



*Connecting Diverse Students to a Career in
Advanced Manufacturing*

Recruiting 101: Build a strategy



This document was developed in collaboration with Alabama's FAME program. NAPE can help your state apply this strategy to meet the needs in your state.





Communication is key to recruiting, but it can be exhausting and ineffective without a clear strategy. Building a strategy is critical to maximizing the return on investment for engaging with social media and other forms of communication. People are inundated with messages all day long. In fact, the average American sees 5000 brand exposures per day, but we only notice about 86 and only 12 make an impression . This document is designed to help you become one of those twelve.

In order to build a communication and recruitment strategy, ask yourself the following questions:

1. *What do I want to happen?* Do you want to grow awareness, recruit participants to register for an event, start a conversation, increase enrollment? Your purpose should shape your approach.
2. *Who do I want to do the action or have the reaction?* Know your audience. When we create messages that appeal to adults, they tend to not appeal to students and vice versa. Vary your approach and tailor it to meet the communication preferences of your audience. Consider gender, generational differences and work values. Be wary of building a single story that attracts a narrow audience and excludes others.
3. *What message and channel do I use to get the intended audience to have the intended reaction?* Different audiences prefer different channels. Know where to find your audience and target your channels to increase the likelihood that your message will find its intended recipient.

Start with the right messages: Creating value statements for FAME programming

Step 1: List why the AMT FAME program is a great option for students.

- One on one experience with a mentor
- Related and relevant work-based experiences
- Get paid while they are learning the job
- Graduate debt-free
- Graduate with two years of experience and start with a higher wage
- Learn to work as a team to solve problems
- Practice essential skills companies want, such as communication, collaboration and problem-solving

Step 2: What does FAME prepare you to do?

- Serve as the robot doctor
- Program machines and keep them in top working order
- Apply multiple skills to keep equipment running efficiently and effectively
- Design new processes to improve machine output
- Develop foundational skills you can transfer to a variety of careers within manufacturing

Step 3: The value propositions of the program will never be heard if you do not attract students to the industry in general. List why manufacturing is a good option for girls or underrepresented populations. What are messages that will get the attention of girls and underrepresented populations?

- Make the world better by manufacturing products that make life easier and safer for consumers
- Use creativity and work with others to solve problems and design more efficient processes
- Apply knowledge from multiple disciplines (ex. Electrical, welding, computer programming, mechanical processes) to improve the efficiency and quality of products being manufactured
- Making products requires multiple teams charged with very different tasks (product design, process design, materials engineering, quality assurance, customer service, marketing, etc.). Jobs in manufacturing are flexible and the skills you learn as an AMT are transferrable to many different jobs and roles
- Enjoy family-sustaining friendly wages, predictable hours and regular pay raises. On a single income, you can make more than Alabama's average household wage (\$46,000). The average wage for an AMT in Alabama is \$49,000.
- Meet lifelong friends in a cohort model, where a team of students learn and work side-by-side throughout the program.

Notice how these statements still cover the key areas you want to promote (salary, job access, etc.), but are crafted to appeal to values and issues girls care about. They communicate the information through a different lens that appeals to girls as well as others.

Step 4: Audit your materials. Consider how you promote the program and make changes that will improve the appeal for all groups of students. Look for places where your messages are either incomplete or promoting a “single story” about manufacturing.



Earn a Competitive Wage While Attending College!

The Alabama Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education (F.A.M.E.) Program partners students with industry while they take classes at select community colleges. The goal is for students to gain valuable employment experience with manufacturing leaders while also completing their associate degree.



Enter the Workforce as an In-Demand, Skilled Technician

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Consider the headline and leading paragraphs.

Do they grab your attention? Is the key message the right message? On the web page in the screen shot, the key value is about earning a wage while attending college. This is a short-term financial value proposition and appeals to a limited audience. Also, all CTE programs in Alabama are now required to offer a co-op or internship. This is no longer a message that sets you apart. It should not be your leading message to promote FAME. There is more to FAME than money.

