking a list of Psychiatrists in New York is:

filetype:xlsx (member OR directory) psychiatry OR psychiatrists New York

H-2. The search results appear below in Figure H-1 below.



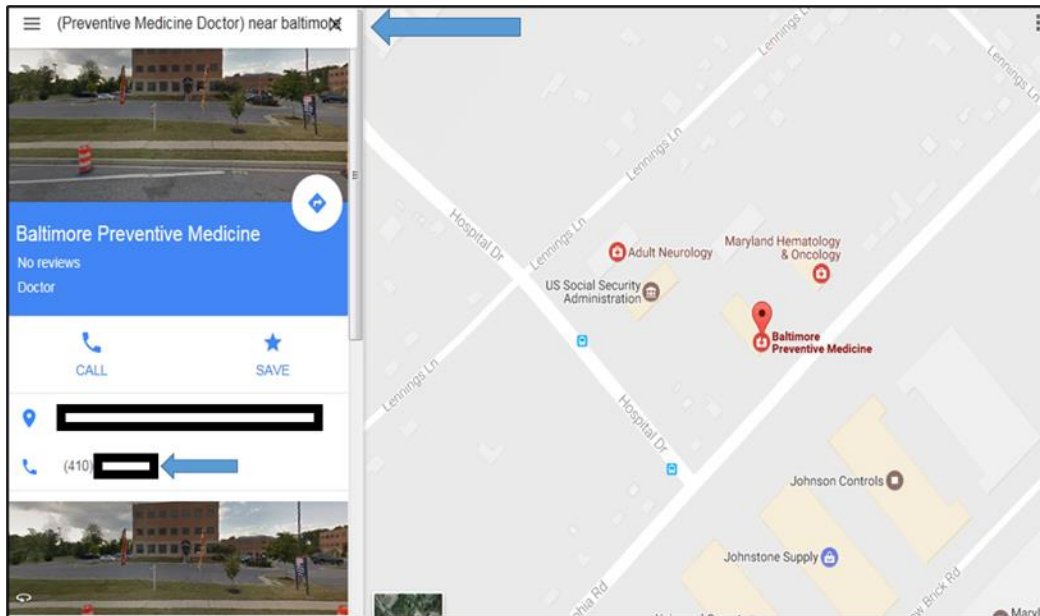
Appendix H-1. Boolean Search Results

H-3. Results with words like "directory" or "sheet" in the title normally lead to excel sheets that contain a list of names. Only some sheets have contact information. However, a further search of a name on the list will often lead to that person's place of work and contact information. Using that name to search various social media platforms provides an opportunity to connect with them there. Boolean searches are as broad or specific as needed, depending on the type of candidates or leads sought. It is also important to keep in mind that the desired search result isn't always on page one of the results.

H-4. Boolean when used with Google Maps delivers names and lists of leads. For example, to find a Preventive Medicine Physician in the Baltimore area the string typed into the search bar on Google Maps may be:

(Preventive medicine doctor) near Baltimore.

H-5. The search results appear below in Figure H-2 below.

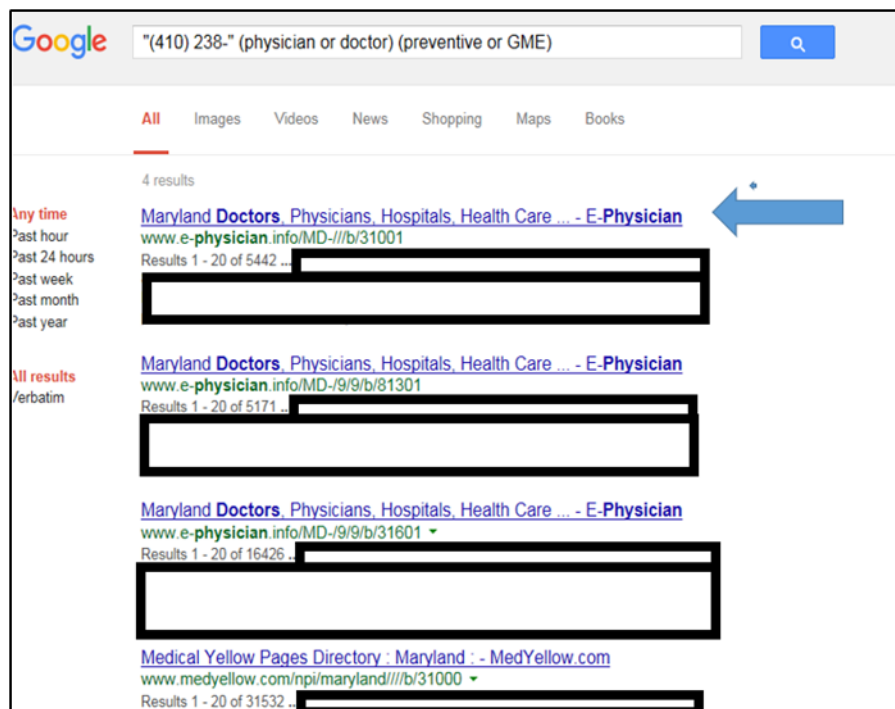


Appendix H-2. Boolean Google Maps Results

H-6. The key element of this search result is the phone number. Most professional offices or healthcare facilities use the same first six digits in phone numbers with only the final four digits changing. This results in a new search string for the recruiter to obtain a list of leads.

