Conducted at Schenectady (NY) County Community College; Darren Johnson, Assistant Dean in charge of Communications.

Our previous surveys were done with prospective students at Open Houses and such and were much more limited. This survey was of current students and much more extensive. The belief is that what forms of communication work with current students “worked” to get them here, and may have a similar result with prospective students.
Traditional type students mostly seemed to respond to the survey, which was executed by student volunteers in the café area. SCCC is a closed campus with no residential component at this time. In reality, we do have larger numbers of part-time students than represented here. They may be more likely to come and go and not linger long enough to be surveyed.
Really, we have more females than males, though this gender difference didn’t seem to affect the results of this survey. Perhaps more males responded because the poll-takers were female? We also offered modest prizes.
This was perhaps single digits two years ago. Will the number be 80% in a year or two?
A year ago, this number may have been in the single digits, too. We need a better destination than our current web site to direct smart-phone users, though.
We’re currently doing a TV run and TV is relatively affordable in this region. We don’t do much paid advertising on radio or in newspapers, but they often run our PR, so perhaps there’s a “blur” between advertising and PR that factors in. Consistently, our own web site is the No. 1 way all constituencies hear about us. It’s a direct destination.
This survey result was the most revealing and indicative of changing media use. Students could click more than one option. It seems that students either clicked a lot of channels or don’t seem to listen to regular radio at all. Of the former, it means they channel surf and a commercial on such stations might get missed.
Students do watch local news. This is important to note in that people don’t typically DVR or TiVo news. It is watched live. Therefore, a commercial just can’t be fast-forwarded.
Most of our students do read a print version of a newspaper. We have a NIE program with The Times that’s very successful on campus. The most local paper, The Gazette, is the most read but least read online (it has a pay wall).
Fewer people actually use news carriers to receive their paper, though.
Not all social media sites are widely used, though for 23%, it may be worth starting an SCCC Twitter site.
Facebook is more ingrained, but not universal.
That said, we could have better synergy with our print publications and the web site. We’re lowering some print runs, though the newsprint courses book is very cost-effective and won’t disappear any time soon.
Still a demand for printed viewbooks.
The site is very ‘90s, so that 67% is “barely passing” as far as we’re concerned.
A new portal is being developed where student and personal email will all be in one place.
We control the three top categories – the home page and the two NY Alert methods. Some people still watch TV, but radio is no longer relied upon for breaking, important information. The trend is for us as communications staff to be a primary news source for interested constituencies.
So our goals are in-line with the results of the survey.

Goal: Implement a portal. Due 9/1,
Goal: Develop consistent style standards to increase effectiveness and convey synergy across mediums, adding to a cumulative “effect” of marketing.
Goal: Redesign the web site by 9/1.
Goal: Move non-marketing print materials, such as handbooks and catalogs, online, releasing more budget dollars for digital.
Students no longer trust marketing, but TV buys are affordable in this region.

Goal: Keep commercials on a single message, make them more reality based, telling the story of one student and one program. Calls to action are subtle.
Goal: Move practically all buys and design in-house, allowing for better rates, eliminating extra fees and creating visuals that are more home-grown and less slick. This will create an intimacy with the art and the institution.
Social media is the tie that binds PR, marketing, publishing and technology. Goal: Encourage integration.