

ADULT, COMMUNITY AND FURTHER EDUCATION BOARD

Learn Local **Awareness Strategy**

Jan 2011 – Dec 2012

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PURPOSE

To increase the awareness of Victoria's Adult Community Education (ACE) sector as a provider of quality education and training and thereby increase participation in the ACE sector by learners, with a particular focus on nine identified priority segments.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the *Learn Local* Awareness Strategy are to:

- Grow the total number of ACE learners by up to 20-25% (ie. to approx 135,000 learners) by December 2013 (ie. one year after the completion of the Strategy). This target is aspirational and will vary due to factors beyond the awareness Strategy itself, such as social inclusion aims of government, demographics of ACE 'catchment' areas, population trends, size and capacity of the provider and economic factors,
- Increase promoted recognition of ACE as a group of organisations delivering quality education, and
- Provide a framework to support individual ACE organisations to promote their training programs to potential learners and individual businesses.

RATIONALE AND PHASES

Victoria's ACE sector comprises approximately 320 not-for-profit community organisations that deliver a wide variety of initial training courses and accredited Vocational Education and Training (VET). In addition, the sector also includes two government owned Adult Education Institutions (AEIs) – the Centre for Adult Education and Adult Multicultural Education Services.

ACE organisations target learners who have had limited prior access to education and who may have experienced social and economic disadvantage. Programs are designed to be flexible to meet learners' needs and support them to return to study, improve their literacy and numeracy skills, gain a qualification, broaden their employment options and learn new skills. ACE organisations are often the only place people can go for adult learning in rural areas.

The ACFE Board's legislated functions include 'to promote public awareness of adult, community and further education' (*Education & Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic.) s 3.3.3 [1][g]). ACFE is instrumental in assisting the ACE sector to offer programs to learners with different needs, and by doing so, contributes to state and national efforts to:

- increase participation in education and training, particularly among those who have previously had poor experience in formal education; and
- support individuals without post-school qualifications gain higher-level VET qualifications and/or pathways to higher education.

In 2009, of the approximately 300,000 government supported learners in the VET sector, 66% attended TAFE (approximately 198,000), 18% attended private institutions (approximately 54,000) and 16% attended ACE organisations (approximately 48,000). Overall, Victoria's ACE sector enrolled a total of 110, 976 learners in a variety of VET courses and non-VET enrichment programs throughout the year.

In recent years the ACE sector has seen a noticeable increase in the number of enrolments in higher level courses (i.e. Certificate III and above). These are classified as "Skills Building" (Certificates III and IV - increased by 14%) and "Skills Deepening" (Diploma and above - increased by 17%). The lower-level, pre-accredited courses ("Foundation" level and "Skills Creation"), however, have decreased. Enrolments in pre-accredited courses have fallen by 28% over the last five years but still represent the majority of contact hours (51%).

This research shows that, while standards have risen in the ACE sector with a continual increase in the demand for higher-level courses and vocational education and training, there has been a gradual decline in demand for basic literacy and numeracy education or Adult Community Education.

Now is the time to broaden the appeal of ACE learning, particularly to young people, males (45+) and vulnerable workers, by promoting the offering in a way that captures this market's attention, enquiry and participation.

In light of this and to ensure they maintain their market share of the VET sector, ACE organisations are going to have to be more proactive in promoting their programs. Due to resource restrictions, ACE organisations see ACFE playing an important role in assisting them to communicate to their target audience and generating a state wide positioning for the sector. In addition, they require significant additional support in strategic marketing, public relations and on-the-ground promotion.

Therefore, the ACFE Board has been working to deliver a positioning and awareness strategy since 2009, with the aim to:

- encourage more individuals and businesses seeking quality education and training to choose ACE providers to meet their needs
- improve the visibility, recognition and understanding of ACE in the community by building its brand equity / value, awareness and consistency of use
- ensure the positioning of ACFE's communication activity represents what ACE providers say and do and is consistent with Government policy
- increase demand for training in ACE.

Phase 1 was a robust research and analysis phase which included consultation and surveying of ACE providers, the wider community and industry (see Appendix A). Based on this research and as part of Phase 2, ACFE commissioned external consultants to develop a detailed awareness strategy. The main elements are:

a. *Rollout of a network positioning for the ACE sector*

Underpinned by the themes of 'local' and 'learning', a new positioning approach would drive awareness of the sector as a network. It seeks to improve visibility and recognition of the sector as well as consistency in the way the sector is identified. The network would be promoted as a group of organisations that deliver education, training, personal development and employment outcomes in flexible, community based local environments. This 'network positioning' would sit along side that of individual providers. The proposed '*Learn Local*' positioning has been tested directly with ACE organisation and ACE learner focus groups and has been well received. It recognises the value ACE organisations place on their own promotional activities and includes co-positioning of '*Learn Local*' with individual ACE provider logos (see Appendix B).

Note: The network positioning does not replace the existing ACFE branding. The ACFE logo will remain as the Boards logo to be used on all internal documents as well external documents that are directly produced by the Board ie. ACFE Annual Report. Where, the Learn Local network positioning will be mainly used by Victorian ACE organisations and on statewide external communications / promotions for the sector eg. Brochure to business / industry about the benefits of a partnership with an ACE organisation.

b. *Statewide promotion*

The second element emphasises creating state-wide partnership agreements with a range of government and industry partners to distribute information on ACE across a range of target markets. The intent is to encourage more individuals and businesses to be aware of ACE and to choose ACE providers for their training and education providers. In addition, this element includes the roll out of a comprehensive media and communications program.

c. *ACE provider support*

This element responds to the feedback garnered from ACE providers detailed in Appendix A. It would include the development of tools to support individual ACE providers to promote their training programs to businesses and individuals.

Phase 3 involves the implementation of the *Learn Local Awareness Strategy* (including all three elements outlined above), commencing with a launch being held on 13 April 2011. The final phase of the strategy is the evaluation phase and this will be conducted at the end of 2012 (2013 if funding is available beyond the current budget cycle).

As of 1 January 2011, ACFE was integrated back into the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development as part of Skills Victoria. ACFE has worked closely with Skills Victoria to ensure that the *Learn Local Awareness Strategy* is aligned with other Government activity encouraging greater VET participation amongst individuals and industry.

TARGET MARKET ANALYSIS

'Typical' ACE learners are people who want to improve their basic English language and numeracy; need basic education to obtain a job or further qualification; want training to start work, or go back to work, or change jobs, or keep their job; want to do personal interest courses or other enrichment programs in a local community; prefer to learn in the smaller, more intimate environment of a local centre, and / or want to be part of a learning community.

85% of ACE learners have experienced prior educational, economic and / or geographic disadvantage, with non-existent or limited early learning journeys, often disrupted by the factors mentioned.