The new search string would read like this: "(410) 238-"(physician or doctor) (preventive or GME)

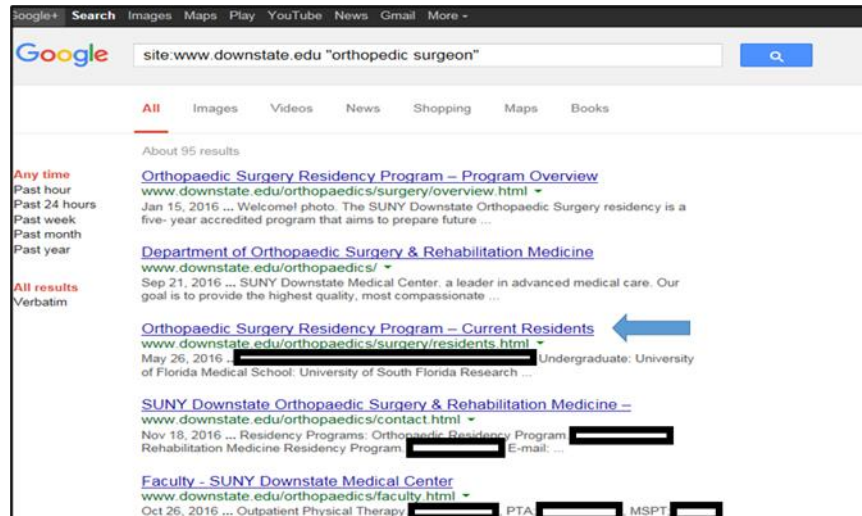
H-7. The search results appear below in Figure H-3 below.



Appendix H-3. Boolean Phone Number Result

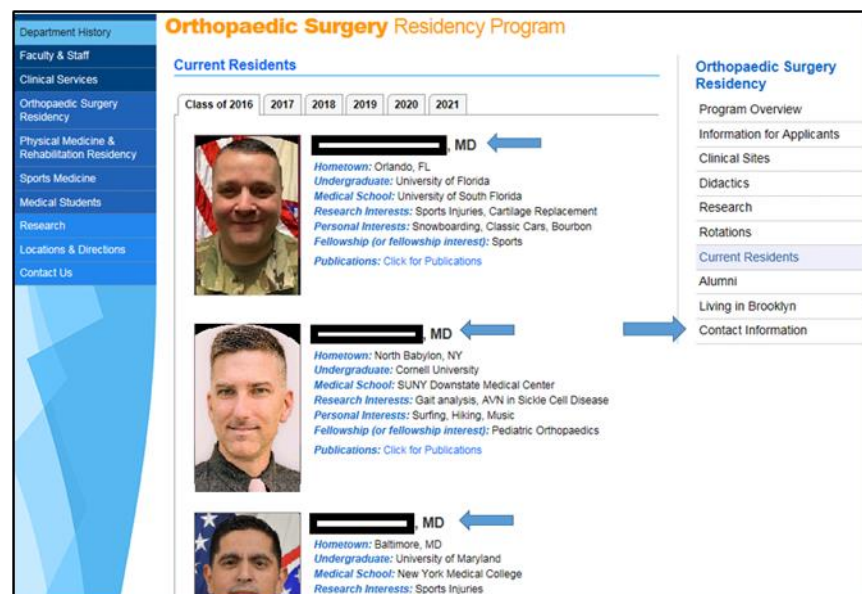
H-8. The results in bold show multiple instances of websites with directories of physicians in other facilities around the target area (Baltimore) as well as those matching the first six of the phone number. The result is a new lead list containing working professionals to prospect.

H-9. The final Boolean technique is called X-Ray. X-ray is a technique that is used to filter search engine results to a specific website using a search engine. X-ray works sites like (but not limited to) Indeed, LinkedIn, organization pages, hospital sites, etc. As an example, to search for orthopedic surgery residents at Downstate Medical University in New York, the search string used is site: www.downstate.edu "orthopedic surgeon" The search results appear below in Figure H-4 below.



