

**GET  
REAL**



# Goals

Expand the number of high school students in Oregon who have an understanding of the computer science field

- Determine what the most critical high school targets are so as to use resources most strategically and effectively.
- Develop outreach strategies and materials
  - such as a website, brochure-poster, and speaker's bureau
  - to provide information to high school students about
    - the field of computer science,
    - the certificate and degree programs offered in the Oregon's postsecondary education system, and
    - the related career opportunities in Oregon's job market.

**GET  
REAL**



# Target Audiences

- **Primary**
  - Oregon high school students, particularly those in the upper grades, with current or potential interest in the computer science field.
- **Secondary**
  - Teachers of math, science, and computer science in Oregon high schools.
  - Counselors
  - Parents of high school students

**GET  
REAL**



# Messages

- A degree in computer science leads to
  - A wide variety of jobs
  - Choice of industries
  - High salaries
  - Job security.
- Wide choice of campuses to pursue degree.
- Math important but other talents lead to success in CS as well
- A computer science degree is “portable”
  - work from home,
  - from a café, or
  - from a distance.
- It’s also a “global” degree and makes you a sought after asset in almost any country around the world.
- Women are in high demand.
- Computer scientists are intelligent and creative team players who enjoy the challenges and opportunities in their career field.

**GET  
REAL**



# Market Research

- Focus Groups
  - High Schools in two counties
  - Had students due series of exercises about interests/preferences
  - Collected written responses plus
  - Facilitated discussion

## GET REAL



Exercise: Write down three to five words or short phrases that you feel describe the types of people who enjoy working with computers, not what others think, but what you think. Picture in your head a computer science person and write down aspects of that person that you see. Who are these people? Maybe they include yourself.

### Conclusions:

- Most words are very positive, and reflect a wide range of impressions.
- There is a high emphasis on intelligence.
- The negative impressions are: people who lack communication skills, antisocial, nerds, punks, apprehensive, dork, not too outgoing, and reserved.

# GET REAL



Exercise: Rank the following in order of importance or interest:

- *Jobs you can get with a computer science degree*
- *Profiles of people in their 20's and 30's who graduated with computer science degrees and what they think about the field, advice they have for students, and who they are*
- *Information from companies in Oregon about the types of computer science graduates they hire, and what they look for in an employee*
- *Books you can read about computer science*
- *All the different colleges in Oregon that offer computer science degrees, what those programs are like, and what they specialize in*
- *Classes you need to take in high school to be prepared to take computer science*
- *How much money you can make in different computer science jobs*
- *Games you can play on the internet related to computer science*
- *Profiles of college students who are currently in college computer science programs and what they think about the program, advice they have for students, and who they are*
- *How much it costs to go to college and get a computer science degree.*

Conclusions: Best ranks went to jobs you can get and how much money you can make, followed by classes you can take, info from companies on grads they hire, and college information. Response seems practically-minded. Profiles of people in their 20s and 30s ranked at 8 total, quite low. Games and books ranked lowest.

**GET  
REAL**

## Exercise: Spend \$1000

- *Through a CD given out at school*
- *Through a brochure or handout sent to your home*
- *Through a website on computer science information specifically for high school students*
- *Through a live presentation from a business person who came to your school*
- *Through a brochure or handout given out at school by a teacher or counselor*
- *Through a live presentation from a teacher at your school*
- *Through a CD sent to your home*
- *Through a cool, artistic poster given to students (that you could take home), and hung around the school*
- *Through another method, which is:*

---

Conclusions: Best rank was a live presentation from a business person at their school, followed by a website on CS specifically aimed at HS students, the poster idea, and other suggestions. Note that the brochure or handout given out by a teacher or counselor, and a brochure sent to their home, both ranked quite low, 7 and 8. The CD sent to home also ranked low.



## GET REAL

Exercise: Rank the following website features

- *Clear, easy to read information*
- *Graphics and colors are attractive*
- *Has a blog on the site*
- *Coupons on site to get discounts or free food at fast food restaurants*
- *Chance to sign up and win a prize*
- *Clear, easy navigation throughout site*
- *Links to other related websites*
- *Ability to play a game on the site*
- *Coupons on site to get free song downloads*
- *Has a chat room on the site*
- *Other features (Please list)* \_\_\_\_\_

CONCLUSIONS: The average total rank shows that clear, easy to read information and clear, easy navigation, and colors and graphics are most important. Links to other websites, chat rooms, and blogs all came next. Coupons, opportunities for prizes, and games were last priority.



# GET REAL



## Exercise: Rank the following according to who you would listen to the most

- *A college student currently pursuing a degree in computer science*
- *A high school principal*
- *A person currently working in the computer science field who graduated from college just in the last few years*
- *A high school computer science teacher*
- *One of your parents/guardians*
- *One of your siblings or other family members (such as a sister, cousin, grandparent)*
- *The President or CEO of a company that hires computer science graduates*
- *A person currently working in the computer science field who graduated from college 15-20 years ago*
- *A high school friend of yours who is good in computer class*
- *A high school guidance counselor*
- *Other person (please list)*

Conclusions: The average total scores and ranks show that a person currently working in CS who graduated in the last few years would be most influential, followed by the president or CEO of a company that hires CS grads, then a person in CS who graduated in last 14-20 years. Last ranked were the hs principal, family members, guidance counselors, and parents or guardians.

**GET  
REAL**



# Key Conclusions

- Generally positive about CS people
- Wanted information on
  - Careers & salary
  - Courses to take
  - College programs
- Preferred formats: presentations by business people, website, poster
- Want highly functional web site
- Interested in opinions of young professionals and industry executives