Target Markets

The 2009 – 2010 ACFE Annual Report identifies nine priority learner markets that ACE providers seek to support:

1. Early school leavers
2. Disengaged youth
3. CALD learners
4. Learners with a disability
5. Indigenous learners
6. Males over 45
7. Vulnerable low skilled workers
8. Low socio-economic status
9. Unemployed / under-employed

Target Regions

Marketing and communications activities can be adapted to individual regions and the priority learner sectors in those regions. Priority learners are those under-represented in ACE organisations, relative to their percentage of the regional population. The regions where learner segments are under represented include:

MARKET	REGION
1. Early school leavers	Hume
2. Disengaged youth	Gippsland, Grampians, Southern Metropolitan
3. CALD Learners	Grampians, Hume, Gippsland, Barwon
4. Learners with a disability	Gippsland, Grampians, Hume, Loddon Mallee
5. Indigenous learners	Gippsland, Grampians
6. Male learners over 45	All regions
7. Vulnerable low skill workers	Gippsland
8. Low socio-economic status	All regions (with particular focus on pockets of under-delivery)
9. Unemployed / under-employed	All regions

Regions can also be targeted in accordance with Victoria’s growth areas, as identified by the Growth Areas Authority (GAA). These regions are Hume, Casey-Cardinia, Melton-Caroline Springs, Wyndham, and Whittlesea.

In addition, the Gippsland region has been identified as an area with changing demographics and a greater need for ACE services in the coming years. Communications activities have been tailored to address these regions, according to their target learner requirements.

Engagement

The awareness Strategy is targeted at learners and prospective learners. Two types of engagement will be utilised as part of the state wide marketing Strategy:

- Engagement with the “**addressable market**” – a target market that can be reached through a database or other direct channels of engagement or interaction (e.g. online). This will capture learners that know us and learners that don’t. The key to this strategy is to identify and form partnerships with relevant government authorities, industry associations and even providers to gain access to relevant individuals.
- Engagement with the “**awareness market**” – a target market that is broadly exposed to a brand or product offering (e.g. publicity). The key to this strategy is through utilising PR, advertorials and promotional activities. Other segmentation approaches have been identified to assist in understanding and reaching our target market as outlined in the following subsections.

Prospective vs Current Learner Market

The following table captures the potential ACE learner market according to their tendency to enroll in accredited / pre accredited courses and Fee for Service courses. Importantly, it identifies that current learners must be a consideration, particularly given recent research which found that the majority of VET enrolments were up-skilling.

It is recommended that the split of communications efforts is 70% towards prospective learners and 30% towards current learners.

TARGET MARKET	PRODUCT	PRIORITY SEGMENT (HIGH CONVERSION PROSPECTS)
Prospective Learners (70%)	Accredited / Pre-accredited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early school leavers • People with a disability • Indigenous Australians • Vulnerable Workers • CALD backgrounds • Unemployed
	Fee for Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previously completed Cert III-IV • CALD backgrounds • Unemployed • Low socio-economic status
Current Learners (30%)	Accredited / Pre-accredited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All current learners - encourage current learners to become advocates and promote ACE through their own networks
	Fee for Service	

Target Market Profile

Based on the nine priority learner markets, the following profile has been sourced from numerous research reports and sector websites. This provides a snapshot of our target market and captures areas where they are under-represented.

TARGET MARKET	PROFILE	REGIONS	HOW TO REACH THEM
1. Early school leavers	<p>General (Young People)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Almost 55% of 24 year olds living in low SES areas have no post-school qualification (FYA 2009) Young people living in rural and remote areas are almost 50% less likely to hold a higher VET qualification or university degree Barriers to education and training can also include involvement in crime, behavioral difficulties, drug or alcohol abuse, homelessness (NCVER 2010) <p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defined as persons with their highest qualification being Yr 10 or Yr 11 Represent 20% of the wider Victorian population Many young people who have low literacy and numeracy also have low confidence which can inhibit participation in education and work (NCVER 2010) 	Hume	<p>Addressable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing learner promotions Centrelink Youth Central Career Education Association of Victoria (CEAV) At least one strategic business partner' ie Westfarmers <p>Awareness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youthcentral.vic.gov.au Youth Media Online / Social Media Advertising Local community events School welfare support officers
	<p>ACE Sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represent 25% of ACE learners All bar one region had participation rates above population share. Hume was below population share and may be worth further attention AEIs contributed to 5% of the metropolitan regions pool 		
2. Disengaged youth	<p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defined as aged 15-19, unemployed whom did not complete Year 12 Represents 4% of the wider Victorian population. Again, many will have low confidence due to a lack of literacy and numeracy skills so participation in education and work is more difficult (NCVER 2010) 	Gippsland Grampians Southern Metropolitan	
	<p>ACE Sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represent 4.7% of ACE learners Were underrepresented in the Southern Metropolitan, Gippsland and Grampians regions Barwon and Loddon Mallee regions have specific youth initiatives which account for a higher participation rate. AEIs (CAE and AMES) contribute to 9% of the metropolitan regions pool 		

TARGET MARKET	PROFILE	REGIONS	HOW TO REACH THEM
3. CALD learners	<p>General Information from Capacity Initiative – “CALD Learners Project”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of CALD residents in Victoria is 21%. The main CALD groups in Australia are Italians, Chinese, Vietnamese, Indians, Filipinos, Greeks, Germans, Malaysians, Dutch, Lebanese and people from Hong Kong. Most of these groups live in urban areas of Australia. <p>ACE Sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represent a significant segment of ACE learners (19%), which is similar to the Victorian population. In 2009, CALD ACE learners represented 167 countries (mostly Vietnam, China and India) 92% of CALD ACE learners attended providers in the three metropolitan regions (due to 95% of the Victorian CALD community living in the metropolitan areas). AEIs contributed 21% of CALD learners in the metropolitan pool. Representation is high in Loddon Mallee and reasonably high in Gippsland, but low in Hume and Grampians, however population is low. To reach parity in Gippsland for example, only an additional 69 CALD learners would be required. 	Grampians Hume Gippsland Barwon	<p>Addressable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing learner promotions Centrelink (CALD specialists) Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC) - Community Directories Ethnic Communities Council (ECC) Multicultural Centre for Women’s Health At least one strategic business partner’ ie Westfarmers <p>Awareness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) Victorian Local Government Association (VLGA) CALD newspapers, and online media Events in line with commemorative days/weeks, e.g. VMC’s ‘Celebrate our Cultural Diversity Week’
4. Learners with a disability	<p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defined by ACE research as having a disability, impairment or long-term condition Defined by the ABS Census as persons having a ‘need for assistance with core activities’ (i.e. self care, mobility and communications) People with a disability have lower levels of prior educational achievement than those without. A 2005 study found that 54% of VET learners with a disability left school at or before the end of Yr 10 compared with 39% of all VET learners The type of disability affects participation, achievement and outcomes differently. A one-size-fits-all approach does not work in this sector, nor may a place based approach always be appropriate. <p>ACE Sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACE definition represents 13% of all ACE learners ABS definition is 20% of this 13% or 2.2% of all ACE learners. Participation is below population share in most rural areas due to proximity of providers. The largest representation is in the metropolitan areas The CAE is the largest single provider for this learner group however other smaller ACE providers that specialise in disabled learner training are Eastwork Employment, Highlands Support Services, Gippsland Accommodation and Rehabilitation Support. 	Gippsland Grampians Hume Loddon Mallee	<p>Addressable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing learner promotions Centrelink (Disability Employment) Disability Services Australia (DSA) At least one strategic business partner’ ie Westfarmers <p>Awareness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Human Services (Disability Division) Sector media Events for the sector ie. International day for people with a disability

