BUILD YOUR
OUTREACH

Research & Marketing
Resource Guide

NCCER · BYF · DISCOVER MORE

"BUILD YOUR OUTREACH: RESEARCH & MARKETING RESOURCE GUIDE" was written and produced by NCCER as part of its Build Your Future (BYF) outreach and recruitment initiative.

NCCER is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) education foundation which offers training curricula, assessments and credentials for more than 70 crafts in over 6,000 NCCER-accredited facilities across the United States.

BUILD YOUR FUTURE is a recruitment initiative working to assist in developing the next generation of craft professionals, closing the skills gap and filling the labor shortage in the construction industry.

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Construction is facing a growing workforce shortage. With a deficit of 1 million craft professionals expected by 2023, the industry must increase its efforts to recruit and train the next generation of skilled craftspeople.

However, the industry faces the challenge of long-standing stereotype and negative perceptions — especially among parents concerned about their children and their career plans.

This resource guide is designed to give the construction industry tips and tools they need to effectively reach out to parents and influencers, shift perceptions and highlight the benefits of a career in construction.

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RESEARCH & INSIGHT

UNDERSTANDING OUR INDUSTRY *NEEDS*

Our industry knows that careers in construction are in high demand with high wages, and there is opportunity for advancement, all with little-to-no debt. But still, the skilled crafts are among the top five hardest roles to fill today.[1]

In fact, 80% of construction firms throughout the country face difficulties hiring.[2]

The most critical problem with the industry boils down to this: There are not enough people joining the industry and obtaining the skills necessary to offset the number of experienced craft professionals retiring.

This is a major concern for the industry because it takes eight to 12 years for an individual to become a fully trained craft professional.[3]

A skills shortage like this leads to late project schedules, high costs and safety issues.[4] As an industry, it is critically important that we make a push to recruit, train and retain the next generation of craft professionals.

To do this, we have to change the perceptions surrounding the construction industry and improve recruitment efforts.

> By 2030, an estimated **40%** of the current workforce will be retired.[5]

PERCEPTIONS OF CONSTRUCTION AND HOW TO CORRECT THEM

> " **One of the biggest roadblocks the industry faces is negative perceptions about construction.** "

When recruiting, it is important to reach students and young adults to shift their perceptions and inform them of the opportunities in construction. As these groups are the ones who will become the next generation of craft professionals, they are the focus of the majority of the industry's recruiting resources.

But there is another group of people who can act as a roadblock to recruiting the youth — their parents. If a parent thinks that the industry is unsafe and dead end, they likely won't support their child's decision.

In recruitment efforts, it is also critically important to change the perceptions of a student's 'influencers.' An influencer is anyone who guides a student when they are choosing their career path, including:

Parents   *Teachers*   *Guidance counselors*

4 KEY *POINTS*

With NCCER's experience in construction industry recruitment and image enhancement, as well as compiled research, there are four important pieces of information to consider in your efforts.

1. Different messages are needed to influence students versus parents when it comes to changing perceptions about construction careers.

2. Playful and emotional messages — as opposed to rational messages — in social media and digital advertising increase engagement faster.

3. Pay to play is a must. Spending money on Google Ads, programmatic marketing and social media advertising is essential to see a significant difference in your efforts.

4. Utilizing specific keywords on your website and in your content is crucial in targeting (or reaching) parents looking for careers for their children.

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INFLUENCING FACTORS

NCCER has found that it is critical to shift a student's perception of the industry from neutral to positive and to shift an influencer's perception of construction from negative to neutral.

PARENTS

Frankel Media Group, on behalf of NCCER, deployed a survey to parents in Virginia in March 2019, researching perceptions of careers in the construction industry.

SURVEY OVERVIEW

Sent to **3,000** parents

514 responses completed in **3 weeks**

67% of respondents were **women**

48% had both sons and daughters

68% were in the 35–54 age group

A bridge between students and parents is that job satisfaction is a significant factor for both — in fact, **100%** of parents rated job satisfaction for their child as important.

KEY RESULTS

70% would be unlikely to advise their child to choose a career in construction,

but **71%** would be supportive if their child pursued a career in construction

99% considered job security and availability important

99% ranked safety as important, but **48%** feel that the industry is unsafe

83% agree that a college degree is vital to a good career

> **Research parent opinions in your state or location when planning a large project.**
>
> - Purchase contact lists.
> - Limit your list to parents with children in PreK–recent high school graduates.
>
> - Send survey digitally.
> - Limit time the survey is open to three weeks maximum.
>
> - Offer an incentive, such as a Visa or Amazon card.
> - Hold focus groups.

STUDENTS

What sways young people into considering construction is generally one of the following:

Connection to the industry, such as family ties.

Community impact of the work.

Awareness of job satisfaction among the current workforce.

In addition, because the cost of a college degree has increased 1,120% in the last 35 years, the opportunity to start a meaningful career with little-to-no debt resonates with today's youth, particularly with Gen Z.[1]

With diversity being expected as par for the course in the newest generation, promoting the concept that construction is for everybody — including women — highlights the industry is no longer that of their parents or grandparents.[1]

Build Your Future's biweekly blog stats showcase this. The top three posts as of the end of 2019 quarter three were:

⭐ **TOP 5 JOBS**
Top 5 Highest-Paying Jobs in Construction

⭐ **TOP 5 MISCONCEPTIONS**
Top 5 Misconceptions About Construction

⭐ **NOT YOUR DAD'S JOB**
Not Just Your Dad's Job—3 Reasons for Women to Go Into Construction

SOURCES

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DRIVING ENGAGEMENT

The essential element of effective messaging is to provide value to your audience. The masses do not care that the industry needs workers. What they want to know is how that affects them.

IMPACTFUL CAMPAIGNS

To disrupt parents and influencers' thinking, and move them from negative to neutral, the following communication styles make the most impact:

Playful   *Emotional*

The emotional angle of opportunity and self- sufficiency for their children drives intrigue and engagement. Two of Build Your Future's most successful campaigns this year introduced this messaging — one in a quite playful manner.

RAMEN NOODLES

A well-known joke is that college students survive on the cheap and quick meals of ramen noodles. With a simple photo of these noodles, the text stated:

AD 1: Bypass life's ramen noodle phase. Construction builds futures. #DiscoverMore

AD 2: No ramen noodle phase! A construction career means they're in demand, highly paid and eating right.

OPEN DOORS

As a play on actually building the door, this campaign focused on the opportunity available:

AD: Construction opens doors. With a career in the construction industry, there are options. Lots of options. #DiscoverMore

In the construction industry, recruitment is more than attending a job fair. It is spreading awareness about what a career in construction looks like and reaching influencers.

GAINING TRACTION

SOCIAL MEDIA

While your website is your company's own turf, you need to venture outside these walls in order to reach more people. That's where social media comes in.

