EDUCATIONPLANNER.CA: An External Review

Prepared by Al Atkinson

BCCAT
BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL
ON ADMISSIONS & TRANSFER

BCCAT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I   BACKGROUND

The **Education Planner website** provides a searchable database of approximately 1,700 undergraduate post-secondary programs in B.C. It is intended as a **"one-start entry point"** for students looking for post-secondary options.   The site also provides information for professionals who work with students. The site is maintained and updated on a regular basis by the **BC Council on Admissions and Transfer** (**BCCAT**). Funding is provided by the **Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development**.

In 2007 the **Admissions Committee** of BCCAT recommended that an independent review of **Education Planner** should be undertaken to determine its overall effectiveness, and to serve as an accountability mechanism to government.

In May of 2008, Mr. Al Atkinson was retained to conduct the review.

It was determined that the scope of the review would include:

- **Governance and Project Management**
- **Effectiveness (Usefulness and Navigability)**
- **Marketing**
- **Site Security**
- **Sustainability**

II   GOVERNANCE AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The **Education Planner** site is governed through advice provided by an **Advisory Committee** composed of stakeholders representing government, the K-12 system, the post-secondary system, parents, contractors, and key BCCAT staff members.

Management of the site is provided by a **Project Team** made up of key BCCAT staff and the principles of the companies contracted by BCCAT to provide the content and the technological architecture and support (**Pardy and Associates; Bayleaf Software Inc.**).

An **annual work plan** is prepared by the Project Team based on the advice of the **Advisory Committee**, and any input received from the **Education Planner Institutional Contacts** (the group of contacts at each institution with whom BCCAT works to update content**)**.

A survey of the **Advisory Committee** was conducted to determine the effectiveness of the governance/management model. **One hundred percent of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed** that all major stakeholders are represented on the Committee, their advice is incorporated into the annual work plan, the Project Team is committed to continuous quality

improvement, the working relationship with the Project Team is effective, and the annual work plan is effectively implemented and monitored.

An initial meeting of the **Education Planner Institutional Contacts** (EPIC) with the **Project Team** was held in May, 2008. Based on the success of this first meeting, it has been proposed that regular meetings with this group become an integral part of the project management model.

Overall, **the model adopted for the governance and project management of Education Planner is very effective**. The proposed inclusion of regular meetings with the institutional contacts will make it even more so.

III   EFFECTIVENESS (USEFULNESS AND NAVIGABILITY)

The core of the review centred on the overall effectiveness of **Education Planner**, in terms of its usefulness (actual and perceived), and its navigability. Information for this part of the review was obtained through a **web-based users' survey**, a **survey of professionals** deemed most likely to use the resource with their students, **surveys of the Advisory Committee** and the **Educational Planner Institutional Contacts**, and a **Focus Group of secondary school students**.

The user group survey and the survey for professional groups were based on the components of **Education Planner** identified in the site map. Respondents in both groups were asked to indicate their **familiarity** with each of the components, as well as the **actual and perceived usefulness** of the components for **various audiences** (secondary school students, post-secondary students, adults entering or returning to post-secondary education, parents, secondary school counselors and advisors, and post-secondary counselors and advisors).

User's Survey

- When asked to indicate the **usefulness** of each of the components of **Education Planner,** the range of responses was very high; between **85% and 96%** of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed**.**
- **Program Search, Institutional Information, Career Developer, Money Matters, Focus Now,** and **For Educators** were identified as the most useful (all 90% or above) components.
- In terms of the **perceived usefulness** for various audiences, the range of those indicating **agreement or strong agreement** was between **74%** (counselors and advisors in post-secondary institutions) and **89%** (secondary school students).
- When asked about their **familiarity** with each of the components, the range of responses was between **32%** and **69%** (85% of the users who responded to the survey identified themselves as **new users**).

Professional Groups Survey

- When asked about the **usefulness** of each of the components of **Education Planner** between **75% and 96%** of the respondents indicated that the components were either **somewhat or very useful**.
- **Program Search, Who Offers What, For Educators,** and **Money Matters** were identified as the most useful (90% or above).
- In terms of **perceived usefulness** for various audiences, the range of those indicating **agreement or strong agreement** was between **81%** (post-secondary students) and **91%** (secondary school counselors).
- The **most used** component was **Program Search** (91% use this component either **often or occasionally** in their work with students and prospective students).
- A significant number of respondents indicated that they were **not aware** of many of the components (21% to 62% range).

Advisory Committee Survey

- When asked about the **perceived usefulness** of **Education Planner** for various audiences, the range of those indicating **agreement or strong agreement** was between **83%** (post-secondary students, post-secondary counselors and advisors, parents, and adults contemplating entering or returning to post-secondary education) and **100%** (secondary school students and secondary school counselors and teachers).

Education Planner Institutional Contacts Survey

- When asked about the **perceived usefulness** of **Education Planner** for various audiences, the range of those indicating **agreement or strong agreement** was between **57%** (post-secondary counselors and advisors) and **80%** (secondary school students).

Focus Group of Secondary School Students

- The components of **Education Planner** most often used were **Program Search**, **Institutional Information**, **Who Offers What**, and **Money Matters.**

- **All students** that participated in the **Focus Group** found the site to be **extremely useful**.
- All students in the focus group agreed that information about programs funded by the **Industry Training Authority** would be a great enhancement.

Navigability

The **surveys** for **users** and **professional groups** contained a section on **navigability**; the students who participated in the **focus group** were also asked to comment on this element. Generally, the site is perceived to be both **user-friendly** and **easy to navigate**. Some **useful comments** for improving navigability were received through the surveys and through the **focus group**.

Key Observations

- *Users and professionals indicate that the site is very useful, and they perceive the site to be useful for the identified target audiences.*
- *A significant number of users were not familiar with many of the components of Education Planner.*
- *The site is generally perceived to be "less useful" for post-secondary students and post-secondary counselors and advisors; the perceptions of the post-secondary contacts were rated significantly lower than those of the other groups surveyed.*
- *Many respondents from the "professionals" group were not aware of many of the components of Education Planner.*
- *Overall, the site is perceived as user-friendly and easy to navigate, but some minor enhancements could improve its navigability.*

Recommendations

- *A follow-up study should be conducted to determine why so many users are not familiar with nor have used many of the components of Education Planner, to determine why many of the professionals who use Education Planner are not aware of nor use many of the components, and to determine whether the site is as useful for post-secondary students and those working with post-secondary students as is presumed.*

- *In order to enhance navigability, the site map could be modified to make it more descriptive of the various components.*

IV   MARKETING

A variety of marketing strategies have been developed and implemented since BCCAT launched **Education Planner**: the inclusion of **Education Planner** within the **Planning 10** component of the B.C. secondary school curriculum; **marketing directly** to potential users through an advertising campaign with **Skytrain** and the **BC public bus system**; establishing **links** with **other websites;** and introducing the resource to professional groups and organizations, either through direct contact or through workshops.

The survey results from the user group and the professional groups indicate a direct correlation to the strategies employed above, an indication of their effectiveness.

- **60%** of users had learned of **Education Planner** from a **Planning 10 teacher** or from a **secondary school counselor, 9%** through **direct advertising, 9%** from **other sources (friend, colleague, presentation or workshop, post-secondary counselor or advisor),** and the remainder from **related on-line activities** (e.g. browsing, searches, links).
- **58%** of the professionals who use **Education Planner had learned of the** resource through their **professional organization** or from a **colleague, 23%** as a result of attending a **presentation or workshop, 13% through** an **advertisement,** and **13%** through **related on-line activities.**

Key Observations

- *The marketing strategies employed to date have been very effective.*
- *The target markets identified by the Project Team as "challenges" (parents, adults contemplating entering or returning to post-secondary education, and the post secondary sector) remain so; few in these categories responded to the surveys.*
- *The assumption that Education Planner is as useful a tool for post-secondary students and post-secondary counselors and advisors may not be accurate.*

Recommendations

- *The marketing strategies employed to date should be continued, with an emphasis on fostering and maintaining relationships with the professional groups and organizations working with students and prospective students.*
- *Other groups of professionals who may be working with adults preparing for or contemplating entering the post-secondary system should be included in outreach activities: e.g., Continuing Education professionals in the school districts, Adult Basic Education instructors in the colleges and the school districts, professionals working in Community Centres and Libraries.*
- *A follow-up study should be conducted to determine the actual usefulness of Education Planner for post-secondary students and post-secondary counselors and advisors.*
- *Many school districts publish a "School Bulletin" for students and parents. This may be a useful tool for increasing awareness of Education Planner for parents.*

V   SITE SECURITY

A security assessment for the **Education Planner** website was conducted with the assistance of Mr. Piotr Kisiel, the Director of Educational and Information Technology from Douglas College. His overall assessment of the site indicates that:

> **"The security provisions for the Education Planner website, designed, maintained and operated by Bayleaf Software Inc., adhere to the best practices and standards commonly accepted for installations of this nature. The technological infrastructure and operational framework of the website have been architected with thoughtful consideration given to achieving high availability and excellent protection of data for the benefit of users."**

VI   SUSTAINABILITY

Early on in the review, **sustainability** was identified by the Project Team as one of the major challenges for **Education Planner**.

As the review progressed, five major factors emerged as relevant for this part of the review: **risk management, technological efficiency, content management, scalability,** and **planned enhancements.**

Risk Management

Responsibility for content management and technological infrastructure and support are contracted to two private firms. In the case of an emergency, there is no risk management strategy in place should either of the contractors be unavailable. At the time of this review, the project team had identified this as a high priority, and a strategy is under development.

Technological Efficiency

Many technological efficiencies (e.g. customized report capabilities, electronic verification of institutional reports, electronic tools to assist with research and editing) have been built into **Education Planner** that have alleviated what was once an even more labour-intensive, manual process.

Content Management

The current content management process remains very labour intensive, heavily reliant on two people who are in constant contact with the post-secondary institutions to develop, update, and verify content. Options are being pursued to develop some online content management protocols.

Scalability

On the content management side, the most **critical variable** related to scalability involves the **number of programs maintained on the site**, especially new programs that need to be added. Currently, there are no scalability issues on the technical side.

Enhancements

Many components have been added to the site over the years; each one has to be maintained and updated on a regular basis.

Some of these components, as well as some of the current enhancements being considered, could be viewed as "tangential" to the intended purpose of the site.

Key Observations

- *There is currently no risk management strategy in place, although efforts are underway to develop one.*
- *Many technological efficiencies have been developed and implemented, but the current system for content management is still very labour-intensive.*
- *More direct input of content from the institutions is being pursued.*
- *The newly adopted policy on membership may have a major impact on scalability (number of new programs).*
- *Some planned enhancements could be viewed as tangential to the intended purpose of the site.*

Recommendations

- *Immediate priority should be given to completing the development of a risk management strategy.*
- *Technological developments should continue to be pursued in support of obtaining additional efficiencies.*
- *A system for content management should be developed with the institutions to allow for more direct input of content.*
- *Any planned enhancement to Education Planner should be assessed against the intended purpose of the site, i.e., as a "one-start" planning tool for students and prospective students.*

I   INTRODUCTION

Background

Early in 2004, the **B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer** (**BCCAT**) assumed responsibility for "**Opening Doors**", a publicly-funded website developed to assist students with planning for their post-secondary education. Ongoing funding for the improvement and maintenance of the site was committed by the Ministry of Advanced Education. After significant revisions and enhancements, the site was re-launched in September of that year as "**Education Planner**". Since then, user statistics corroborate that the use of the site has increased dramatically.

The **Education Planner** site provides a searchable database of approximately 1,700 undergraduate post-secondary programs in B.C. Through this site, students can compare, in one place, program details, including admission requirements, fees, and start dates. The site also provides information for professionals who work with students.

The site is managed by a Project Team based on input from a network of post-secondary institutional contacts and an Advisory Committee. The primary responsibility for content management of the site is contracted to an independent provider, Pardy and Associates. The primary responsibility for the technological architecture and technical support of the site is contracted to another independent provider, Bayleaf Software Inc. Both contractors are represented on the Project Team, which also consists of two representatives from the administrative staff of the B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer.

The Project Team has adopted a policy of "continuous improvement" for managing and improving the site. Within this context a detailed work plan is prepared and implemented annually; the Plan is monitored closely by the Project Team, and results are reported to the Advisory Committee on a periodic basis.

An independent review of the site has never been undertaken. In 2007, such a review was identified as a priority by the Admissions Committee of the Council.

Review

In May of 2008 Mr. Al Atkinson, the recently retired Vice President of Educational Services at Douglas College, was contracted to conduct an external review of **Education Planner.**

The review would serve several purposes:

- provide an independent analysis of information from different sources about the site's effectiveness;
- provide feedback on possible further improvements that could be made to enhance usefulness and user-friendliness;

- serve as an accountability mechanism to government.

An initial meeting was held with the Project Team to determine the successes, issues, and challenges of **Education Planner** from the perspective of those responsible for maintaining and improving the resource. From this meeting, the scope of the review was determined, to include:

- Governance and Project Management
- Effectiveness (including overall usefulness and navigability)
- Marketing
- Site Security
- Sustainability

The Project Team also identified some current issues that would become part of the scope for the review:

- Content Management Protocols
- Institutional Membership on the Site
- Risk Management

A variety of methods were employed to glean information from many different perspectives, including:

- Analysis of existing data and information
- Focus Group Discussions
- Interviews
- Meetings
- Surveys
- Workshops

The observations and recommendations from the review are reported thematically in the following sections of this report:

- Governance and Project Management
- Effectiveness (Usefulness and Navigability)
- Marketing
- Site Security
- Sustainability

The report concludes with a general summary and a summary of recommendations.

II   GOVERNANCE AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Background

Under the general auspices of the **Admissions Committee** and the **B.C. Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT)**, the **Education Planner** resource is governed through advice provided by the **Education Planner Advisory Committee**. This committee is composed of key stakeholders responsible for or interested in providing information to potential students about post-secondary programs in B.C. The current committee consists of members from the secondary school system, the post-secondary system, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development, parents, contractors, and key BCCAT staff members. Insight and advice is provided on the content and design of the resource, the needs of potential users, usability and ongoing improvements of the resource.

