Online Orientation Program

Proposal

(Revision 1)

for

Los Angeles Southwest College
TABLE OF CONTENTS

REVISION HISTORY .......................................................................................................................... 2
INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................................................... 3
ABOUT US .......................................................................................................................................... 4
WHAT MAKES US DIFFERENT ........................................................................................................ 4
STATEMENT OF WORK ...................................................................................................................... 5
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION ................................................................................................................ 5
  DESIGN AND STORYBOARDING .................................................................................................. 5
  VIDEO PRODUCTION ............................................................................................................... 6
  GRAPHIC PRODUCTION ........................................................................................................... 6
  PROGRAMMING ....................................................................................................................... 7
ADDITIONAL PROGRAMMED ELEMENTS ...................................................................................... 7
KNOWLEDGE GAP ASSESSMENT ................................................................................................... 9
INTERFACING WITH PEOPLESOFT ................................................................................................ 10
WARRANTY ...................................................................................................................................... 10
PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE ........................................................................................................... 11
COST .................................................................................................................................................. 11
  COST DETAILS .......................................................................................................................... 12
APPENDIX A: PRODUCT INTERFACE TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION ............................................. 13

REVISION HISTORY

Revision 1:
1. Adjustments were made to the Cost and Cost Details sections of this proposal to align project costs with negotiated pricing.
2. Content was added to provide assurances that the programs would interface with PeopleSoft
3. Added Appendix 1: Product Interface Technical Description
INTRODUCTION

Among the processes a new community college student first encounters is Student Success and Support Services program (SSSP). SSSP ensures students set out on the right foot to be successful adult learners. Part of that program is new student orientation. Typical orientations are in-person presentations where college staff cover the basics of college life, describe student services, and provide insight on how to make each student’s college experience a success. Unfortunately, too often these facilitator-led presentations lack consistency of message and engagement, and needlessly burden an already thinly stretched staff.

To ensure the greatest number of students hear a consistent message, Cynosure, working closely with our existing community college clients, has developed a web-based new student orientation program.

The primary goal is to create a self-guided, online, media-based, application that meets the unique content requirements of Los Angeles Southwest College and results in improved student knowledge about student services, keys to college success, and an overview of the college experience.

The online new student orientation also serves these additional needs:

1. Outreach/recruitment
2. Online information resource
3. Guest or parent review of orientation content

Subordinate goals/project objectives for online orientation include:

- The creation “middleware” applications that can interface with existing student data systems.
- Track student performance and provide data output capabilities for analysis and reporting.
- Ensure compliance with Section 508 of the American’s with Disabilities Act.
- Create Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs).
- Incorporate into the orientation program an SLO measurement survey, Cynosure’s Knowledge Gap Assessment.
ABOUT US

Cynosure New Media, Inc. (est. 1999) is a San Diego-based full-service communications company specializing in media-based training development, digital content production, and custom software applications. Our expertise in instructional systems design and corporate communications spans several industries including wireless telecommunications, biotech, healthcare, software development, organizational management, leadership development, and employee improvement. Our clients consistently agree, the Cynosure difference is that we always do what we say we will do - deliver superior end-products on time, on budget and with exceptional customer care.

Powered by a dynamic team of individuals with diverse skills and talents, Cynosure builds successful partnerships with its customers through careful planning, monitoring, and two-way communication. We pride ourselves in our ability to respond to our customers quickly through proactive rather than reactive project management. Bottom line – we strive to create long-term collaborative business relationships to ensure a win-win environment for our customers, our strategic partners, and our team of creative professionals.

WHAT MAKES US DIFFERENT

At its core, Cynosure New Media is a training development / instructional design company. Therefore, regardless of the project type (training, corporate communication, or information) we make use of the ADDIE instructional design model in our development process. The model forces us to make certain project considerations that would not normally be addressed by ordinary multimedia developers.
NEW STUDENT ONLINE ORIENTATION PROGRAM
for Los Angeles Southwest College
Proposal/Estimate (Revision 1)

STATEMENT OF WORK

Design, develop, produce, and program an online orientation program for new students attending Los Angeles Southwest College.

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION

Online orientation delivers an innovative and engaging interactive program that presents a high-level core set of information needed for success by the first semester student. Projects of this nature and with the previously documented list of objectives are best produced in phases.

Cynosure proposes this project be developed in the following phases:

- Design and storyboarding
- Video production
- Graphic production
- Programming
- QC, test, review, and approval

DESIGN AND STORYBOARDING

This stage of production encapsulates all design considerations to be made for the finished program. It begins with a campus kick-off meeting that explores and documents all the campus specific content requirements.

The results of the kick-off meeting are used through the continuation of the design and storyboarding phase, which culminates into a complete storyboard document that details all of the rich media elements, narrated dialog, video vignettes, on-screen text, graphic/photo descriptions, and relevant content.