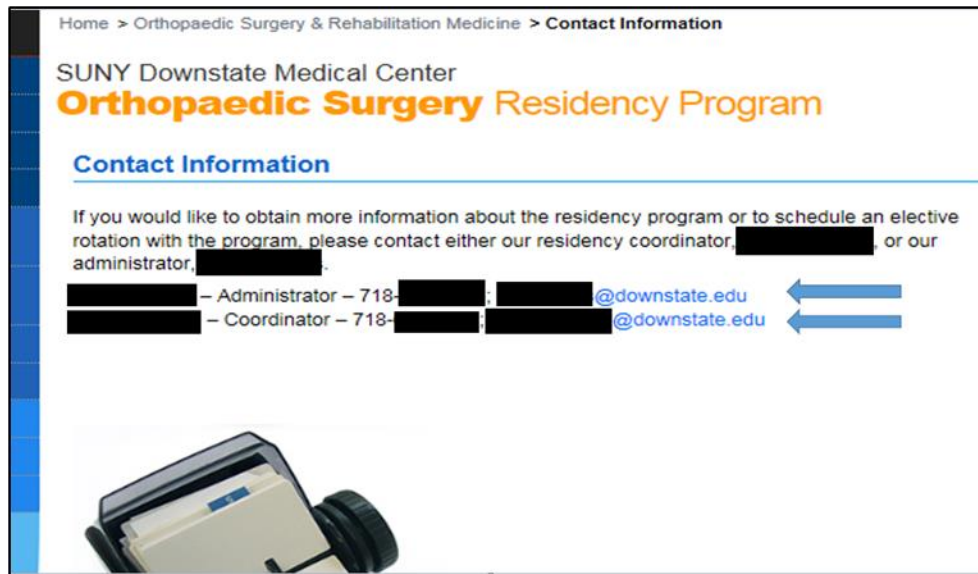
Appendix H-4. Boolean X-ray Search

H-10. One of the results is a link to see the current medical residents enrolled in the residency program.



Appendix H-5. Boolean X-ray Residents

H-11. There are names, pictures, and other blueprinting information on current residents to reach to about Army programs. On the right, there is a link for contact information.



Appendix H-6. Boolean X-ray Contact Information

H-12. On the contact information page, there is the name, phone number, and email addresses of residency program administrators and coordinators. These individuals who are key COIs in the program and when developed into CPs, may be used to pass information about Army programs and incentives to the medical residents in the program.

Appendix I

Mass Text Templates

ENLISTED RECRUITING MASS TEXT TEMPLATES

I-1. Personalized texts sent via mass messaging platforms are a great way to engage a large audience in a short amount of time. The use of templates is a best practice when crafting a text message. Templates capture former successful messages and facilitate the creative process. Below are example templates for enlisted and medical text messages.

USAR TEMPLATE.

- This is <NAME>. I'm the Army representative in your area. I wanted to know if you'd be interested in receiving information for part-time jobs here in <CITY or COUNTY> through our Reserve component.
<Insert two sentences about appropriate Reserve benefit>
Feel free to message me.
(Yes) For more info.
(No) Not interested.
- My name is <NAME> and I'm with the U.S. Army. I'm contacting students at <COLLEGE> to see if they are interested in full or part-time jobs nationwide or locally in <CITY or COUNTY>. Fields like <List of Reserve opportunities and high producing MOS> are available to individuals like you. If eligible, benefits include <List of no more than 3 targeted and appropriate benefits>
Feel free to message me.
(Yes) For more info.
(No) Not interested.
- Good morning! I'm <NAME> from the U.S. Army. I'm contacting you to see if you were interested in receiving information for part-time jobs located here in <CITY> and the surrounding areas. Benefits include EFT, medical coverage and tuition assistance for school while remaining local here.
Feel free to message me.
Reply (Yes) if interested.
(No) if not interested.
- Good morning! I'm <NAME> and I'm the Army representative for your area. I just wanted to inform you that we are offering up to \$50K for Student Loan Repayment and part-time jobs available. Would you be interested in more information?
Reply (Yes) if interested
(No) if not interested.

COLLEGE STOP OR DROP OUT TEMPLATE.

- Good afternoon <LEAD NAME>. This is <NAME> from the U.S. Armed Forces Career Center here in <LOCATION>. I was reaching out to you to see how college was going for you and if the Army can help you pay for it? However, I know college is not for everyone and the Army has over 150 career opportunities in which the Army will pay you to learn a skill. If you are interested and want to learn more about how the Army can benefit you and your family, respond YES and a recruiter will reach out within the next 24 hours.

ASVAB-CEP LEAD TEMPLATE.

- Good afternoon,

This is <NAME>. I'm the Army representative for <SCHOOL>. The ASVAB that you took in high school qualifies you for opportunities in the Army. Has anyone reached out to explain your score and options?

- Good afternoon,
This is <NAME>. I'm the Army representative for <SCHOOL or AREA>. You took the ASVAB in high school and noted that you were interested in the military. Did anyone ever reach out to you and explain your score and options?

HS JUNIOR TEMPLATE.

- Good afternoon, my name is Sergeant <NAME> and I am trying to reach <LEAD NAME> to talk with them about the U.S. Army and what is available to them after they graduate from <SCHOOL> next year. This is by no means a commitment to join the military, just a chance to learn about options and see if service in the U.S. Army is the right thing for you after graduation. If <LEAD NAME> would like more information, respond YES to this message and one of my counselors will reach out to you within 24 hours.