The **Project Management Team** produces an annual work plan based on the advice and insights provided by the **Advisory Committee** and feedback received from users and post-secondary institutional contacts**.** The plan is monitored on a regular basis; results are reported to the **Advisory Committee**.

Review

Information for this section of the review was obtained through an examination of **existing documents and data**, a **meeting with the Project Team**, **individual interviews** with key members of the Project Team, a **survey of the Advisory Committee members**, excluding members of the Project Team, and a **meeting of the Project Team with the Education Planner Institutional Contacts** (the group of contacts at each institution with whom BCCAT works to update content).

Meeting with the Project Team

The overall basis for the review was determined through a meeting with the reviewer and the Project Team. The overall purpose of the resource was articulated as a "**one-start entry point**" for students and parents looking for post-secondary educational options. Targeted audiences include secondary school students, post-secondary students, prospective adult students contemplating entering or returning to post-secondary education, professionals working with students and prospective students, and parents of secondary school students. Within these target groups several **challenges** were identified: reaching counselors and advisors in the post-secondary environment, reaching adult audiences, and reaching parents of secondary students. For the most part, the resource is well known and embraced by secondary school counselors and advisors, by the Planning 10 teachers in the secondary schools, and thus, probably by secondary school students. The Project Team also identified several **successes**, including the use of **Education Planner** in Planning 10 classes, the

exponential increase in user traffic on the site, the positive working relationship with the Advisory Committee, and the positive feedback received from users.

From the perspective of the Project Team, the **major challenges** include:

- Keeping the information current
- Fostering a better relationship with the post-secondary sector
- Risk management
- Sustainability
- Membership (more and more private institutions are interested in being represented on the site)

All of these challenges were built into the review, and are reported in the appropriate sections of this report, which follow (**Sustainability; Marketing**).

Individual Interviews with Key Members of the Project Team

The reviewer met individually with three key members of the Project Team (Linda Pardy of Pardy and Associates, responsible for content management; George Tomes of Bayleaf Software Inc., responsible for technological support; and Mike Winsemann, responsible for "in-house" support). The purpose of these interviews was to delve more deeply into the issue of sustainability (content management and risk management).

The information provided from these interviews is incorporated into the appropriate sections of this report (**Site Security**; **Sustainability**) which follow.

Survey of Advisory Committee Members

A survey was developed for use with those members of the Advisory Committee who were not on the Project Team. The main purpose of the survey was to determine the overall effectiveness of the governance/management model including the working relationship between the Committee and the Project Team. Of the eight non-BCCAT members on the Advisory Committee, six completed the survey. Key responses are as follows:

- 100% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that all major stakeholders are represented on the Committee.

- 100% either strongly agreed or agreed that their advice is incorporated into the annual work plan.

- 83% felt the committee is achieving its full potential.

- 100% strongly agreed that the Project Team demonstrates a commitment to continuous quality improvement.

- 100% either strongly agreed or agreed that the working relationship with the Project Team is effective.

- 100% either strongly agreed or agreed that the annual work plan is effectively implemented and monitored.

In the "**comments**" section of the survey, respondents were very positive about individual members of the Project Team. Ease of use, the "one-stop shopping" nature of the resource and its user-friendliness were identified as major strengths of the website. Keeping information current, educating users, and making people aware of the resource were identified as key challenges. It was suggested that more frequent communication between the Project Team and the Committee might be helpful.

Full results from this survey are appended. (**See Appendix 1: Advisory Committee Survey)**

Meeting of the Project Team with the Education Planner Institutional Contacts

Feedback from the May, 2008 meeting of the Project Team with the Education Planner Institutional Contacts was extremely positive. Participants expressed an interest in meeting on a regular basis. (**See Appendix 2: Education Planner Institutional Contacts Workshop**)

Observations

- *The governance/project management model is very effective.*

- *There is no risk management strategy in place to sustain the project should anything happen to the two private contractors.*

- *Keeping information current is an ongoing challenge.*

- *More and more private institutions are expressing interest in becoming members. At the outset of this review, only those private institutions included in the BC Transfer Guide as existing institutional members were eligible for membership. A formal policy for membership was adopted in October 2008 which provides all private institutions included in the B.C. transfer system with the opportunity to become members of Education Planner, on a cost-recovery basis.*

- *As more and more programs are added to the site, sustainability will become an even greater challenge; the current protocols for content management may not be sufficient to sustain the project.*

- *The meeting held in May, 2008 with the Education Planner Institutional Contacts was received very positively by the participants.*

- *Current marketing strategies may not be meeting some of the intended target audiences.*

Recommendations

- *A risk management strategy should be developed, and work has begun on one. (Also see section on Sustainability).*

- *A new approach to content management should be considered and developed in order to ensure sustainability. (Also see section on Sustainability).*

- *New marketing strategies should be considered to meet specific target markets (parents, post-secondary counselors and advisors). (Also see section on Marketing).*

- *The effect of the new policy on membership that was adopted in October of 2008 should be monitored carefully, especially with respect to scalability.*

- *Regular meetings with the Education Planner Institutional Contacts should become a key element of the project management of Education Planner.*

III   EFFECTIVENESS

The core of the review centred on the overall effectiveness of **Education Planner**, for usefulness, both actual and perceived, and navigability.

Information and data for this part of the review were obtained through:

- a web-based user's survey;
- a survey of professional groups deemed most likely to make use of the resource;
- surveys of the Advisory Committee and the Education Planner Institutional Contacts;
- a focus group of secondary school students.

Three hundred users responded to the web-based survey, predominantly secondary school students. Most of the respondents were new users. Overall, the response rate was high, but lower than anticipated amongst some groups of users, namely parents of secondary students, post-secondary students, and post-secondary counselors and advisors.

Due to the fact that many of the respondents were new users, a significant number were therefore not aware of nor had used various components of **Education Planner**. This factor, combined with the low response rates identified above, must be considered when interpreting the results.

The response rate to the survey designed specifically for professional groups was especially low. Surveys were distributed via listservs to three groups: members of the **Career Education Society**, the **BC School Counsellor's Association** (BCSCA), and the **BC Academic Advising Association** (BCADA) for post-secondary academic advisors. This low response rate must also be considered when interpreting the results.

The Advisory Committee and the **Education Planner Institutional Contacts** (the group of contacts at each institution with whom BCCAT works to update **Education Planner**) were asked about their perceptions of the usefulness of the site for various potential users: secondary school students, post-secondary students, adults entering or returning to post-secondary education, parents, secondary school counselors and advisors, post-secondary counselors and advisors.

The focus group of secondary school students provided useful information for this part of the review.

Results are reported in the following sections:

- **User Group Survey**
- **Professional Groups Survey**
- **Advisory Committee Survey**
- **Post-secondary Institutional Contacts Survey**
- **Secondary School Student Focus Group**

User Group Survey

Of the **300 responses**, 207 (**69%**) were from secondary students, and 43 (**14%**) from adult prospective post-secondary students. International students or prospective students represented **4%** of the respondents, and parents, **2%**. The remainder (**11%**) of the respondents identified themselves as "other", most of whom were working in some capacity within the secondary or post-secondary education sectors.

Of the 300 respondents, **85%** identified themselves as **new users**.

50% of the respondents learned about **Education Planner** from a **Planning 10 teacher**, **10%** from a **secondary school counselor**, **9%** from an **advertisement,** and **21%** from an "**other**" source, mainly through related **online activities** (e.g. browsing, searching). (**See Section on Marketing).**

Respondents were asked to indicate their familiarity (very familiar, somewhat familiar, not familiar) with the components of **Education Planner** identified in the site map:

- **Program Search**
  69% very or somewhat familiar
  31% not familiar

- **Institutional Information**
  55% very or somewhat familiar
  45% not familiar

- **Who Offers What (WOW grid)**
  42% very or somewhat familiar
  58% not familiar

- **Career Developer**
  52% very or somewhat familiar
  48% not familiar

- **International Students**
  38% very or somewhat familiar
  62% not familiar

- **Money Matters**
  47% very or somewhat familiar
  53% not familiar

- **Focus Now**
  41% very or somewhat familiar
  59% not familiar

- **Hey You**
  32% very or somewhat familiar
  68% not familiar

- **For Educators**
  39% very or somewhat familiar
  61% not familiar

Given the very high rate of new users (85%), it is not surprising to observe that many of the components of the site are not yet fully familiar to users. However, some are clearly more familiar than others.

Users were also asked to indicate the "usefulness" of each of the components (very useful, somewhat useful, not useful, or haven't used). In reporting the following results, the number of respondents identifying "haven't used" was not factored into the calculations since one cannot express an opinion if one has not yet used the resource. Also, given that most of the respondents were new users, the following responses are likely indicative of the potential usefulness of each of the components.

- **Program Search**
  96% of users identified this component as either very or somewhat useful.

- **Institutional Information**
  94% of users identified this component as either very or somewhat useful.

- **Who Offers What (WOW grid)**
  90% of users identified this component as either very or somewhat useful.

- **Career Developer**
  94 % of users identified this component as either very or somewhat useful.

- **International Students**
  86% of users identified this component as either very or somewhat useful.

- **Money Matters**
  92% of users identified this component as either very or somewhat useful.

- **Focus Now**
  90% of users identified this component as either very or somewhat useful.

- **Hey You**
  85% of users identified this component as either very or somewhat useful.

- **For Educators**
  90% of users identified this component as either very or somewhat useful.

Users were also asked to indicate their **perceptions** of the usefulness of **Education Planner** as a planning resource and tool for secondary school students, Planning 10 teachers, secondary school counselors, parents of secondary school students, post-secondary students, adults contemplating entering or returning to post-secondary education, and counselors and academic advisors in post-secondary institutions (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree, no opinion).

In reporting the following results, only those who expressed an opinion (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree) were factored into the calculations; those expressing "no opinion" were not.

- **Secondary School Students**
  89% of users who expressed an opinion either strongly agreed or agreed that Education Planner is a useful planning resource and tool for secondary school students; 5% either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

- **Planning 10 Teachers**
  74% of users who expressed an opinion either strongly agreed or agreed that Education Planner is a useful planning resource and tool for Planning 10 teachers; 9% either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

- **Secondary School Counselors**
  77% of users who expressed an opinion either strongly agreed or agreed that Education Planner is a useful planning resource and tool for secondary school counselors; 9% either disagreed or strongly disagreed**.**

- **Parents of Secondary School Students**
  73% of users who expressed an opinion either strongly agreed or agreed that Education Planner is a useful planning resource and tool for parents of secondary school students; 12% either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

- **Post-Secondary Students**
  79% of users who expressed an opinion either strongly agreed or agreed that Education Planner is a useful planning resource and tool
  for post-secondary students; 6% either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

- **Adults Contemplating Entering or Returning to Post-Secondary Education**
  78% of users who expressed an opinion either strongly agreed or agreed that Education Planner is a useful planning resource and tool
  for adults contemplating entering or returning to post-secondary education; 9% either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

- **Counselors and Academic Advisors in Post-Secondary Institutions**
  74% of users who expressed an opinion either strongly agreed or agreed that Education Planner is a useful planning resource and tool for counselors and academic advisors in post-secondary institutions; 9% either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

The last section of the user survey dealt with **navigability**.

71% of respondents either **strongly agreed** or **agreed** that the site is **user friendly**; **8%** either **disagreed** or strongly **disagreed** (**20%** were **neutral**).

63% of respondents either **strongly agreed** or **agreed** that the site is **easy to navigate**; **11%** **disagreed** or **strongly disagreed** (**25%** were **neutral**).

The comments received for this section of the survey support the notion that most users find the site user-friendly and easy to navigate.

Complete results of this survey, including comments, are appended (**See Appendix 3: User Survey**).

Professional Groups Survey

The Professional Groups Survey was sent via listservs to three groups: counselors in the secondary schools (BCSCA), academic advisors in post-secondary institutions (BCADA), and members of the Career Education Society, an association that many of the Planning 10 teachers are affiliated with.

Of the several hundred possible recipients, the response rate was **exceedingly low**. Although the deadline for responses was extended, only **39 responses** were received. Of these, **49% were from counselors in the secondary schools**, **13% from Planning 10 teachers**, **3% (one respondent) from post-secondary academic advisors,** and **36%** from those designated as "**other**". In this latter category all respondents were working in some advising or counseling capacity.

86% of the respondents were already **familiar** with **Education Planner**.

58% had learned of **Education Planner** from a colleague or through a **professional organization**, **23%** through a **workshop or presentation**, **13%** through an **advertisement,** and **13%** through **browsing on the web**. (**See Section on Marketing).**

95% of the respondents reported using **Education Planner** either **often** (62%) or **occasionally** (33%) in their work.

Respondents were asked how often (often, occasionally, rarely, never, not aware) they used each of the components of **Education Planner** in their work:

- **Program Search**
  91% use this component either often or occasionally.

- **Institutional Information**
  67% use this component either often or occasionally.

- **Who Offers What (WOW grid)**
  46% use this component either often or occasionally.

- **Career Developer**
  42% use this component either often or occasionally.

- **International Students**
  8% use this component either often or occasionally.

- **Money Matters**
  16% use this component either often or occasionally.

- **Focus Now**
  12% occasionally use this component.

- **Hey You**
  4% occasionally use this component.

- **For Educators**
  37% use this component either often or occasionally.

A significant number or respondents indicated that they were "**not aware**" of many of the components:

- **Who Offers What (WOW grid):** 29%

- **Career Developer:** 21%

- **International Students:** 42%

- **Money Matters:** 21%

- **Focus Now:** 62%

- **Hey You:** 62%

- **For Educators:** 21%

Respondents were also asked to rate each of the components in terms of usefulness (very good, good, average, poor and "don't know"). The "don't knows" were not factored into the following calculations. Results are only reported in those categories where there was not an overwhelming number of "don't knows".

- **Program Search**
  96% rated this component as either good or very good.

- **Institutional Information**
  83% rated this component as either good or very good.

- **Who Offers What (WOW grid)**
  92% rated this component as either good or very good.

- **Career Developer**
  75% rated this component as either good or very good.

- **Money Matters**
  89% rated this component as either good or very good.

- **For Educators**
  92% rated this component as either good or very good.

In addition to the above, respondents were asked about their perceptions regarding the usefulness of **Education Planner** for various potential users (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree). They were asked to indicate "don't know" if they had no opinion. Those expressing no opinion have not been included in the following calculations:

- **Secondary School Counselors**
  91% either agreed or strongly agreed that Education Planner is a useful resource for this group.

