

# Market research & marketing plans



**ADVANCEMENT**  
Associates

## *These services might be important to you...*

- if you wish to provide a fuller range of programs to meet the needs of your clients.
- if you sense a lagging interest among your constituents.
- if you would like to target new markets.
- if you want to know what it would take to be the provider of choice in your community.

**Building relationships.** Advancing your mission.

# Market research & marketing plans

Market research is an inquiry into the needs of current and potential clients coupled with a study of an organization's success in meeting those needs. Advancement Associates, Inc. (AAI) uses a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods.

In qualitative studies, we might prepare a questionnaire schedule, then conduct one-hour in-depth interviews with crucial stakeholders. At other times, we may use focus group methods. Scientific (quantitative) research is preferred when statistical inference



requires reliability and validity. The design of questions, the selection of a random sample that is large enough to represent the whole and the control of questionnaire completion all contribute to the authority of scientific findings.



Consultation with a marketing staff usually takes the form of an AAI mentor helping a staff member to develop and implement a coherent marketing plan. Such a plan identifies marketing goals and specifies the actions needed to reach the goals. In addition, a marketing plan contains the monitoring mechanisms to assure that all actions are completed satisfactorily.



## A CASE STUDY

"In 2005 our school was at a transition point with our admissions and outreach departments. We were looking for outside help to streamline our processes and clarify our message to our constituents. Rich and Mike took the time to get to know us and gently guided us through an image audit," wrote Margie Figgins, development director of Scattergood Friends School (West Branch, Iowa).

The marketing study completed by Rich Gerig, AAI principal, and Mike Wiese, AAI associate, indicated Scattergood's enrollment development would not come through mass marketing and slick campaigns to large groups of prospective students, but rather through more personal channels to specific niche audiences. Wiese was able, on the basis of his findings, to make particular suggestions about communicating with Friends Yearly Meeting, with selected potential feeder schools, with alumni and current supporters.

*Photos courtesy of AAI clients*

### Consulting in

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**Visioning**  
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**Fundraising**  
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**Capital Campaigns**  
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**Enrollment**  
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