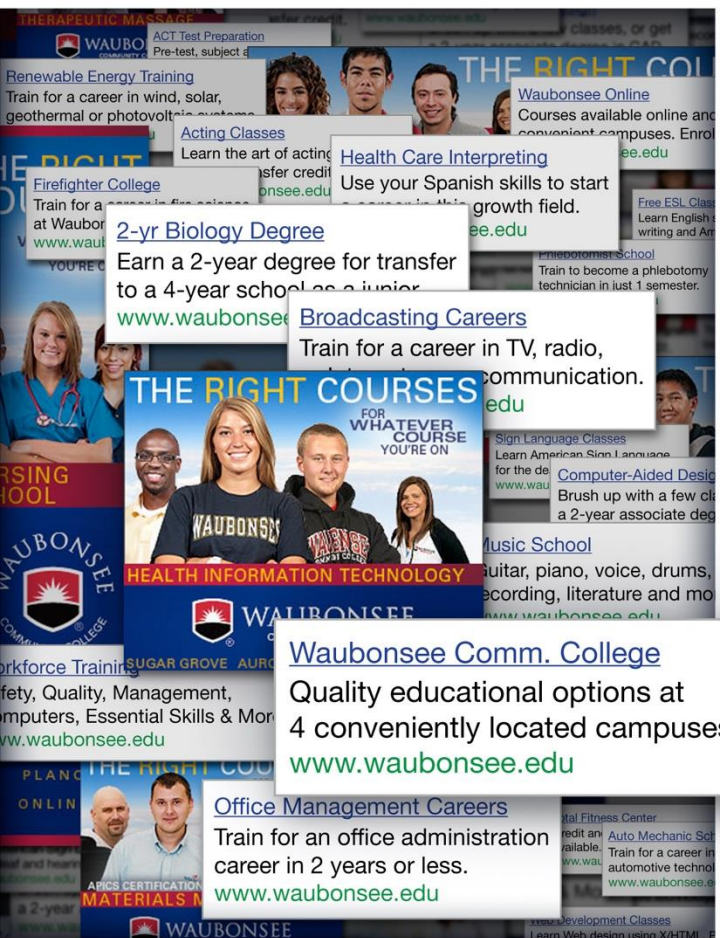




Results Focused SEO/SEM

A best practices search engine optimization and keyword-based pay-per-click marketing campaign



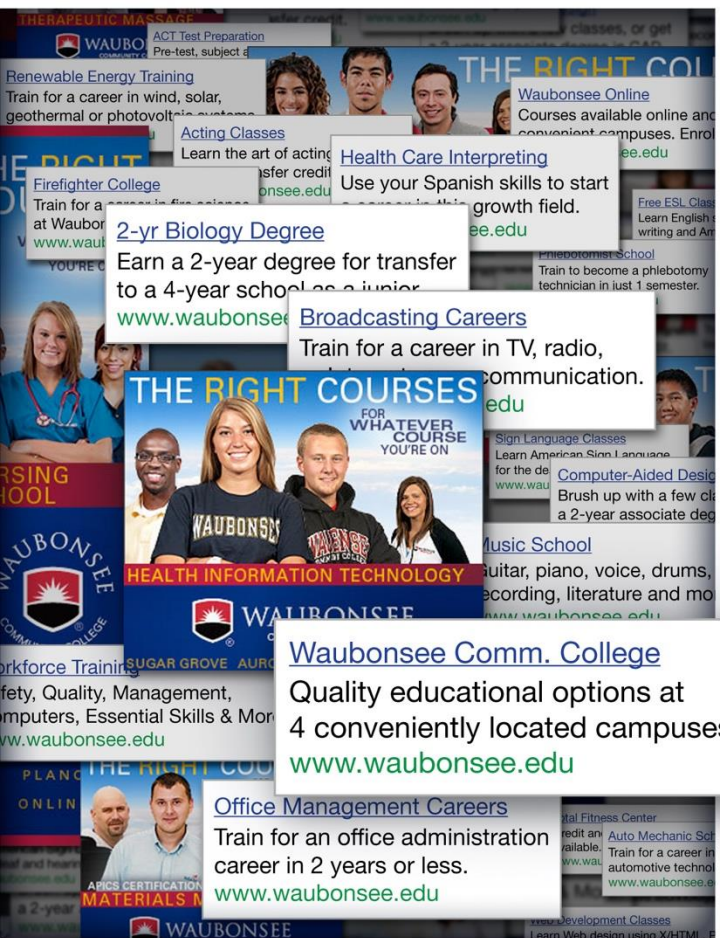
2011 Paragon Awards Entry

Online Marketing/Advertising



WAUBONSEE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Where futures take shape



Overview

Purpose: With a renewed focus on recruiting, a redesigned college website went live on January 25, 2011. The overhaul project provided a unique opportunity to implement optimization best practices for attracting nonpaid "organic" search traffic *and* improving the college's return on investment in pay-per-click advertising.