Just over a decade ago, the idea of "social media" wasn't even around. And yet here we are, with more than 2.3 billion active users on Facebook and hundreds of millions more on Twitter, Instagram, YouTube LinkedIn, Snapchat, TikTok and other social networks.[1]

Simply put, social media is the main forum of communication for the majority of people — especially your younger audience who doesn't know a life without the internet. If your organization doesn't have a space on social, it's missing a critical opportunity.
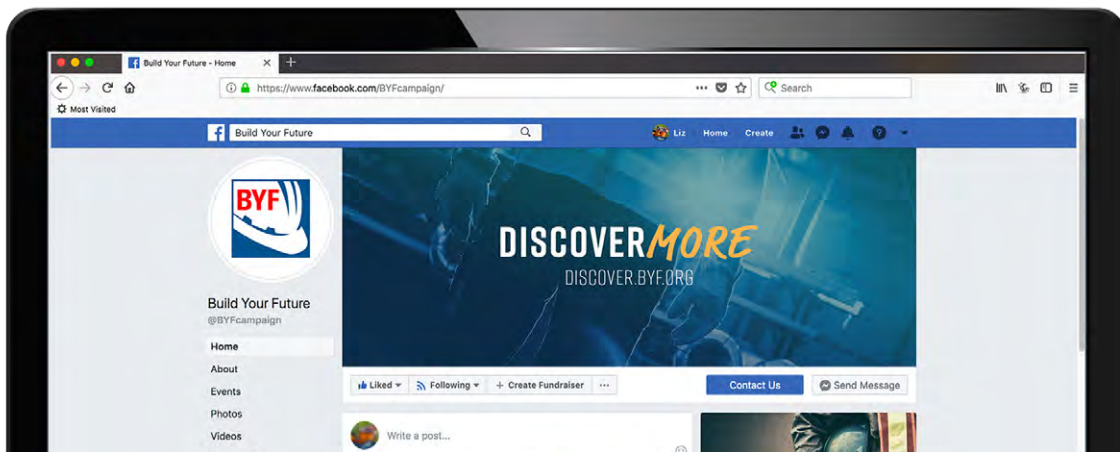
WHY SHOULD OUR COMPANY BE ON SOCIAL MEDIA?

Construction companies may not think they need to make a big commitment to social media.

While construction marketing efforts mostly happen within the industry, the need for communicating in a more public forum may not seem as great.

However, the growing skills gap in the industry and the need to recruit and train a new generation of craft professionals necessitates a more outward strategy.[2]

> **In order to reach a new audience, you must expand into new territories and try to build new relationships.**

Your audience is on social media. No attempt to reach the core audiences in recruitment efforts is complete without dedicating time, personnel and money towards establishing your company on social media.

WHAT SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORKS SHOULD OUR COMPANY BE ON?

You don't need to create a profile on EVERY social network that comes around. In fact, you should be careful not to overstretch your resources by trying to establish yourself everywhere, especially if you have a smaller marketing team with only one or two people managing your social profiles. However, there are three core networks you should concentrate on:

Facebook   **Twitter**   **Instagram**

Concerned about managing multiple social media channels at once? Look into using third-party social management tools such as Hootsuite or Sprout Social. These tools can combine the feeds and publishing process of multiple networks onto one platform.

FACEBOOK

> ## Facebook is a casino.
> — Carlos Gil of Gil Media Co.

Seventy-eight percent of 30- to 49-year-olds own a Facebook account, which means Facebook is a great place to reach parents and other influencers of children and students.[3]

As a brand, your primary presence on Facebook will be your Business Page. You can share text, photos, videos, polls, events and other types of posts to people who have "liked" your page. You can also share beyond your own community with promoted posts and other Facebook ads.

Although Facebook has many positive features, it can also be frustrating, especially for smaller pages. Facebook utilizes an algorithm that decides what to show on a user's timeline, which means even people who have liked your page might not see your post.[4]

Every post is a gamble, and you never know exactly how well a post will do. And just like at a casino, you have to pay to play. Allocating budget to boosting Facebook posts will go a long way toward growing your reach.

PROS:

- Massive audience
- Great for parents and influencer demographics
- Top social advertising system

CONS:

- Not as popular among younger audience
- Timeline algorithm can inhibit your visibility
- More pay-to-play

POST FREQUENCY AIM: 2-5 per week

PROFILE PICTURE DIMENSIONS:
200px X 200px

COVER PHOTO DIMENSIONS:
820px X 360px (keep text and graphics near center so they aren't cropped on desktop or mobile)

SHARED IMAGE: 1200px X 63px

TWITTER

While people use Facebook to connect with friends and family, Twitter is more for reaching beyond your current circle.

Twitter is popular for its back-and-forth interactions among users and for its (mostly) reverse-chronological timeline of quick updates of 280 characters or less. Its time-sensitive layout makes it great for live coverage of events or reactions to breaking news, and the frequent use of hashtags allow you to search for key terms and jump into the conversation quickly.

Out of all of Twitter's users, 64% are within the 18-29 or 30-49 age brackets, so it's also a good place to reach our core audience of influencers.[5]

Because Twitter's timeline is less algorithmically built than Facebook's (although they continue to gradually add more of these elements in), it's much fairer to organic, non-paid content. However, your window for other people to see that content is smaller.

The average lifespan of a tweet is 18 minutes.[6]

PROS:

- Less algorithm = Better for organic content
- Can tweet more without spamming
- Great for interactivity

CONS:

- Stagnating user growth
- Easy to get lost in the noise
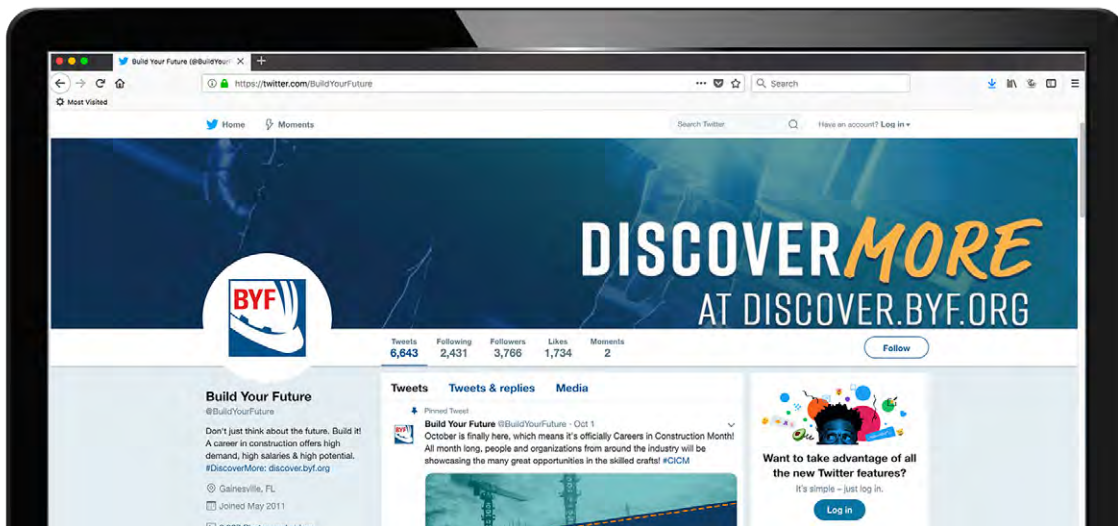- Character limits can cause issues

POST FREQUENCY AIM: 10-15 per day

PROFILE PICTURE DIMENSIONS:
400px X 400px

COVER PHOTO DIMENSIONS:
1500px X 500px

SHARED IMAGE: 1024px X 512px

INSTAGRAM

> **Instagram's focus on images pushes brands to create eye-catching content instead of relying on text.**

This social network is all about the visuals. Every post is either a photo or a video.