HS SENIOR TEMPLATE.

- <LEAD NAME> Good morning. This is <NAME> from the U.S. Army Career Center in <LOCATION>. I would first like to congratulate you on your upcoming graduation. The Army has programs that could benefit you, both full and part-time. With over 150 careers to select from, the opportunities are endless. Let us pay for college and save your parents money! Would you like to learn more?
- Good afternoon, this message is for <LEAD NAME>. I am Sergeant <NAME> with the Army office in <LOCATION>. Today, I am reaching out to <SCHOOL> seniors to talk about the opportunities and education benefits the U.S. Army and Army Reserve offer. If you would like to talk about a solid future with the U.S. Army, please respond to this text with YES. If not, reply with STOP. Thanks, and enjoy your day.

HS SENIOR GRADUATION (PARENT) TEMPLATE.

- Good morning! I want to first say congratulations on your child completing senior year at <SCHOOL>. The next few months you all will start looking into college or entering the workforce. Would you be interested in receiving some information about how the Army can help you achieve both of those options? Reply (Yes) if interested (No) if not interested.

HOT LEAD OR ADHQ LEAD TEMPLATE.

- Good morning, my name is <NAME> and I'm with the U.S. Army. I'm reaching out to you because you submitted a request for information on career opportunities in the Army online. Just wanted to know if anyone reached out to you yet?
- Hello <LEAD NAME>, my name is <NAME> and I am a career counselor with the U.S. Army. I see you requested information regarding career opportunities within the U.S. Army. Are you still interested in receiving that information?

TERMINATED RECORD TEMPLATE.

- Good morning! My name is <NAME>. Our records indicate that you were interested in the Army within the last 14 months. For whatever reason, your process stopped and that's understandable with <CURRENT EVENT> in the past year. Would you be interested in continuing the process that you started? Reply (Yes) if interested (No) if not interested.

FOLLOW UP (DRIP) MESSAGE TEMPLATES

- Hey, did you get my last message?
- <LEAD NAME>, just following up on my message from last week, do you have a moment to chat?

- Hello, this is <NAME>. Just seeing if you got my text yesterday.
- <LEAD NAME>, the bonus offer I reached out to you about earlier this month expires Friday. Are you free for a quick call to discuss it?

MEDICAL RECRUITING MASS TEXT TEMPLATES

HPSP TEMPLATE

- <LEAD NAME>, have you heard of the Health Professions Scholarship Program (HPSP)? HPSP is an Army Medical Department program for students going to a health professions graduate program, such as medical, optometry, dental and veterinary school. It pays for up to four years of 100% tuition and fees while providing a monthly stipend of over \$2,600!

MATCH DAY TEMPLATE

- <LEAD NAME>, with Match Day here, we wish you the best of luck as you get your results! As you plan this next step of your career, we have plenty of information to share with you about Army Medical Department programs designed for resident physicians. These programs pay you while you are going through your residency program- one even pays up to \$250,000 of any students loans you may have, while you are in residency!

MEDICAL SCHOOL STIPEND PROGRAM TEMPLATE.

- <LEAD NAME>, as a current M.D. student, I'd like to inform you of the Medical School Stipend Program (MSSP). This program, if selected, will pay you a monthly stipend of over \$2,600 for your remaining time at medical school. After graduating, you may apply for the same stipend through residency and our student loan repayment program that will pay up to \$250,000 toward your student loans- while you are in residency! Please reply with any questions you may have, or to schedule a one-on-one information session with me. Thank you!

65D NEW GRAD TEMPLATE.

- <LEAD NAME>, the U.S Army Medical Department is looking for students who will be graduating with their Master of Physician Assistant studies soon. Being an Army physician assistant will make you one of the most important members on a Soldier's collaborative care team focused on wellness, injury preventions, patient education, and evidence-based care practices. Applying to be part of the U.S. Army Medical Department now can secure you up to \$60K bonus or up to \$120K in student loan repayment. Please reply with any questions you may have, or to schedule a one-on-one information session with me. Thank you!

Appendix J

Mail Merge Templates

J-1. Personalized emails sent via mail merge are a great way to engage a large audience in a short amount of time. The use of templates is a best practice when crafting an email message. Templates capture former successful emails and facilitate the creative process. Below are example templates for enlisted, medical, and special operations emails.

ENLISTED RECRUITING EMAIL TEMPLATES

Note. Validate that all incentive and benefit information is accurate and current before using a template.

COLLEGE TEMPLATE

Good morning <FIRST NAME>,

I am reaching out to all students that currently attend <COLLEGE> to inform them about opportunities that may be of interest with the United States Army and the United States Army Reserve. There is no experience necessary. Positions are entry level.

Active Duty

- Full time job and pay.
- Direct deposit.
- Travel opportunities.
- Free healthcare.
- Education benefits.
- Learn a trade starting with ZERO experience.
- 30 days paid vacation a year.