Outcomes: From February through September 2011, a comprehensive keyword-based SEM campaign drove significant levels of traffic to relevant content pages on the college website. Reaching out to prospective students at an important moment of truth when they seek information online has contributed to sustained enrollment growth.

Audience: Search engine marketing during this period was aimed primarily at traditional age prospective students residing in Illinois Community College District 516.



WAUBONSEE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Where futures take shape

Website Optimization

The existing wealth of content published in the college catalog was leveraged to provide a solid SEO/SEM foundation.

www.waubonsee.edu

Relaunch Date: January 25, 2011

Content Architecture: More than 1,200 topic-specific landing pages were created – one for each academic discipline, career area, associate degree, certificate program and course offered by the college.

Internal Link Architecture: Extensive cross referencing provides easy access to related content and improves search engine page rankings.

URL Construction: Simplified “search engine friendly” page addresses were implemented.

XML Sitemap: An invisible listing of pages was provided to help search engines quickly index the entire site and identify updated pages.

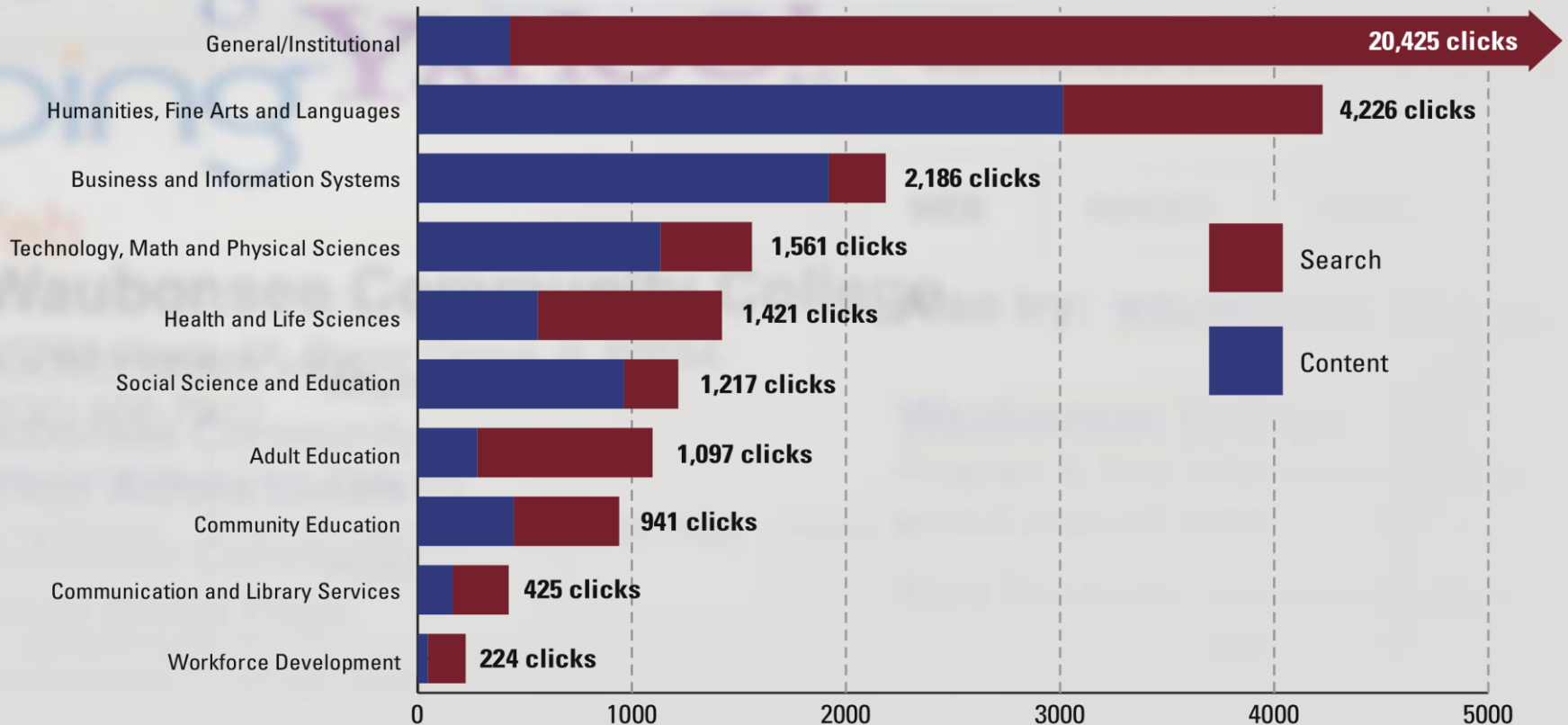


Waubonsee Community College Homepage

Interest Targeting

Segmented by college division, more than 150 topic-specific Ad Groups generated 30,000+ clicks to relevant website content.

Feb. 1 to Sept. 30, 2011



Source: Google AdWords data and Microsoft adCenter data.



Interest Targeting

More than 500 ad variants relating to apx. 20,000 search terms received 9.7 million impressions*.

Feb. 1 to Sept. 30, 2011

Search Relevance: 300+ Text Ad variants and 200+ Image Ad variants linked directly to website content relevant to the user's search criteria.