With respect to this phase of production, Cynosure will:

- Meet with the college representatives or committee to collect ideas, themes, and content requirements; identify key stakeholders; and college any existing orientation materials.
- Create a project “Design Document” which in addition to communication plan, tentative schedule, and description of other design considerations; features a comprehensive content outline documenting all information to be incorporated into the orientation.
• Develop a "Storyboard Document" which provides the screen by screen details of all content to be produced in the finished orientation.

VIDEO PRODUCTION

The online orientation will make use of a substantial amount of video. The use of video is intended to maintain learner engagement and improve content retention.

Cynosure’s professional video product crew will film all required video segments on campus during 3-days of on-campus video production.

Video production on campus is also our opportunity to take still photography as needed to support graphic requirements of the orientation.

With respect to video production phase of production, Cynosure will:

• Produce a "Video Planning Document" which details all the rich media requirements for the program and serves as an aid for campus staff to prepare for the video production/photography event.
• Work with the campus to populate a production schedule with volunteer student talent.
• Shoot video using professional crew and equipment. Equipment typically includes camera, lights, audio, and teleprompter. Actual equipment and crew provided depends on video requirements.
• Provide still photography as required
• Edit and produce videos.
• Digitize and compress finished videos for inclusion in the finished online orientation.

GRAPHIC PRODUCTION

During this phase, all images, graphics, animations, and photography documented in the storyboard for use in the program are produced. Individual screens are laid-out with their associated text and/or images.

With respect to the preparation of all rich media for use in the orientation, Cynosure will:

• Prepare all rich media elements as detailed in the approved storyboards
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The system records the following information:

- Student identify at the time of entry.
- Completion of individual orientation segments.
- Time of entry into and exit from the online program.
- Overall completion status.

The data utility is a pre-existing tool and as such not subject customization.

Administrative functions and controls to be programmed include:

- Password protected access to the administrative control panel and report generation
- Search capabilities based on Student ID number, student name, and/or date/date range.
- Data export to a tab-separated values (TSV) format, suitable for use in programs such as Microsoft Excel.
- Automated data archiving. Archived data is also searchable as needed.
- The data system will be self-sufficient and not require maintenance by IT department staff.
KNOWLEDGE GAP ASSESSMENT

The Knowledge Gap Assessment is an automated survey and report that is integrated into the orientation program. It is designed to measure student success in the orientation against a set of established Student Learning Outcomes (SLO).

Students entering the orientation for the first time are presented a survey of 25 or more questions developed in accordance with the SLOs.

Students are asked to rate their existing knowledge of subject material to be covered in the online orientation on a 6-point scale with intervals at 100, 80, 60, 40, 20, and 0 percent.

Upon completion of the orientation, students respond again to the same survey.

The Knowledge Gap Assessment is a measure of the students’ own perceived improvement (or lack) in knowledge about orientation subject material.

The data is then available in report form accessed through the existing data utility.

The report tracks performance averages for the entire population of results selected. The report is displayed in a browser window for printing, or can be exported into a format suitable for import into an Excel spreadsheet or other data application.

In support of Knowledge Gap Assessment requirements, Cynosure will:

1. Develop a complete set (approximately 25) of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs).
   a. Objectives will be written as informal Mager-style objectives. Informal objectives include the task description in verb/noun form, but lack the condition and standard statements of formal objectives.
2. Develop a Knowledge Gap Assessment survey matched against the SLOs
3. Integrate both the Pre- and Post-orientation surveys into the online orientation program.
4. Program the necessary output reports and integrate them into the admin utility.

INTERFACING WITH PEOPLESOFT
Initially, access to the orientation will be provided via student self-sign on. Eventually, the District will be deployment PeopleSoft as a student data system. After which, Cynosure agrees to provide services needed to interface with PeopleSoft as needed to perform two (2) basic handshaking functions.

1. Students will authenticate in PeopleSoft where they will find a link to orientation. That link will be a dynamic URL that will append student identification information and pass that information to the online orientation program. From this information the Cynosure program will create a user account for the purposes of monitoring student progress.
2. Upon completion of the orientation requirements, Cynosure's program will deliver, via HTTP POST, an orientation completion notice to PeopleSoft for the purpose of clearing orientation holds, etc.

Cynosure assumes support from District and/or campus IT to provide this handshaking function. Namely the District and/or campus is responsible for:

1. Programming the dynamic URL as described for accessing the online orientation
2. Programming the script that will ingest the completion notification sent by Cynosure's program and performing whatever PeopleSoft functions required by the District/College.