TARGET MARKET	PROFILE	REGIONS	HOW TO REACH THEM
5. Indigenous learners	<p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Those aged 15 – 64 represent 0.5% of the Victorian population In Australia, 38% of the indigenous population is aged under 15 years. Only 19% of the non-indigenous population is in this age group. Unemployment rates for indigenous people are higher than non-indigenous people and labor force rates are lower across all age groups Indigenous people tend to take lower-level courses with poorer employment outcomes. Completion rates are lower and withdrawal rates higher than for non-indigenous people Essentially, indigenous Australians face similar barriers to participation but their degree of disadvantage is usually higher. <p>ACE Sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represent 1.1% of all ACE learners This is more than double the proportion of Victorian indigenous people aged 15 – 65 Most regions have a high representation with Loddon Mallee and Eastern Metropolitan the highest Gippsland and Grampians are below the number represented in the population, however these numbers are very small. There were only three specialist indigenous training providers delivering ACE programs in 2009 including Mirrimbeena Aboriginal Education Group, Mildura Aboriginal Corporation and MADEC. 	Gippsland Grampians	<p>Addressable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing learner promotions Victorian Aboriginal Education Australia Incorporated (VAEAI) Aboriginal Affairs Victoria (AAV) Centrelink At least one strategic business partner' ie Westfarmers <p>Awareness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal Association of Victoria Indigenous media Racism No Way
6. Males over 45	<p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represent 18% of the Victorian population <p>ACE Sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noticeably under-represented in the sector (9%) relative to population numbers (18%) No region achieves its share of older male learners The highest rate is the Grampians region (12.1%) The lowest rate is the Eastern Metropolitan (7.4%) and Southern Metropolitan (8.4%) regions TAFE attracts a significant number of older male learners to courses such as General Manufacturing, Transport and Storage etc – courses not offered by ACE in significant numbers (2%) 	All regions	<p>Addressable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing learner promotions Centrelink Rural football / soccer league (eg. VCFL) At least one strategic business partner' ie Westfarmers <p>Awareness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mens Magazines Sporting events

TARGET MARKET	PROFILE	REGIONS	HOW TO REACH THEM
7. Vulnerable low-skilled workers	<p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed year 9 or below of high school The majority (28%) are aged 15 – 19 and are mostly located in metropolitan regions / 23% are aged 60 – 64 / 12% are aged 20 – 24 Tend to be “in low paid jobs, are often under-employed, and face job insecurity and limited job opportunities.” (NCVER 2010) Have little access to training and development. For some, their vulnerability stems from low skills or poor qualification Women and young people are over represented Lack of finances, time, confidence, energy and literary skills are cited as barriers (NCVER 2010) Employer support is important – there needs to be RELEVANCE, a link to the job Need to demonstrate financial return in training and gaining qualifications AiG 2010 report found 75 % of employers reported that their businesses were affected by low levels of literacy and numeracy. These low levels were an issue for 45% of labourers and process workers, 25% apprentices, 23% technicians, 17% admin staff and 13% IT staff. <p>ACE Sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represent higher proportion in the sector than the general population The ACE sector has the majority share of these learners (16%) with TAFE having 10% and Private RTOs 11% Participation rates are double the expected population share in the metro regions 	Gippsland	<p>Addressable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing learner promotions Centrelink Victorian Trades Hall Union (VTHU) Skills for Growth brokers At least one strategic business partner' ie Westfarmers <p>Awareness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local and statewide media publicity Events
8. Low socio-economic status	<p>ACE Sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low socio-economic learners were over-represented in the ACE sector relative to the population Every region attracts more learners in this group than the representative population proportion, but there are pockets of under-delivery in all regions. 	All regions – with particular emphasis on pockets of low-socio economic	<p>Addressable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing Learners Centrelink At least one strategic business partner' ie Westfarmers <p>Awareness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local and Statewide media and events
9. Unemployed / under-employed	<p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ABS definition of unemployed person: Persons aged 15 and over who were not employed during the reference week due to a range of defined reasons (Source: ABS cat.no.6203.0, Labour Force, Australia, August 1999, p.71) National unemployment rate: 5% (as at 13 Jan 2011) Victorian unemployment rate: 4.0% (as at 13 Jan 2011) <p>ACE Sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unemployed learners were over-represented in the ACE sector relative to the population 	All regions	<p>Addressable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing Learners Centrelink VTHU At least one strategic business partner' ie Westfarmers <p>Awareness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local and Statewide media publicity

KEY MESSAGES

The ACE story will be developed with versions for each target audience. The following targeted messages will be tailored and used as required:

For Learners:

- The *Learn Local* education and training sector comprises 320 organisations across Victoria offering a range of programs to a broad range of Victorians.
- *Learn Local* organisations are unique. They have a genuine focus on the individual needs of learners, and the flexibility to meet each individual's learning requirements.
- The sector is particularly suited to learners of all ages who wish to undertake programs that help them gain qualifications and employment and have previously had limited access to education.
- *Learn Local* organisations can provide learners with a range of services from basic education to diploma-level qualifications.
- Accredited and pre-accredited training and education is offered with accredited training providing the learner with a set of qualifications that are high quality, nationally recognised and transferable.
- Pre-accredited training is educational programs that are designed for learners to gain confidence and skills, which can lead to further education and training, employment, or both.
- *Learn Local* organisations can help learners transition from pre-accredited training to accredited training to further education such as TAFE or university.
- *Learn Local* organisations offer the convenience of education and training just around the corner.
- For more information please visit the *Learn Local* website www.acfe.vic.gov.au

For Businesses:

- There are 320 *Learn Local* organisations across Victoria that provide training and education for individuals of all ages with limited previous education.
- *Learn Local* organisations are flexible and can provide customised, high quality training programs on and/or off workplace premises.
- A partnership with a *Learn Local* organisation in your area will set your company on a path to higher productivity through employees with the skills required to more effectively and efficient undertake their work.
- Developing links with *Learn Local* providers helps employers get training that is tailored for them and their employees.
- *Learn Local* organisations have qualified instructors who will work with businesses to developed suitable training programs.
- For more information contact your closest ACFE Regional Office or visit the *Learn Local* website www.acfe.vic.gov.au

KEY COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

Deliverable	Focus S / R	Priority	Responsibility Internal/External
PART ONE: NETWORK POSITIONING			
Develop network positioning	S	H	Internal (ACFE)
PART TWO: STATEWIDE MARKETING			
1. <i>Learn Local</i> Launch	S	H	Internal (ACFE) External (venue, catering)
2. <i>Learn Local</i> Champions	S	H	Internal (Regional Councils)
	R	H	Internal
3. Addressable Marketing Partner Agreements	S	H	Internal (ACFE)
	R	H	Internal (Regional Councils)
4. ACFE Website Optimisation	S	H	Internal (ACFE) External (Web design)
5. Social Media Strategy	S	H	Internal (ACFE)
6. Media – Editorial	S	H	Internal (ACFE)
	R	H	Internal (Regional Councils)
7. Media – Special reports	S	H	Internal (ACFE)
8. Media – Magazine / Newsletter Editorial	S	H	Internal (ACFE)
9. Media – Advertorial	S	H	Internal (ACFE)
	R	H	Internal (ACFE)
10. Media – Radio	S	H	Internal (ACFE)
11. Promotional material	S	H	Internal (ACFE) External (Design & print)
12. <i>Learn Local</i> Provider Directory	S	M	Internal (ACFE) External (Design & print)
13. <i>Learn Local</i> Awards	S	M	Internal (ACFE)
14. Events	S / R	L	Internal (Regional Councils)
PART THREE: ACE PROVIDER SUPPORT			
15. Provider Advisory Panel	S	H	Internal (ACFE)
16. Strategy Roll-Out to ACE Providers	S	H	Internal (ACFE) External (Kit production)
17. Provider Resource Centre	S	H	Internal (ACFE/DEECD)
18. <i>Learn Local</i> Promotional Material	S	H	Internal (ACFE)
19. Communications & Marketing Training	R	M	Internal (ACFE)
20. <i>Learn Local</i> E-News	S	M	Internal (ACFE) External (Design)

PART ONE: NETWORK POSITIONING

Aim: To develop and rollout a network positioning for the ACE sector which improves the visibility and recognition of the sector as well as the consistency in the way the sector is identified.

The network would be promoted as a group of organisations that deliver education, training, personal development and employment outcomes in flexible, community based local environments.

This network positioning would sit along side that of individual providers as it is recognised that ACE organisations value their own promotional activities.

Description:

- Positioning options have been developed and tested with providers, learners and potential learners.
- A Style Guide will be developed which outlines in detail how the positioning should be used. For example, signage, brochures, letterhead, etc.
- The Style Guide will then be presented and distributed to ACE providers and made available on the ACE Provider Resource Centre.
- See Strategy Rollout to ACE Providers (page 33) and ACE Provider Resource Centre (page 34) for more information.

Target Audience:

- ACE Providers
- ACFE
- Relevant Government Departments

Timing: February 2011 (Finalise style guide)
April to June 2011 (Roll out positioning)

PART TWO: STATEWIDE MARKETING

1. *Learn Local* Launch

STATEWIDE FOCUS

Aim:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officially launch the new Strategy and network positioning – <i>Learn Local</i>. • Generate media coverage for the launch, and ongoing awareness activities. • Enlist the support and encourage ongoing enthusiasm among government and ACE Providers for the <i>Learn Local Awareness Strategy</i>. 	Target Audience:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minister • DEECD leadership team • Government / Industry Partners • ACFE Board • ACE Champions • Providers • Key businesses • Media
Description:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The launch provides an opportunity to bring together key stakeholders and officially launch the '<i>Learn Local</i> Awareness Strategy'. • Media will be invited, as well as select Providers and business / industry representatives. • The launch will also create a platform to announce a high profile <i>Learn Local</i> Champion. • Workstations will be set up to demonstrate the Find a course provider function, Twitter and Facebook accounts. • The ACE Provider network will be informed in the lead up to the launch about the new strategy and provided with the media release and positioning plan on the launch day. • A series of emails will roll-out post launch providing information and encouragement to Providers to engage with the Strategy and the Provider Resource Centre (see page 34). 	Timing:	13 April 2011

2. Learn Local Champions

STATEWIDE FOCUS

- Aim:** Promote the success stories of the sector (and thereby increasing awareness of the sector) by identifying and showcasing the particular/stand-out achievements of ACE learners, providers and business partners.
- Description:**
- Identify one learner and one provider / business / industry partnership for the purpose of statewide communications.
 - This individual / organisations would be highlighted and championed as success stories, and would be adept at presenting and prepared to talk to media if required.
 - In the first instance, the Champions would be presented at the *Learn Local* launch. They would then undertake a program of activities over the year including hosting business events, undertaking media interviews and speaking at conferences etc.
- Target Audience:**
- Government
 - Potential learners
 - Potential businesses
 - Metropolitan media
- Timing:** April 2011 (Aim for at least one *Learn Local* Champion for launch)

REGIONAL FOCUS

- Aim:**
- Champion and promote the success stories of ACE learners, providers and business partners in each local region.
 - Focus on stories that will broaden the appeal to target audiences under-represented in each region.
- Description:**
- As above, however identify one learner and / or one provider / business partnership in each region.
 - Regional Councils would be responsible for identifying local champions.
 - The Champions would be rotated every year to provide ongoing interest to media, and not be too onerous a task for the individuals / organisations.
 - Local Champions would undertake a series of activities over the year including hosting business events, undertaking media interviews and speaking at conferences.
 - The regional Local Champions could be linked to the ACE awards where each ACE award winner becomes a champion in their regional area.
- Target Audience:**
- Potential local learners
 - Potential local businesses
 - Local media
- Timing:** June 2011

3. Addressable Marketing Partner Agreements

STATEWIDE FOCUS

- Aim:** To reach priority target markets through a database or other channels of 'direct' engagement (e.g. online), via alliances and partnerships with relevant Government and industry bodies.
- Description:**
- Individual agreements will be sought with relevant government and industry bodies to form a cross promotional partnership to distribute the ACE product to an addressable target market.
 - Agreements are likely to cover one or more of the eight areas (outlined below).
 - The aim will be to strike as many agreements as possible that are biased towards the activities at the start of the list below.
- Target Audience:** Target government and industry organisations have been selected according to the ACE learner target market and industry associations related to the most popular ACE accredited and pre-accredited course. The first recommended contacts are:
1. Centrelink
 2. YouthCentral
 3. Career Education Association of Victoria (CAEV)
 4. Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC)
 5. Ethnic Communities Council (ECC)
 6. Multicultural Centre for Women's Health
 7. Disability Support Australia (DSA)
 8. Victorian Aboriginal Education Assoc Inc (VAEAI)
 9. Aboriginal Affairs Victoria (AAV)
 10. Victorian Country Football League (VCFL)
 11. Victorian Trade Halls Union (VTHU)
 12. Skills for Growth brokers
 13. Strategic business partner ie. Westfarmers

Timing: Confirmation of at least one partnership by March 2011 and a second one by June 2011.