Precision Targeting: Ads were displayed not only in conjunction with high volume keywords, but also more specific "long tail" *keyphrases*.

Content Networks: In addition to Text Ads displayed alongside Google, Yahoo! and Bing search results, ads were also systematically displayed on third party websites based on keyword/content relevance.

Game Design School

Learn how to develop your own computer games at Waubonsee.
www.waubonsee.edu

Computer Gaming Certificate of Achievement

This certificate is designed for students who have an interest in the field of computer game design and development. Graduates will be able to develop web-based and computer based games.

Course Requirements	21
CIS115 Introduction to Programming	3
CIS186 Game Design	3
CIS186 Game Development	3
GRD170 Digital Image	3
WEB110 Web Development with HTML/XHTML	3
WEB231 Web Authoring/Animation with Flash	3
WEB235 Flash ActionScript	3
Program Total	21

Major course shown in **color** requires minimum grade of C.

COST OF ATTENDANCE	
Tuition:	\$1,095.00
Books and Supplies:	\$640.00
Fees:	\$235.00
Total:	\$3,070.00

THE RIGHT COURSES FOR WHATEVER COURSE YOU'RE ON

GAME DESIGN SCHOOL

WAUBONSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SUGAR GROVE AURORA COPLEY PLANO ONLINE

© 2011 Waubonsee Community College

- Employment Opportunities
- Legal Notices
- Safety & Campus Police
- Accreditation

Aurora Campus
18 S. River St.
Aurora, IL 60506-4134
(830) 801-7900
[Map & Directions](#)

Copley Campus
2000 Ogden Ave.
(Route 34 on Rush-Copley Campus)
Aurora, IL 60504-7222
(830) 585-7900
[Map & Directions](#)

Plano Campus
100 Waubonsee Dr.
Plano, IL 60545
(830) 552-7900
[Map & Directions](#)

Sugar Grove Campus
Route 47 at
Waubonsee Drive
Sugar Grove, IL 60554-9454
(830) 466-7900
[Map & Directions](#)

*Source: Google AdWords and Microsoft adCenter data.



Creative Strategy

Ad Groups included three popular banner sizes to maximize the number of branded impressions on content network sites.