- **Planning 10 Teachers**
  85% either agreed or strongly agreed that Education Planner is a useful resource for this group.

- **Post-Secondary Counselors and Advisors**
  91% either agreed or strongly agreed that Education Planner is a useful resource for this group.

- **Parents**
  91% either agreed or strongly agreed that Education Planner is a useful resource for this group.

- **Post-Secondary Students**
  81% either agreed or strongly agreed that Education Planner is a useful resource for this group.

- **Adults Entering or Returning to Post-Secondary Education**
  88% either agreed or strongly agreed that Education Planner is a useful resource for this group.

The last section of the survey dealt with **navigability**.

83% of respondents found the site user-friendly (8% disagreed). **88%** of respondents found the site easy to navigate (12% disagreed).

Several useful comments regarding navigability and suggestions for improving the resource are contained in the comments section.

Full survey results, including comments are appended. (**See Appendix 4: Professional Groups Survey)**.

Advisory Committee Survey

Members of the Advisory Committee (n = 6) were asked about their perceptions of the usefulness of **Education Planner** for the various groups identified earlier (secondary students,

counselors and advisors in secondary schools, post-secondary students, post-secondary counselors and advisors, parents and adults contemplating entering or returning to post-secondary education):

- **Secondary School Students**
  100% either strongly agreed or agreed.

- **Counselors and teachers in secondary schools**
  100% either strongly agreed or agreed.

- **Post-Secondary Students**
  83% either agreed or strongly agreed.

- **Post-Secondary Counselors and Advisors**
  83% either agreed or strongly agreed.

- **Parents**
  83% either strongly agreed or agreed.

- **Adults Contemplating Entering or Returning to Post-Secondary Education**
  83% either agreed or strongly agreed.

Full results, including comments are appended (**See Appendix 1: Advisory Committee Survey**).

Education Planner Institutional Contacts Survey

The post-secondary institutional contacts were also asked for their perceptions of the usefulness of **Education Planner** for the various audiences identified above (those respondents who indicated "don't know" have not been included in the calculations):

- **Secondary School Students**
  80% either agreed or strongly agreed.

- **Counselors and Teachers in Secondary Schools**
  80% either agreed or strongly agreed.

- **Post-Secondary Students**
  57% either agreed or strongly agreed.
  18% either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

- **Post-Secondary Counselors and Advisors**
  57% either agreed or strongly agreed.
  24% either disagreed or strongly disagreed.

- **Parents**
  66% either agreed or strongly agreed.
  11% disagreed.

- **Adults Contemplating Entering or Returning to Post-Secondary Education**
  63% either agreed or strongly agreed.

The survey results, combined with several of the comments from this group suggest that **Education Planner** may not be as useful for the post-secondary sector (students and those working with students) as it may be for other targeted groups.

Full results, including comments are appended (**See Appendix 5: Education Planner Institutional Contacts Survey).**

Focus Group of Secondary School Students

A focus group discussion with secondary school students was conducted at John Oliver Secondary School (Vancouver School District). The group was comprised of students from Grades 10, 11, and 12.

Students were asked about how they had learned about **Education Planner**, and what, in their opinions is the best way(s) to inform people about it (**See section on Marketing**).

In addition, discussion centred on familiarity with the various components of the site, which components students found most useful (or not useful), and navigability. The participants were also asked to identify any aspects of **Education Planner** that they found missing and would like to see included, whether or not they had shared the site with their parents and what, in their opinions, were the most important pieces of information about post-secondary education that they either wanted or needed to know about.

The template used for this focus group is appended (**See Appendix 6: Focus Group Template**).

Discussion with participants in the focus group substantiated many of the results obtained through the above-mentioned surveys:

- All of the students had been introduced to Education Planner by their Planning 10 teacher; many had also learned about it through a friend.

- The components most often used were "Program Search", "Institutional Information", "Who Offers What", and "Money Matters".

- Most students had used and liked the MyEdPlanner function.

- All students liked the user-friendliness and ease of navigation; however, most thought that the site map could be more descriptive of the various components of the site.

- Some students would like to see a brief section on "Study Abroad" options.

- All students agreed that information from the Industry Training Authority would enhance the resource.

- Most students had already shared the site with their parents; all students agreed that, at some point, it would be appropriate to do so.

- One student suggested, with the agreement of others, a simple way to market the site to parents would be to make use of the school bulletin (See Section on Marketing).

Observations

The following observations and recommendations apply to all groups involved in surveys and focus groups.

- *From users, there is significant variability with regard to familiarity with the various site components of Education Planner; the most familiar components identified by users were "Program Search", "Institutional Information", and "Career Developer.*

- *Although significant numbers of users had not used various components of Education Planner, those who had gave high ratings for "usefulness" (85% to 96% range).*

- *The perception of users with regard to the usefulness of the components of Education Planner for various audiences was high (73% to 89% range).*

- *Many of the respondents in the "professionals" group were not aware of many of the components of Education Planner.*

- *Of those professionals who had used the various components of Education Planner, overall ratings for "usefulness" were generally high (75% to 96% range);*

- *The overall perceptions of the professionals who use Education Planner in terms of its usefulness for various audiences was generally high (81% to 91% range).*

- *The overall perception of the Advisory Committee regarding the usefulness of Education Planner for various audiences was high (83% to 100% range).*

- *Although the overall perceptions of the Education Planner Institutional Contacts regarding the usefulness of Education Planner for various audiences was consistently above 50% (57% to 80% range), their perceptions were significantly lower than the perceptions from the other groups, especially when applied to the post-secondary sector (post-secondary students and those working with them).*

- *The majority of respondents indicated that the site is user-friendly and easy to navigate.*

Recommendations

- *A follow-up study should be conducted to:*

  o *determine why so many users are not familiar with or have not used many of the components of Education Planner;*

  o *determine why many of the professionals who use Education Planner are not aware of or do not use many of the components; and*

  o *determine whether the site is as useful for post-secondary students and those working with post-secondary students as is presumed.*

- *The results from the follow-ups identified above should be used to assess the usefulness of many of the components of Education Planner for targeted audiences vis-à-vis their intended purpose, and to improve its navigability. The outcomes should then be used to determine specific priorities for the continued refinement and enhancement of the resource.*

- *As an aid to navigation, make the site map more descriptive.*

- *Serious consideration should be given to including programs funded by the Industry Training Authority on the site.*

IV   MARKETING

A variety of marketing strategies have been developed and implemented since BCCAT launched **Education Planner** in 2005. These strategies have seen the inclusion of **Education Planner** in the required **Planning 10** component of the B.C. secondary school curriculum, marketing directly to potential users through an advertising campaign with **Skytrain** and **public buses throughout B.C.**, establishing links to other websites (e.g. **B.C. Transfer Guide, B.C. Government website**), and introducing the resource to various professional groups and organizations, either through direct contact or through workshops. In all cases, these strategies appear to have been very successful.

Usage statistics since **Education Planner** was launched in 2005 indicate a significant increase in the number of users, another indication that these strategies have proven successful. Statistics from 2005 are not available, but from 2006 to 2007 usage increased by **12.20%.** From 2007 through 2008, usage increased by **17.20%** in spite of a glitch in the tracking system for three months when statistics were not available (**See Appendix 7: Web Traffic Summary**). In both 2007 and 2008, the highest monthly increases in site visits correspond with the direct advertising campaign undertaken with **the Skytrain and public buses throughout B.C.**

Information obtained for this review from the **surveys** developed for users and the professional groups also substantiate the effectiveness of the strategies employed thus far.

Of the users surveyed, (most of whom were secondary school students), **60%** had learned of **Education Planner** from a **Planning 10 teacher** or from a **Secondary School Counselor**. **9%** had learned of the resource as a result of advertising, and **9%** from other sources (friend, colleague, post-secondary counselor or advisor). The remainder had learned of the resource through **"other"** means, mostly through related on-line activities (e.g. browsing, searching, links). Complete results are appended (**See Appendix 2: User Group Survey**).

Of the professional groups surveyed, **58%** had learned of the resource through their **professional organization** or from a **colleague**, **23%** as a result of attending a **presentation** or **workshop** on **Education Planner**, **13%** through an **advertisement,** and **13%** through **browsing on the web**. Complete results are appended (**See Appendix 3: Survey of Professional Groups**).

Information gleaned from the **Focus Group Discussion** with secondary school students corroborated the information obtained from other sources; most students had learned of the resource from a **Planning 10 teacher**, a **fellow student** or a **counselor**.

The surveys offered little useful information regarding marketing to adults contemplating entering or returning to post-secondary education, post-secondary counselors and advisors and parents. Coincidentally, these were the various potential audiences for **Education Planner** that had been identified by the **Project Team** as the greatest marketing challenges.   However, through anecdotal conversations with the students who participated in the **Focus Group**, and conversations with other professionals working with students and prospective students, several

useful suggestions were made that are worthy of consideration in attempting to reach these target audiences. They are included in the **recommendations**.

The results from the survey of **Post-Secondary Institutional Contacts** provided some insight into the perceived value of the resource for post-secondary students and post-secondary counselors and advisors, raising the question as to whether or not to continue to attempt to reach these audiences.

Observations

- *Overall, the marketing strategies employed to date have been very successful.*

- *The audiences identified by the Project Team (parents, the post-secondary sector, adults contemplating entering or returning to post-secondary education) as challenges for marketing purposes remain so.*

- *Fostering and maintaining relationships with the professional groups and organizations working with students and prospective students is probably the most effective marketing strategy.*

- *The assumption that Education Planner is as useful a tool for post-secondary students and post-secondary counselors and advisors may not necessarily be accurate.*

Recommendations

- *The marketing strategies employed to date should be continued, with an emphasis on fostering and maintaining relationships with the professional groups and organizations working with students and prospective students.*

- *Other groups of professionals who may be working with adults preparing for or contemplating entering the post-secondary system should be included in outreach activities: e.g. Continuing Education professionals in the various school districts, Adult Basic Education instructors in the colleges and the school districts, professionals working in Community Centres and Libraries.*

- *A follow-up study should be conducted to determine the actual usefulness of Education Planner for post-secondary students and post-secondary counselors and advisors.*

- *Many school districts publish a daily or weekly "School Bulletin" for students and parents. This may be a useful tool for increasing awareness of Education Planner for parents.*

- *Since many users seem to be unaware of many of the components of Education Planner, some target marketing of these components may be necessary.*

**V	SITE SECURITY**

A security assessment for the **Education Planner** website was conducted with the assistance of Mr. Piotr Kisiel, the Director of Educational and Information Technology from Douglas College. His overall assessment of the site indicates that:

> **"The security provisions for the Education Planner website, designed, maintained, and operated by Bayleaf Software Inc., adhere to the best practices and standards commonly accepted for installations of this nature. The technological infrastructure and operational framework of the website have been architected with thoughtful consideration given to achieving high availability and excellent protection of data for the benefit of users." (See Appendix 6: Site Security).**

Significant observations include:

- **User Data and Personal Information**

  The site is accessed via user accounts; no private or sensitive data is required.

  Technical measures ensure that user accounts are secure.

- **Infrastructure Architecture**

  The infrastructure provided by Bayleaf Software Inc. and Peer1 (a company specializing in providing Information Technology infrastructure) adheres to the highest industry standards.

- **Network Security**

  Network security incorporates a trusted firewall and platform, intrusion prevention, content security, risk management, and monitoring.

- **Backups**

  All servers are backed up to tape on daily, weekly, and monthly schedules, and database snapshots to disk are taken every four hours.

- **Updates and Upgrades**

  Updates, patches, and upgrades of the application and operating system software are first applied and tested in a development environment before being applied to staging and production environments.

During the course of the review a massive and lengthy power outage (including the backup generators and universal power) occurred in downtown Vancouver, including the building housing the production servers. This occurrence served as a "perfect storm" for testing the infrastructure and the backup provisions of **Education Planner**. When power was restored, Bayleaf was able to fully restore all services within 12 hours of the initial power outage.

VI   SUSTAINABILITY

Early on in the review, **sustainability** was identified by the Project Team as one of the major challenges for **Education Planner**.

As the review progressed five major factors emerged as relevant for this part of the review: **risk management**, **technological efficiency**, **content management**, **scalability,** and **planned enhancements**.

Risk Management

As identified earlier, independent contractors are responsible for the technological and content management aspects of **Education Planner**. Should either of these two contractors be replaced, or should anything happen to either one, it is essential that a risk management strategy is in place to sustain the project. (Since the outset of this review the Project Team has begun to address this issue.)

Technological Efficiency

Since its inception, many technological efficiencies have been developed for **Education Planner** that have alleviated what was once an even more "person-intensive", manual process. These efficiencies include:

- customized report capabilities that have been built into the administrative tool;

- the ability to publish to the live site without having to batch or go through Bayleaf;

- verification of institutional reports via email; and

- electronic procedures that have been developed to assist with research and editing.

These efficiencies have greatly reduced the time and effort involved in the content management process.

Content Management

Some efficiencies have been built into the content management process, including some self-reporting from institutions and devolving the responsibility for many of the tasks associated with content management (e.g. updating, collecting, and verifying information) to specific personnel. However, the current content management process remains very labour intensive, relying mostly on two people who are in constant contact with the post-secondary institutional contacts to add new programs to the site, and to update and verify content.

The Project Team has begun to address this issue and is pursuing the development of closer relationships and more frequent contact with the Education Planner Institutional Contacts in order to seek more direct input of both program information and ideas for further improvements from the institutions. To this end, The Project Team, with members of the Advisory Committee, met with the post-secondary institutional contacts in May, 2008 to begin discussions on how this might occur. Two options were presented at this meeting; using an **enhanced "Word" document** that could be used within "Track Changes" to **highlight updates**, and an **online content management system** that would allow users to login to the website and **submit updates online**. In return, some refinements (primarily technological) could be made to **EducationPlanner** that would enhance marketing capabilities for the institutions.

There was overall general support for pursuing the online content management option, and for meeting more regularly with the personnel from the institutions (**See Appendix 7: Education Planner Institutional Contacts Workshop**).

