



Situation

Young people today are bombarded by conflicting messages about how education will prepare them for the future. Many people see high school's primary purpose today being preparation for college, which in turn should serve as a gateway to "a good job." Meanwhile, employers complain that students who graduate from high school or college often lack enough work experience and real-world skills to make them ready for workplace success. Adding to the confusion, many people still believe that a young person who chooses a vocational pathway in high school rather than a purely academic one is sacrificing future earning potential. In reality, all of these messages are rooted on myths—and the challenge facing Cumberland Perry Area Vocational Technical School (CPAVTS) was, simply put, to explode those myths...and replace them with a fresh new narrative.

Strategy

Mary Rodman, administrative director of CPAVTS, saw the opportunity to change the nature of the conversation in her community and recruit students from sending school districts with a fresh and relevant message



strategic consulting

branding & messaging

organizational development

integrated communications

advise

design

engage

deliver

“Working with Wendt Partners has helped us create a stronger and more professional image of our school, our programs, and our students for the parents and community stakeholders that we serve. They are very creative in crafting engaging narratives that tell a compelling story.”

■ **Mary Rodman**

Director
Cumberland Perry Area
Vocational Technical School

that would speak to them, and to their parents. The key messages of today’s CPAVTS are powerful ones: that a student can go to vocational high school and still graduate with an academic diploma and preparation for college; that students at CPAVTS are well-prepared to enter the workforce right after high school, but are also equally prepared to continue their studies—often while building their career at the same time; and that many CPAVTS students even receive college credit while in high school, giving them a “leg up” when they enter college.

Solution

Building on the concept that the key to college and career success is in working toward a professional pathway, Wendt Partners connected the messages together and developed a comprehensive newsletter program that has become the centerpiece of the school’s communications. The newsletter integrates program profiles, descriptions of opportunities, and success stories together, all the while emphasizing that a CPAVTS education prepares students to be more successful in college, and in the workforce as well. This concept has culminated in powerful success stories, such as the profile of a graduate who went on to establish his own business; serve as an officer in the military; and run successfully for public office—all rooted in skills he learned while at CPAVTS. As a result, stakeholders are getting the message that the school offers state-of-the-art programs and powerful opportunities.

Sectors

Education

Services

Strategic Consulting, Integrated Communications

wendt Partners

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