When done well, a beautiful picture, a cool video or a well-designed infographic can leave a greater impression on those who see it. However, Instagram's text and link-sharing limitations can inhibit your ability to go into detail or provide a call-to-action.

Unlike Twitter and Facebook, Instagram's demographics swing much younger, with 72% of people aged 13-17 using Instagram.[7] The number of users drop in each subsequent age group.

As is the trend among social networks, an algorithm now has a lot of control over a user's Instagram feed, which can make starting off a new account more challenging. But as you post more, use hashtags and develop a community, you can find success.

PROS:

• Perfect for eye-catching visuals

• Popular among younger audiences

• Instagram Stories feature gives additional visibility and versatility

CONS:

• Limited link sharing

• Mobile-only

• Algorithm influencing timelines

POST FREQUENCY AIM:	PROFILE PICTURE DIMENSIONS:	SHARED IMAGE:
2-5 per week	180px X 180px	1080px X 1080px

SOCIAL MEDIA BEST PRACTICES

Although each individual network has its quirks and intricacies, there are a few best practices that apply to any social media channel you are on.

DEVELOP A PERSONALITY

Nobody wants to follow an account that posts like a robot.

Developing a brand voice is important in all marketing, but especially on social media. It shapes how you interact with people.

Your personality should reflect your brand. For construction companies and associations, we recommend a balanced approach. This is an interesting and exciting industry, so have some fun. But be careful not to feed into the negative stereotypes of the industry, such as it is unsafe or only for men.

When Build Your Future shares about safety or diversity, we aim to provide facts that disprove misconceptions.

FIND THE BALANCE OF POST FREQUENCY

There can be a fine line between posting too often and not posting enough.

Because of how the timeline algorithms work, you need to be active and posting relatively frequently. Going weeks at a time between posts will indicate that your page is dormant or lacks quality, and it will not be shown to users.

> " At the same time, posting too often will appear spammy. "

Finding the balance of post frequency is key to social media success. We've listed some recommendations at the end of each social platform section, but you'll need to determine what is right for your organization based on your audience and content.

Build Your Future
October 5 at 4:00 PM ·

Safety matters to the construction industry. From better gear to improved training and advancing technology, #construction is safer than ever before. #CICM http://discover.byf.org/safety-standards-what-do-they-look.../

SAFER
------- THAN -------
EVER BEFORE.

Build Your Future
@BuildYourFuture

Construction is not just for the boys anymore. Skilled craftswomen are flooding into the industry -- and the industry needs them.

Construction Offers Opportunities for Girls
 discover.byf.org

PROVIDE VALUE

Unlike your website, a social network is not your own territory. You are a guest in someone else's home, and you need to make yourself useful to stick around.

That means providing value to your followers. Your followers made a commitment by following your page, and it's up to you to make sure that decision was a good one.

Using social media exclusively as a billboard of self-serving ads is not a great strategy for growth. You need to think about your audience: What do they want to see?

You can mix in promotional posts occasionally but remember that your primary focus for social posts is to offer value to your audience.

TRACK AND EVALUATE PERFORMANCE

How do you know how you're doing on social media? The key is to log your metrics.

By recording analytic data and establishing benchmarks, you can see how your numbers rise or fall over time. This can give you clues into what works and you should do more or less of.

All major social networks provide their own metrics, such as Facebook Insights or Twitter Analytics. Metrics can also be collected from third-party social management platforms.

These are some key metrics to track:

- Followers/ Page likes
- Reach/Impressions
- Post likes
- Shares/Retweets
- Number of posts
- Follower demographics
- Engagement rate

In fact, Facebook Insights offers analytics on the age, gender, location and other demographics of your fans, allowing you to shift your messaging to reach your target audience. When switching our messaging focus to parents, Build Your Future's follower age range of 25- to 54-year-olds has increased by 257% from January through September of 2019.

SOCIAL MEDIA *SPEND*

WHAT SHOULD OUR SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING BUDGET BE?

Depending on the size of your organization, your social advertising budget could range from just a few hundred dollars to a few hundred thousand.

Unsurprisingly, the more money you spend, the more people will see your ads on social media.

But that doesn't mean companies with tighter budgets can't have success on social media!

EXAMPLE 1: Boosting one Build Your Future video on Facebook for just **$20** helped us earn more than **1,115 additional views** and reach more than **5,000 people** — a **cost per result (CPR)** of less than **$0.02.**
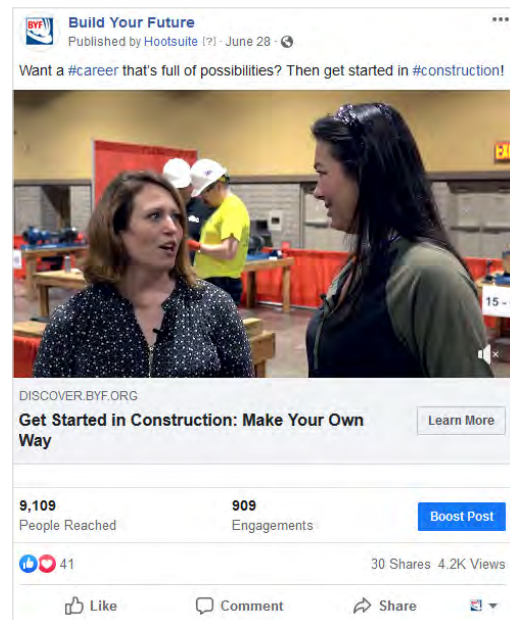
EXAMPLE 2: Spending **$800** over a two-week period on a Build Your Future Facebook Page Likes Campaign generated over **34,000 impressions** and **1,073 followers** added. The **cost per follower** spend was **$0.74.**

EXAMPLE 3: The previously mentioned Ramen and Doors messages were used as ads on Twitter over a two-week period and received a **click-through rate (CTR)** of **3.37%** with a **CPC** of **$0.37.** With almost **165,000 impressions,** the ads received **5,554 clicks** and had a total spend of **$2,052.21.**

It's important to note that while Build Your Future's Twitter account saw higher CPC and CTR compared to our Facebook while running similar campaigns, the targeting options on Facebook are much more effective in reaching our core audiences. There is a potential for lost spend with non-parents on Twitter.

CREATING SOCIAL MEDIA ADS

Although different social platforms have slightly different advertising services, there are some basic principles that most adhere to.

Most of the advertising work will be done in an ads manager. There's the Facebook Ads Manager, Twitter Ads, and the LinkedIn Campaign Manager. Since being bought by Facebook, Instagram ads are also done through the Facebook Ads Manager.