REGIONAL FOCUS

Aim: As above however this time the focus is with Local Councils and 'grassroots' community organisations, such as local businesses, chambers of commerce.

Description: As above

Target Audience:

- Community groups via community directories (CALDs, Indigenous, disability etc)
- Social workers
- Service Clubs
- Local Council
- Local big businesses
- Chambers of Commerce
- Neighbourhood watch
- Churches
- Local Sporting clubs

The top ten partners will be developed in conjunction with the regions and will be picked based on the priority learner target markets for each region (see page 5). For example, the Hume region will be encouraged to seek an industry partner that will increase the awareness of their programs to Early School Leavers as well as Learners with a Disability.

Timing: Confirmation of at least one partnership in each region by Dec 2011.

4. ACFE Website Optimisation

STATEWIDE FOCUS

- Aim:**
- Increase the relevance of the ACFE website as a resource for Providers and Learners.
 - Implement activities that will assist in Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)

- Description:**
- 1. Brand Alignment**
 - Option 1: Look at structuring the website in accordance with the *Learn Local* brand. For example, having learner focused pages on location, jobs and fun. This will require a design element and back of house design to ensure the structure is consistent with the brand and a new url www.learnlocal.vic.gov.au
 - Option 2: If this is not possible due to DEECD website restrictions, then add a section on the *Learn Local* brand to the existing website.
 - 2. Course Provider Search / Google Maps**
 - Develop a search tool that enables learners to search providers according to location and course utilising Google maps.
 - A series of symbols will be developed which identify the services offered by providers such as disability programs, youth programs, childcare etc. These, for example, will appear when the mouse hovers over a provider pin on the Google map.
 - Investigate developing an iPhone app for this function that could be promoted to learners.
 - 3. Provider Resource centre**
 - Create a resource centre for Providers with templates, news, case studies of good marketing initiatives, link to online discussion forum (see p 36).

4. Search Engine Optimisation

- Optimise the website for keyword searches on major search engines eg. Google, Yahoo etc

5. Link Building Strategy

- Develop a link building strategy in order to get the ACFE website higher up in search engine results ie. Set up links with approx 50 of the most important websites that learners and providers regularly use.

6. Vignettes

- Create an area on the website for video case studies or vignettes, which would be translated into different languages for CALD learners.
- The use of videos on websites helps in Search Engine Optimisation and is an effective tool for engaging viewers of the website, particularly those with English as a second language.

7. External website review

- Implement activities recommended as part of the website review including converting memos to news items etc.

Target Audience:

- Learners (all sectors) and potential learners
- Providers
- Businesses
- Partners
- Government Agencies
- General public

Timing:

March 2011 (1 – 2 and templates for 3)
 June 2011 (the rest of 3)
 December 2011 (4 – 7)

5. Social Media Strategy

STATEWIDE FOCUS

- Aim:** Broaden the exposure of the ACE sector amongst young people by tapping into social media opportunities.
- Description:**
- Social media avenues will be explored to reach, in particular, young people.
 - A blog is to be included in the ACE Provider Resource Centre (see page 27) however more public social media avenues are recommended.
 - The primary avenues to be utilised will be Twitter, Facebook and YouTube with other supporting opportunities also investigated.
 - A *Learn Local* Twitter Account will be set up to increase the awareness of the ACE sector with the general public.
 - A *Learn Local* Facebook page will be set up which could also be used as a tool for ACE IT Courses.
 - YouTube videos could be made by learners and placed on the Facebook page, competitions could also be held and promoted on the page.
 - Providers would be encouraged to promote the *Learn Local* social media accounts to current students, which will help with developing content.
 - The Facebook page will encourage interaction and engagement with cross promotional partnerships.
- Target Audience:**
- Potential learners (particularly young people)
 - General public
- Timing:** March 2011

6. Media – Editorial

STATEWIDE FOCUS

Aim:	Leverage ACE/ACFE milestones and announcements to help generate metropolitan media coverage.
Description:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Metropolitan editorial coverage can be difficult unless it is linked with a large event, milestone or announcement. Possible milestones would be the ACE awards, brand launch, funding announcements, statistical milestones (e.g. 10,000th ACE learner) etc. The Careers Section is a good avenue for editorial and could be targeted twice per year.
Target Audience:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential learners Potential businesses Government General public
Target Media:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Age (e.g. specific section <i>MyCareer</i>, Sat) Herald Sun (e.g. <i>Learn</i>, Tuesday lift out; <i>CareerOne</i>, Saturday lift out) Suburban papers, e.g. Melbourne Weekly (Fairfax), Melbourne Leader (News Limited)
Timing:	Ongoing (Media Program to be developed)

REGIONAL FOCUS

Aim:	Increase local awareness by pursuing local media coverage in newspapers, local radio and TV where appropriate
Description:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local media have a strong interest in local stories Providers and Regional Councils would be asked to submit ideas and pursue coverage in their local media Stories would be focused on testimonials and case studies of learners, providers and business partnerships Milestones would also be released to the media such as partnership announcements or the 1,000th learner to the centre. Priority should be given to the target learner market that is under-represented in each region.
Target Audience:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential local learners Potential local businesses Local community
Target Media Examples:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Melbourne Weekly (Fairfax) Melbourne Leader (News Limited) Geelong Advertiser, Geelong
Regional Newspapers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Courier, Ballarat The Border Mail, Albury-Wodonga Gippsland Times, Sale The Advertiser, Bendigo Sunraysia Daily, Mildura Latrobe Valley Express, Latrobe
Timing:	Ongoing (Media Program to be developed)

7. Media – Special reports

STATEWIDE FOCUS

- Aim:** Gain editorial coverage or advertise within a report aimed at the target market
- Description:**
- Metropolitan publications have a program of special reports and supplements for the year. Ones relevant to the sector will be identified with a view to pitching editorial.
 - Consideration will also be given to advertising if it is deemed to be worthwhile.
 - These supplements or special reports increase the likelihood of gaining editorial coverage.
- Target Audience:**
- Potential learners
 - Potential businesses
 - Government
 - General public
- Target Media:**
- To be researched
- Timing:** Ongoing (Media Program to be developed)