Feb. 1 to Sept. 30, 2011

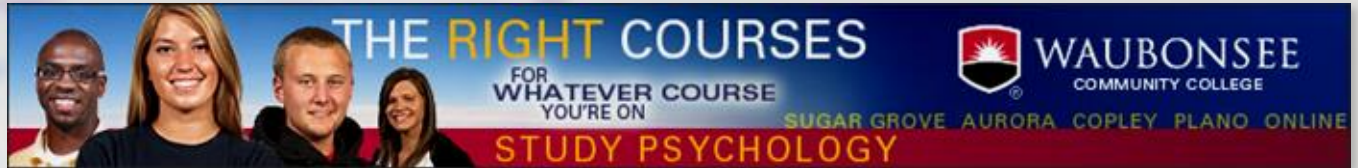
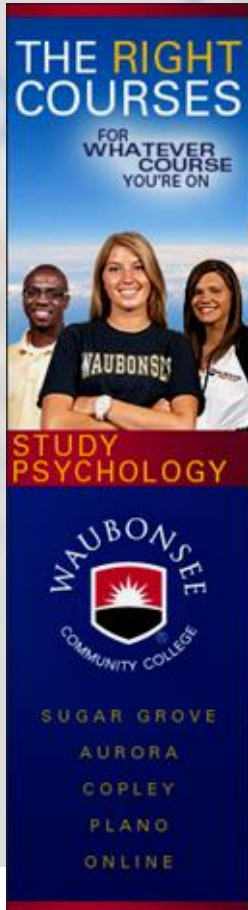


Image Ad - Leaderboard (728 x 90)

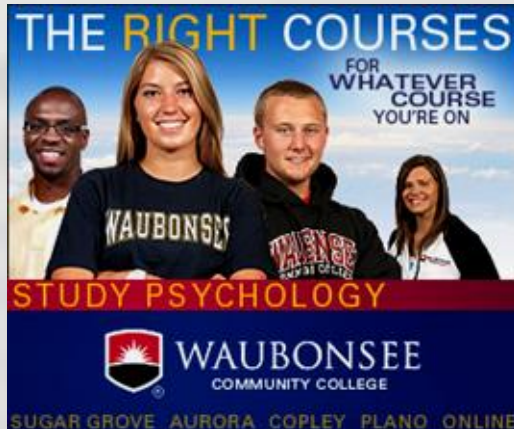


Image Ad - Inline Rectangle (300 x 250)

In-House Creative: Aimed at a traditional age audience, ads were developed by Marketing and Communications staff. Banner ads featured photography of actual students.

Split Testing: Multiple Text Ad versions systematically identified the most effective wording.

[Study Psychology](#)

Do basic course work at Waubonsee.
Transfer credits to a 4-yr college.
www.waubonsee.edu

Text Ad - Version A

[College Psychology](#)

Earn college credits transferrable
to a 4-yr college or university.
www.waubonsee.edu

Text Ad - Version B

Image Ad - Wide Skyscraper (160 x 600)



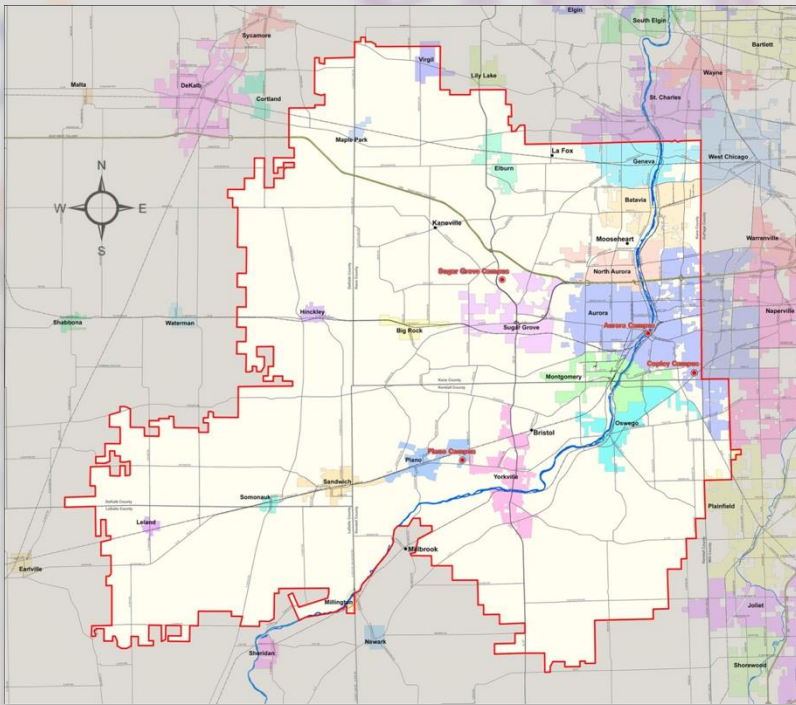
WAUBONSEE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Geographic Targeting