Creating ads on these platforms follows the same basic three-pronged hierarchy:

CAMPAIGN

Campaign Title
↳ Objective
↳ Campaign details

AD GROUPS

Ad Group Title #1
↳ Ad group details
↳ Targeting
↳ Creatives

Ad Group Title #2
↳ Ad group details
↳ Targeting
↳ Creatives

REVIEW

1. **Campaign** — The top umbrella for any ads you want to run. Name the campaign, choose an objective, and set a time frame and budget.

2. **Ad Sets** — Within the campaign you can have one or several ad sets, which are groupings of ads. Ad sets allow set timelines and budgets for each, so they are especially useful to break up a campaign into different sections. For example, set a campaign for a full business quarter, with a separate ad set for each month.

3. **Ads/Creatives** — These are the actual placements, including the media and copy. You can create multiple ads in an ad set.

> **Facebook prefers ads with little or no text on the images. Ad images with lots of text will not be shown to as many people. Use the Text Overlay Tool to check that your ads will fully run.**

AUDIENCE TARGETING ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Social ads are able to target specific characteristics of social media users.

As much of the key data (age, gender, etc.) is provided by the users directly when creating their profile, targeting can be very accurate. Data is also collected based on what pages a person follows and which posts they interact with.

☀️ You can customize everything — copy, imagery, tone, content — to be the **most effective for the audience you're trying to reach.** For example, if you're trying to reach parents of high schoolers, then ads featuring students of a similar age might deeply resonate with them.

☀️ It's a **cost-effective tactic** because you aren't sending a single message out to a large generic audience and hoping something sticks. You aren't wasting dollars showing an ad to someone you don't want to show it to.

☀️ By not showing the same ads to everyone, you **avoid irrelevancy**. Build Your Future services both students and adults, so portions of our content and messaging are more geared toward one or the other. Messaging intended for parents wouldn't make sense to show to their children, so targeting helps provide spill-over.

Each platform gives you a number of characteristics to choose as part of your custom audience, including age, interests and jobs.

See the examples of custom audiences on Facebook and Twitter that Build Your Future has built as part of its #DiscoverMore campaign. Use these as a guide, and then add and customize it to even better fit your own organization.

FACEBOOK | Parents and Teacher Audience

Audience Details
View how this audience is defined.

Audience Name	BYF Parents & Teachers
Saved Audience Details	Location: United States
	Excluded Connections: Exclude people who like Build Your Future
	Age: 30 - 55
	Language: English (US)
	People Who Match: Interests: Career counseling, Career development, Parenting or Parent, Employers: Parents, Job title: Career counseling, Teacher, School counselor, Principal or School Guidance Counselor, Parents: Parents (All), Parents with teenagers (13-18 years) or Parents with preteens (08-12 years)

Edit

> " **You can create and save multiple custom audiences on Facebook for easy selection in the future.** "

TWITTER | Parents and Teacher Audience

Follower look-alikes

@parentsmagazine @todaysparent @parenting

Keywords

Parent parents father mother parenting construction

Interests

Job search Career news and general info Job fairs Moms Dads Parenting teens

Behaviors

US – Child nearing high school graduation US – Number of children: 1 US – Family member age: 20-29
US – Children ages: 16-17 US – Child age: 6-10 US – Number of children 3+ US – Child age: 16-17
US – Family member age: 18-19 US – 4 children US – 3 children US – 1 child US – 2 children
US – Children ages: 11-15 US – Presence in household: yes US – Child age 11-15
US – Family member age: 17 and under US – Children ages: 6-10 US – 5 children
US – Presence of children: yes US – Number of children: 2 US – Young adult age: 18-25 US – Husband
US – Male: HOH US – Female: HOH US – Wife US – Moms with big families US – Soccer moms
US – Corporate moms US – Moms of high school kids US – Stay-at-home moms US – Single parent
US – Green moms US – Working-class moms US – Working-class families

SOCIAL ADS VS. BOOSTED CONTENT

Social media platforms offer a few ways to amplify your message for a fee.

True **advertisements** on social media act similar to ads you might create through Google Ads. Some pop up on the side of the page as banner ads, while other will appear in the main timeline with a "Sponsored" notice.

Another method of promoting on Facebook is through **boosted posts.**

Most standard posts on Facebook can be boosted. Doing this increases the number of people who see your post, meaning more clicks and better engagement.

Facebook uses an algorithm to curate what appears on a given user's timeline. With Facebook giving priority to posts from friends and families over those from brands, business pages can struggle with low organic reach — even if they have lots of followers.[8] Boosting gives your post higher priority for the algorithm, so you have a better shot at being seen.

ADS

Pros:

- More detailed customization options, such as link preview customization and **dynamic creative.**
- Multiple formats, such as side or banner ads.

Cons:

- More detailed creation takes longer.
- Some ad placements are easier to ignore than timeline placements.

BOOSTED POSTS

Pros:

- Quickest promotion options.
- Appear more naturally in timelines, although can still be labeled as sponsored.

Cons:

- Lacks detailed customization.
- Limited to regular post format.

Build Your Future
Sponsored ·

It's time to connect industry and education. Join us for the 2019 Construction Career Pathways Conference!

#NOMORESKILLSGAP

PATHWAYS.NCCER.ORG
2019 Construction Career Pathways Conference

LEARN MORE

RECRUITING THROUGH *ADVERTISING*

With all the noise online, advertising is an important part of making sure you are reaching your audience.

Digital advertising has a number of effective and efficient options for budgets of all sizes. Two popular methods are through Google Ads and programmatic marketing platforms.

GOOGLE ADS

Looking for a way to get your message in-front of general audiences? Google Ads offers a way to deliver content that fits directly with active searches — in effect, offering tailored information that consumers want.

Google Ads is an online advertising platform where you can pay to display brief advertisements to web users, which will show up as top search results, side bars and other placements.

Why a career in construction?

Better question: Why not? Construction offers high demand, salaries and potential.

> " If you are a nonprofit organization, *BEFORE setting up your Google Ads account,* check if you're eligible for a <u>Google Grant</u>.[9] You could receive up to $10,000 of in-kind advertising each month. "

HIGHLIGHTS OF GOOGLE ADS

BUDGET

Pros:

- You decide how much you want to spend by setting your budget to a daily limit or campaign total spend.

- Chose the campaign model option that best fits your needs: Cost Per Click (CPC), Cost Per Impression or Cost Per Engagement.

- Once you set up a campaign, it runs well without needing intensive time effort on your part. It is recommended to review your ads at least 30 minutes a week.

Con:

- Budget restrictions could limit your ability to appear first in search results.

CAMPAIGNS

There are a variety of options with Google Ads to fit your specific needs.

- **Search:** These are text forms that show when someone searches for a product or service.

- **Display:** These are image forms that display on websites or apps.

- **Video:** Generally, six or 15 second videos, these show up right before or during YouTube videos.

COST PER CLICK (CPC):
Only pay if somebody clicks on your ad.

COST PER IMPRESSION: Pay based on how many times your ad was seen.

COST PER ENGAGEMENT:
Pay if somebody completes a specific engagement, such as watching the video ad.

