



# Community Systems

## Digital Economic Development University

### 2016 Certification Syllabus and Study Guide

The following guide walks you through key lessons from each of the 14 certification classes. Use this guide as you decide which of the courses to attend throughout 2016, and refer back to it as you are working through the exercises to create your EDOs own high performing digital presence.

## Part 1: Creating a High Performing Economic Development Website

### 1. Defining your Digital Strategy: How to use Digital Tools to Compete in the World of Today and Tomorrow

- Set goals for your digital presence
- Select your audience
- Identify what each audience wants
- Develop your timeline
- Develop your project plan
- Set up your project team
- Gain support inside your organization

### 2. Telling Stories Online: How to Develop Relevant Economic Development Content For Your Community

- Develop an appropriate site map
- Develop your content outline
- Repurpose existing content within your organization
- Write new pages using web best practices
- Edit your pages for length and “scanability”
- Select appropriate links, documents, and photography
- Advanced content strategies including video, social, and more

### 3. Building an Attractive Property Inventory: DIY Data Collection, Working with Brokers and Local and National MLS partners

- Decide what property types support your EDO goals
- Decide what types of properties to feature
- Find existing inventory in your community
- Build partnerships with the local real estate community
- Evaluate national MLS providers
- Set data quality standards
- Collect data
- Upload property data to your GIS system
- Source property photography
- Engage your local real estate community in property self management



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#### **4. Using Demographics and Labor Data to Tell Your Story: Building your Demographic Data Library using State, Local, and National Sources**

- Decide what demographic and labor data to use to sell your community
- Evaluate state, local, and national data sources
- Self management versus API auto updated data
- Data reporting and visualization techniques
- Set a frequency to publish, release and analyze data
- Develop a brand for your data publishing efforts

#### **5. Using Your Largest Employers to Tell Your Story: Building Business Lists, Success Stories, and Testimonials from your Community's Most Important Assets**

- Decide what companies in your community tell a story
- Develop success and reference stories for companies in your community
- Build your largest employers list
- Give your investor and stakeholder companies visibility

#### **6. Telling your Digital Story Visually: How Great Website Design can Drive Conversations with Your EDO**

- How layout, messaging, and other factors drive digital engagement
- How to develop your community's digital brand
- Develop engaging key messaging
- Select a design and layout for your website
- Select designs for your email, social, digital documents, and prospect proposals
- Select and source photography

#### **7. Managing your Digital Presence: Developing an Ongoing Content Management Competency in your EDO**

- Train on website and GIS content management tools
- Create a content calendar for your organization
- Set update deadlines for property data
- Determine an update schedule for demographic and labor force data



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## Part 2: Driving and Measuring Quality Traffic to Your Economic Development Website

### 8. Driving Traffic to Your Website, and Your EDO, Using Email Marketing Tools

- Develop and clean targeted email lists
- Write subject lines that prompt people to open emails
- Write short email copy and strong calls-to-action
- Create landing pages that drive engagement
- Review email metrics

### 9. Setting Goals and Measuring the Performance of Your Economic Development Website

- Review available performance benchmarks for economic development websites
- Interpret website analytics
- Interpret GIS analytics
- Interpret lead conversion analytics to your CRM
- Plan to increase performance over time

### 10. Using Digital Tools To Generate Leads to Your EDO

- Review available performance benchmarks for economic development websites
- Interpret website analytics
- Interpret GIS analytics
- Interpret lead conversion analytics to your CRM
- Plan to increase performance over time

### 11. Leveraging Search Engines to Drive Traffic to Your Economic Development Website

- Overview of available search engines
- Define a pay-per-click strategy
- Define a search engine optimization strategy
- Register with search engines
- Review performance
- Adjust pay-per-click campaigns



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### **12. Using LinkedIn to Drive Prospect and Stakeholder engagement**

- Overview of LinkedIn
- Create a profile that gets viewed
- Create LinkedIn company pages
- Use LinkedIn for prospecting
- LinkedIn for targeted advertising

### **13. Capturing Leads, Managing Recruitment and Retention Prospects using Customer Relationship Management Tools**

- Define CRM fields appropriate for economic development
- Set up lead conversion events from email and your website
- Import your prospect, retention, stakeholder lists
- Set up CRM reporting
- Set up data maintenance protocols

### **14. Proactively Responding to Digital Prospects**

- Why digitally sourced leads are the number one opportunity for your community
- Review available tools to generate and drive digital leads to your website
- Using unique IP mapping tools to convert visitors into leads
- Real-world examples of how EDOs are utilizing digital tools
- How organizations of varying sizes can take advantage of this trend