8. Media – Magazine / Newsletter Editorial

STATEWIDE FOCUS

- Aim:** To reach target audiences by placing stories in relevant sector magazines such as CALD, disability, indigenous etc, or industry magazines to target businesses for example in hospitality.
- Description:**
- The media program will identify feature articles that would be relevant for sector publications and would utilise our *Learn Local* Champions. These would be plotted into periods of low activity to ensure the awareness momentum continues.
 - The editorial must be learner or business focused.
- Target Audience:**
- Potential learners
 - Potential businesses
 - Government
 - General Public
- Target Media:** **INDUSTRY**
- Aged Care: • Hospital & Agedcare Magazine / Insite - The Aged Care Industry Newspaper Magazine
- IT: • Information Age
- Children's Services: • Rattler
- Hospitality: • Australian Food Shop / Food Service News / Open House
- Business: • My Business
- Adult Education: • **AEU News / Australian Journal of Adult**

Learning

SECTOR MAGAZINES

- Youth: • Youth Studies Australia Magazine
• Random Smash, Ballarats Youth magazine

- Disability: • Voice

- Indigenous: • National Indigenous Times

Timing: Ongoing (Media Program to be developed)

9. Media – Advertorial

STATEWIDE FOCUS

- Aim:**
- To strategically place advertorials in metropolitan papers to ensure the broader market is reached and the messages delivered.
- Description:**
- As metropolitan editorial will be more difficult to achieve, it is recommended that advertorials are placed to reach the target market and convey the messages.
 - Timing should be in line with peak enrolment times as well as periods where there is little activity. Case studies will also be utilised.
- Target Audience:**
- Potential learners
 - Potential businesses
 - Government
 - General Public
- Target Media:**
- The Age (e.g. specific section *MyCareer*, Sat)
 - Herald Sun (e.g. *Learn*, Tuesday lift out; *CareerOne*, Saturday lift out)
 - Suburban papers, e.g. Melbourne Weekly (Fairfax), Melbourne Leader (News Limited)
- Timing:** Ongoing (Media Program to be developed)

REGIONAL FOCUS

- Aim:**
- To strategically place advertorials in regional papers to ensure the broader market is reached and the messages delivered.
- Description:**
- Although regional editorial is easier to achieve it is still recommended that one advertorial is placed in each region at least once per year to reach the target market and convey the messages.
 - Timing should be in line with peak enrolment times as well as periods where there is little activity. Case studies will also be utilised.
- Target Audience:**
- Potential learners
 - Potential businesses
 - Government
 - General Public
- Melbourne Weekly (Fairfax)
 - Melbourne Leader (News Limited)
 - Geelong Advertiser, Geelong
 - The Courier, Ballarat
 - The Advertiser, Bendigo
- Timing:** Ongoing (Media Program to be developed)

10. Media - Radio

STATEWIDE FOCUS

- Aim:** To reach target audiences by placing key messages on relevant radio stations.
- Description:**
- Radio adverts will increase the awareness of the ACE sector to the general public as well as our target audiences
 - Further research will be conducted into the most appropriate radio stations to target eg. Nova or Triple J for the youth market, SEN or Gold FM for men over 45 market
- Target Audience:**
- Potential learners
 - Businesses
 - Industry associations
 - Partners and potential partners
- Timing:** Launch Strategy April 2011 (in time for launch) then ongoing throughout 2011 / 2012

11. Promotional material

STATEWIDE FOCUS

- Aim:** To reinforce the network positioning and unite providers and the sector under the one 'Learn Local' banner.
- Description:**
- Develop a suite of branded promotional material for distribution to key target markets including schools, businesses and potential partners. The following items could be developed:
 - Branded posters for distribution to ACE organisations as well as partner organisations and local social services centres or careers centres etc.
 - Professional brochure for distribution to businesses and agencies outlining the vision of the ACE sector and the benefits and opportunities for a partnership or support. It will explain the ACE offering including the types of people it appeals to and the various courses that are available.
 - Multi-linguistic fact sheets as well as fact sheets focused in specific learner sectors, for example, learners with a disability and indigenous learners. This provides the opportunity for more targeted distribution of tailored messages.
- Target Audience:**
- Existing and potential learners
 - School students
 - Businesses
 - Industry associations
 - Partners and potential partners
- Timing:** June 2011

12. List of Providers in TAFE Directory

STATEWIDE FOCUS

- Aim:** To provide a comprehensive list of all Victorian ACE providers as part of the Skills Victoria TAFE Directory.
- Description:**
- The annual Skills Victoria TAFE Directory provides a comprehensive guide to every TAFE across Victoria.
 - ACFE will liaise closely with Skills Victoria to ensure all ACE providers are also included in this directory.
 - This will be made available at numerous locations such as Council offices, social service centres, careers centres etc.
- Target Audience:**
- Potential learners
 - Business
- Timing:** July 2011 for 2012 Directory
July 2012 for 2013 Directory

13. Learn Local Awards (existing ACFE activity)

STATEWIDE FOCUS

- Aim:** To formally recognise achievements in the sector, and award individuals and organisations for their efforts.
- Description:**
- The *Learn Local Awards* occur every year, however to-date they have not received much promotional coverage.
 - It is envisaged that there is an opportunity to generate media interest and coverage around the announcement of the *Learn Local Awards*, in both metro, local and specialist magazines. Note: local media in particular tend to show an appetite for case study stories around the success and achievements of local residents.
 - This initiative could be linked to the *Learn Local Champions* where every *Learn Local Award* winner becomes a champion for the following year in their relevant region.
- Target Audience:**
- Providers
 - Learners
 - Stakeholders
 - Media – both metropolitan and regional
- Timing:** Sept 2011 and Sept 2012

14. Events / Expo's

STATEWIDE AND REGIONAL FOCUS

- Aim:**
- Use existing special days / weeks, community events and expo's to promote sector to the community.
- Description:**
- This could be by way of sponsorship, displays / 'gorilla' initiatives at local events (small or large) and expo's or advertising.
 - Regional Councils will assist in determining appropriate opportunities in regional areas and engaging local providers. Regional events would be focused on targeting learners that are under-represented in that region.
 - Established exhibitions provide an opportunity to network and leverage existing promotional opportunities targeting the nine priority learner markets eg. career's expo's.
- Target Audience:**
- Potential learners
 - Potential businesses
 - Metropolitan and regional media
- Timing:** 2012 - As per existing timing of special day / week, community event or expo