In pursuing these new options, caution should be exercised in order to ensure that **Education Planner** remains true to its intended purpose as a **"one-start" entry point** for students and prospective students planning for their post-secondary studies. There is an inherent danger that institutions, keen on marketing their programs, could lose sight of this intended purpose. However, handled appropriately, there is clearly a "win-win" opportunity here that should be pursued.

Scalability

As part of the review individual interviews were held with George Tomes, of Bayleaf Software, Inc., Linda Pardy, of Pardy and Associates and Mike Winsemann of BCCAT.

On the content management side, the most **critical variable** related to **scalability** involves the number of programs represented on the site, especially new programs that need to be added. Involving institutions in providing information on new programs could address this issue. However, caution should be exercised in how responsibility for inputting information is devolved to institutions so that institutions do not feel that they have an unnecessarily high workload being placed upon them. On the technological side, there are no critical variables at this time; there is sufficient capacity to handle any increase, and the environment is such that additional capacity can be added should that become necessary.

In relation to scalability, **BCCAT** recently adopted a policy regarding membership which allows private institutions included in the B.C. transfer system, on a cost recovery basis, the opportunity to become members of **Education Planner**. This policy should be carefully monitored for its effect on scalability (i.e. the number of new programs that need to be added and updated).

Enhancements

The Project Management Team uses the concept of "**continuous quality improvement**" to manage the resource. A work plan is produced each year to identify and implement various enhancements.

An examination of these work plans indicates that careful thought has gone into considering and developing enhancements; however, these must always be measured in relation to the **intended purpose** of the site. **Caution** must be exercised to ensure that the project doesn't drift away from what it is intended to provide, a "**one-start shopping**" experience for students and prospective students beginning to plan for their post-secondary education. For example, two items identified in the 2008/09 work plan, a **graduate program subject classification system**, and an initiative to provide **summaries and links to research** for BC students could be viewed as tangential to the stated purpose of the website.   The more components that are added to the sight only increase the work required to update and maintain them. In addition, the more components included on the website could make navigation of the site more complex.

Observations

> ***Risk Management***
>
> - *No risk management strategy is currently in place, although one is under development.*
>
> ***Technological Efficiency***
>
> - *Many technological efficiencies have been developed and implemented.*
>
> ***Content Management***
>
> - *Several options are being considered to allow for more direct input from the post-secondary institutions.*
>
> ***Scalability***
>
> - *The most critical variable with regard to scalability is the number of programs (especially new programs that need to be added) represented on the site; this is a critical factor in working with institutions to take a more active role in providing new program information, and monitoring the effect of the new policy on institutional membership.*

Enhancements

- *Several planned enhancements could be viewed as not being directly related to the intended purpose of Education Planner.*

- *The more components that are added to the site, more maintenance and support will be required.*

- *Increasing the number of components could make navigation more complex.*

Recommendations

- *Immediate priority should be given to completing the development of a risk management strategy.*

- *Technological developments should continue to be pursued in support of obtaining additional efficiencies.*

- *A "balanced" system for content management should be developed with the institutions to allow for more direct input of content.*

  The integrity of Education Planner must be the guiding factor; the resource is intended to serve students first, and not institutions. To this end, the templates and definitions must be standardized within the purvue of the project and not dictated by the institutions for their own purposes.

- *Planned enhancements to Education Planner should be assessed against the intended purpose of the resource, that is, as a "one-start" planning tool for students and prospective students.*

VII SUMMARY COMMENTS

The **Education Planner** website was designed to serve students and prospective students as a **"one-start shopping"** experience for post-secondary educational options. Its target audiences include secondary school students, post-secondary students, parents, professionals working with students and prospective students in both the secondary and post-secondary systems, and adults contemplating entering or returning to post-secondary education.

Surveys were prepared for users and the various professional groups deemed most likely to make use of the resource to assess the site's effectiveness, both in terms of usefulness and for navigability. **Both users and the professional groups working with students and prospective students gave the resource high ratings for both usefulness and for navigability.** However, within both groups, many respondents were not familiar with, and in many cases, had not used many of the components. The reasons could be many, but further investigation and analysis is warranted. Of particular concern is the observation that the website may not be as useful for the post-secondary education sector (post-secondary students and the post-secondary counselors and advisors working with them). The results of further analysis will help to identify potential modifications to the site, to determine priorities for future enhancements, and to develop future marketing strategies.

The governance and management model for the site has proven to be most effective. The Project Team works well with the Advisory Committee. Annual work plans are prepared, implemented, and monitored based on user feedback and the insights of the Committee. It has been observed that regular meetings with the **Education Planner Institutional Contacts** could enhance project management.

Feedback received through the surveys and the focus group indicates that **the marketing strategies employed are working well.** In addition, several useful suggestions for reaching parents of secondary school students and adults contemplating entering or returning to post-secondary education were received, groups identified by the Project Team as challenges for marketing purposes.

An assessment of site security revealed that **the technological architecture and technical support is of the highest industry standard.**

In relation to **sustainability**, several important factors emerged: **risk management**, **technological efficiency**, **content management**, **scalability**, and **planned enhancements**. It is recommended that a **risk management strategy be developed** and that further **technological efficiencies be pursued, especially for content management**. In addition, it will be important to **monitor the effect of the newly adopted policy on membership** as it could greatly increase the number of programs that need to be added and updated. It will also be important to **assess all planned enhancements to Education Planner**, not only in relation to the work required to develop and maintain them, but also to ensure that any planned enhancements are in keeping with the intended purpose of the site.

VIII   SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Governance and Project Management

- *A risk management strategy should be developed, and work has begun on one.*

- *A new approach to content management should be considered and developed in order to ensure sustainability.*

- *New marketing strategies should be considered to meet specific target markets (parents, post-secondary counselors and advisors)*

- *The effect of the new policy on membership that was adopted in October of 2008 should be monitored carefully, especially with respect to scalability.*

- *Regular meetings with the Education Planner Institutional Contacts should become a key element of the project management of Education Planner.*

Effectiveness

- *A follow-up study should be conducted to:*

  o *determine why so many users are not familiar with or have not used many of the components of Education Planner;*

  o *determine why many of the professionals who use Education Planner are not aware of or do not use many of the components;*

  o *determine whether the site is as useful for post-secondary students and those working with post-secondary students as is presumed.*

- *The results from the follow-ups identified above should be used to assess the usefulness of many of the components of Education Planner for targeted audiences vis-à-vis their intended purpose, and to improve its navigability. The outcomes should then be used to determine specific priorities for the continued refinement and enhancement of the resource.*

- *As an aid to navigation, make the site map more descriptive.*

- *Serious consideration should be given to including programs funded by the Industry Training Authority on the site.*

Marketing

- *The marketing strategies employed to date should be continued, with an emphasis on fostering and maintaining relationships with the professional groups and organizations working with students and prospective students.*

- *Other groups of professionals who make be working with adults preparing for or contemplating entering the post-secondary system should be included in outreach activities: e.g. Continuing Education professionals in the various school districts, Adult Basic Education instructors in the colleges and the school districts, professionals working in Community Centres and Libraries.*

- *A follow-up study should be conducted to determine the actual usefulness of Education Planner for post-secondary students and post-secondary counselors and advisors.*

- *Many school districts publish a daily or weekly "School Bulletin" for students and parents. This may be a useful tool for increasing awareness of Education Planner for parents.*

- *Since many users seem to be unaware of many of the components of Education Planner, some targeted marketing of these components may be necessary.*

Site Security

- *No recommendations are currently warranted.*

Sustainability

- *Immediate priority should be given to completing the development of a risk management strategy.*

- *Technological developments should continue to be pursued insupport of obtaining additional efficiencies.*

- *A "balanced" system for content management should be developed with the institutions to allow for more direct input of content.*

  The integrity of Education Planner must be the guiding factor; the resource is intended to serve students first, and not institutions. To this end, the templates and definitions must be standardized within the purvue of the project and not dictated by the institutions for their own purposes.

- *Planned enhancements to Education Planner should be assessed against the intended purpose of the resource, that is, as a "one-start" planning tool for students and prospective students.*

Appendix 1: Advisory Committee Survey

Please be frank in answering this brief survey. Constructive is nice, but frank is essential. Only the combined results from all respondents will be reported.

1. All major stakeholders are represented on the Advisory Committee

Strongly Agree	0	0%
Agree	6	100%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%
Total	**6**	**100%**

2. The Advisory Committee's advice is incorporated in the annual work plan

Strongly Agree	5	83%
Agree	1	17%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%
Total	**6**	**100%**

3. The Advisory Committee is achieving its full potential

Strongly Agree	1	17%
Agree	4	67%
Neutral	1	17%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%
Total	**6**	**100%**

4. Comments about the Advisory Committee

4 Responses

1 Meetings are well planned and activities have been incorporated to ensure that our ideas are heard and noted for action planning.

2 -previously the focus was primarily on high school stakeholders, but now the needs/interests of post-secondary stakeholders are being considered

3 Should include a representative from Industry Training Authority

4 I think it's great that we get to provide input into the yearly workplan. It would be great to get follow up information on what suggestions will be incorporated into the workplan once the final decisions have been made (instead of just at the next meeting)

5. The Project Team demonstrates commitment to continuous quality improvement

Strongly Agree	6	100%
Agree	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%
Total	6	100%

6. The Project Team has an effective working relationship with the Advisory Committee.

Strongly Agree	3	50%
Agree	3	50%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%
Total	6	100%

7. The annual work plan is effectively monitored.

Strongly Agree	2	33%
Agree	4	67%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%
Total	6	100%

8. The annual work plan is effectively implemented.

Strongly Agree	2	33%
Agree	4	67%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%
Total	6	100%

9. Comments about the Project Team:

5 Responses

1 Great experience as well as innovative

2 Excellent skills and efficient use of them!

3 dedicated professionals well versed in software development, very familiar with the product, little time lost to a learning curve

4 George Tomas does an awesome job!

5 seem to work very hard on the project to make it successful.

10. How might the Advisory Team work more effectively with the Project Team?

6 Responses

1 More electronic updates between Advisory Meetings
2 More communication between meetings.
3 I feel they work very well together
4 no comment
5 Communicating by email, or special meetings if necessary.
6 Where the advisory team has voted for an item on the workplan that cannot be implemented (for whatever reason) - the project team could send out a follow up email to the advisory team

11. EducationPlanner's greatest strengths are:

6 Responses

1 Ease of use,   Career Planning section for students

2 Ease of use.

3 -information on all options in one spot (one stop shopping for students)   -interactive   -can be personalized, therefore, relevant for students at all stages

4 user friendly, very powerful source of information
5 Being open to new ideas, adding suggested changes, and having great technological support from Mike and George.
6 It seeks input from external stakeholders on a regular basis

12. The greatest challenges for EducationPlanner are:

6 Responses

1 Keeping up on program and admission requirement changes
2 Informing ALL students of it's existence and how it can help them.
3 -getting the word out to adult users (mature students, post-secondary, those in the work force, etc.) -updating and managing huge volume of data
4 to educate users so they are fully aware of the depth of information - perhaps video walk through of a demo search or two for new users
5 Keeping things updated, and adding more features to keep students actively engaged.
6 Awareness that the product exists

13. Secondary School Students

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
	5	1	0	0	0	0
	83%	17%	0%	0%	0%	0%

1 if they really knew how to use it
2 Great for students planning their education paths.

14. Counselors and teachers in secondary schools

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
	3	3	0	0	0	0
	50%	50%	0%	0%	0%	0%

15. Post-secondary students

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
	2	3	1	0	0	0
	33%	50%	17%	0%	0%	0%

16. Post-secondary counselors and advisors

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
	1	4	1	0	0	0
	17%	67%	17%	0%	0%	0%

But I'm not sure they use it too much

17. Parents

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
	3	2	1	0	0	0
	50%	33%	17%	0%	0%	0%

Again, not sure how many parents use the product/are aware that the product exists.

18. Adults contemplating entering or returning to post-secondary education

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
	1	4	1	0	0	0
	17%	67%	17%	0%	0%	0%

19. Comments about other audiences for EducationPlanner:

3 Responses

1 international students
2 Needs additional information for International students.
3 Target immigrants looking to move/work in Canada and upgrade their skills?

20. Overall comments about the effectiveness of EducationPlanner in serving a variety of audiences:

5 Responses

1 Quite effective, but needs more marketing to existing post-secondary students
2 Effective in serving their needs for those who know about the resource
3 good product
4 Overall effectiveness is excellent.
5 I think it's a great tool - sometimes it's a little content heavy but overall very useful.

Appendix 2: Education Planner Institutional Contact Persons Workshop Meeting Summary, May 23, 2008

Welcome and Objectives

Devron Gaber gave the welcome and introduced the objectives of the workshop. The objectives of the day were to: provide a forum for networking among people associated with EP and for building a sense of common purpose; inform about BCCAT's mandate and about the relationship between Education Planner and the BC Transfer Guide; demonstrate key features of the site and how they can be used; and provide an opportunity to provide feedback on the existing process of updating institutional information and explore ways in which BCCAT can provide additional services to post-secondary institutions.

Demonstration

Mike Winsemann gave a brief presentation on the history of Education Planner and then gave a demonstration of the Education Planner website and its various features.

Education Planner Content Management – The Current Process

Linda Pardy gave an overview of the current process for content management of Education Planner. George Tomes and Linda Pardy went on to demonstrate some potential changes to the content management process that could make the content management process smoother for both institutions and BCCAT. The two options presented were an enhanced Word document that could be used with Track Changes to highlight updates, and an online content management system that would allow users to login to the website and submit updates online.

Question 1: Considering the content management options presented, which options will work best for your institution? Why?

Summary of Responses:

- Linda still needs to play a role in "kicking off" the annual update cycle
- Would prefer to use a content management system vs track changes.
- Updating admission requirements, application deadlines not a problem. Open to more areas for updating.
- Need to have defined user access to update information throughout the year.
- Direct entry (updates) is the best choice as it eliminates lengthy emails to change simple items.
- Allows for more timely update as curricula change and easier to distribute workload.
- Content management system allows EP to be responsive to new programs notifications.
- Need a standard calendar conversion date if possible.
- Content management system preferred route. Content could be updated by both the EP contact and possibly a calendar person.
- An automated reminder option would be ideal.
- Early summer is the best time for updates and could submit semi-annually.
- No to expansion of Word document use.
- For smaller institutions, Word document may be appropriate.
- Prefer the option of being able to update the website directly. More expedient, easy to see changes, less chance for errors.
- Nice to see the context of the changes. Uploads/downloads have room for tech glitches.
- Tracking changes in Word can become confusing with various drafts, colours, edits.
- How many users might/would have access to making online submissions?
- Preference for content management system. Can be part of regular process at institutions.
- Very important to have most current and correct information.
- Content management system could be a time saver and BCCAT is still the safety net.
- Could enable more prompt review of programs – every 1 or 2 years.