The second section is focused on the workforce, not the student. People make value-based and emotional decisions. How can we revise that section to excite students to be part of the manufacturing workforce? If we want to overcome the perception of manufacturing, we need to focus on the values and interests of the audience, not the factoids about manufacturing in the US. Promote that manufacturing is about brains over brawn and diverse professional pathways. Notice the statements above can help students see manufacturing differently without “telling them.” It communicates WHY manufacturing is attractive, not WHAT manufacturing is.

Example headlines for FAME:

Get started NOW. FAME sets students up to learn while they work, build a professional network, and gain the experience that can jump start careers in manufacturing.

Don't let your education get in the way of launching your future! You can earn, learn and get your career started NOW!

Use your brain! Manufacturing requires high levels of creativity, critical thinking and problem solving. Join FAME and become a professional who can design tomorrow's manufacturing industry.

Next, notice the photos.

Photo 1: A female is present, but the students are standing around watching a middle-aged, white male demonstrating something. Girls are attracted to hands-on experiences.

Photo 2: Again, a student is watching a middle-aged, white male demonstrating something. The equipment appears to be something from an industrial arts classroom. It does not look high-tech.

Also notice videos.

What are the intended and unintended messages of the video. As an outside person watching these videos, not only do they fail to accentuate the value propositions defined above, in some cases, they contradict them. *Watch the video at <https://youtu.be/NYAgCqqThFk>*

Here are the key messages that emerge from that video:

1. Title of video says this is about industrial maintenance tech. Those words are highly connected to language of manufacturing and can connote an antiquated vision of what manufacturing is. The word maintenance evokes images of school custodians and apartment handy men. While this may be language used in manufacturing to mean something else, we want to omit the terms when we are promoting the program. Further, the title says nothing about FAME, which is the point of the promotion. Retitle.
2. Video opens with a statement that the student didn't plan to go to college and was never a strong student. Message: This career path is for struggling students who were not academically capable. What we say: This pathway is a great option for future engineers who want to have a career while they gain the degrees necessary for their ultimate career goal – TOTAL MISMATCH
3. The student is unshaven and wearing a dirty baseball cap with a Browning logo. Browning is a shooting and hunting sports retailer. An urban student or girls or other underrepresented populations may not relate to this person. It underscores the stereotypes and single story of manufacturing employees.
4. The setting contradicts the story. He is alone working on something that looks like a car part in an automotive shop. Message: Industrial mechanics work alone and the job involves using the types of tools you find in your garage and/or in the red standing tool cabinet at auto mechanics shops. During part of the video, he is literally using a plastic mallet that looks like a toy to whack a piece of metal. This may be relevant if I already know what he is working on, but as an outsider with no manufacturing experience, it looks like this work requires brawn, not brain. What we say: This job is high-tech and involves robots. – TOTAL MISMATCH
5. The graduate promotes the structure of the program and the fact that he was able to get experience and his education simultaneously. This is consistent with the messaging of FAME and might need to be highlighted more.
6. While the video shows the person working near a computer, he is wrapping cords around something. He isn't actively coding or doing anything high tech.

Look for internal consistency

Visit <https://www.nwscc.edu/program-of-study/career-technical/fame>. This is the same page where the video above is embedded. Scroll to the bottom of the page where the partner companies are highlighted and look at the images. These images are very different that the video and promote a totally different vision of what the program is. Consider how these images are aligned with the value propositions above. They have computers, pictures, people of color, clean workplaces, no heavy equipment, etc.

Consider creating videos that are specific to your value propositions. For example, if you are promoting that FAME can be a stepping stone to a career in engineering, create a video with an engineer and an AMT discussing how they work as a team and how the AMT is prepping to become an engineer.

If you are promoting FAME as a way for women to earn a livable wage, have a woman who is working as an AMT and perhaps is a single mom discussing how she supports her family with the wages she earns.

Look for multiple stories that tell the whole picture

Calhoun's FAME program website highlights two videos that are both students working in automotive factories (EFI). How can we diversify the videos to include other industries? Also, both videos highlight white males. Without diverse videos, we unintentionally create a single story that FAME is about automotive technologies and for white males.

While Alabama has many opportunities in automotive manufacturing, other industries are not represented on this program page.