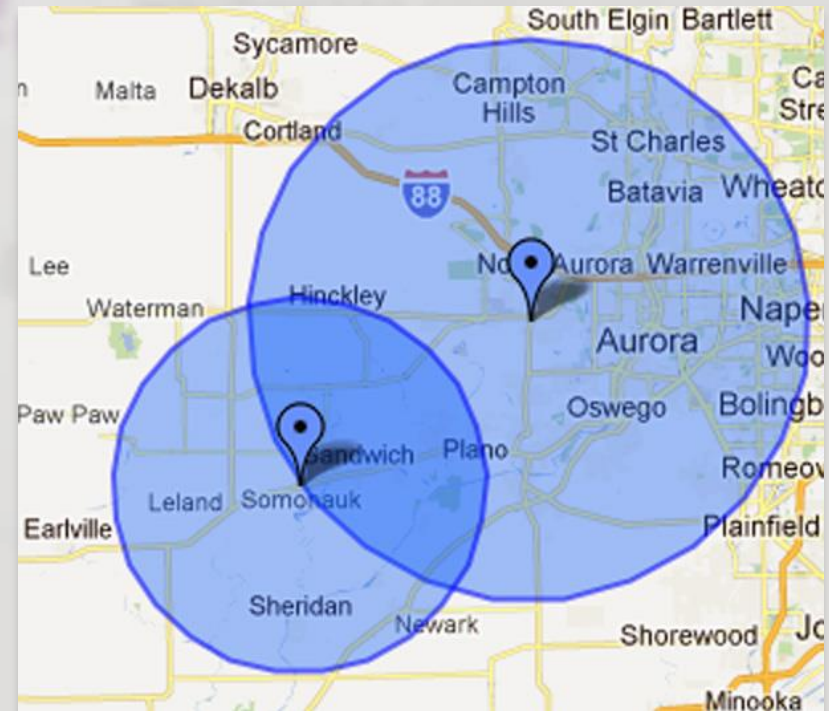
All keyword-based, pay-per-click advertising was precisely focused on the college district to minimize waste.

Feb. 1 to Sept. 30, 2011

Illinois Community College District 516



Google AdWords radial targeting

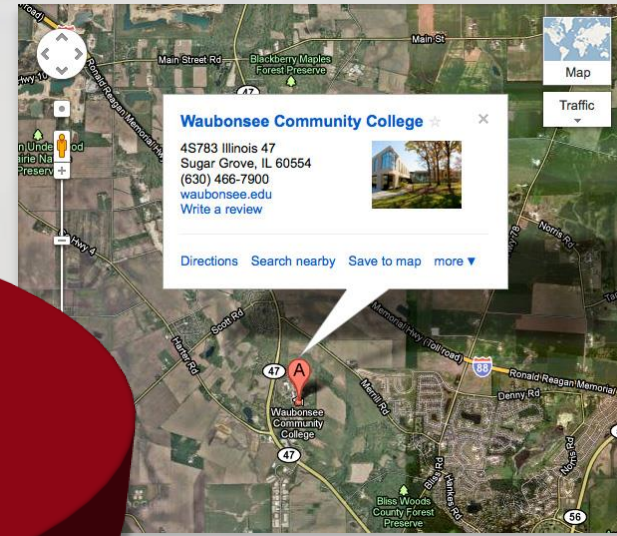
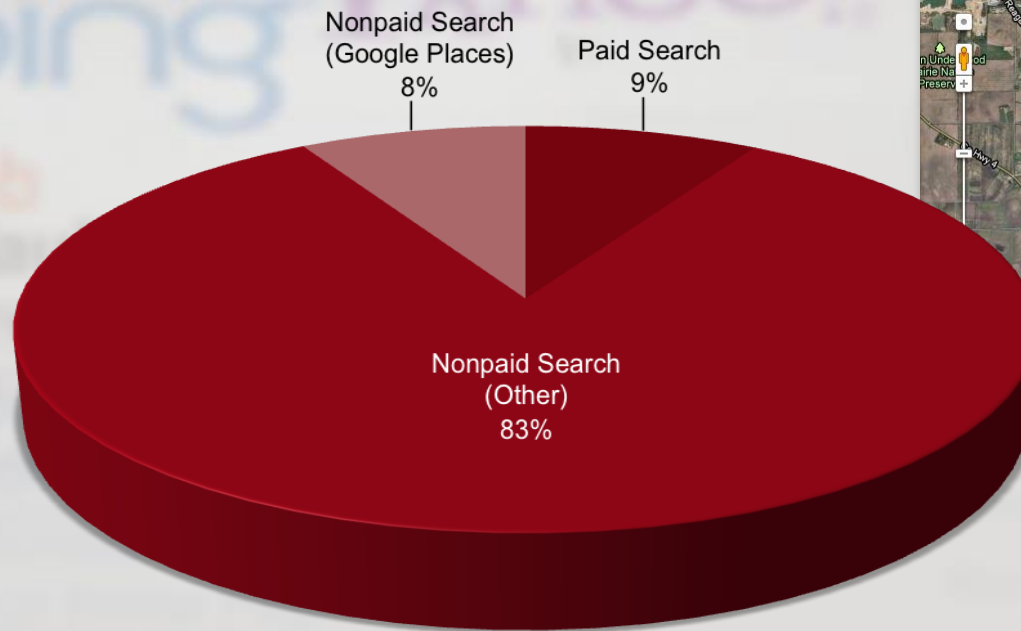