- How often would reminders be sent?
- Concern with depth of content housed on external sites.
- Volume of program changes makes it impossible to keep program level changes current.
- Institutional level changes possible.

Question 2: What other ideas do you have that will contribute to improving the content management and/or the liaison relationship between EP and your institution?
- Publications manager: including calendar, liaison to senate + Ed Planner.
- Need to go back to our institution to determine how processes are currently working. Do we need to distribute this work differently?
- Interface to our own content management systems (future wish list).
- Have/provide same functionality at the college level that BCCAT has (e.g. master editor-distribute the authority to edit to departments and have the "master editor" be able to review changes and give final approval before submitting to BCCAT).
- Automated reminder and confirmation system.
- On EP main page, have links to New programs AND discontinued programs.
- Would be helpful to know who owns this information at the various institutions, is it the Registrar? Advising? Senior Admin?
- The more appealing/efficient process might lead to greater number of revisions and demands on time for EP Staff.
- Information on new programs or program cancellations needs to be timely.
- Electronic transfer of info from institution to EP would be great if possible.

What Education Planner Can Provide for You

George Tomes, Mike Winsemann and Linda Pardy provided information on potential services EP could provide to institutions. These include access to the EP web service which allows institutions to offload third party information requests, greater customization of the EP institutional pages and search mechanisms, access to information regarding stats and program views, and the use of EP as a pre-screening tool for advisors and support staff.

   Will your institution use any of these services?

- Potential as a pre-screening tool with Kwantlen branding that lives on Kwantlen's advising website.
- Search tool/filtering capability is particularly helpful.
- Recruitment tool reporting on hits to our own programs would be used.
- Useful for high school visits.
- EP web analysis very useful as statistics are different from institutional website. Might be an opportunity to reach a larger audience to find out where students are coming from. This could allow for more targeted marketing.
- Info on how visitors find website would be useful.
- We would like to use all services available.
- Real time usage reports will be useful to determine the return on the time invested in this resource.

What other services could Education Planner provide?

- Possibility to collect basic prospect information to follow-up with additional program info and/or invitations to Kwantlen events (info sessions, advising appointments, etc...)
- Possible EP "lite" version or a bridging version for upgrading/mature students who are technologically challenged.
- Interested in having institutional RSS feed into EP.
- Would like to be able to search by occupation for appropriate programs.
- Prompt students when they save programs if they want to be contacted by someone at that institution. This info could then be provided to that institution.
- Live chat feature where students can ask questions and receive immediate response. Chats could be scheduled at different intervals i.e. once per week for a couple of hours etc.
- Translation service for parents
- Enhanced info for parents in general.
- Comparison shopping for budget between institutions (WOW budget grid).
- Institution transfer guide/program search on Institutional home page.
- Review other student opinions on programs.
- Compare program, admission and tuition information.
- More info on laddering.
- MyEP option for news feed – info on session announcements, publish news feeds.
- Collection of geographical info to better advise.

What can BCCAT do to help facilitate use by your institution?

- Need to be careful of firewall/spam solutions not processing emails from EP.
- Links to faculty blogs or profiles.
- RSS feeds a great idea.
- Having an institutional contact for students through EP – help as recruitment tool.
- Use EP as starting point before seeing an advisor.
- Imbed EP features in institutional website.
- Promote activities by institutions.
- User guide for BC Transfer Guide and EP for advisors.
- Data requests go to IR group – perhaps they should be contacted about EP web service.
- Multiple access for data management likely required.
- Interested in contacting students w/announcements.
- Institution page could contain info on upcoming school visits or links to school visit page.
- Demo to BCRA, faculty or come to recruiters retreat.
- Demo to advisors, recruiters, counsellors.
- Embed EP in pre-visit planning poster or develop customized poster.
- Give brochures to upgrading centers.

Marketing and Enhancements

Devron Gaber and Mike Winsemann gave a presentation on the current enhancement plans and marketing initiatives. The following enhancements are on proposed for the 2008-09 workplan: developing a graduate program subject classification system; developing a comparative grid on post-secondary institution policies on provincial exams; providing comparative information on English language proficiency testing; providing summaries of and links to various research on BC students (e.g. student mobility research). Budget has also been set aside for enhancements requested at the EPIC workshop. BCCAT's annual marketing plan includes: participation of various school and career fairs; presentations and workshops at numerous conferences and institutions; and production and distribution of brochures and promotional materials

What other options should BCCAT consider for marketing Education Planner?

- Workshop for PS institutions (head of recruitment/advising).
- Need data to support marketing outside of BC.
- Advertise on popular websites.
- Create a facebook page.
- Youtube, Bebo, Mobile marketing, Blog, Google Ad words, SEO, MSN, UTours.
- LCD screens are being installed in high schools – useful to promote EP.
- Use CEC to promote EP overseas.
- ABE conference.
- Cool swag, mints, highlighters etc.

How could we do a better job of marketing Education Planner within your institutions?

- International student recruitment should be a big part of EP marketing.
- Advertise to Home Schooling organization.
- How to use EP & BC Transfer Guide manuals.
- Instructional videos or video conferences, podcasts.
- Focus on Ed Advisors outside of BCCAT.
- Presentations to student services groups, immigrant services.
- Lunch and learn and transfer planning sessions.
- Travel to institutions for Pro D Day, work with high school districts for pro-d day sessions.

What other enhancements to Education Planner would you like to see?

- Explanation of BC Post-Sec System.
- Include post-baccalaureate programs.
- More info on International, exchange, field school and unique program offerings to show the diversity and breadth of programs available.
- Grid on provincial exams will become obsolete as soon as this year.
- ESL offerings of EP.
- EP podcast.

OVERALL EVALUATION FORM
How useful was Today's Workshop for you and your institution?
- Very useful, a great overview. Lots of info.
- Will talk to our student services group to setup info session/presentation.
- Great to share concerns and issues. EP is very responsive which has changed my perceptions.
- Am now aware of features in EP I wasn't aware of.
- Pleased that BCCAT is consulting widely on its future direction with EP.
- I wasn't aware of all the things EP could do. It will be essential in my role as an academic advisor.
- Great to meet other folks who work on EP. Interesting to see their responses to website.
- Loved it! Wonderful way to find out more about the depth and breadth of the project. A healthy balance between what we can do for you and what you can do for us.
- Learned a lot.
- Excellent communication of EP's purpose, achievements and goals.
- EP's interactive approach with institutions is laudable.
- Very useful to review EP features & upcoming changes. Networking w/other EP users and exchanging ideas was time well spent.
- Amount of info on services available was fabulous. Most of us at the table had no idea about the wealth of info & data available through EP.
- Well run day, organized, well presented.

- It was so good to be reminded of what EP can do and to see things I didn't know existed. The collective wisdom and perspective of so many schools was very valuable.
- Very useful in my role as manager of student services and registrar. Relevant, collaborative and an opportunity to share ideas on enhancements.
- Great to have you so open to our needs – thanks!

Would you recommend that the workshop be held again?

All evaluations forms said yes (15 received).

If so, how often?

- Depends on how much change happens. At least every 2 years.
- Annually (11)
- Semi-annually
- Twice a year or maybe even 3 times. Whenever there are changes/workplans or to act as an advisory group. (2)
- Perhaps every year while new options are being rolled out, otherwise maybe once every 2 years.
-
What Topics would you like to see included next time, if another such workshop is held?

- New and improved
- Reporting
- Institutional innovations and best practices re using EP.
- Versions for people who are technologically challenged
- Update on content management system option
- Recruitment and Marketing info
- Follow up on new tools, options
- International recruitment
- best practices in file evaluation
- More examples of how often institutions are using your services.

Any other comments or suggestions

- Thanks for the workshop! It was really informative and a great networking opportunity.
- Great lunch!
- Add RSS newsfeed to contact info session
- Perhaps some participation from high school counsellors or high school perspective
- BCCAT always provides well run workshops. I always learn a ton!
- Try to include advisors outside of BCADA.
- Great food! Great room!

Appendix 3: Education Planner User Group Survey

A. User Group Survey - Complete Survey Responses

1. I am:		
A secondary school student	76	64%
The parent of a secondary school student	4	3%
An adult prospective post-secondary student	17	14%
An international student or a prospective international student	4	3%
Other, please specify	17	14%
Total	118	100%

2. I am a new user:		
Yes	97	82%
No	21	18%
Total	118	100%

3. How did you first become aware of Education Planner?		
From another student	3	3%
From a Planning 10 Teacher	52	44%
From a counselor in my secondary school	11	9%
From a counselor or an academic advisor in post-secondary institution	3	3%
From a friend or acquaintance	4	3%
From an advertisement	12	10%
From my son or daughter	2	2%
Other, please specify	31	26%
Total	118	100%

Website Components The Educaton Planner website consists of the following components. Please indicate how familiar you are with each of them:		

4. Program Search		
Very Familiar	41	35%
Somewhat Familiar	48	41%
Not Familiar	29	25%
Total	118	100%

5. Institutional Info		
Very Familiar	24	20%
Somewhat Familiar	44	37%
Not Familiar	50	42%
Total	118	100%

6. Who Offers What (WOW grid)

Very Familiar	17	14%
Somewhat Familiar	35	30%
Not Familiar	66	56%
Total	**118**	**100%**

7. Career Developer

Very Familiar	22	19%
Somewhat Familiar	37	31%
Not Familiar	59	50%
Total	**118**	**100%**

8. International Students

Very Familiar	14	12%
Somewhat Familiar	26	22%
Not Familiar	78	66%
Total	**118**	**100%**

9. Money Matters

Very Familiar	23	19%
Somewhat Familiar	30	25%
Not Familiar	65	55%
Total	**118**	**100%**

10. Focus Now

Very Familiar	15	13%
Somewhat Familiar	30	25%
Not Familiar	73	62%
Total	**118**	**100%**

11. Hey You

Very Familiar	5	4%
Somewhat Familiar	28	24%
Not Familiar	85	72%
Total	**118**	**100%**

12. For Educators

Very Familiar	12	10%
Somewhat Familiar	30	25%
Not Familiar	76	64%
Total	**118**	**100%**

Usefulness The Education Planner website consists of the following components. Please rate how useful you found each component to be (or indicate if you haven't used that component).

13. Program Search

Very Useful	60	51%
Somewhat Useful	27	23%
Not Useful	4	3%
Haven't Used	27	23%
Total	118	100%

14. Institutional Info

Very Useful	45	38%
Somewhat Useful	32	27%
Not Useful	4	3%
Haven't Used	37	31%
Total	118	100%

15. Who Offers What (WOW Grid)

Very Useful	24	20%
Somewhat Useful	30	25%
Not Useful	7	6%
Haven't Used	57	48%
Total	118	100%

16. Career Developer

Very Useful	30	25%
Somewhat Useful	31	26%
Not Useful	4	3%
Haven't Used	53	45%
Total	118	100%

17. International Students

Very Useful	15	13%
Somewhat Useful	19	16%
Not Useful	7	6%
Haven't Used	77	65%
Total	118	100%

18. Money Matters

Very Useful	23	19%
Somewhat Useful	24	20%
Not Useful	5	4%

Haven't Used	66	56%
Total	118	100%

19. Focus Now

Very Useful	21	18%
Somewhat Useful	21	18%
Not Useful	4	3%
Haven't Used	72	61%
Total	118	100%

20. Hey You

Very Useful	17	14%
Somewhat Useful	23	19%
Not Useful	5	4%
Haven't Used	73	62%
Total	118	100%

21. For Educators

Very Useful	17	14%
Somewhat Useful	25	21%
Not Useful	4	3%
Haven't Used	72	61%
Total	118	100%

In my opinion, Education Planner is a useful resource and planning tool for:

22. Secondary School Students

Strongly Agree	48	41%
Agree	47	40%
Neutral	7	6%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	5	4%
No Opinion	11	9%
Total	118	100%

23. Planning 10 Teachers

Strongly Agree	33	28%
Agree	34	29%
Neutral	15	13%
Disagree	1	1%
Strongly Disagree	7	6%
No Opinion	28	24%
Total	118	100%

24. Secondary School Counselors

Strongly Agree	36	31%
Agree	34	29%
Neutral	13	11%
Disagree	1	1%
Strongly Disagree	7	6%
No Opinion	27	23%
Total	**118**	**100%**

25. Parents of Secondary School Students

Strongly Agree	37	31%
Agree	34	29%
Neutral	14	12%
Disagree	5	4%
Strongly Disagree	7	6%
No Opinion	21	18%
Total	**118**	**100%**

26. Post-secondary students

Strongly Agree	42	36%
Agree	40	34%
Neutral	16	14%
Disagree	2	2%
Strongly Disagree	4	3%
No Opinion	14	12%
Total	**118**	**100%**

27. Adults contemplating entering or returning to post-secondary education

Strongly Agree	36	31%
Agree	44	37%
Neutral	13	11%
Disagree	3	3%
Strongly Disagree	6	5%
No Opinion	16	14%
Total	**118**	**100%**

28. Counsellors and academic advisors in post-secondary institutions

Strongly Agree	34	29%
Agree	34	29%
Neutral	16	14%
Disagree	1	1%
Strongly Disagree	7	6%
No Opinion	26	22%
Total	**118**	**100%**

Navigation I find the Education Planner site to be:

29. User friendly

Strongly Agree	27	23%
Agree	57	48%
Neutral	24	20%
Disagree	4	3%
Strongly Disagree	6	5%
Total	118	100%

30. Easy to navigate

Strongly Agree	24	20%
Agree	51	43%
Neutral	30	25%
Disagree	4	3%
Strongly Disagree	9	8%
Total	118	100%