Army Reserve

- Stay in the <LOCATION> area.
- Part time (1 weekend a month; 2 weeks in the summer).
- Discounted healthcare.
- Education benefits.
- Learn a trade starting with ZERO experience.
- **Allows you to be a full-time student** or employee while receiving additional benefits from your weekend service.

If you are interested or want to learn more about different opportunities in the United States Army, click here <MAC LINK>. Within 72 hours, a Recruiter will contact you to discuss your interest. If you are not interested, please respond “No” and I will remove you from my list.

Respectfully,

<RANK AND NAME>

U.S. Army Career Opportunities

Office: <PHYSICAL LOCATION AND PHONE NUMBER>

<FACEBOOK>

<INSTAGRAM>

COLLEGE FRESHMAN TEMPLATE

<LEAD NAME>,

I'd like to say great job wrapping up your first semester at <COLLEGE>. I know when I went to college, Freshman year was a big adjustment with unique challenges. You're about to make it over the first big hurdle and it must be a relief. I'm reaching out to offer assistance to make your college experience as smooth as possible.

Right now, the national student loan debt average is around \$35,359; a 25% increase since last year. The cost for an education can be steep, and with less than half of college graduates finding work without the necessary experience, the odds can seem stacked against you. In the Army Reserve, you can earn college credits, federal employment experience and full tuition payment in exchange for working one weekend a month while you attend college full time.

With up to **\$50,000 Student Loan Repayment, \$350 GI Bill Kicker, \$20,000 enlistment bonus, tuition assistance, the GI Bill and more**, there has literally never been a better time to be a student in the Army Reserve. Request an appointment to learn more. If you are not interested, please respond "No" and I will remove you from my list.

Respectfully,

<RANK AND NAME>

U.S. Army Recruiter

Office: <PHONE>

Cell: <CELL>

E-mail: <EMAIL>

Fax: <FAX>

<PHYSICAL LOCATION>

<INSTAGRAM>

COLLEGE SENIOR TEMPLATE

<LEAD NAME>

I wanted to extend my congratulations to you on your pending graduation. Only 57% of <COLLEGE> students graduate, so that's a huge achievement. You've displayed determination, resiliency, and a passion for your chosen profession.

I'm looking for bright, tenacious future leaders for the U.S. Army. As the representative assigned to your school, I can coordinate an interview to determine your eligibility to become an Officer or Enlisted member in your chosen career path. If experience and Student Loan Repayment (up to \$65k) are what you're looking for, it might be the right choice for you. Let me know if you're interested and I'll connect you with the right people. If you are not interested, please respond "No" and I will remove you from my list.

Respectfully,

<RANK AND NAME>

U.S. Army Recruiter

Office: <PHONE>

Cell: <CELL>

E-mail: <EMAIL>

Fax: <FAX>

<PHYSICAL LOCATION>

<INSTAGRAM>

CAREER FAIR ATTENDEE TEMPLATE

Good morning <LEAD NAME>,

I understand you recently attended <CAREER FAIR NAME>. I wanted to reach out and provide some information and opportunities available to you if you choose. Please read the entirety of the email. Listed below is information for individuals who have college experience, however for individuals with no college experience we have opportunities for you as well. For more information, click the hyperlink below.

Listed below are a few opportunities you may qualify for with college experience:

Have your bachelor's or master's degree?

- Officer Candidate School Enlistment Program
 - Must be in final semester of bachelor's program.
 - Starting pay for officers is \$3,287 (per month) plus additional benefits.
 - Degree plan does not designate job field.
- Criminal Investigative Division (CID) Enlistment Program
 - Must have 4-year degree plan in the one of the following courses of study: Criminal Justice, Forensic Science, Computer Science, Digital Forensics, Pre-Law, Legal Studies, Accounting, Finance, Psychology or Biology with a GPA of 3.0 or higher.
 - Starting rank is Specialist (E-4) with pay at \$2,263 (per month) plus additional benefits.
 - Will be conducting investigations as a detective within the Army.
- Start at the rank of Specialist (E-4), our highest entry level rank.
 - Starting pay at \$2,263 plus additional benefits.
 - You select the career path that interests you.
 - May qualify for up to \$50,000 enlistment bonus.

BENEFITS

- 30 days of vacation with pay annually.
- Full healthcare coverage for you and your family.
- Educational benefits worth over \$72,000.
- Obtain Industry standard recognized certifications.

ELIGIBILITY

- Between 17-34 years old.
- No felonies.
- Current high school senior, high school graduate or GED equivalent.
- Permanent resident or U.S. citizen.
- Meet physical standards based on gender and age.
- Pass the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB).

If you would like more information, click here <MAC LINK>. If you are not interested, please respond "No" and I will remove you from my list.

Respectfully,

<RANK AND NAME>

U.S. Army Recruiter

Office: <PHONE>

Cell: <CELL>

E-mail: <EMAIL>

Fax: <FAX>

<PHYSICAL LOCATION>

<SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS>

MEDICAL RECRUITING EMAIL TEMPLATES

EMERGENCY MEDICINE PHYSICIAN TEMPLATE

Good afternoon!