Note: Advertising through Microsoft AdCenter (Yahoo!, Bing) was targeted by ZIP code.

Geographic Targeting

Enhanced *Google Places* listings for all four college campuses generated Nonpaid Search traffic about equal to that of Paid Search.

Feb. 1 to Sept. 30, 2011



Sugar Grove Campus as it appears on Google Maps

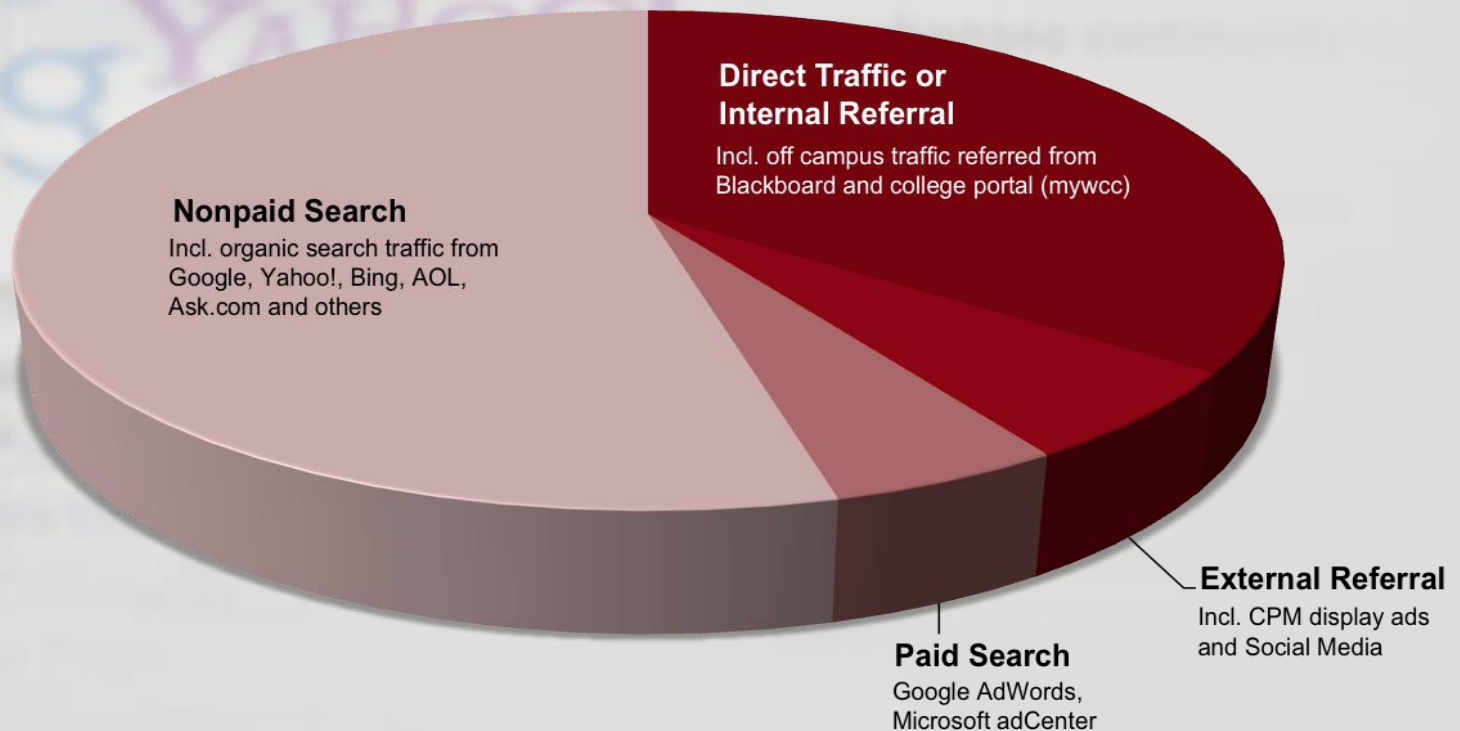
Source: Google Analytics data and Google Places data.