31. Please describe your navigation experiences (e.g. ease of use or speed)

57 Responses

32. Suggestions, if any, for improvements to Education Planner:

41 Responses

Individual responses

Question 1
1 school administrator
2 COUNSELLOR
3 Secondary School Counsellor
4 Career Advisor
5 Web assistant
6 a high school student
7 High School and University Advisor
8 a university student
9 spouse of adult prospective post-secondary student
10 both parent of secondary student & adult student
11 Teacher
12 a post secondary student looking to upgrade
13 post-secondary graduate
14 bachelor degree in economic science from another c
15 an bookkeeper
16 faculty
17 psychologist specializing in vocational rehab

Question 3

1 from CES
2 from bcworkfutures
3 From the Counsellor's LSTSRV
4 because of fucking Mrs. Lyon
5 other website
6 from my career resouce teacher at my highschool
7 Searching for websites with our institutions infor
8 Google search
9 Google
10 http://www.workfutures.bc.ca
11 visit from someone at Education Planner to the sch
12 an add in the bus
13 online search
14 google.ca
15 bus ads
16 jobfutures web site
17 agenda
18 the internet
19 Planning 12
20 web search
21 Career Education Conference may years ago
22 on a university website
23 aware of it through work (academic librarian)
24 google
25 employment counselor
26 CES conference
27 internet
28 Planning 10 Module 1
29 from website
30 web search / link
31 from the Work Futures website

Question 31

1 good
2 its fairly easy to use, narrowing your search for programs could be simplified a bit.
3 very slow, and often frustrating. Not very easy to use.
4 i was very happy with the speed and how easy it was to use
5 i was very easy to find the programs i was looking for because of the way it is organized
6 I've only used it twice so far and it doesn't take time to learn at all!
7 slow and confusing
8 you guys suck
9 I thing this ia a great site and I show it to every student I work with,
10 very quick navigation
11 No real problems with speed.
12 This website is very quick and easy to use, and holds a good amount of information that could be useful.
13 difficult to begin with.........till I understood it better....especially the "apply selections"
14 well i guess they gave me the information i needed and i found out which are the colleges or university's that have that program
15 Good experience
16 Excellent

17 Easy to understand
18 good when your system is fast - slow in the school
19 easy
20 good speed but don't like the layout
21 i havent really navigated anything yet
22 i have only used this program once, but that one time was alright.
23 painful
24 the speed is slow and its too hard
25 very slow
26 I don't really know what to do sometimes.
27 I like it how everything is layout very organizly.
28 good
29 good
30 Good speed
31 havent used yet
32 The pages load quite quickly and over all, the website was easy to use
33 easy to use and can quickly find what you need
34 fun!!!!!!!!
35 well... i don't have special experience ... but it's useful
36 balls
37 some times gets hung up
38 I have been using the Education Planner for post secondary searching for a number of years and have taught many students to use and the program is very easy to navigate
39 came into educating planner not knowing what it was about and found it somewhat useful
40 not sure
41 c
42 speed
43 ksdfj;aslkdfjl;asdkjfasdfjkla;sf
44 my experience has been positive, i havent used this site too much, but so far so good
45 never use it
46 easy to use.
47 It has been fairly easy to use this and helpful.
48 really helps
49 easy to use
50 im finding it hard to find exactly what i have to do to obtain prerequisites for a program i want to enter
51 Speed
52 really nicely layed out
53 confusing interface, offers ideas, but no real information on obtaining training in such fields...too vague on program lengths and costs.
54 fast and easy
55 intermediate
56 can be a bit cumbersome or awkward.
57 not always clear what they were referring to - a lot of trial and error

Question 32

1 nothing
2 somehow combine the field of study and subject area.
3 i have no suggestions, because i find the site very satisfactory.
4 i think that smaller programs such as the science one and coordinated science programs at ubc should be included
5 This site is a great tool. I am still a new user and wish to explore it mor to discover how it can help me

decide what I would like to invest my future it. I do beleive to, living on the west coast, choosing my career will be affected by the income amount typicaly earned by certain careers. I hvane not come across any such detail which would give a guestimate of the salary / hourly rate paid on average.

6 Not at the moment.

7 be less confusing and actually work properly plz

8 Close this damn website

9 More promotional materials to get the word out to the students

10 make it more appealing for youth (like att a bit more color and make it less dull !!!)

11 OMG. In certain areas, there is so much missing information, incorrect information and this does not serve the institutions that are not properly presented. A check with each institution to see if their programs, courses, costs, locations, registration fees, pre-reqs are up-to-date and accurate.

12 Suggestions for who to contact regarding programs.
Hey You, Money Matters, etc featured more prominently.

13 i think what you guys are doing is great .. because it helps people who want to continue on with eduction

14 Not up to date...some programs are missing even though I know they exist...for example, Respiratory Therapy at TRU did not show up

15 not sure what you mean by the Hey You section in this survey

16 nothing

17 easier layout

18 i dont have any suggestions yet cause i havent checked out the web site yet

19 improve

20 better lay out and more info on all jobs

21 make it faster

22 More obvious buttons/clicks for important topics

23 example careers

24 haven't used yet

25 NONE

B. User Group Survey - Partial Survey Responses

1. I am:		
A secondary school student	131	72%
The parent of a secondary school student	3	2%
An adult prospective post-secondary student	26	14%
An international student or a prospective international student	7	4%
Other, please specify	15	8%
Total	182	100%

2. I am a new user:		
Yes	158	87%
No	24	13%
Total	182	100%

3. How did you first become aware of Education Planner?		
From another student	7	4%
From a Planning 10 Teacher	99	54%
From a counselor in my secondary school	18	10%
From a counselor or an academic advisor in post-secondary institution	5	3%
From a friend or acquaintance	4	2%
From an advertisement	16	9%
From my son or daughter	0	0%
Other, please specify	33	18%
Total	182	100%

Website Components The Educaton Planner website consists of the following components. Please indicate how familiar you are with each of them:		

4. Program Search		
Very Familiar	9	20%
Somewhat Familiar	14	32%
Not Familiar	21	48%
Total	44	100%

5. Institutional Info		
Very Familiar	5	11%
Somewhat Familiar	16	36%
Not Familiar	23	52%
Total	44	100%

6. Who Offers What (WOW grid)

Very Familiar	8	18%
Somewhat Familiar	8	18%
Not Familiar	28	64%
Total	44	100%

7. Career Developer

Very Familiar	6	14%
Somewhat Familiar	19	43%
Not Familiar	19	43%
Total	44	100%

8. International Students

Very Familiar	9	20%
Somewhat Familiar	13	30%
Not Familiar	22	50%
Total	44	100%

9. Money Matters

Very Familiar	11	25%
Somewhat Familiar	12	27%
Not Familiar	21	48%
Total	44	100%

10. Focus Now

Very Familiar	8	18%
Somewhat Familiar	14	32%
Not Familiar	22	50%
Total	44	100%

11. Hey You

Very Familiar	8	18%
Somewhat Familiar	11	25%
Not Familiar	25	57%
Total	44	100%

12. For Educators

Very Familiar	8	18%
Somewhat Familiar	13	30%
Not Familiar	23	52%
Total	44	100%

Usefulness The Education Planner website consists of the following components. Please rate how useful you found each component to be (or indicate if you haven't used that component).

13. Program Search

Very Useful	17	39%
Somewhat Useful	11	25%
Not Useful	1	2%
Haven't Used	15	34%
Total	**44**	**100%**

14. Institutional Info

Very Useful	9	20%
Somewhat Useful	16	36%
Not Useful	2	5%
Haven't Used	17	39%
Total	**44**	**100%**

15. Who Offers What (WOW Grid)

Very Useful	11	25%
Somewhat Useful	11	25%
Not Useful	1	2%
Haven't Used	21	48%
Total	**44**	**100%**

16. Career Developer

Very Useful	14	32%
Somewhat Useful	10	23%
Not Useful	1	2%
Haven't Used	19	43%
Total	**44**	**100%**

17. International Students

Very Useful	6	14%
Somewhat Useful	17	39%
Not Useful	2	5%
Haven't Used	19	43%
Total	**44**	**100%**

18. Money Matters		
Very Useful	11	25%
Somewhat Useful	13	30%
Not Useful	1	2%
Haven't Used	19	43%
Total	44	100%

19. Focus Now		
Very Useful	9	20%
Somewhat Useful	10	23%
Not Useful	3	7%
Haven't Used	22	50%
Total	44	100%

20. Hey You		
Very Useful	6	14%
Somewhat Useful	10	23%
Not Useful	5	11%
Haven't Used	23	52%
Total	44	100%

21. For Educators		
Very Useful	8	18%
Somewhat Useful	11	25%
Not Useful	3	7%
Haven't Used	22	50%
Total	44	100%

In my opinion, Education Planner is a useful resource and planning tool for:

22. Secondary School Students		
Strongly Agree	0	0%
Agree	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
No Opinion	0	0%
Total	0	0%

23. Planning 10 Teachers

Strongly Agree	0	0%
Agree	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
No Opinion	0	0%
Total	0	0%

24. Secondary School Counselors

Strongly Agree	0	0%
Agree	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
No Opinion	0	0%
Total	0	0%

25. Parents of Secondary School Students

Strongly Agree	0	0%
Agree	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
No Opinion	0	0%
Total	0	0%

26. Post-secondary students

Strongly Agree	0	0%
Agree	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
No Opinion	0	0%
Total	0	0%

27. Adults contemplating entering or returning to post-secondary education

Strongly Agree	0	0%
Agree	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
No Opinion	0	0%
Total	0	0%

28. Counsellors and academic advisors in post-secondary institutions

Strongly Agree	0	0%
Agree	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
No Opinion	0	0%
Total	0	0%

Navigation I find the Education Planner site to be:

29. User friendly

Strongly Agree	0	0%
Agree	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Total	0	0%

30. Easy to navigate

Strongly Agree	0	0%
Agree	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Total	0	0%

31. Please describe your navigation experiences (e.g. ease of use or speed)

0 Responses

32. Suggestions, if any, for improvements to Education Planner:

0 Responses

Individual Responses

Question 1

1 college instructor
2 parent

3 teacher
4 high school counsellor
5 school counsellor
6 an Enrolment Services employee
7 high school student
8 out of province graduate student
9 your mom
10 noodles
11 Secondary School Teacher
12 career education teacher
13 wanting to take post secondary
14 High School Student
15 laid off logger

Question 3
1 in association with my employment
2 From a Planning 10 Online class
3 school assignment
4 colleague
5 University website link
6 Surfing the net
7 personal research
8 From a link on Planning 10
9 Saw it on the BCCAT website and clicked on it.
10 website
11 website
12 internet search
13 cicic
14 Internet/Google
15 from student Aid BC website
16 assinment
17 I just found it
18 bctransferguide.ca
19 UniVic counselor Website
20 assignment
21 your mom told me while i was having sex with
her
22 internet
23 china town
24 on my own, browsing the internet
25 BC PNP
26 BC Work Futures
27 myself
28 from the website
29 Career's class teacher
30 teacher
31 from my career planning course
32 workfutures.ca
33 google

Appendix 4:

A. Professional Groups Survey - Complete Survey Responses

1. I am:		
a counselor in a secondary school	15	54%
a counselor in a post-secondary institution	0	0%
a teacher in a secondary school responsible for Planning 10	3	11%
an a academic advisor in a post-secondary institution	1	4%
Other, please specify	9	32%
Total	28	100%

2. Are you aware of Education Planner?		
Yes	24	86%
No	4	14%
Total	28	100%

To type in your initial question, click Edit. Insert adds a new question either above or below this one.

3. How did you become aware of Education Planner?		
Through my professional association or organization	4	17%
From a colleague	9	38%
From a student	0	0%
Through a workshop or presentation on EducationPlanner	6	25%
Through an advertisement	3	12%
By browsing on the web	3	12%
Other, please specify	1	4%

4. How often do you use Education Planner in your work?		
Often	15	62%
Occasionally	8	33%
Rarely	1	4%
Never	0	0%
Total	24	100%

5. Please describe your use of EducationPlanner (or why you don't use it):

24 Responses

Website Functions and Composition The EducatonPlanner website contains the following components. Please indicate how often you refer to them or use them in your work with students and prospective students. If you are not familiar with any component please, indicate "Not Aware".

6. Program Search		
Often	20	83%
Occasionally	2	8%
Rarely	2	8%
Never	0	0%
Not Aware	0	0%
Total	**24**	**100%**

7. Institutional Info		
Often	10	42%
Occasionally	6	25%
Rarely	6	25%
Never	2	8%
Not Aware	0	0%
Total	**24**	**100%**

8. Who Offers What (WOW grid)		
Often	6	25%
Occasionally	5	21%
Rarely	3	12%
Never	3	12%
Not Aware	7	29%
Total	**24**	**100%**

9. Career Developer		
Often	4	17%
Occasionally	6	25%
Rarely	4	17%
Never	5	21%
Not Aware	5	21%
Total	**24**	**100%**

10. International Students		
Often	0	0%
Occasionally	2	8%
Rarely	7	29%
Never	5	21%
Not Aware	10	42%
Total	24	100%

11. Money Matters		
Often	1	4%
Occasionally	3	12%
Rarely	8	33%
Never	7	29%
Not Aware	5	21%
Total	24	100%

12. Focus Now		
Often	0	0%
Occasionally	3	12%
Rarely	2	8%
Never	4	17%
Not Aware	15	62%
Total	24	100%

13. Hey You		
Often	0	0%
Occasionally	1	4%
Rarely	3	12%
Never	5	21%
Not Aware	15	62%
Total	24	100%

14. For Educators		
Often	3	12%
Occasionally	6	25%
Rarely	6	25%
Never	4	17%
Not Aware	5	21%
Total	24	100%

Please rate each of the same components in terms of their perceived effectiveness. If you are unsure, please indicate "Don't Know"

15. Program Search

Very Good	13	54%
Good	10	42%
Average	0	0%
Poor	1	4%
Don't Know	0	0%
Total	**24**	**100%**

16. Institutional Info

Very Good	10	42%
Good	8	33%
Average	1	4%
Poor	1	4%
Don't Know	4	17%
Total	**24**	**100%**

17. Who Offers What (WOW Grid)

Very Good	4	17%
Good	8	33%
Average	0	0%
Poor	1	4%
Don't Know	11	46%
Total	**24**	**100%**