Visit <https://calhoun.edu/student-services/career-services/fame-amt/>

Notice the James Stanford video. The message here is positive as he discussed the versatility of what he does. He says it prepares him for multiple pathways. This is a message to underscore.

As he discusses how he entered the field through his brother's experience, the guy from the other video highlighted above is working in the background. Why do we have the same person in the video? We need more diversity of industry and people. When he mentions his brother and the other person appears, it seems as if the two people they used for these videos are from one family.

Also, he is working alone as well. We are not seeing any mentors or teams. This is a key value proposition highlighted, but the video contradicts the messaging.

What the person is saying is completely separate from the visuals of the video. For example, he is alone tinkering on a machine part while discussing his growing communication skills. Pictures tell the story and his words are lost because the images do not support them.

Visit <https://calhoun.edu/student-services/career-services/fame-amt/testimonials/>

How do the testimonials tell a single story? Notice the people, the props and the messages.

Appeal to your audiences' preferences- Rethink your channels!

Students are NOT coming to your websites to review videos and testimonials. Get a social media strategy and rely heavily on it for promoting your programs!

What To Think About...

- Social media only works when it is dynamic, so launching a social media campaign requires people and focus. Many times, it requires human resources, content creation and an advertising budget.
- Social media platform decisions should align with goals and trends both within your organization and industry-wide.
- Identify your goals and objectives – what are you trying to achieve with your social media marketing.
 - What are my overall objectives?
 - How can I use social media to align with these objectives?
 - What do I really want from my social media efforts?
 - Are my goals measurable?
- Understand your audience – know who they are and where they are. Are they Tweeting or on Twitter? Watching online videos?

Teens are on social media. They do not visit websites and read content. They ask YouTube and watch videos. Periodically review the latest research on social media preferences and platform choices because of the frequency of change, especially among teens. There also are demographic and gender differences when it comes to social media use which recruiters need to be aware of in order to increase the likelihood that they are reaching the audience they wish to target. Below are some pointers on teen use of social media :

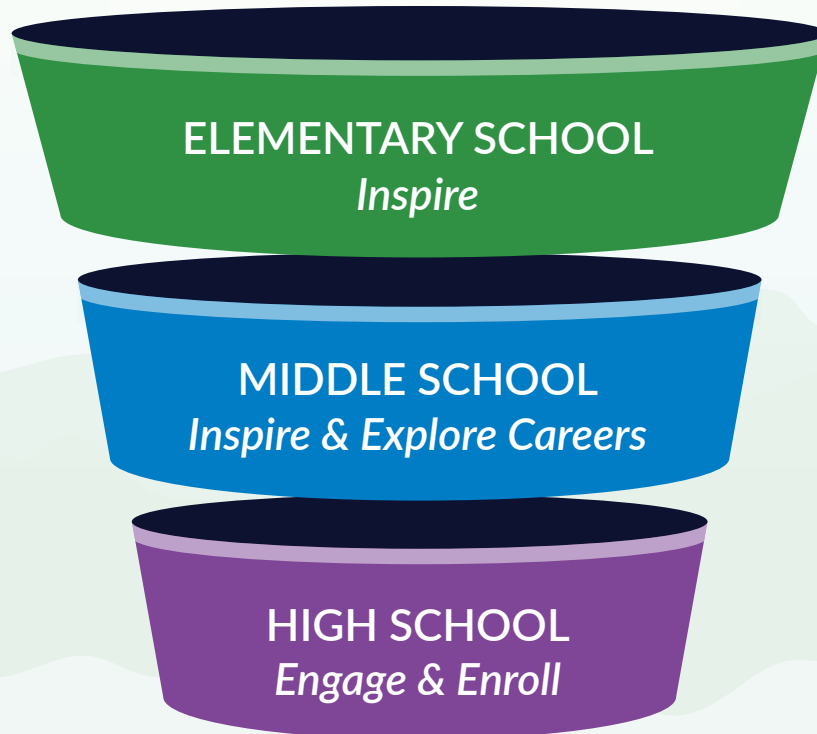
1. Facebook is no longer king: According to a Pew Research Center survey conducted March 7-April 10, 2018, roughly half (51%) of U.S. teens ages 13 to 17 say they use Facebook, notably lower than the shares who use YouTube, Instagram or Snapchat. However, low income teens still tend to use Facebook (7 out of 10 teens from households making less than \$30,000 annually).
2. 95% of teens have a Smartphone and 45% say they are online on a near-constant basis.
3. Girls are more likely than boys to say Snapchat is the site they use most often (42% vs. 29%), while boys are more inclined than girls to identify YouTube as their go-to platform (39% vs. 25%).
4. White teens (41%) are more likely than Hispanic (29%) or black (23%) teens to say Snapchat is the online platform they use most often, while black teens are more likely than whites to identify Facebook as their most used site (26% vs. 7%).

