Ivy Tech Captures ROI with Data-Driven Tool

After launching an entirely new career coaching initiative, Ivy Tech Community College needed a way to demonstrate return on investment. In order to facilitate the culture shift it sought, Ivy Tech turned to Resultant for a solution that would marry data and education insight with human-centered design.

SETTING THE STAGE

Ivy Tech launched the Career Coaching and Employer Connections (CCEC) initiative with the intended outcome of revolutionizing how student career coaching operates. To be successful, the initiative would require the support of key partners—funders and businesses—and for students to interact with data in entirely new ways.

Based on our unique combination of experience with higher education systems, work with the State of Indiana's development of their statewide education and workforce longitudinal data system, organizational health insight, and data integration expertise, Ivy Tech partnered with Resultant to develop a prototype of a human-focused, data-driven solution.

THE PROBLEM

Specifically, Ivy Tech wanted to illuminate the economic benefits of CCEC by creating an ROI methodology. The methodology would need to show employers, funders, and key stakeholders the ROI for participating in or funding the initiative, and, ultimately, support students in making informed career path decisions.
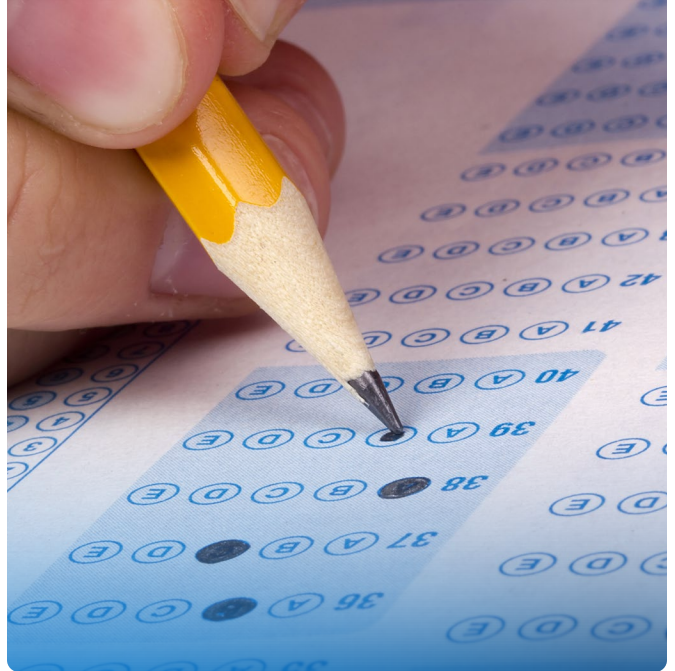
OUR APPROACH

Together with Ivy Tech we held stakeholder feedback sessions to unearth exactly how an ROI methodology would function and further the organization's goal of being a leader in community education. We prioritized and refined these purposes to develop a preliminary version of an ROI tool:

- Demonstrate to funders the value of CCEC and their investments

- Show the financial benefit to employer partners, and expand these partnerships based on value to individual organizations

- Demonstrate the value of partnering with Ivy Tech to potential employer partners

- Inform the effectiveness and relevancy of individual programs within the College to target efforts efficiently

- Refine CCEC processes for career coaches, talent connection managers, and employer consultants to provide better value to stakeholders

The technical solution to accomplish the full scope of ROI for all stakeholders, including students, would require meaningful record linkage and a robust analysis environment.

For example, record linkage with Indiana's Management Performance Hub (MPH) would potentially provide student longitudinal data—including wages, tax records, and other important variables. A scalable, cloud-based, computational environment would perform the needed analytics.

Understanding the need for a phased approach, we directed our discoveries into:

- Outlines of specific use-case scenarios for each of the key partner groups

- A manual ROI framework that incorporates value-driven needs from employers, and a metadata dictionary of algorithms and key metrics available for ROI analysis

- Language for the data request documentation that is submitted to data providers

- A narrative outlining the findings and rationale for future implementation of the ROI analysis and recommendations for next steps

OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

Resultant and Ivy Tech developed a prototype for calculating an ROI for employers and other stakeholders, and a strategy for incorporating and using data across the college system and into Indiana's longitudinal education and workforce data system. With continued testing and refinement of the ROI tool, real data will show partners the value of working with Ivy Tech and inform students of the impact of course choices and potential wage and employment outcomes.