



# National Weather Service: Finding a Needle in a Haystack

## Situation

The National Weather Service (NWS), an arm of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) within the Department of Commerce and provides a wide variety of national and international weather guidance products to NWS field offices, government agencies, emergency managers, private sector meteorologists, and meteorological organizations and societies around the world.

NWS had experienced significant difficulty recruiting qualified candidates to fill the SES Director’s position for its National Center for Environmental Prediction (NCEP), comprised of nine National Centers and the Office of the Director.

The Director handles the planning and execution of personnel and budget matters, as well as the operational aspects for all nine National Centers, including the Aviation Weather Center, Climate Prediction Center, Environmental Modeling Center, National Hurricane Center, NCEP Central Operations, Ocean Prediction Center, Storm Prediction Center, Space Weather Prediction Center, and the Weather Prediction Center.

It had been previously posted on USAJobs for 60 days, however, the posting did not yield any qualified applicants with the very specific required qualifications.

Because of the urgency to fill this critical SES position, NWS sought help in identifying potential qualified candidates and guiding them through the complicated application process to yield better results.

Requirements for the position included strong professional and technical qualifications that demonstrated experience in theories, principles, and practices of modern weather forecast and analysis systems consisting of one or more of the following specialty areas: meteorology, weather research, climate, hydrology, and/or environmental sciences and their operational applications, in addition to demonstrated executive-level leadership expertise and experience directing a large geographically disbursed scientific organization, and a proven ability to communicate to and collaborate with diverse stakeholders—certainly not your everyday talent acquisition profile.

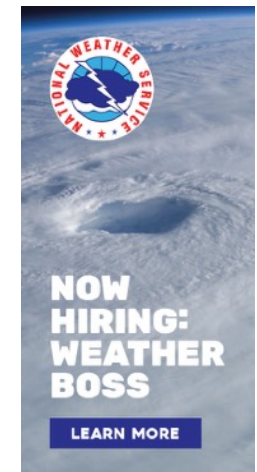
## MarCom Group Solution

To find qualified candidates for the SES opportunity, MarCom Group developed a candidate sourcing strategy after a thorough discovery process. This included discussions with the COO of the NWS and conversations with the selecting official and HR support personnel at our partner, Your Recruiting Company Incorporated (YRCI), whose Federal HR consultants provided a thorough understanding of the position’s responsibilities, qualifications, and related competencies.

With this essential information and perspective, MarCom Group implemented its six-part sourcing and marketing communications strategy



DIGITAL BANNER AD



DIGITAL BANNER AD





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## Part 1: Identify Sources of Talent

- Professional organizations
- Businesses and other private sector groups
- Academia, public sector, and government agencies
- Data base sources

## Part 2: Finalize the Marketing Communications Strategy

- Select the most promising sources
- Establish a schedule for roll out and follow through
- Implement the outreach campaign

## Part 3: Select Media to Reach the Targeted Professionals

- Digital banner ads delivered to mobile devices, laptops
- Advertising (e.g., social media, professional organizations)
- LinkedIn, Job boards (e.g., AMS, NWA)

## Part 4: Develop Creative

- Create an integrated communications campaign
- Identify messaging themes and select headlines
- Write supporting copy and develop graphics
- Design advertising materials

## Part 5: Build a Campaign Microsite as ad destination

- Prepare content that fully explains the NCEP position
- Design an engaging layout
- Launch site on YRCI server

## Part 6: Evaluate Responses

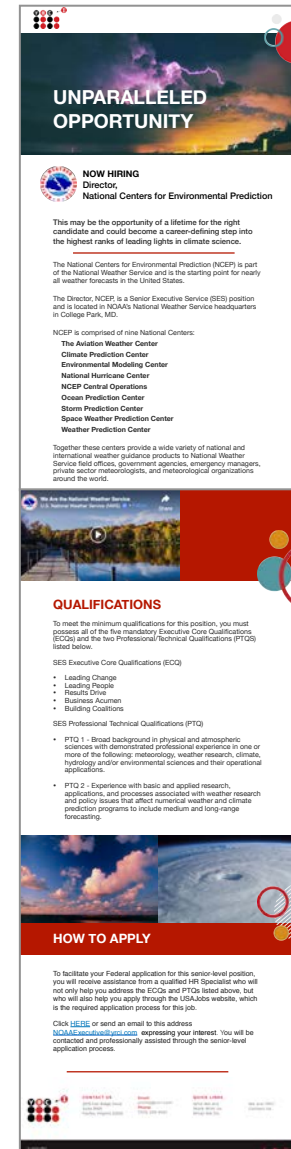
- Analyze response rates and identify trends
- Optimize advertising delivery algorithms
- Adjust the schedule and messaging to improve response

Key to the success of this effort was the development of a microsite to which all banner advertising, job postings, and email were linked. The visually pleasing, NWS-branded microsite resonated with candidates providing them with detailed information about the duties, the SES executive and technical core qualifications, and the application process. The microsite included direct links to the USAJobs announcement, as well as contact information for a YRCI HR consultant who was available to help candidates through the SES application process.

## Results

Results of the marketing communications campaign resulted in **2,149 inquiries** to the campaign microsite. **Twenty-two** individuals applied for the position and **three** were determined to be eligible, having met both the SES Executive Core Qualifications and the Professional Technical Core Qualifications. A final selection was made from among the three.

Another tangible and important result was an increase in NWS awareness in the employment marketplace due to the wide net cast to attract qualified candidates, which will enable easier recruitment in the future.



CAMPAIGN MICROSITE

