

## **Using Multimedia Applications to Promote Career and Academic Opportunities**

Since 1997, the U.S. Department of Labor has funded efforts to develop a multi-media library of occupational career information for use in the national One-Stop Career Center Program. Approximately 540 videos have been developed and are used in all aspects of career exploration and planning. The U.S. Department of Labor decided to eliminate funding for the program.

America's Career Resource Network Association (ACRNA) was asked to determine the feasibility of developing a new partnership to continue this successful effort. The potential of a new partnership model provides an opportunity to reflect on the existing resources and to explore options for expanding and enhancing the product.

In June 2007, ACRNA solicited input from a wide array of education, workforce, and career development professionals regarding their experience in using the career videos to promote career and educational opportunities as well as their recommendations for future enhancements. The following are the results from that online survey.

### ***Summary of Findings***

The 49 respondents found the videos to be an effective resource. Most respondents (80%) reported that the videos were either "somewhat" or "very useful" in helping individuals explore career options. Only a handful found the videos "not very useful" or "extremely useful."

Embedding the career videos in the Career Information Delivery System (CIDS) was the most popular use of the videos. This was true for both practitioners who work primarily with youth and for practitioners who work primarily with adults. Linking the videos to labor market information was the second most popular use of the videos. Neither the adult practitioners nor the youth practitioners reported using the career videos to recruit for their programs or to highlight programs at the postsecondary institutions.

The videos currently are organized by the U.S. Department of Education's 16 career clusters. When asked about other ways to organize the videos, the majority of respondents (53%) requested that videos be arranged by high growth/high demand occupations. Other suggestions included organizing the videos by specific topics such as work environment or salary (33%) and by related occupational videos (31%). Least useful would be to organize the videos around STEM occupations (29%) or by non-traditional occupations (23%). Many respondents also suggested using the standard occupational classification (SOC) codes to organize the videos.

Adding a more interactive and engaging aspect to videos emerged as a clear priority for future enhancements. To provide a virtual job shadowing experience, over half of the survey respondents (59%) requested adding short video clips that address specific questions about the occupations. This was followed closely by a day-in-the-life interview with actual workers (57%) and linkages with state labor market information (41%). A little more than one-third of the respondents wanted the graphic footage upgraded. Others suggested that future videos include a dynamic first person account to make the resource more engaging for the end user.

The majority of the videos focus on specific occupations. However, some videos cover more general employability topics. When asked about creating more of these crosscutting videos, almost three quarters indicated that they would like videos that describe the skills and abilities that are applicable to multiple occupational areas. Over one half of the respondents wanted videos that explained different types of work options, such as apprenticeships and non-traditional careers. Almost half (43%) would like videos highlighting specific industries.

### ***Moving Forward***

These results appear to indicate that continuing the development and dissemination of career videos is a worthwhile endeavor. The next step is to create a collaborative partnership to determine the specific interest level of potential investors in moving the effort to the next level. Information gathered by the survey will be used to inform future efforts of the collaborative partnership.

ACRNA is prepared to organize and coordinate the effort. At this time, ACRNA envisions that the partnership will determine the specific product enhancement(s), the priority level of each upgrade, and the overall financial infrastructure of the effort.

### ***About ACRNA***

America's Career Resource Network Association (ACRNA) is a non-profit organization that provides leadership, coordination, partnerships, and advocacy to support the efforts of young people and adults in identifying and obtaining the academic, technical and career skills that they need to be productive. ACRNA's vision is for ***all individuals to have the knowledge and skills necessary to make fully informed career decisions.***

**A resource of America's Career Resource Network Association  
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