PART THREE: ACE PROVIDER SUPPORT

15. Provider Advisory Panel

STATEWIDE FOCUS

- Aim:**
- To select a group of providers which will provide a two-way resource for communications and future activities to promote the sector.
- Description:**
- The Provider Advisory Panel will be tasked with providing input and generating ideas to better promote the ACE sector.
 - They will input into the statewide and regional communications activities as well as resources developed to support providers.
 - The Provider Advisory panel will be communicated with via conference call / skype and email with face to face meetings held as required.
 - This method helps to ensure the communications activities have the best chance of working on the ground as well as encouraging buy-in and support from a select group of providers.
 - Panel will comprise one local representative in each region and membership will be rotated annually.
- Target Audience:**
- ACE Providers
- Timing:** March 2011 (prior to Launch in early 2011)

16. Strategy Roll-Out to ACE Providers

STATEWIDE FOCUS

- Aim:**
- To introduce and familiarise ACE providers with the new communications direction and network positioning so they feel confident and equipped to represent and communicate the new direction moving forward.
- Description:**
- Initial email sent to providers with information about the *Learn Local* launch and aims and purpose of the subsequent road show.
 - Positioning Pack mailed to providers, including a cover letter and invitation to a regional forum (see below), as well as a *Learn Local* disk with the Style Guide, and branded templates and logo for application.
 - The content of the Positioning Pack will also be uploaded onto the Resource Centre.
 - Conduct a series of regional forums via a state-wide road show to formally introduce and socialise the new communication direction with local providers
 - This format provides a chance for providers to ask questions and familiarise themselves with the new positioning and accompanying suite of new initiatives and resources.
- Target Audience:**
- ACE Providers

Timing:

- Distribute email and Positioning Pack April 2011, post *Learn Local* Launch.
- Commence road show post distribution of emails and Positioning Pack – potentially in line with other provider forums organised for May / June 2011:
 - Grampians – 11 May
 - North Western – 11 May
 - Eastern – 25 May
 - Gippsland – 31 May & 1 June
 - Barwon – 7 & 8 June
 - Loddon Mallee – 8 June
 - Southern – 8 June
 - Hume - TBC

17. ACE Provider Resource Centre**STATEWIDE FOCUS****Aim:**

- To develop a resource centre for Providers to utilise communication templates, access up-to-date information, share ideas, and develop a calendar of events.
- Equip ACE providers with a suite of online communication resources and tools, developed inline with the *Learn Local* Awareness Strategy, to streamline and augment communication by all providers.
- Maximise engagement with and between ACE providers, and help facilitate a sense of community and social network via interactive communication resources.

Description:

- The Provider Resource Centre will sit within the ACFE website.
- The site will have a suite of information for Providers to maintain connection and engagement in the communication activities, and leverage assistance where possible.
- It will also enable providers an avenue for feedback and sharing of ideas, whether locally or statewide focused through an online forum initiative.
- The resource centre will comprise:
 - News items (previously memos)
 - Media release templates
 - Advertisement templates
 - *Learn Local* Brand Plan
 - Media contacts

- Templates for newsletters, letters, brochures, etc.
- Calendar of events
- Feedback forms
- *Learn Local* Provider Blog – to encourage the social network
- Link to *Learn Local* Twitter, Facebook and YouTube accounts
- Link to online community forum

Target Audience:

- ACE Providers

Timing:

June 2011 (However, the appearance of information on the site will be staged)

18. *Learn Local* Promotional Material

STATEWIDE FOCUS

Aim:

To provide ACE organisations with a suite of branded promotional material that they can use to increase the awareness of the sector in their local area.

Description:

- The suite could include a range of branded items such as promotional banners that providers could put up in their learning centres and / or a branded collateral item for providers to distribute to potential and current learners etc.
- The idea of giving each Provider a Certificate of Registration to hand in their offices will also be investigated.
- The Provider Advisory Panel will be consulted in order to develop a list of preferred items to be produced on their behalf.

Target audience:

- ACE Providers

Timing:

June 2011

19. Communications and Marketing Training Sessions

REGIONAL FOCUS

Aim: Familiarise ACE Providers with the *Learn Local* proposition and suite of new communications and marketing initiatives.

Description:

- Conduct a series of formal communications and marketing training sessions, aka 'Communications 101', with providers, Regional Managers, and other relevant administrative bodies in each region.
- Sessions would support other information sharing and networking events outlined in this document, and create an opportunity for ACE representatives to feel confident with applying the new communications direction and brand to all communications activity moving forward.

Target Audience:

- ACE Providers
- Regional Managers

Timing: Aim for first training session post launch of Provider Resource Centre in June 2011 – potentially on same day as Regional Council meetings so that ACFE Board member is already in the regional area and can attend:

- 25 – 29 July 2011
- 12 – 16 September 2011
- 28 November – 2 December 2011

20. Learn Local E-News

STATEWIDE FOCUS

Aim: To communicate with ACE providers in an engaging and informative manner to ensure they are updated on ACFE activities as well as activities of other providers.

Description:

- The 'e-newsletter' would be distributed quarterly to ACE providers to keep them up-to-date and engaged in the sector and activities of ACFE.
- The newsletter will provide up-to-date information on sector updates, service providers, news alerts, plus events calendar.
- The newsletter would include feature sections, such as learner case studies, industry profiles and twice yearly recognition of providers that are performing well ie. Best practice case studies.

Target audience:

- ACE Providers

Timing: 4 time per year starting in June 2011

APPENDIX A – Research findings



Community Attitudes to Training & ACE – Research (February 2010)

KEY FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Whilst the term *adult community education* is associated with valuable training, it is not necessarily with the sort of training many see as relevant to them. This stems from the term itself coupled with a shallow awareness of what providers (and the sector) actually offer.

If it is an aim of the ACE name to connote relevant job skills training to as broad a range of people in the community as possible, it is not currently doing so. A very large percentage of people equate term *adult community education* with training for ‘mature’ adults (i.e. “not us!”), often as part of re-skilling to re-enter the job market and from a less advantaged base, or as places that offer hobby and general interest courses. It is important to stress that people value and strongly support the availability of training targeting those disadvantaged (whether it be because of limited language skills, redundancy, or limited communication skills) as well as the provision of hobby courses all delivered within local communities; they just do not necessarily see it as relevant to them in the context of their training needs. It is evident that the term itself creates some of this ‘not relevant to me’ assumption. This assumption also comes from a lack of awareness about the breadth of what is available thorough ACE providers (as is evidenced by the large percentage who indicated they would consider undertaking job-related training through an ACE provider *if* they knew they had courses relevant to them).

There is therefore real scope to appeal to a broader market by increasing awareness of the range of courses available (particularly accredited ones to appeal to the vast majority of people for whom recognised certification/qualification is a critical component of what training delivers). This ties into the strong community perception that formal qualifications/certification ultimately lead to good jobs.

There is considerable support for the types of training and services offered by ACE providers, however, there is not necessarily a recognisable ACE training sector across the general community.