BASICS OF GOOGLE ADS

As seen across multiple advertising platforms, there is a hierarchy to creating your ads:

1. **Campaigns** — A campaign is set of related ads. This helps keep you organized and be able to pull metrics based on topics, i.e. parents, students, industry. Set your campaign goals (and don't worry, you can always adjust these) and choose the type of campaign you'd like to run.

2. **Ad groups** — Ad groups allow you to create multiple ads that are targeted to the same audience and keywords. This lets you create different art and content directions for a particular audience to see what appeals the most.

3. **Ads** — This is the content and images that your audience will see. You'll set headlines, descriptions, images and a URL that will best appeal to your audience.

Check out a few best practices of using Google Ads:

DEMOGRAPHICS

This is key. To target parents, ensure your audience is set to people with children and a specific age range.

AUDIENCE

For display and video campaigns, create a custom intent audience to segment your ideal audience. First develop a keyword list that fits a common theme like the examples below:

⭐**Students:** best job options; build a building; building careers; career options; career websites; careers for students; careers in building; careers in construction; choosing a career; find a career path; find my dream job; find the right job for me; find your dream job; help me find a career; what career should I choose

⭐**Parents:** beginner construction jobs; best construction jobs; career builders; career exploration; career finder; career ideas; career in construction company; choosing a career; choosing a career path; entering the job market; find your career; jobs for students; jobs for teenagers

There may be a few overlaps which is why choosing an age range and other demographics options is highly important. The last thing you want is to have your ads compete with themselves.

While it can be easy to set your ad and let it run, it's important to make sure that it's running successfully. There are different measurement tools depending on what your goal is.

If your goal is to change perceptions or increase interest in a career in construction, it's useful to track your clicks and clickthrough rate (CTR).

> **Impressions give you a great snapshot of how many times your ad has been viewed.**

The CTR is found by how many clicks your ad receives compared to the number of impressions. A good CTR is considered 1% or higher. Don't worry if you are not hitting when your ads first begin running — it typically takes time to evaluate which keywords are best triggering your ads.

If specific keywords are running a low CTR, you have a couple of options. You can pause or remove these words. Or, if you feel that these keywords are especially important to your campaign, adjust your ad to better match.

PROGRAMMATIC MARKETING

Programmatic marketing is an extremely efficient advertising tool that allows even more targeting approaches than other platforms. This tool uses online behavioral data across a range of partner networks to target people most likely to engage with ads.

There are various platforms that can be used for programmatic marketing such as Genius Monkey and MultiView. Advertisements will display across multiple media outlets, such as Google, Yahoo!, MSN and more.

HIGHLIGHTS OF PROGRAMMATIC MARKETING

REACH

Provides a clearer idea of the reach of your ad and conversion rate that goes beyond clickthrough rates. If a consumer sees the ad, does not click on it, yet visits your website later, this is considered a conversion that is tracked. To do this, you'll need to be able to add code to your website.

BUDGET

Distinct budgetary considerations compared to other advertising platforms.

- **Pro:** The cost per click is typically the lowest possible.
- **Con:** The overall cost to be efficient is higher than needed on other platforms.

TARGETING

Extremely focused. Targeting options include:

- **GEO:** Choose specific states to be most effective.

- **Demographics:** Select age range; gender; job titles; parents of children a specific age; etc.

- **Behavioral:** Include searches by the audience: college options; available scholarships; what should my child major in.

- **Emails:** Narrow to individuals who are receiving emails from specific sources: @collegeboard.org; @schoolcounselor.org; etc.

- **Websites:** Select competitors' websites to offer alternatives: collegeboard.org; college-insight.org; etc.

- **Keywords:** Choose keywords that apply to searches for target ads.

BASICS OF PROGRAMMATIC MARKETING

Besides identifying the factors listed in the targeting section, you'll need to write your ad and supply creatives (images, gifs, etc.). Here is an example of the Build Your Future Today campaign targeting parents:

NATIVE TITLE:

Why a career in construction?

NATIVE DESCRIPTION:

Better question: Why not? With 40% of the current workforce retiring by 2030, they'll be in demand and highly paid. It's time to talk construction.

SOCIAL TITLE:

Why a career in building?
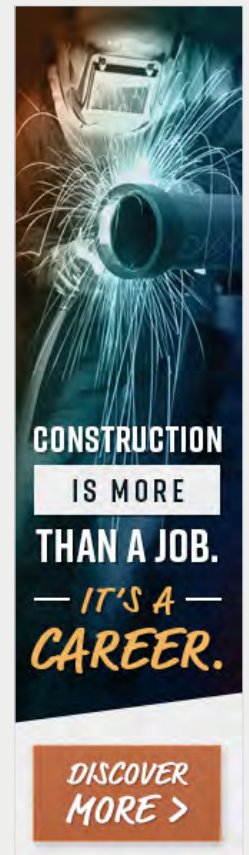
AD DESCRIPTION:

Better question: Why not? They'll be in demand and highly paid. Think about construction.

COMPANY NAME:

Build Your Future

DISPLAY URL:

discover.byf.org

Programmatic marketing ads require more design skills as they will need text and a call to action included.

EVALUATION

With programmatic marketing, the managing of the ads is run by a different company so it's more hands-off compared to Google Ads or social media advertising.

However, you will have a custom dashboard that lets you pull metrics that match your goals. Make sure to review impressions, clicks, total conversions and cost per click.

EXAMPLE: Spending a total of **$5,000**, Build Your Future had a **41.24%** total site **conversion rate of 18,529** during a four-week time frame. The campaign had a **$0.65 CPC** and over **1.3 million impressions**.

Programmatic spend can be an effective tool in driving website traffic.

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CONTENT

Changing perceptions and recruiting have their own building materials: content. Marketing strategies are pointless without valuable content to communicate your message in an engaging way.

WHAT IS CONTENT?

In construction recruitment, we have a number of different crucial concepts we need to share with the world. So, what are the different mediums we can use to communicate those messages?

The most common forms of digital content include:

- Blog posts
- Videos
- Infographics
- Guides and how-tos
- White papers and research reports
- Testimonials
- Feature pieces

In most cases, the content you produce will be hosted on your company's website (the exception being videos, which are usually uploaded to YouTube or another video host and then embedded on your site).

Regardless of what type of content you choose to create, it's important to make sure that it's high-quality work and aligns with your company values and the messages you need to communicate.

THE KEYS TO GOOD CONTENT

FOUR KEYS TO GOOD CONTENT

Credible   Consumable   Searchable   Shareable

CONTENT IDEAS

Keep your audience interested by varying your types of content:

- Photos and videos from construction sites.
- Profiles of craft professionals in your organization.
- Success stories of organizational leaders who rose in the ranks.
- Feature pieces on completed construction projects with before/after photos.
- Step-by-step guides on how to apply for an apprenticeship or other training.
- Infographics with industry research and statistics.
- Testimonial videos from craft professionals about why they like their career.
- Blogs about the benefits of a construction career.

> **Producing high-quality and informative content showcases your company's expertise and insight into the industry.**

✅ CREDIBLE

As your authority grows, so does your reputation. Your company's image could soar within the industry as well as with your target audience and the general public. Becoming a thought leader is important as we work to shift perceptions of construction and craft careers.