The U.S. Army Medical Department (AMEDD) is currently hiring Emergency Medicine Physicians to join our team and join one of the largest health networks in the world as part of the Defense Health Agency. Healthcare providers who serve as officers in AMEDD enjoy a wide range of opportunities and financial incentives. These include:

- Up to \$400,000 in cash bonuses.
- Student loan repayment.
- Competitive salary and incentive pays to include board certification pay.
- Employer funded continuing medical education courses.
- Relocation allowance.
- Special patient population (Soldiers, veterans, and their families).
- Greater autonomy.

In addition to working with a special patient population, you would also have access to a substantial benefits package including:

- **Zero cost** health insurance for yourself and your family.
- **30 days** of vacation with pay per year.
- 401K with **employer matching contributions**.
- **Guaranteed pension** after 20 years.

You will also have opportunities to develop even more specialized skills than those you already possess; you'll be able to enhance your level of expertise. These include:

- Continuing education courses.
- Fellowships: Austere and Wilderness Medicine; Emergency Medicine Cardiology; Emergency Medicine Services and Disaster Medicine; Emergency Toxicology; Pediatric Emergency Medicine; Sports Medicine; Ultrasound.
- Seminars.
- Clinical research.
- Teaching.
- Humanitarian missions.

With one of the largest alumni programs in the world and the leadership experience gained in AMEDD, many of our physicians go on to hold leadership positions in hospitals all around the world! Not to mention, in our system, your performance is not judged by the number of patient encounters, but on patient outcomes and maintaining the health of our Soldiers and their dependents. If you are not interested, please respond "No" and I will remove you from my list.

"Serving those who serve us since 1775"

Respectfully,

<RANK AND NAME>

U.S. Army Healthcare Recruiter

Office: <PHONE>

Cell: <CELL>

E-mail: <EMAIL>

Fax: <FAX>

<PHYSICAL LOCATION>

<SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS>

HPSP SCHOLARSHIP TEMPLATE

Hello <LEAD NAME>,

I hope this greeting finds you well! As you pursue your goal of becoming a physician, we hope you will use your experience to advance the health care provided to our Soldiers and their families. By increasing your career's impact on a local, part time, Reserve Medical Team, or full time in one of our state-of-the-art medical facilities.

For medical school students we offer two options, the first is our Health Professions Scholarship Program that comes with a stipend of approximately \$31,000 a year, \$20,000 sign on bonus, and 100% tuition, books, equipment, and academic fees! The second option is our Medical School Stipend Program that comes with the \$31,000 stipend and eligibility for \$250,000 student loan repayment once you are in residency!

With both options, our goal for you is that you graduate medical school, get into a great residency, and become the best medical provider possible to treat our troops, their families, and our retired population! You will be able to focus on your education, while living a comfortable lifestyle, and ultimately earn real world experience in a proven system that creates and develops leaders in the medical community.

If you are interested and want to learn more about the Healthcare Professional Scholarship Program (HPSP) or the Medical School Stipend Program (MSSP), don't hesitate to contact me. If you are not interested, please respond "No" and I will remove you from my list.

Respectfully,

<RANK AND NAME>

U.S. Army Healthcare Recruiter

Office: <PHONE>

Cell: <CELL>

E-mail: <EMAIL>

Fax: <FAX>

<PHYSICAL LOCATION>

<SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS>

SPECIAL OPERATIONS RECRUITING TEMPLATES

OFFICER AND ENLISTED TEMPLATE

<LEAD NAME>,

A unique career opportunity is open to you as a (*Insert CA, PSYOPS, SF, or EOD*) professional in the Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF).

(*Insert CA, PSYOPS, SF, or EOD*) Soldiers are versatile, innovative, and highly trained professionals who operate in small, autonomous teams. Trained in foreign languages, cultural expertise, and negotiation techniques, (*Insert CA, PSYOPS, SF, or EOD*) Soldiers commonly operate in over 80 different countries worldwide to build networks of formal and informal leaders and accomplish important missions in diplomatically or politically sensitive areas.

We invite you to attend a briefing to learn more about (*Insert CA, PSYOPS, SF, or EOD*).

BRIEFING DETAILS

=====

WHO: Active Duty Enlisted & Officers

WHEN: 20 June 2023 @ 1430

WHERE: Room 116, F Wing at the Liberty Training & Education Center

4520 Knox St

Fort Liberty, NC

Please see attachment for additional details.

INTERESTED?

=====

If you are interested in attending and hearing about the opportunities available to you in (*Insert CA, PSYOPS, SF, or EOD*), please RSVP by clicking Plan to Attend below.

TO RESPOND: Copy and paste the link below into your web browser or convert this email to HTML.

PLAN TO ATTEND <LINK>

Not Interested <LINK>

QUESTIONS?

=====

For more information, please contact the POC below or text ARSOF to 462-769.