Top 10 Tips for a social media campaign

1. Follow women and minorities on your platforms. Flood your timeline with female and minority voices and learn from their unique perspectives and experiences.
2. Make sure women are not taking a passive role in promotional videos. Let their voices narrate, show them working with their hands rather than watching, and position them as employees with power or authority.
3. Understand which channel your content is best suited for - YouTube is for videos, Snapchat is for disposable content, and Instagram is for pictures and short visual media.
4. Place emphasis on visual platforms.
5. Do not ignore the streaming quality of your video experience because tweens/teens won't return to a website or app with sluggish video.
6. Create visuals that are recognizable and tell a complete story.
7. Include diverse role models and mentors.
8. Create posts where students can read (or watch on YouTube) someone talking about their career, their path, the skills needed, what a typical day looks like, etc. These videos can be informal, short and uncut.
9. Consider partnering with people already in the social media space you want to enter. Partner with YouTube Creators, influencers and people who get the platform and speak the language.
10. Because Smartphone user growth has been massive and will continue to grow among teens for the foreseeable future, it is important that you have a mobile-friendly website.

Create a customer journey strategy to ensure you are getting the messages to the right people at the right time.

Our recruiting efforts **MUST** be longitudinal. Consider recruiting as a funnel. When students are in elementary school, the purpose of recruiting is inspiration. As they get into middle school, the purpose is to continue to inspire, explore careers in more detail and narrow down the ideal candidates. Finally, high school recruitment is targeted toward engagement and enrollment.



Because the purpose of recruiting activities changes, design your recruiting activities so they are in alignment with the purpose. Remember the example of working in retail. Each employee is stationed at various parts of the store to create messages and offer support that are proven to get you to the cash register with a purchase. The greeter doesn't ask for your credit card. There is an entire process that takes the customer from a browser to a buyer and it involves many people with different roles. A recruiting strategy should involve many partners, including student ambassadors, industry partners, career counselors, teachers, college recruiters, etc.

Recruiting is also strategic. Take sports recruiting as a model. College team recruiters do not visit every student or send information to every person. They target their recruits based on a set of data related to winning. In the same way, you want to identify the types of data that predict FAME student interest and success. Once sports recruiters have the list of recruits, they rank them and spend more time and effort on the ones that are the most talented, the best fit or the most interested. They also get to know them. If you want to recruit more girls and nontraditional students, you need to know them. Create your messages and approaches strategically, so you are engaging your targeted populations. Partner with role models that have similar life experiences or are the same gender or race. Borrow this method and you can ensure your efforts are worth it and you are spending your energy where you need to.

In order to create a longitudinal recruitment strategy, consider the following:

ACTION	DESCRIPTION
<i>Data mining and analysis</i>	Start with data. Examine historical data on successful graduates and identify the key variables that are worth using as application criteria. Make sure you are looking at quantitative data such as attendance, ACT scores, completion rates, test scores, post-graduate employment etc. Also consider survey or interview data from alumni and employers. Remember that your current data may not be reflective of diverse groups of students, so you may want to also identify data points that are more inclusive. Make sure to identify the gaps where the data show that specific student groups aren't participating and implement recruitment strategies that target these underrepresented students. Use NAPE's nine best practices to help you consider how you recruit females and underrepresented populations.
<i>Revise outreach strategies and selection criteria based on data analysis.</i>	Consider that the data colleges use may not have predictive power. For example, most colleges require FAME students are college ready, which means they meet a minimum score on the ACT and do not require enrollment in remedial coursework. If your data show successful graduates were far above the thresholds you set, you may need to adjust your selection criteria. Consider the experiences of your successful graduates and build these into your feeder programs to ensure they are available to a wider demographic. If students with an ACT score of 18 are able to be admitted, but your data show your successful graduates tended to have at least a 21, consider ways your outreach can include support to help students be academically successful. In addition to looking at a recruit's past performance, what data points can you identify that predict potential? If certain populations tend to be underprepared or don't have the same opportunities to build experience, consider ways your outreach can include support to ensure diverse student groups meet criteria necessary for enrollment in your programs. You can take an active role in building an equitable pipeline.
<i>Develop a targeted recruitment plan and relationships with influencers</i>	Where are the students that fit your criteria? Identify the channels and the messages that will attract those students to your program. Start to develop relationships with the career counselors and other influencers who can help you find the students who are most qualified for your program. Use the career counselors to connect you to students and invite them to participate in your events or meetings. Ensuring they are consistent with your message is critical. Also, make targeted students feel special. A handwritten note, a celebratory comment shared with a student's parent or teacher can go a long way in developing relationships.
<i>Integrate your recruiting message into college recruiting approaches.</i>	Your college has a number of ways they recruit all students. Find ways to use those channels and events to find potential FAME students. Ensure the college recruiters understand FAME and can carry your message. Share data and target students who show an aptitude or interest in FAME.

ACTION	DESCRIPTION
<i>Design events or meetings to inspire students, identify potential recruits, and/or enroll students</i>	Revisit the 9 Best Practices document and checklists to help you design events. For example, you may want to include personal invitations to targeted students, invite role models that are similar gender and race as your intended audience, create hands-on activities, and engage parents or other community-based organizations to help you build relationships. Start early. You can design annual events or contacts with students starting as early as kindergarten. Remember to design events by FIRST asking what you want students to DO or THINK. Gather data to discover whether you achieved that purpose.
<i>Partner with industry to recruit</i>	Provide industry partners with your recruitment calendar and offer to have them team up with you. Consider providing them the list of the most qualified or interested students and have them meet with them in person rather than having the industry partner give presentations to all. Consider gathering data on student interests and pairing them with relevant industry representatives (ex. If I like cars, pair me with Toyota. If I like food, pair me with Frito Lay). Use industry partners to fund prizes and swag. Wearing logos and brands goes a long way with product or organization identification, which increases the trust and connection between students and your college or the company. Industry partners can also provide supplies for hands-on activities. Make sure to vary the types of activities you are doing to reflect the variety of industry in your region.
<i>Create longitudinal strategy for keeping interested students engaged</i>	Create a data collection system to keep track of students who are interested in FAME. If you do an event at a middle school, gather data on who was interested and keep in touch with them. Start to target the marketing, so you will have multiple opportunities to develop trust with students and their families. Some of your greatest efforts may not come to fruition for five years or more, but you will have an easier time keeping your programs running at full capacity with students who will be successful FAME graduates if you have developed a long-term relationship with them.

Recruitment Ideas

Elementary school

Expose students to manufacturing and the skill set AMTs, engineers and other advanced manufacturing careers require

ACTIONS	RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING	DATA COLLECTION
<p><i>Tinker station where students are pulling apart items and examining how they work.</i></p> <p><i>Hands-on activities where teams of students CREATE something.</i></p> <p><i>Design challenges and friendly competitions.</i></p> <p><i>Manufacturing lessons that show students how stuff is made.</i></p> <p><i>*See the 9 best practices document, strategy 6 for links to activity ideas for various ages.</i></p>	<p>Provide prizes for students that show interest or win a competition. Consider t-shirts students will wear over and over. School identification is critical to enrollment decisions down the line.</p> <p>Create a one page summary of the event for students to take home to parents. Give a few talking points about the activities you did and infuse some of your value propositions into the flier. Provide your contact information.</p> <p>Write a press release to the local paper to announce winners if you hold a competition for students.</p>	<p>Collect names of any students who win a competition at your event.</p> <p>Ask students to complete a quick evaluation with a few key questions. Ex. I liked the activity we did. Doing this for a job would be fun. Etc.</p> <p>Ask teachers to send fliers home to all students. Most elementary students have take home folders. Put information about events or opportunities in fliers.</p>

Middle school

Provide opportunities for all students to explore and more targeted experiences for students who express interest. Begin developing relationships with their families.