Links to and from your website are a great way to become reputable and an authority on the subject.

When other websites link to your website, it shows they agree with you or they can verify your information. When you link to other websites, it shows you do your research and are citing sources for any claims you make.

There are three main types of links:

🌟 **External Links** —
Links you make to pages on other websites.

- When you include stats or data in a post, remember to reference your source with a hyperlink.

🌟 **Internal Links** —
Links you make to other pages on your own website.

- If you write a blog post and mention a topic you've already written about, you can link to your previous article.

🌟 **Back Links** —
Links made by other websites to a page on your website.

- You can earn backlinks by creating high-quality, shareable content

🍴 CONSUMABLE

Even with amazing writing, epic video shots and great editing, your formatting must be consumable or you'll miss out on reaching a major portion of your audience.

BLOGS AND WRITTEN CONTENT

Sorting your way through a massive text chunk is not a pleasant experience. It strains your eyes, it's easy to lose your place, and it seems more difficult to remember the most important take-aways.

In your written content, it's important to avoid this issue.

People who are still in the early stages of learning about and exploring the industry will be more receptive to content that is scannable and friendly on the eyes.

> ❝ **You want to make your content as easy to digest as possible.** ❞

Here are a few tools at your disposal that can help make your content easier to read.

- **Headers and Sub-headers** — Break up your writing into sections and make your work easy to scan.

- **Bullet Points** — Present lists in straight-forward and eye-catching ways.

- **Pull Quotes** — Make the most important lines stand out.

- **Bolded Words** — Focus attention on keywords.

- **White Space** — Help the brain process the information by limiting paragraphs to two or three lines.

- **Images** — Reinforce ideas and themes through visual means.

VIDEOS

While it's good to have some longer videos for in-depth topics, the majority of your videos should be relatively short.

If possible, keep your videos under a minute long, especially if they're being posted on social media. If you have a longer video, you can cut a 10-15 second clip to use as a preview and then provide a link to the full version, which should still be reasonable.

> **Try to keep most of your videos under a minute long.**

BYF SOCIAL MEDIA CLIPS

For BYF's longer videos, we like to edit a short snippet to use as a preview for the full-length version.

In this video interview with Jimmy Greene, President/CEO of ABC Greater Michigan Chapter, we cropped a 7-second clip from the end of the video where Jimmy is summarizing his points. The short clip captures attention on Twitter, and those interested in the more in-depth explanation can click the link to watch the complete interview.

Best practices for video content:

- ☀ Keep **most** videos under a minute long.
- ☀ **7–15 second** videos perform well on social media.
- ☀ Add **subtitles**.
- ☀ Upload video files **directly** to social platforms rather than linking to a YouTube video — they will auto-play on Facebook and Twitter.

⌕ SEARCHABLE

Most people don't find a website for the first time via the site's homepage. They find it by typing a phrase or keyword into a search engine and then clicking through the top results.

Similarly, most parents wouldn't know the name of the construction companies or associations in their area if they had no previous involvement in the industry.

Think about what a parent might be searching for on Google. Imagine a father whose child is a sophomore in high school and wants to help them choose a career path. What could they type?

> **"Jobs that pay well"**
>
> **"Careers with low-debt education"**
>
> **"What jobs are in demand?"**

Those are all generic searches, but they can all apply to careers in construction. By creating content about those topics, you could appear in search results and have a chance to earn their eyes.

A parent who is lukewarm about their child working in construction is going to have questions and concerns. By providing answers and reassurances through content, you're helping to make a difference.

> **Content opens doors to people who are searching online.**

To get started, here are some construction recruiting keywords aimed at parents, teachers and other influencers you can use on your website in page headers and content copy:

CONSTRUCTION KEYWORDS FOR PARENTS AND INFLUENCERS

1. Apply for construction jobs
2. Best career for my child
3. Best construction jobs
4. Building and construction jobs
5. Building careers
6. Building construction careers
7. Career exploration for parents
8. Career opportunities in construction
9. Career path
10. Career path for my child
11. Careers for my child
12. Careers in building and construction
13. Careers in construction
14. Cheaper options than college
15. Cheaper ways to start a career
16. Choosing a career
17. Choosing a career path
18. College too expensive
19. Construction apprenticeships
20. Construction careers
21. Construction careers for my daughter
22. Construction careers for my son
23. Construction industry employment
24. Construction job opportunities
25. Different career paths
26. Entering the job market
27. Entry level construction jobs
28. Find a career path
29. Good paying construction jobs
30. Help choosing a career
31. Helping my child pick a career
32. Highest paying construction jobs
33. Is college the right choice
34. Job opportunities for my child
35. Job options for my child
36. Jobs after high school
37. Jobs for my child
38. Jobs in construction companies
39. Jobs in construction field
40. Jobs in construction industry
41. List of careers in construction
42. Minorities in construction
43. My child's future career
44. My child's career
45. Should my child choose construction
46. What career for my son
47. What career should my child choose
48. What should my kid do for work
49. Where to find construction jobs
50. Women in construction

> **You'll need to do your own keyword research to see which keywords might be most effective for you.**

Content is a major component of search engine optimization (SEO).

📖 To learn more about SEO, check out the Websites section of the Additional Platforms module.

⤤ SHAREABLE

It's great when your audience reads and watches your content. But it's even better when they share it.

When your content gets shared, you have a better chance to reach new people outside of your existing network.

WHAT MAKES CONTENT SHARABLE?

💥 **Validate Your Audience**

» Find topics that people are passionate about and make points that support those opinions.
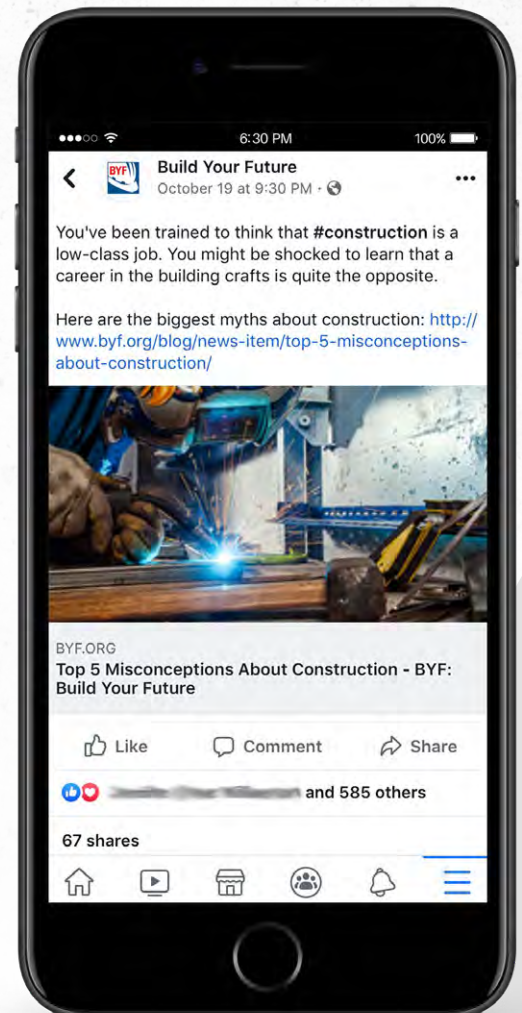
💥 **Be Visually Appealing**

» Images such as quote graphics should be crisp and properly formatted for the platform it's shared on. Blurry or pixelated photos that are awkwardly cropped won't perform as well.