<RANK AND NAME>

U.S. Army Special Operations Recruiter

Office: <PHONE>

Cell: <CELL>

E-mail: <EMAIL>

Fax: <FAX>

<PHYSICAL LOCATION>

<SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS>

Appendix K

Posting Calendar Example

K-1. A posting calendar enables organizations to effectively plan, coordinate virtual efforts, and meet minimum posting requirements. It also incorporates recurring themes, evergreen content, and trending hashtags. A posting calendar is not limited to just the format below. It is best practice to plan at least one month ahead at a time. The following is a simple four-week example:

Table K-1. Calendar Example

June 12-16	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Facebook			Community Partner feature: CASA Smith Army Birthday Post		Future Soldier Friday
Instagram	MOS Monday: SSG Jax - 11X		Army Birthday Post		Future Soldier Friday
Google Business	Weekly events update post		Army Birthday Post		
X (formerly Twitter)	MOS Monday: SSG Jax- 11X		Army Birthday Post		Future Soldier Friday
Army Birthday Campaign Focus All Week					
Paid Google ad Campaign					

June 19-23	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Facebook			Community Partner feature: Principal Snuffy		Future Soldier Friday
Instagram	MOS Monday: SFC Smith - 42A	First Day of Summer Post			Future Soldier Friday
Google Business	Weekly events update post				
X (formerly Twitter)	MOS Monday: SFC Smith - 42A	First Day of Summer Post			Future Soldier Friday

Table K-2 Calendar Examples (Continued)

June 26-30	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Facebook			Community Partner feature: CEO of local business Jeff Rambo		Future Soldier Friday
Instagram	MOS Monday: SGT Kim – 68W				Future Soldier Friday
Google Business	Weekly events update post				Ensure hours are updated for holiday weekend
X (formerly Twitter)	MOS Monday: SGT Kim – 68W				Future Soldier Friday

July 3-7	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Facebook		July 4 Holiday post	Community Partner feature: Dr. Jones of local hospital		Future Soldier Friday
Instagram		July 4 Holiday post			Future Soldier Friday
Google Business	Weekly events update post	July 4 Holiday post	Update hours after holiday weekend		
X (formerly Twitter)		July 4 Holiday post			Future Soldier Friday
July 4 Campaign focus all week					
Paid Google ad campaign					

Glossary

Use chapter intro style for glossary introduction.

SECTION I – ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACE	Army Career Explorer
AEMO	Army Engagement Marketing Office
AFQT	Armed Forces Qualificaiton Test
AO	area of operation
A&PA	Advertising and Public Affairs
APT	AFQT Predictor Test
ASVAB	Armed Forces Vocational Aptitude Battery
COA	course of action
CP	community partners
DM	direct message
EBRC	electronic business reply care
ESS	Education Services Specialist
FSTP	Future Soldier Training Program
HPSP	Health Professions Scholarship Program
HQ USAREC	Headquarters, U.S. Army Recruiting Command
IM	instant message
IPOE	Intelligence Preparation of the Operational Environment
IT	information technology
JAMRS	Joint Advertising Market Research and Studies
MDMP	military decision making process
METT-TC(I)	mission, enemy, time, troops-available, terrain, civilian considerations, information
MMA	market and mission analysis
MSSP	Medical School Stipend Program
OE	operational environment
PHI	Protected Health Information
PiCAT	Pending Internet Computerized Adaptive Test
PII	Personally Identifiable Information
PM	private message
PMESSI-PT	Political, military, economic, social, infrastructure, information, physical environment, time
ROI	return on investment
RTW	register to win
RZ	recruiter zone

SEO	search engine optimization
SMS	Social Media Specialist
TAIR	Total Army Involvement in Recruiting
USAREC	U.S. Army Recruiting Command
USMEB	U.S. Army Marketing Engagement Brigade
VRD	virtual recruiting division
VRL	virtual recruiting liaison
VRS	virtual recruiting station
XO	Executive Officer

SECTION II – TERMS

Audience

A group of users who are available to view your content. This can be narrowed by defining a target audience. For example, an audience would be every user on Facebook and a targeted audience would be Facebook users that are currently in High School.

B-Roll Footage

Extra video footage shot while capturing a video. It is often spliced together with the main footage to bolster the story, create dramatic tension, or further illustrate a point. Types of B-roll footage include atmospheric shots of location or inanimate objects, undirected footage of subjects, establishing shots, dramatic reenactments, pick-up shots, Stock footage, and archival imagery.

Blog

A regularly updated website or web page, typically one run by an individual or small group, that is written in an informal or conversational style.

Boosting

Increasing the reach of a post on social media by applying funding with the intent to increase impressions, engagement, or following.

Engagement

Any interaction with online content or profile. Examples include likes, shares, follow, subscriptions, clicks, and comments. This metric is natively tracked by each online platform.

Following

A group of people with a declared interest in a brand or an online account. It is the total number of followers, subscribers, “friends”, or connections.