ACTIONS	RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING	DATA COLLECTION
<p><i>For all students:</i> <i>Hold contests for students where they have to demonstrate skills relevant to AMT coursework or job.</i></p> <p><i>Use AMT student ambassadors to run one day events where students get to rip apart machines and put them back together, build robots, program something, etc.</i></p> <p><i>Use survey instrument to divide students into groups and have various activities that are related to their interests (ex. Those who like to braid and use their hands can do something with electrical wire, those who like to code can play with raspberry pi, and those who like to see how things work can rip apart items and examine their innards.)</i></p> <p><i>For students who express interest:</i> <i>Engage role models to work with students who show interest/ aptitude.</i></p> <p><i>Create school and industry tours where targeted students can spend “the day in the life” of an AMT student.</i></p>	<p>Use trained student ambassadors and ensure you have role models that are the same gender or race.</p> <p>Identify students who show interest and have a postcard ready to go home that invites the parents to have a call or visit. Here is some text to get your started:</p> <p>We hosted an event today to introduce advanced manufacturing to your child’s class. Advanced manufacturing is a growing industry in the United States and many opportunities exist for engineers, technicians and thought leaders to engage in manufacturing careers. Your son or daughter showed significant skill and interest today and I would love the opportunity to introduce you to the educational pathways available to prepare them for their future.</p>	<p>Keep a log of who you contacted and when.</p> <p>Create targeted invitations to any families of students who showed aptitude or interest.</p> <p>Consider having a survey tool to divide students into groups for an activity. The information you gather can be used to help you target messaging and recruiting.</p> <p>Below are some ideas. I like to see how things work. I like to build stuff. I like to do intricate things with my hands (braid, needlepoint, draw) I like to code computers. I like to work in a group. I like riddles and puzzles. I like math. I like to design steps to solve a problem or get a task done.</p> <p>If students complete those surveys, you have their names and can reach out.</p>

High school

Identify additional students who are interested and enroll students in the AMT program

ACTIONS	RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING	DATA COLLECTION
<p>Create a communication strategy that engages students at least once per quarter.</p> <p>Create materials and events for school counselors to attend where they experience FAME activities and learn more about it.</p> <p>Create annual events where students can come to the college to experience a day in the life.</p> <p>Design events that build efficacy, where students are hands-on, solve problems and engage in activities FAME students do in the class.</p> <p>Identify targeted students and set them up with a FAME student mentor.</p> <p>Create a project for the FAME class that involves the student working with a high school student who is interested.</p> <p>Create contests with cash or swag prizes for student groups.</p> <p>Share lessons teachers can use in their science/physics classes that are related to FAME curriculum.</p> <p>Host a girls' leadership camp where they engage in AMT related problem solving activities and learn leadership skills (consider the soft skills the AMT program promotes) (consider the soft skills the AMT program promotes).</p>	<p>Visit and talk with students at their high schools.</p> <p>Host parent nights that include activities parents and students can do together.</p> <p>Do home visits and/or call parents of juniors/seniors if their parents cannot attend informational nights.</p> <p>Host a counselor breakfast or luncheon.</p> <p>Address specific questions and interests of students with targeted mailing, messaging, or face to face visits.</p> <p>Offer to host teachers on a professional development day to show them more about your program and provide hands-on activities that introduce them to the FAME curriculum.</p> <p>Design a PD for math and/or science teachers that is based on a FAME assignment where they have to apply the concepts they teach to a manufacturing problem.</p>	<p>Get a list of all juniors and seniors. Star the interested students you have interacted with in elementary and middle school.</p> <p>Reduce the list based on the data you identified that predicts student success.</p> <p>Target the students who showed interest and fit the criteria and track how many times you visit with them, identify any questions or issues they raise, revise your collateral to answer those questions and address those issues. Your qualitative data from the interviews will be used in a feedback loop for your messaging.</p>