18. Career Developer

Very Good	3	12%
Good	3	12%
Average	1	4%
Poor	1	4%
Don't Know	16	67%
Total	**24**	**100%**

19. International Students

Very Good	0	0%
Good	1	4%
Average	1	4%
Poor	0	0%
Don't Know	22	92%
Total	**24**	**100%**

20. Money Matters

Very Good	0	0%
Good	8	33%
Average	1	4%
Poor	0	0%
Don't Know	15	62%
Total	**24**	**100%**

21. Focus Now

Very Good	0	0%
Good	1	4%
Average	1	4%
Poor	0	0%
Don't Know	22	92%
Total	**24**	**100%**

22. Hey You

Very Good	0	0%
Good	0	0%
Average	1	4%
Poor	0	0%
Don't Know	23	96%
Total	**24**	**100%**

23. For Educators

Very Good	1	4%
Good	10	42%
Average	1	4%
Poor	0	0%
Don't Know	12	50%
Total	**24**	**100%**

Utility EducationPlanner is a useful resource or planning tool for: (please answer "Don't Know" for any item which you have no opinion)

24. Secondary School Counselors

Strongly Agree	16	67%
Agree	5	21%
Neutral	2	8%

Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	1	4%
Total	24	100%

25. Planning 10 Teachers		
Strongly Agree	9	38%
Agree	8	33%
Neutral	3	12%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	4	17%
Total	24	100%

26. Post secondary counselors and academic advisors		
Strongly Agree	6	25%
Agree	4	17%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	1	4%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	13	54%
Total	24	100%

27. Parents		
Strongly Agree	9	38%
Agree	11	46%
Neutral	2	8%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	2	8%
Total	24	100%

28. Post-secondary students		
Strongly Agree	8	33%
Agree	5	21%
Neutral	3	12%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	8	33%
Total	24	100%

29. adults contemplating returning to postsecondary education

Strongly Agree	10	42%
Agree	5	21%
Neutral	2	8%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	7	29%
Total	24	100%

Navigation I find the Education Planner site to be:

30. User friendly

Strongly Agree	12	50%
Agree	8	33%
Neutral	2	8%
Disagree	2	8%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%
Total	24	100%

31. Easy to navigate

Strongly Agree	10	42%
Agree	11	46%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	3	12%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%
Total	24	100%

32. Please describe your navigation experiences (e.g. ease of use or speed)

17 Responses

33. Overall comments about the usefulness of Education Planner:

17 Responses

34. Suggestions, if any, for improving EducationPlanner:

14 Responses

35. What, if any, other websites do you use for helping students plan their postsecondary education? What do you like about them?

28 Responses

Individual responses

Question 1

1 career counselor
2 career development facilitator
3 Career Info Advisor in a high school
4 Academic advisor in secondary school
5 Career Centre Assistant
6 Career Resource Facilitator in a secondary school
7 Advisor / Counsellor in Adult Continuing Ed
8 Career Advisor in a secondary school
9 Career Programs Assistant

Question 3

1 Started using the old website years ago

Question 32

1 Website developer seem to believe that the average classroom teacher and counsellor has time to search and play with unfamiliar websites. If I took the time to search all wesites that pertain to my job I would be divorced.
2 Too many options; a simple search produces too many results and it is difficult for the students to sort through. I would like to see fewer options.
3 the set up seems easy to follow, easy to read, very user friendly,
4 mostly positive sometimes difficult to decide under what area the course may be grouped
5 use education planner one or two times per day
6 nothing really jumps out at you when you view the site. you have to already know where to find what you want.
7 the speed is very slow, at least at
my school
8 Somewhat limited by trying to match terminology. If I am using a term that isn't in the system it doesn't have a synonym matching aspect.
9 I'm planning on using EP more often this year for students who are looking for a specific program and the PSI's which offer it. The one time I used the link it was helpful. When I navigated around the entire site, however, I found it unwieldy and not user friendly.
10 Subject area search is what i use most often, then filter by lower mainland. Fast and easy to navigate/explain to others.
11 Could be faster, but I don't know if that is the site itself or our server
12 it's been good!
13 The search function is a bit slow.
14 No problems. I suggest to students to go to the site map and work from there.
15 Not always up to date. Quiter user friendly
16 I find it works well for me. I often have students come in to ask how to start after I've done a demo it though because they can't figure out how to get started
17 Good.

Question 33

1 Awkward
2 A very good start in this important field

3 I wish it did all post secondary across the country as it is very good

4 I use it constantly and I love it

5 wonderful

6 I think it is extremely useful. I realize there are some sections I am not using (after doing this survey I realize I am only using some areas) I will have to go back and explore some of them.

7 it is informative, it provides alternative

choices to students and, it is reliable.

8 I like it, the students like it and I will continue to use it.

9 I think it has the potential to be a first visit site, as opposed to a second or third visit which it currently is for me. I really like the comparisons of programs at the PSI's and plan to make a lot more use of it.

10 It is a great site

11 Very useful! Not sure what I'd do without it.

12 I bring up Education Planner at least once/day and EVERYONE that I show it to comments on how useful it is. It makes my job super easy and I don't really know how I would function without it. I hope this survey is about improving it and not the possibility of nixing it!

13 Career Cruising for Grades 8 & 9. Education Planner for grades 10-12.

14 the best (my favorite tool)

15 Love it.

16 I would miss it if it disappeared. Great resource.

We made use of glossary of terms for the first time -posted it on BB - great.

Question 34

1 That would be your job. An index that worked like an index in a book or calendar would be the best idea. Not a hunt and peck search that works through by guess and by golly.

2 I found the predecessor to Education Planning (the name of which I forget) easier to use.

3 see above

4 would really like a connection to other Canadain Universities outside of B.C.

5 make more visually appealing

6 I will leave it to the esperts to decide,

but the speed is really a problem, it is

frustating at time.

7 Widen the range of descriptors to include some synonyms for those of us who may not be thinking of the proper words.

8 I was fortunate to find out about it. A colleague told me in passing. I would work on upgrading the user-friendliness aspect - make it easier to navigate (less info per page and more headings with links).

9 When I click on Accounting, not ALL programs come up. Not sure why. I sometimes find this with other subject areas. Maybe updating is in progress? Generally I use this program to get a gist of what's out there, but then refer to the college websites to see all possibilities. Also, how often is EP updated? Nonetheless the service is a huge help. Thanks

10 I know that I've seen, for example, the personality profile inventories that are offered, but I can never seem to find them. I think the titles on the drop down lists may not be a clear enough indication of what lies behind them.

11 Timely updates of institutional faculty admission requirements are necessary. Hiring retired or experienced high school advisors/counsellors for verbal consultations with families (for a fee) would be a good idea. Add that option to your service- hire me!

12 I would like to be able to search by keyword better (does not always work well)

13 Adding a general timeline (Calendar of deadlines) - we can add to it and post it on our Post-Secondary bulletin board

14 Make sure it is up to date and is all-inclusive of career area related programmes.

Question 35

1 www.jobfutures.ca
www.itabc.ca
www.northernopportunities.bc.ca
2 www.bridges.com,www.careercruising.com I like these because they allow students to review the different occupations available in relation to their interests.
3 University/college websites. Ministry of Ed. Bridges.ca. Professional Association Websites. Truthfully I do not "like" any of them they are simply tools that I "use" I prefer books and calendars because I find the information is to find and they use familiar terms.
4 Student Counsellor.com - just starting to use it
Career Cruising - quite good for grade 1os
Institution websites - good but sometimes confusing
Usually the best thing is to have students check print and websites and make an appointment with post-secondary advisors as they know the most and are the most current.
5 career cruising, scholarshipscanada.com, pasbc,globecampus.ca, learnnowbc.
6 I don't use others unless my students want to search outside of BC
7 career cruising, edinfo (ont.), college board

ability to compare institutions via a grid
8 access bridges
Schools in Canada
9 none
10 many of them, it depends which info the
student is looking for, but it works.!!

11 I google occupational names with students so there is a wide range of websites.
12 the PSI specific websites. Many students have already narrowed their PSI choices and programs, so we go directly to the specific PSI sites.
13 Careercruising.com, canlearn.ca, aucc.ca, pas.bc.ca,
14 Career Cruising - all relevant info pertaining to a career needed by students such as pay, description, etc. Seeing what they list in their Education section allows to toggle b/t EP and Career Cruising.
15 TypeFocus - I love that it starts with a Myers-Briggs type personality indicator and that it has a step by step process to get to career exploration. Great program.
16 www.careercruising.com -- job descriptions, pros/cons
www.workfutures.ca -- as above but more difficult to navigate (for students)
17 Career Cruising- video and sound clips are appealing to younger students.
18 choices
bridges
19 it's my only one for planning
20 I use bcawardsonline and other sites for scholarship info. The search functions are the most important part.
21 pportal.bccampus.ca; scholarshipcanada.co; scholarhips.ca; canlearn.ca; cellegeboard.org; myschool101.com;schoolfinder.com; places4students; edgeip.com; aucc.ca
All recommended to students. would have to survey them to see which are most used and why.
22 govt websites, university websites, personality sites ie. Myers Briggs, Choices etc.
23 This is the main one I use. Other than Education planner, I have the individual calendars also linked off our school web site
24 Career Cruising - relates education to career
25 None.

B. Professional Groups Survey - Partial Survey Responses

1. I am:		
a counselor in a secondary school	4	36%
a counselor in a post-secondary institution	0	0%
a teacher in a secondary school responsible for Planning 10	2	18%
an a academic advisor in a post-secondary institution	0	0%
Other, please specify	5	45%
Total	**11**	**100%**

2. Are you aware of Education Planner?		
Yes	9	82%
No	2	18%
Total	**11**	**100%**

To type in your initial question, click Edit. Insert adds a new question either above or below this one.

3. How did you become aware of Education Planner?		
Through my professional association or organization	2	29%
From a colleague	3	43%
From a student	0	0%
Through a workshop or presentation on EducationPlanner	1	14%
Through an advertisement	1	14%
By browsing on the web	1	14%
Other, please specify	0	0%

4. How often do you use Education Planner in your work?		
Often	2	29%
Occasionally	2	29%
Rarely	2	29%
Never	1	14%
Total	**7**	**100%**

5. Please describe your use of EducationPlanner (or why you don't use it):
7 Responses

Website Functions and Composition The EducatonPlanner website contains the following components. Please indicate how often you refer to them or use them in your work with students and prospective students. If you are not familiar with any component please, indicate "Not Aware".

6. Program Search

Often	1	50%
Occasionally	0	0%
Rarely	1	50%
Never	0	0%
Not Aware	0	0%
Total	2	100%

7. Institutional Info

Often	0	0%
Occasionally	1	50%
Rarely	1	50%
Never	0	0%
Not Aware	0	0%
Total	2	100%

8. Who Offers What (WOW grid)

Often	0	0%
Occasionally	1	50%
Rarely	0	0%
Never	0	0%
Not Aware	1	50%
Total	2	100%

9. Career Developer

Often	0	0%
Occasionally	2	100%
Rarely	0	0%
Never	0	0%
Not Aware	0	0%
Total	2	100%

10. International Students

Often	0	0%
Occasionally	0	0%
Rarely	0	0%
Never	1	50%
Not Aware	1	50%
Total	2	100%

11. Money Matters

Often	0	0%
Occasionally	0	0%
Rarely	0	0%
Never	1	50%
Not Aware	1	50%
Total	2	100%

12. Focus Now

Often	0	0%
Occasionally	1	50%
Rarely	0	0%
Never	0	0%
Not Aware	1	50%
Total	2	100%

13. Hey You

Often	0	0%
Occasionally	0	0%
Rarely	0	0%
Never	0	0%
Not Aware	2	100%
Total	2	100%

14. For Educators

Often	0	0%
Occasionally	1	50%
Rarely	0	0%
Never	0	0%
Not Aware	1	50%
Total	2	100%

Please rate each of the same components in terms of their perceived effectiveness. If you are unsure, please indicate "Don't Know"

15. Program Search

Very Good	0	0%
Good	1	50%
Average	0	0%
Poor	0	0%
Don't Know	1	50%
Total	2	100%

16. Institutional Info

Very Good	0	0%
Good	2	100%
Average	0	0%
Poor	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%
Total	2	100%

17. Who Offers What (WOW Grid)

Very Good	0	0%
Good	0	0%
Average	0	0%
Poor	0	0%
Don't Know	2	100%
Total	2	100%

18. Career Developer

Very Good	0	0%
Good	0	0%
Average	1	50%
Poor	0	0%
Don't Know	1	50%
Total	2	100%

19. International Students

Very Good	0	0%
Good	0	0%
Average	0	0%
Poor	0	0%
Don't Know	2	100%
Total	2	100%

20. Money Matters

Very Good	0	0%
Good	0	0%
Average	0	0%
Poor	0	0%
Don't Know	2	100%
Total	2	100%

21. Focus Now

Very Good	0	0%
Good	0	0%

Average	0	0%
Poor	0	0%
Don't Know	2	100%
Total	2	100%

22. Hey You		
Very Good	0	0%
Good	0	0%
Average	0	0%
Poor	0	0%
Don't Know	2	100%
Total	2	100%

23. For Educators		
Very Good	0	0%
Good	0	0%
Average	1	50%
Poor	0	0%
Don't Know	1	50%
Total	2	100%

Utility EducationPlanner is a useful resource or planning tool for: (please answer "Don't Know" for any item which you have no opinion)

24. Secondary School Counselors		
Strongly Agree	0	0%
Agree	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%
Total	0	0%

25. Planning 10 Teachers		
Strongly Agree	0	0%
Agree	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%
Total	0	0%

26. Post secondary counselors and academic advisors

Strongly Agree	0	0%
Agree	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%
Total	0	0%

27. Parents

Strongly Agree	0	0%
Agree	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%
Total	0	0%

28. Post-secondary students

Strongly Agree	0	0%
Agree	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%
Total	0	0%

29. adults contemplating returning to postsecondary education

Strongly Agree	0	0%
Agree	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%
Total	0	0%

Navigation I find the Education Planner site to be:

30. User friendly

Strongly Agree	0	0%
Agree	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%

Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%
Total	0	0%

31. Easy to navigate		
Strongly Agree	0	0%
Agree	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	0	0%
Total	0	0%

32. Please describe your navigation experiences (e.g. ease of use or speed)

0 Responses

33. Overall comments about the usefulness of Education Planner:

0 Responses

34. Suggestions, if any, for improving EducationPlanner:

0 Responses

35. What, if any, other websites do you use for helping students plan their postsecondary education? What do you like about them?