» Be sure to optimize your content for link preview cards on Facebook and Twitter. These cards are what displays when you post a link; when done properly, it should show an image from the page as well as a headline and description. Preview cards are eye-catching and make it clear to people scrolling that there is something to click on.

> **Content that is presented well is more shareable.**

📖 For recommended image dimensions for Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, check out the Social Media section of the Gaining Traction module.

> **Build Your Future typically sees extra engagement and sharing for blogs and videos that highlight career and technical education because the content resonates with that audience.**

●●○○ � 6:30 PM 100% 🔋

‹ [BYF] **Build Your Future**
October 19 at 9:30 PM · 🌐 ⋯

You've been trained to think that #construction is a low-class job. You might be shocked to learn that a career in the building crafts is quite the opposite.

Here are the biggest myths about construction: http://www.byf.org/blog/news-item/top-5-misconceptions-about-construction/

BYF.ORG
Top 5 Misconceptions About Construction - BYF: Build Your Future

👍 Like   💬 Comment   ↪ Share

👍❤️ ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓ and 585 others

67 shares

HOW TO MAKE A TWITTER CARD

In addition to link previews that naturally display when you share a link to Twitter, you can create custom displays for links via Twitter Cards.

1. Go to the Twitter Ads Manager at ads.twitter.com.

2. Click "Cards" under the "Creatives" tab in the top left of the page.

3. In the top right of your Cards Library, click Create Card — you will most often use Website Card (for images) or Video Website Card (for videos).

4. Create your card by adding media, a headline, and the URL you want to link to, as well as the card name to help identify the card in your library. (Note: Images should be either a 1:1 or a 1.91:1 ratio.)

5. Save your card. You can now create a post with it from your Cards Library. We recommend bookmarking your Cards Library for easy access.
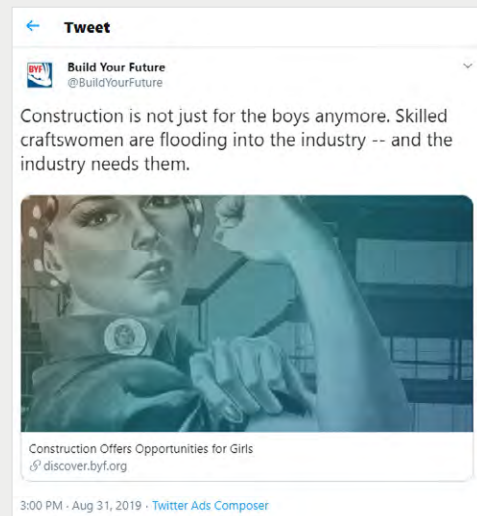
FOLLOW TRENDS AND THEMES

> **One of the best ways to earn shares is to create content related to trending topics and themed events.**

Social media is a great way to pick up on what news and ideas the world is discussing right now. You can contribute to the conversation and start engaging people by sharing your own content about the topic.

You can also get a head start on themed blogs and videos by preparing a content calendar at the beginning of the year. There are a number of construction-related topics that are celebrated throughout the year — make note of these and prepare accordingly. Some of the special events include:

- ✴ *Career and Technical Education Month (February)*
- ✴ *Women in Construction Week (March)*
- ✴ *Construction Safety Week (May)*
- ✴ *Careers in Construction Month (October)*
- ✴ *National Apprenticeship Week (November)*

There are also national holidays as well as seemingly endless "hashtag holidays" that you might be able to create content for. You'd be amazed at how many ways you can tie in your organization to fun events like the "International Day of Happiness" or "World Emoji Day"!

Every March, the National Association for Women in Construction (NAWIC) holds Women in Construction Week. With the industry rallying around this theme, this would be a great time to publish blogs and videos that highlight women in the crafts.

ADDITIONAL PLATFORMS

As an industry, we can't start to change perceptions of construction without a proper way to distribute our message. In addition to social media, optimizing your website and email campaigns can help set your organization up for success.

WEBSITES

Your organization's website is the online face of the company and most of your external marketing efforts will ultimately lead people back there.

Here are some keys to getting the most out of your website:

Optimizing the user experience

Ranking on search results

Tracking your website's performance

OPTIMIZING THE USER EXPERIENCE

Before using your website for outreach, it must be optimized for user experience (UX).

UX is how visitors to your site browse and interact with your site's features. A good browsing experience is critical to keeping visitors on your website; poor UX will frustrate users and cause them to click away.

Key components of user experience include:

LOADING SPEED

Your pages need to load quickly, or your audience will lose patience and give up. One simple way to help your website load faster is to compress the images and text.[1]

53% percent of mobile visitors leave a page that takes longer than three seconds to load.[1]

RESPONSIVE DESIGN

People access the internet from many devices: desktops, laptops, phones, tablets, etc. With the different screen sizes and dimensions on these devices, a website needs to work well across all of them, with a focus on mobile-first. Responsively designed websites are built to automatically reformat the page depending on the screen being used to access it.

NAVIGATION

Your website's visitors want to move around the site and find what they need easily. Divide your site into a few higher-level sections (About, Contact, Portfolio, Careers, News, etc.) and link to smaller subsections within them via a drop-down menu.

RANKING ON SEARCH RESULTS

Search engines have completely changed how people discover businesses and find information. In fact, 51% of all web traffic comes from organic search.[2]

To capture all this search engine traffic, your website needs to rank highly in a search's results.

**Of all search traffic, 91.5%
goes to websites on the first
results page of a given search.[2]**

The key to doing this is search engine optimization (SEO).[2]

SEO is all about appealing to the algorithm used by Google and other search engines to pull results. These algorithms analyze your website and decide if it's high enough quality to show the person searching.