Virtually everyone has a fairly accurate understanding about the education and training ‘space’ occupied by universities and TAFEs. There is also recognition that there is a myriad of training providers beyond the major institutions of these two sectors, however, little concept of any cohesive, not-for-profit community based training sector as such. Where there is recognition, it is of individual training providers (ACE and private). The CAE has positive, stand-alone recognition amongst Melbournians (mainly in their mid 30s and above). AMES may not be recognised, but when explained it is very positively regarded. Regionally-based, ACE providers are more likely to be recognised across their local communities, but again this is often amongst identification of a number of private training providers, with no distinction necessarily made. Whilst identifying a

distinct community education sector is not of importance to the vast majority of people, it presents a challenge to the ACE sector if the aim is to generate greater demand for its training services.

In addition, the ACFE logo has no recognition or meaning alone or alongside the title Adult, Community and Further Education. This is not necessarily a negative nor surprising finding, given the logo is not one promoted across the community, but it does further suggest a real opportunity to create an overall brand to 'consolidate' the ACE sector in the mind of the community and broaden its relevance.

Employers readily acknowledge the extent to which they value on-the-job experience over off-the-job training. Any training they seek needs to be directly relevant to their business, demonstrate its added value and be of high quality if they are to consider it for their staff.

There is considerable variation in both employers' and the general community's experiences with certificate courses, mainly undertaken through smaller, private trainers, and this engenders a degree of cynicism. Those who have undertaken certification (largely through work or to improve their employability) often described it as 'tick-the-box' and very basic, with little new learning. Employers dismiss this sort of training as 'dodgy' and as training providers 'cashing in' through Government schemes. They are more likely to use an industry association or TAFE for staff training. Accordingly, the opportunity exists for the ACE sector to distinguish itself from providers whose training is less than adequate or lacking in substance. Beyond improving its recognition, the ACE sector's ability to attract a larger number will be through the quality of its services. Those who have used ACE providers speak highly of them, however most people are unaware of the quality of training offered (albeit that this lack of awareness is higher in metropolitan Melbourne than it is in regional Victoria where providers tended to be better known).

In Summary: Considerable scope exists to create a better recognised ACE sector profile across the broader community. Whilst the variability in the size, training offer and provider names can be as much of a strength for individual providers, it detracts from creating an identifiable training sector offering quality services to a broad range of people. In its favour, this lack of an overall profile (and not a negative profile) provides an opportunity to create one that has broader appeal. The Victorian community has a strong belief in (and up-take) in on-going training throughout one's working life. Those who have experienced training through ACE regard it very highly. Much of what the sector's providers deliver and how they deliver it is also very highly regarded and can form the basis of any positioning exercise (high quality, relevant, locally-based, accredited training). This may also go some of the way to distinguishing the sector from private providers of a lesser quality. A cohesive brand may also erode narrow assumptions about the relevance of the sector to most adults looking at training.



ACFE Communication Audit – Consultation (March 2010)

KEY FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Key findings in relation to communications between ACE providers and target audiences are:

- ACE providers' communication strengths are their local knowledge, established brand, brochures and word of mouth, good networks and personalised approach.
- The challenges facing ACE providers in communicating with target audiences are limited resources and limited capacity, tendency to over-rely on printed brochures, limited use of new communication tools and technology, potentially patronising approach to local needs and a brand with limited meaning.
- ACE providers resource constraints impact on the quality of communication.
- The main barriers for ACE providers in evaluating their communication activities are time constraints and limited resources and capacity.
- The key messages used by ACE providers align with the main motivations of people choosing a training provider. They are also consistent with the ACFE Positioning and Awareness key themes as outlined in the Positioning and Awareness Strategy Development Plan (September 2009).
- From ACE providers' point of view, the highest priority in ACFE's role in assisting ACE providers communicate with their target audiences is to undertake coordinated, state-wide positioning activities.

Key findings in relation to communications support provided to ACE providers by ACFE are:

- ACFE's local presence, regular distribution of information, provision of facilities for ACE providers to share ideas and network and the ACFE website are the key strengths in communications between ACFE and ACE providers.
- The weaknesses and/or challenges to communication between ACFE and ACE providers are predominantly due to ACFE's lack of a tailored approach to communication, use of technical jargon and language, untimely provision of information, limited use of the website and top down focus.
- With the changes in the sector as a result of the new funding model, ACE providers see raising the profile of the ACE sector within Government as the highest priority role for ACFE.
- ACE providers strongly support and appreciate the ACFE regional office structure and the communication functions it performs.
- ACE providers rate communications from the ACFE regional office as providing the best value information about the ACE sector.
- The personalities of ACFE staff, in particular staff from regional offices, have an impact on the quality of information and the perceived level of customer service provided to ACE providers.
- ACE providers who are involved in Regional Councils see the value in having them.

ACE providers position on ACFE's future communication roles

The coming changes in the funding model are creating uncertainty amongst ACE providers about the future of the sector and also about their relationship with ACFE. The audit highlighted providers' desire for ACFE to undertake and/or continue to perform the following communication roles (in order of priority):

1. Raising the profile of the ACE sector within Government;
2. Assisting ACE providers market the sector to the public;

3. Keeping ACE providers up-to-date with State Government's policy;
4. Assisting ACE providers market the sector to industries; and
5. Becoming a point of contact for the ACE sector.

1. Raising the profile of the ACE sector within Government

ACE providers want ACFE to become their advocate within State Government and other levels of government in order to raise their profile among the various departments and increase recognition of ACE's contribution to education, training and social outcomes. This is driven by the fact that most ACE providers receive funding from a variety of government sources.

2. Assisting ACE providers market the sector to the public

ACE providers acknowledge that the general public has little awareness of the ACE sector. While many providers have successfully marketed themselves within their local context, greater awareness in the broader community will assist their marketing and communication effort. ACE providers want ACFE to help them market the sector on a state-wide level.

3. Keeping ACE providers up-to-date with State Government policy

Changes in State Government policy impact of ACE providers' operations and administration. ACFE's role in keeping ACE providers up-to-date with policy changes is a priority communication function.

4. Assisting ACE providers market the sector to industries

Marketing to businesses is an area of weaknesses for most ACE providers. ACE providers see this as a role which ACFE could take up.

5. Becoming a point of contact for the ACE sector

As mentioned, ACE providers receive funding from various government departments. For some ACE providers, in particular smaller ones, ACFE could be a point of contact for the ACE sector for the various funding streams available.

The online survey respondents also provide additional indicated two more communication roles which ACFE could perform. They are:

- Communicating the value of the ACE sector particularly in regard to community capacity building; and
- Listening and collating providers views on a range of issues.

APPENDIX B – *Learn Local* Positioning Guidelines

See attached document.