Measurable Results

Paid and Nonpaid Search together delivered about 60% of all 1.23 million external user visits to the college website.

www.waubonsee.edu

Feb. 1 to Sept. 30, 2011



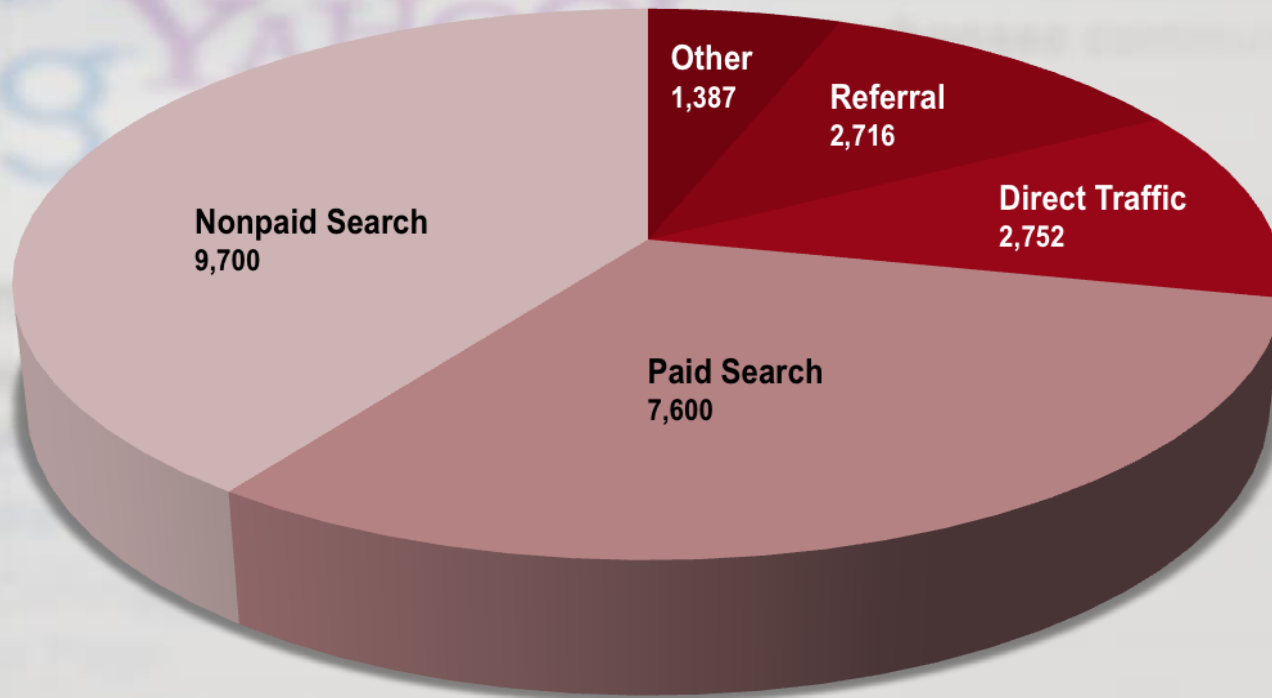
Source: Google Analytics data and Microsoft adCenter data.

Measurable Results

Paid and Nonpaid Search together delivered 72% of all inbound landings on Academic Program pages.

www.waubonsee.edu/learning/academics/disciplines/..

Feb. 1 to Sept. 30, 2011



Source: Google Analytics data and Microsoft adCenter data.



Observed Results

Fall 2011 head count at Waubonsee was up 3.1% in spite of a statewide downward enrollment trend.