There are numerous different factors that an algorithm weighs. Some include the UX components, such as loading speed, while another major factor is keywords.
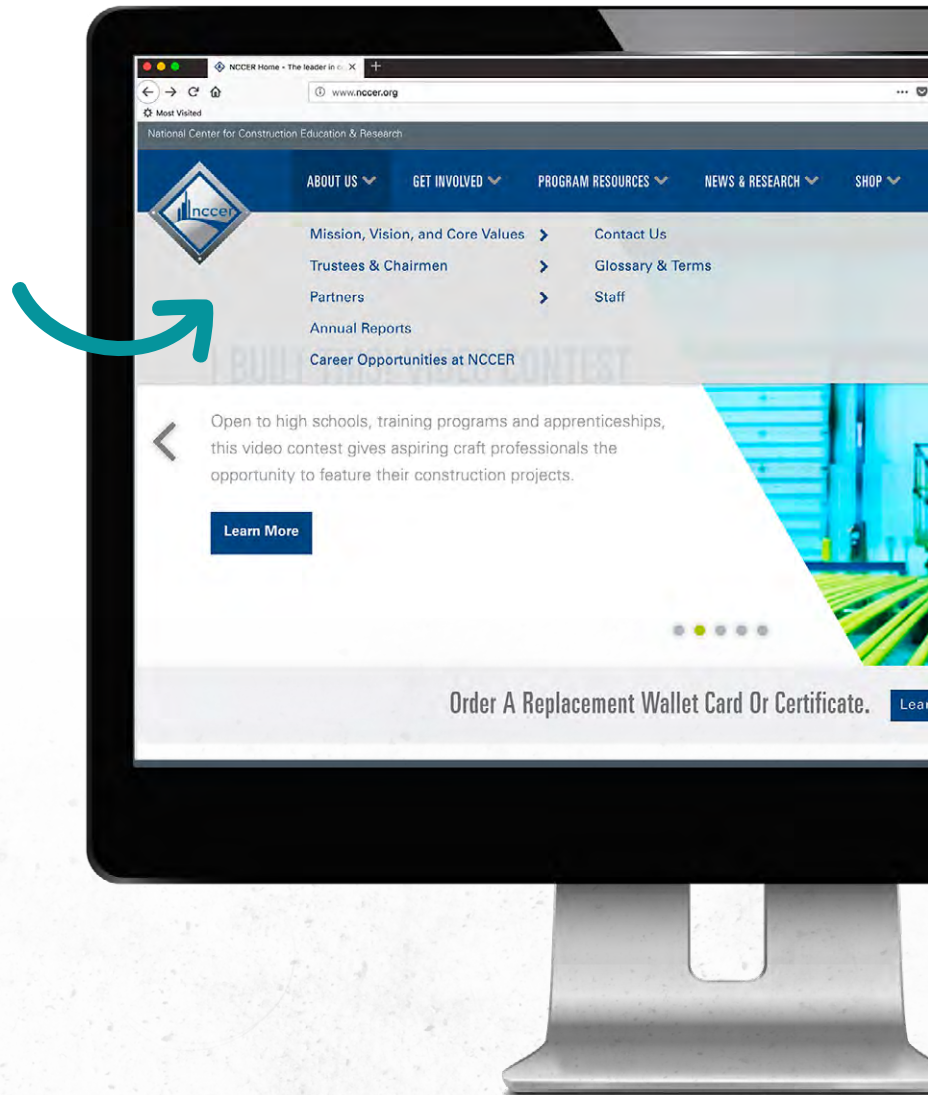
KEYWORDS

Your website will be more likely to show up in results when you use the keywords that real people search for.

Your company name is an obvious keyword but think of some other words or phrases that people might type or say when looking online for what you offer.

If your keyword is too broad (ex. "construction"), then you will face stiff competition and aren't likely to crack the front page of Google. Something like "carpentry apprenticeships in Austin, Texas" is more niche and won't have as large of an audience, but less competition means a better chance at a good ranking. Plus, the leads you do get will be much stronger.

SEO is part art form and part science, but it's crucial to driving organic and high-quality traffic to your website. It might be worth investing in an SEO audit of your website and having an expert help you with optimization.

To see a full list of keywords, check out the Searchable section of the Content module.

TRACKING YOUR WEBSITE'S PERFORMANCE

How do you know if your efforts on your website are working and effective?

Tracking your site's metrics is an important aspect of maintaining it.

The standard way to acquire these metrics (and many others) is with Google Analytics. Other third-party services can also help, and your site host may likely offer insights as well.

These are some website analytics to log on a frequent basis:

- Traffic
- Bounce rate
- Audience demographics

- Source of traffic
- Behavioral flow
- Average time on page

- Site speed
- Newsletter/Email list sign-ups

EMALS

> ## Think emails are fading into the past? Think again.

In 2015, 89.6% of the U.S. population used email at least once a month — that number is projected to be 90.9% through 2019.[3]

One way to build an effective contact list is to have an email subscription button or link on your website. Ideally, it would be in the header or footer of your website, as well as on the contact us, blog or news pages — anywhere you have content that people may want to receive regularly.

Email design is highly subjective but here are some points to keep in mind:

- Provide your company's name, address, email and social media channels (and links).
- Include an unsubscribe option.
- Use at least a 16-point font for text and larger for headlines.
- Preview how the email looks in both desktop and mobile views.
- Hyperlink photos and text pertaining to the link; buttons can be used as well.
- Text should be engaging, personable and informative.
- Proofread. Multiple times.

TRACK AND EVALUATE PERFORMANCE

Review your metrics to ensure your emails are effective and resonating with your audience.

★ OPEN RATE

Percentage of people who received the email and opened it.

★ CLICK THROUGH RATE

Percentage of links that have been clicked in the email.

★ BOUNCE RATE

The amount of contacts in your list that did not receive the email. *Note: Reasons can vary from out-of-office blocks to the email provider limiting emails from outside sources. Track this to ensure your leads are valid.*

★ UNSUBSCRIBE RATE

The number of contacts that decided that they do not want to receive your emails at this time. *Note: If the content is not relevant to them, it's better to part ways and reach the people to whom your message will have merit.*

What numbers should you be looking for or striving to reach? Different industries have different metrics and it's important to establish a baseline for your specific industry.

INDUSTRY AVERAGES
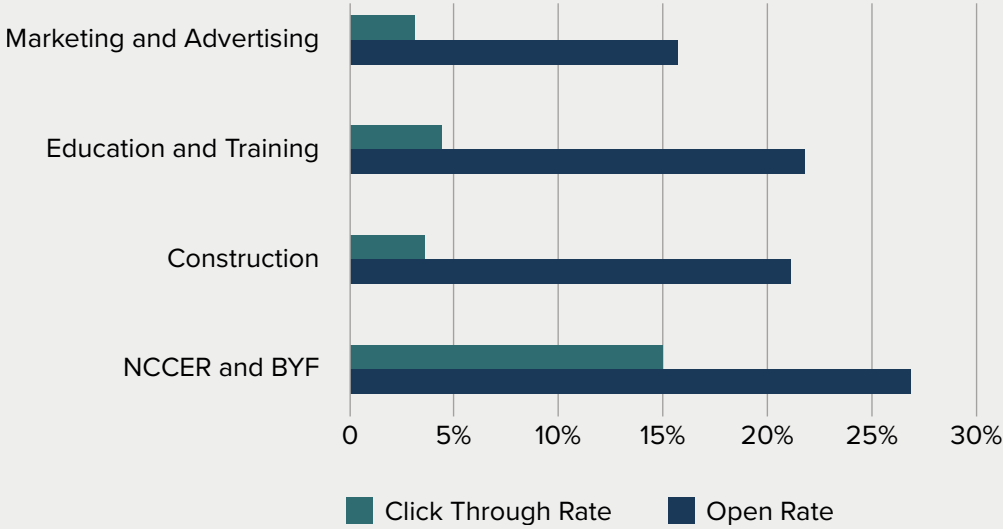
Getting to know your avenues of communication is essential to shifting perceptions surrounding the construction industry.

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