0 Responses

Individual Responses

Question 1
1 Special Needs Teacher - Vocational Focus
2 Principal of Trades
3 Para educator
4 teacher in a secondary school...Careers
Coodinator
5 District Career Education Coordinator

Appendix 5: Education Planner Institutional Contacts Survey

> **Please be frank in answering this brief survey. Constructive is nice, but frank is essential. Only the combined results from all respondents will be reported.**

EducationPlanner is an effective planning resource for:

1. Secondary School Students

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
	6	10	2	2	0	2
	27%	45%	9%	9%	0%	9%

1 Since our institution has virtually no access to the public school system, we can't determine the usefulness of EP in assisting typical BC secondary students plan their post-secondary programs. Our own secondary students are usually only exposed to EP if they take Planning 10, but even then their pathway to university has been largely predetermined: they proceed through our UT program and transfer to university at the appropriate time. Most of our students, both secondary and post-secondary rely primarily on their support groups (peers, family) for planning their educational goals. When internet sources are consulted, students tend to general searches or university-specific searches. Our in-person counselling services are also highly utilized. EP is not an effective planning resource for our students.

2 I have heard the site is well used by secondary schools to complete Planning 10 assignments. I don't know if students use the site on their own.

3 prior to our meeting I was not aware of the tool or how it was used in the classroom

4 Based on the contact that we have with HS students, we are not aware that this is a major source of info for them. They search our sites more than a central source.

5 Not all information is current so I can't say that I strongly agree.
6 Needs to have the buy-in from the majority of schools that students are looking at.

2. Counselors and teachers in secondary schools

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
	6	10	2	2	0	2
	27%	45%	9%	9%	0%	9%

1 See answer to #1 with reference to public system. Teachers (other than Planning 10)within our institution do not access EP, and our counselors are familiar with EP but rarely find it useful for advising students. Our hope is that counselors and teachers in public secondary schools find EP useful and encourage their students, especially their international students, to explore Columbia College as a possible option for UT studies.
2 I have heard that councellors and teachers use the site significantly, particularly for career planning assignments.
3 Our contact with counsellors does not give us any sense that they use this; I cannot speak for Planning 10 teachers, who may well use it as a curriculum resource.
4 Not all information is current so I can't say that I strongly agree.

3. Post-secondary students

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
	3	9	5	2	2	1
	14%	41%	23%	9%	9%	5%

1 EP is not a popular or particularly useful resource for our students, as their goals are already fairly clearly defined, and they get considerable input from peers, family, and counselors.

2 My experience is that post-secondary students know what information they are looking for, and will go directly to a post-secondary institution site to complete their research.
3 Our academic advisors indicate this is not a source used by post-secondary students; they search directly on other institution sites when there is something specific they are looking for, especially grad programs.
4 Not all information is current so I can't say that I strongly agree.

4. Post-secondary counselors and advisors

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
	2	9	5	4	1	1
	9%	41%	23%	18%	5%	5%

1 See #2.
2 Our advisors and counsellors don't use the site at all.
3 It's hard to apply general inst. info to a student in progress, and sometimes course transfer info needs to be contextualized according to the destination schools and ed goal of the student. However, the career planning tools and study instruments are excellent for supporting students exploration,learning and study skills.

4 Our academic advisors indicate that they do not use this resource, as they deal primarily with our own program information which they already know in detail.
5 Not all information is current so I can't say that I strongly agree.

5. Parents

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
	6	6	4	2	0	4
	27%	27%	18%	9%	0%	18%

1 Since about 85% of our students are international, EP is largely unknown to them and, therefore, ineffective as a resource.
2 They are probably encouraged by secondary school staff and their children to use the site, but I don't

have any direct knowledge of this.

3 My experience is that parents generally have a low level of knowledge about post-sec and are not as involved as they should be in planning for that with their childen.

4 Not all information is current so I can't say that I strongly agree.

5 Could be more "parent oriented" - review concerns parents may have about the institutions - student access & support

6 Adding other languages into the mix would be very helpful.

6. Adults contemplating entering or returning to post-secondary education						
Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option. Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
	1	9	6	0	0	6
	5%	41%	27%	0%	0%	27%

1 Access and Upgrading are challenging to capture in a database, as schools vary so much in their offerings to the adult learner - support is oftend the most important aspect to the adult needing to upgrade or re-enter tehe job market, so schools offer a variety of lifeskills/workskills and additional services as value-add-ons to upgrading. Therefore, there is a need to be able to expand the context around the course planning and selection side of adult learning. On the other hand, post diploma/degree students wanting to upgrade skills or credentials need more information on how their current credential or learning will transfer and if that information can not be provided, (and it most often can't), then emphasis would need to be on the resources available and next steps.

2 My experience is that adults tend to look first at the institution closest to them, and what they offer, unless they have a very specific program objective already.

3 Not all information is current so I can't say that I strongly agree.

4 I find most "adults" are not aware of this resource.

7. Comments about other audiences for EducationPlanner:

1 I think Education Planner could also be targetted towards new Canadians...

2 Deans and Department Heads could use this information for comparison purposes. Recruitment folks could also use this information for the same reason.

3 Business owners - upgrade training for there employees for purposes of employee retention

8. Overall comments about the effectiveness of EducationPlanner in serving a variety of audiences:

1 The site visit analytics are not strong in comparison to indvidual institution sites given the secondary school population.

2 The tool is most useful for high school students who need a quick glance at all BC offerings, and the ability to sort/filter the info to reduce and focus it. It's a great database resource, and should continue to grow as a database and not just a web interface.

3 I think it is a very easy tool for everyone.

4 I think it is a very useful tool and unlike many of the commercial ones, it is accurate!

5 In ider for this tool to be effective in searching out programs etc, students require a brief background / information on the differences betwen colleges, uni's etc. and the dirfferences between a certificate, diploma and degree. My team has a high level of contact with senior students who are apparently using this tool in CAPP clasees yet we find that a large majority are not aware of the differences. Therefore, their searching becomes difficult and they could get frustrated in using a tool like EP because it offers a wealth of info and options. For the educated students, EP is a great resource!

6 The information is derived from academic calendars, and thus is presented in the dry, boring and often confusing style of the academic calendar, as opposed to the style of writing and visual presentation on web sites that young people today expect to see. My concern would be that the people we might want to use it are not, because it's not presenting info the way they want it.

7 The Education Planner is as good as the information that is included. The information our institution has submitted is out of date and it will be our priority to provide accurate and timely information so that our students get the most current information available.

8 Overall - very useful tool.

9 This is a very easy website to use.

9. EducationPlanner is a useful communications and marketing resource for my institution

Strongly Agree	5	25%
Agree	6	30%
Neutral	4	20%
Disagree	3	15%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	2	10%
Total	**20**	**100%**

10. The information in EducationPlanner about my institution is current:

Strongly Agree	1	5%
Agree	11	55%
Neutral	1	5%
Disagree	4	20%
Strongly Disagree	2	10%
Don't Know	1	5%
Total	**20**	**100%**

11. The information in EducationPlanner about my institution is accurate:

Strongly Agree	1	5%
Agree	13	65%
Neutral	2	10%
Disagree	3	15%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	1	5%
Total	**20**	**100%**

12. The information in EducationPlanner about my institution is sufficient:

Strongly Agree	0	0%
Agree	8	40%
Neutral	6	30%
Disagree	4	20%
Strongly Disagree	1	5%
Don't Know	1	5%
Total	**20**	**100%**

13. Comments about the information in EducationPlanner:

1 Because certain links provided by EP are restricted to public institutions (BCCIE, Study in BC), students who follow those links do not come across Columbia College as an option. It would be helpful if a link to private members of EP were provided alongside these links to public members.

2 Our institution does not like having detailed program information housed on a third party site - it's too

much work to keep two sites current. Education Planner should focus on the process of post-secondary exploration and planning.

3 I have not kept up with updating the information. Perhaps a semi-annual reminder email for updating would help me.

4 Format doesn't necessarily allow for information to appear in a manner that is suitable for all types of institutions. Information at the program level can be confusing for students.

5 Gives an overview of certain information, however, our calendar is a better source of program and institutional information, and it is better for prospective students to get into it directly. I also find it is a lot of duplication of effort to "repackage" much of our information that is already contained on our web site, although Linda does a great job of digging out a lot of information on her own. Still, there is a workload issue with providing annual reviews and updates.

6 Information needs to be updated and added on an ongoing basis, ideally through a CM system that can be accessed by those who are responsible to update.

7 We have assigned a new person to this position and will make Ed Planner a priority for 08/09.

8 Obviously, I need to contact you to make some corrections on the programs we offer.

14. The mechanisms currently used to manage content are effective (achieve their goal):

Strongly Agree	0	0%
Agree	7	35%
Neutral	7	35%
Disagree	4	20%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
Don't Know	2	10%
Total	20	100%

15. The mechanisms currently used to manage content are efficient (quick and easy):

Strongly Agree	1	5%
Agree	6	30%
Neutral	8	40%
Disagree	2	10%
Strongly Disagree	1	5%
Don't Know	2	10%
Total	20	100%

16. Comments about content management mechanisms:

1 i would like to see a more web-based, interactive CMS

2 Please do not push the work of keeping the content housed on Education Planner back at the institutions. It's way too much for for the large complex institutions.

3 Direct Entry, maybe twice a year as opposed to ongoing would be helpful, as long as the system to do so is simple to learn and submit!

4 Probably as good as possible, but anything that requires reworking and reviewing all the program information at an institution is a major undertaking.

5 I'm not familiar with them.

6 None

7 It seems like a lot of work for one person to be manually updating info based on calendars.

17. For my institution, the most important aspects or functions provided by EducationPlanner are: (please list them in priority order)

1 1. identifying, in as many website fields as feasible/appropriate, our institution as an equal player in the university transfer field.

2 Programs offered

Admission requirements

Co-op

tuition

length of program

3 Helping post-secondary explorers see the programs offered at my institution (programs, not details)

4 1)The relationship between EdPlanner and the BC high schools providing delivery of our school information to BC high school students via Planning 10, and graduation requirements. This link to these projects is pivotal to our ongoing support of EdPlanner, and sets it aside from the other websites in existance. 2)Combined with the supporting information on career planning, student and school tools and resources, BC transfer etc, it becomes an optional resource for staff. 3) statistical info

5 - Provide an overview of post-secondary institutions in the province, - Provide an overview of institutions that offer a specific program

6 Ensuring that programs are easily found in searches. Many programs should be listed in multiple categories. I'm not sure if that is the case, but I do see an odd variety of programs listed in some fields. For example, Applied business tech listed in Legal and Social Sciences (for some institutions), BSc listed for liberal arts and humanities (for one institution). I don't know how programs are slotted into these categories, but it does not seem too consistent. Some programs might fit several categories and should be listed in all (for the most part, I find our programs where I expect to)

7 Promoting Post-Secondary Program Options in BC

As a resource with consolidated institution information, including admission requirements

8 Making sure potential students are aware of the programs we offer.

18. In addition to yourself, are their others within your institution with whom the Project Team should liaise? Please identify them by title.

1 Trevor Toone: Principal

2 Not at this time

3 Vice President of Education, Baldev Pooni

Director of Ed Planning and Research, Paul Merner

Director of Students Services and Registrar, Nicole Greengoe

Associate Director of Student Support and Development, Vicki Bruce

4 At this time, I am the appropriate contact person.

5 No

6 No

7 Education Advisors could benefit from learning this tool. It is very powerful.

8 No.

19. Other Comments:

1 Keep contained, resist spreading too thin, and put emphasis on core info and timely updates. However, continue with the planned enhancements that provide quality over quantity.

2 None.

Appendix 6: Focus Group Template

1. **How did you learn about Education Planner? What is the best way to inform people about it?**

2. **Which aspects or components of Education Planner have you used? Which ones do you find the most useful? Are you familiar with the other components? Which ones don't you use? Why**

3. **Do you use MyEdPlanner? If not, why not? If so, do you find it helpful? Explain.**

4. **Do you find the website easy to navigate? How could it be improved?**

5. **Are there any aspects or components missing that you would like to see there?**

6. **Have you shared the website with your parents? If so, did they find it useful? What aspects or components of the website did they find the most useful?**

7. **What are the most important pieces of information about post-secondary education that you need/want to know about?**

Appendix 7: Web Traffic Summary

Education Planner Web Traffic

	EP	Visits	Daily Average	Increase over previous year			
2006	January	31,458	1,015				
	February	34,083	1,217				
	March	35,191	1,135				
	April	32,751	1,092				
	May	34,387	1,109				
	June	34,861	1,162				
	July	32,532	1,049				
	August	28,466	918				
	September	34,734	1,158				
	October	42,062	1,357				
	November	40,445	1,348				
	December	39,443	1,272				
					Total Visitors 2006	Daily Average 2006	
2007	January	45,128	1,456	43.45%	480,511	1,316.47	
	February	43,121	1,540	26.52%			
	March	72,581	2,592	106.25%			
	April	36,588	1,220	11.72%			
	May	36,384	1,174	5.81%			
	June	50,377	1,679	44.51%			
	July	47,502	1,532	46.02%			
	August	42,113	1,358	47.94%			
	September	42,121	1,404	21.27%			
	October	51,146	1,705	21.60%			
	November	44,488	1,483	10.00%			
	December	37,067	1,196	-6.02%			
					Total Visitors 2007	Daily Average 2007	% Increase Overall
2008	January	46,929	1,514	3.99%	536,848	1,466.80	12.20%
	February	44,474	1,534	3.14%			
	March	57,659	1,860	-20.56%			
	April	72,648	2,422	98.56%			
	May	69,426	2,240	90.81%			
	June	55,798	1,860	10.76%	**Extrapolated based on 19 day average**		
	July	**Not Available**					
	August	**Not Available**					
	September	**Not Available**					
	October	45,825	1,528	-10.40%			
	November	38784	1,293	-12.82%			
	December	36672	1,222	-1.07%			
					Total Visitors 2008	Daily Average 2008	% Increase Overall
						1,719.02	17.20%

BCCAT