Impressions

The number of times a specific piece of content has been viewed. This differs from reach by counting the total number of views opposed to unique viewers. An impression is counted each time a piece of content is shown. This metric is natively tracked by each online platform.

Information Fratricide

Is the result of employing information-related capabilities and elements in a way that causes conflicting or negative effects in the information or virtual environments that impedes the conduct of recruiting operations or adversely affect the recruiting force.

Lead

A name with a method of contact (address, telephone number, e-mail address, or social media handle) for whom no appointment has been made for an Army interview.

Match Day

A term used widely in the graduate medical education community to represent the day when the National Resident Matching Program or NRMP releases results to applicants seeking residency and fellowship training positions in the United States.

Meme

An image, video, or piece of text that is typically humorous in nature, that is copied and spread rapidly by internet users, often with slight variations.

Mention

Referring to a profile, business, or brand online by tagging them on social media.

Organic

An effort put forth by an individual user or brand online that is not funded, sponsored, or boosted.

Prospect

A person who has indicated interest in an enlistment or commission to a recruiter directly or indirectly through face-to-face or telephonic communication or by Lead Evaluation and Distribution System, Community Partners, Delayed Entry Program referrals, and hometown recruiter aids.

Reach

Number of unique individuals who have viewed a specific piece of online content. This metric is natively tracked by each online platform.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

The process of maximizing the number of visitors to a particular website by ensuring that the site appears high on the list of results returned by a search engine.

Social Media

Web-based applications or sites, which promote the creation and exchange of user-generated content and facilitate social networking. Web-based programs continue to grow in terms of capability and sophistication. Prominent examples include Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn, YouTube, Reddit, Snapchat, and X (formerly Twitter).

Value Proposition

A simple statement that describes an innovation, service, or feature intended to make a company or product attractive to customers.

Vlog

Otherwise known as a video log. A personal website or social media account where a person regularly posts short videos.

Virtual Brand

This is how an organization or Soldier represents themselves in the digital space. This image either positively or negatively affects how the public views the Army, organizations, and Soldiers. It is important that an individual's brand remains consistent with the Army Values and applicable guidance.

Virtual Prospecting

Virtual prospecting is a method and activity where the recruiter attempts to contact a specific lead using digital means with the intent to schedule an Army interview. It is one of the most efficient forms of prospecting due to the ability to engage a high number of leads in a short amount of time. Virtual prospecting includes actions such as sending an email, mass texting, and direct messaging on social media sites. The station commander must ensure all virtual prospecting operations deliver a message consistent with the Army values, and current Army social media policies.

This form of prospecting is often confused with lead generating activities. Prospecting takes place after lead generation. Posting on social media, listing jobs, and engaging with accounts (like, comment, share, etc.) is not considered prospecting.

Virtual Recruiting

Virtual recruiting is the process of using approved web-based resources for tasks involved with finding, influencing, interviewing, qualifying, processing, and enlisting or commissioning Future Soldiers into the United States Army. Approved tools and resources include but are not limited to email, search engines, mass texting platforms, job boards, websites, and social media applications.

Virtual Recruiting Stations

The Virtual Recruiting Station (VRS) facilitates decisive, shaping, and sustaining operations by leveraging virtual platforms at the battalion level. Through content creation and digital marketing analysis, the VRS is responsible for lead generation, lead refinement, lead distribution, and prospecting through digital means. The VRS conducts shaping operations in the digital space to support the commanders' intent. Examples include building relationships with community partners, generating awareness, and promoting upcoming Army events. The VRS provides training and oversight to all personnel assigned to the battalion in virtual recruiting activities, online security measures, regulatory guidance and compliance, and social media best practices.

References

REQUIRED PUBLICATIONS

FM 3-13, “Information Operations” (dated December 2016)
FM 3-61, “Communication Strategy and Public Affairs Operations” (dated 25 Feb 2022)
USAREC Pam 601-3, “Virtual Recruiting” (dated 17 Nov 2017)
USAREC Manual 3-0 "Recruiting Operations" (dated 09 Mar 2022)
USAREC Manual 3-29 “Recruiting Brigade and Battalion Operations” (dated 09 Mar 2022)
USAREC Manual 3-30 "Recruiting Company Operations" (dated 07 Mar 2022)
USAREC Manual 3-31 "Recruiting Station Operations" (dated 7 Mar 2022)
USAREC Manual 3-32 “The Army Recruiter” (dated 09 Mar 2022)
Joint Publication 3-0 “Joint Operations” (dated 18 Jun 2022)
The Department of Defense Social Media Policy (DODI 5400.17)

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

USAREC Training Circular 5-01 Mission Command (dated 21 Jul 2020)
USAREC Training Circular 5-3.02 Influencing and Interviewing (dated 29 Apr 2020)

WEBSITES

MilSuite – Recruiting ProNet - <https://www.milsuite.mil/book/community/spaces/apf/recruitingpronet>

PRESCRIBED FORMS

None

REFERENCED FORMS

DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to this Publication)

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