Positive Media Coverage: Local media, including The Beacon-News (Aurora, Illinois) and the Daily Herald (northwest suburban Chicagoland) noted Waubonsee's growing popularity.

Improved Access: Accessibility is one of Waubonsee Community College's formally stated core values. Effective SEO/SEM removes barriers to learning by spreading awareness of academic programming availability.

Community Success: The collective efforts of the Marketing and Communications staff, Admissions staff and college administrators helped realize the potential opportunity of higher education for newly enrolled students, benefiting the community at large.

The Beacon-News

75 CENTS | FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2011 | BEACONNEWSONLINE.COM

A CHICAGO SUN-TIMES publication

WCC ENROLLMENT ACHIEVES

HIGH MARKS

Numbers defy state's downward trend for community colleges



Ryan Pilske of Geneva works on his computer between classes in the student center on Thursday at Waubonsee Community College's Sugar Grove campus. (STP/STC)

Despite state trends, Waubonsee enrollment is continuing to grow

BY JENETTE STURGES
sturges@beaconnews.com

Students are flocking to Waubonsee Community College.

Which, normally, wouldn't be that shocking.

Recession, historically, have led community colleges. When unemployment is high and economic uncertainties linger, older adults return to education to retool themselves, and younger students see community colleges as a path to making a college degree less expensive.

At least, that was the conventional wisdom until a recent report from the Illinois Community College Board that last spring's enrollment at community colleges around the state had dropped by almost 2 percent.

One exception? Waubonsee.

Over the same period, Waubonsee Community College saw an increase of 2.3 percent in its full-time equivalent students, an additional 22 students over the previous spring semester.

The equivalent of 5,704 full-time students attended classes at WCC last spring.

Among surrounding community college districts, only Kishwaukee College grew more, increasing its enrollment 2.9 percent. The school, located in rural Moline, enrolled the equivalent of only 2,976 students.



Waubonsee Community College has seen an increase in enrollment, part of which could be attributed to its new downtown Aurora campus.

While Waubonsee administrators can only speculate on the rise in enrollment, their guess seems pretty straightforward.

"Basically, this is the first fall semester we have had both the Plano and the downtown Aurora campuses open," said Stephanie Westmoreland, spokeswoman for the college. "And since they're both open prebative — meaning that students can complete an entire degree or certificate at one facility close to where they live or work — that might be the incentive they need to start, continue or finish a program."

Students milling about the downtown

Aurora campus between programs said convenience was a factor.

"I live right down the road," said James Stevenson. "And the classes are cheaper. I'm taking a math class that at another school was \$2,000. Here it's \$800, so it's a smart move. Plus it's a new campus. It looks good, so why not?"

Shiny, modern campus aside, students said money was their biggest motivation for enrolling, whether it meant saving some over the course of their undergraduate careers or the promise of more lucrative job options once they finish their program.

Waubonsee student Lucia Roma was practicing her English with a tutor between classes on Wednesday. She's in the school's ESL program "because I want a better job, better opportunities," she said.

Diverse programs that allow students to learn a language, a new job skill, or get dual credit also drew students.

"I'm taking a class because I'm going into the medical field and I want to get a Waubonsee nursing class for dual credit. We don't have to pay for it or anything. Our school pays for it, it's really great."

In-district tuition at Waubonsee is almost exactly average when compared to surrounding districts. A Waubonsee student pays \$100 per credit hour for tuition and registration fees.

At College of DuPage, students pay \$122 per credit hour, and at Illinois Valley Community College in Oglethorpe, students pay \$81 per credit hour.

While the recently opened Plano and downtown Aurora campuses can take some of the credit for the school's growth even in tough times, Waubonsee's online presence — which administrators have come to call the "fourth campus" — has also taken off.

Online student enrollment grew in the spring by 8.4 percent, and nearly 4,500 online seats were filled, making Waubonsee fourth in the state for online enrollment among Illinois community colleges.

The upward trend has continued this fall, according to the 10th-day enrollment figures from the school. Total student enrollment is up another 3.1 percent over this time last year, pushing record enrollments even higher.

As for the rest of Illinois' community colleges, the Illinois Community College Board has stressed that, despite the slight dip, the seats are still full.

Spring 2010 headcount enrollments are at the second-highest level in the 37 years that the spring enrollment survey has been conducted, according to the board.