WARRANTY
Cynosure New Media, Inc., warrants this application from programming and technical defects with regard to the condition of content, navigation, and video playback. However, Cynosure can not anticipate the future direction of the technologies upon which this orientation is based and therefore cannot warrant its ability to play without error should technologies change in the future. Specific technologies employed in this program include: Adobe Flash and various Internet browsers, i.e., Microsoft Internet Explorer and Mozilla Firefox.

ORIENTATION ON-GOING MAINTENANCE
Cynosure New Media, Inc., understands that in spite of our best effort to develop a product with content longevity, things change. As such, we agree to make small changes free of charge for a period of up to 3-years.

Small changes are described as typographical errors, minor changes to text content, etc., that can be made in the period of 30-45 minutes and returned to the college as a replacement file with instructions for IT staff how to upload the file the web server.
Changes of longer duration, video changes, programming changes, additions or removal of content segments do not fall under this provision.

Change requests of this type should be documented by college staff and delivered to Cynosure for a prompt return of an estimate to make the requested changes.

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The typical development process is 4-5 months. A detailed development schedule will be developed following contract approval. The schedule milestones will be planned working backwards from the desired project completion date.

COST

Cynosure agrees to develop the Los Angeles Southwest College online orientation as described in this proposal for the firm fixed price of $45,000.00, which includes video production and travel expenses. Cynosure requests that payments be made based in four (4) equal installments based on the following milestone schedule.

- **Milestone 1**: Execution of the Project Kick-Off Meeting
- **Milestone 2**: Delivery of the Draft Storyboard Document
- **Milestone 3**: Completion of 3-days On-Campus Video Production and Photography
- **Milestone 4**: Final Acceptance and Delivery of Programmed Orientation

All invoices are submitted based on Net 30-day terms.
## COST DETAILS

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**Travel Day expenses cover the day rate of the video production crew while traveling. The rate is 50% of the actual on location day rate.
APPENDIX A: PRODUCT INTERFACE TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION

Adding 3rd party software applications to campus web servers can be problematic, particularly where it is necessary for these applications to provide information to the existing data systems.

Cynosure applications were designed to be IT-friendly in that they can exist stand-alone on the campus web server and operate without the need to interface with other campus programs. Student progress is collected in an XML data file, and an admin utility is provided with the application for simple report generation of stored data.

While a relief to a thinly-stretched IT department staff, the monitoring of student progress and program completion becomes a manual operation for counseling department staff that must find the student data in the Cynosure application and then manually transfer the results into the existing campus student data system.

Where there is a desire on campus to keep the Cynosure applications stand-alone, other mechanisms have been put in place to make the process more efficient, but these methods still are not ideal.

- Automated e-mail generation to student and counseling as a notice of completion
- Function in the admin utility that allows searches for data based on name, student ID, or completion date.
- TSV download function in admin utility

The ideal solution is for the Cynosure applications and the existing campus student data system (DataTel, Banner, PeopleSoft, etc) to exchange real-time data that:

- Improves data security
- Provides accurate student information to the Cynosure application
- Allows for immediate action consequent to successful completion of the Cynosure application (i.e. clearing registration holds, etc.)
- Eliminates manual process for department staff.

This document was prepared as a technical description of the best practice for interfacing the two programs and to be used as a starting point in the dialog with campus IT staff to create the code needed to successfully integrate the programs.

The document does not assume any technical insight into the programming and operation of any specific student data system and relies on the expertise of campus IT staff for implementation on that end.

This document only serves as a high-level explanation of the requirement to aid campus IT staff to understand the interface requirement.
INTERFACE DESCRIPTION

The interface between the Cynosure application and campus data system should be described as a simple hand-shaking operation where:

1. **Campus Data System to Cynosure Application**
   a. Students authenticate in the existing campus system where they consequently find links to the Cynosure application (online Orientation, online Advising, online Probation Workshop, or other)
   b. The link embeds the URL with required student identification information
      i. This information is used to create a data account in the Cynosure application XML data file which is used to collect student input from the app, monitor progress, and provide bookmarking.
      ii. Information required depends upon the application being accessed and/or other customizations being made to the apps based on campus requirements.
         1. Orientation and/or Probation Workshop
            a. Student First Name
            b. Student Last Name
            c. Student ID
            d. Student e-Mail
        2. Advising
           a. Student First Name
           b. Student Last Name
           c. Student ID
           d. Student e-Mail
           e. Recorded Academic Goal
           f. Selected Major
           g. Assessment Test Results

2. **Cynosure Application to Campus Data System**
   a. Student completes the requirements of respective Cynosure application resulting in an event notification to the campus data system using the HTTP POST request method.
   b. The event notification serves to signal the campus data system that a specific student has successfully completed the application.
   c. The methods used by the campus IT department to ingest this event notification and what effect it will have on the internal operations of the campus data system is unique to the campus and not defined herein.
INTERFACE DEPICTION

The previously described hand-shaking routine is illustrated in the functional block diagram below.

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