

The Sinclair Advisor



E-News for our clients, prospective clients, and Associates

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Welcome to *The Sinclair Advisor*, a monthly electronic newsletter for clients and Associates of The Sinclair Advisory Group LLC. The Sinclair Advisory Group is a leading provider of strategic planning, leadership development, and expert advisory services to government agencies and private industry.

IN THIS ISSUE

SAG, PwC ON GLIDE PATH	1
IMPROVING CUSTOMER SERVICE PROCESSES.....	2
SAG, VISA 5 ENTER INTO NEW AGREEMENT.....	2
MAY BLOG POSTS	3
ASSOCIATES' AREA	3
THE LAST WORD	3

SAG, PWC ON GLIDE PATH

In this time of budgetary uncertainty for Federal agencies, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has devoted a considerable amount of thought to the issue of aligning its resources with operational goals, and to predict future financial efficiency. VHA established a Glide Path Workgroup to develop a set of comparative metrics that can be used to establish and assess VHA's existing legacy programs in a way that assures they are efficiently run, and maximizes their productivity—by benchmarking them against a common set of metrics within the context of industry norms.

Sinclair Advisory Group is teaming with PricewaterhouseCoopers to review the Workgroup's final report. In their report, the workgroup created a planning glide path template for field facilities to plan for future year activities and to determine whether gaps exist between revenues and expenses. Metrics developed by the workgroup will then be used to identify options for increased efficiency; alternative methods of service delivery; and increased productivity.

PwC and SAG will analyze and assess the validity of the workgroup's metrics as predictors of financial efficiency, and to provide recommendations on a model process that can standardize budgetary practices and financial accountabilities. Together, we hope to help VHA improve its ability to provide cost-efficient health care as revenues become less available, and to maximize the value of the appropriations VHA does receive. We're proud to be a part of this aspect of VHA's transformation into a patient-centric, forward-looking and results oriented organization.

IMPROVING CUSTOMER SERVICE PROCESSES

In our last issue, we introduced Chris Domergue as SAG's new Director of Client Services. Chris has spent his entire career advising Government and Private Organizations in defining customer relationship management strategies and delivering related solutions. Chris has been kind enough to share with us his four principles on how Federal Agencies can improve their customer service processes:

- *Define the Customer Experience:* Know your customers, and how, when, and why they interact with your agency. Understand where they have problems dealing with your organization and how you can optimize their experience.
- *Focus on Consistent Information:* Make sure all of the “channels” of information you provide, such as your web site, emails and chat, phone systems and customer service agents, smartphone apps, and social media outlets are offering the same information to all customers who use your services.
- *Leverage Today's Technology and Data:* The multi-channel, virtual, and ‘cloud’ based technologies now available to managers make it much easier to see a complete picture of their enterprise—and to make smarter and more customer-focused decisions.
- *Make Customer Experience One of Your Core Functions:* Consider creating a Customer Experience or Marketing Officer at the Executive Level to emphasize the importance of the voice of the customer. This can not only improve performance, but reduce operating costs as well!

Chris' expertise in this area should be particularly valuable to our Federal customers, because on April 27, 2011, the White House issued an executive order entitled “Streamlining Service Delivery and Improving Customer Service.” The executive order instructed all Federal Agencies to come up with ways to use improve customer service within six months. In a statement to the news media, President Obama said: “Government managers must learn from what is working in the private sector and apply these best practices to deliver services better, faster, and at lower cost...The Federal Government has a responsibility to streamline and make more efficient its service delivery to better serve the public.”

Chris and SAG's entire team have the experience and know-how to help your agency review its Customer Service programs and implement projects that will meet the President's goal in a relatively short time frame. In the next few weeks, Chris will be going into greater detail on this subject on our blog. Read his posts at <http://sinclairadvisorygroup.blogspot.com/>. If you'd like to discuss a potential project with Chris, email him at Chris.Domergue@sinclairadvisorygroup.com.

SAG, VSN 5 ENTER INTO NEW AGREEMENT

Some of our readers may not know that the Sinclair Advisory Group, besides being a veteran-owned small business, is a GSA Contract Holder on Schedule 874 for Management, Organizational and Business Improvement Services (MOBIS.) Under this schedule, we are able to provide specialized consulting, training, and facilitation services in support of agencies' mission oriented business functions.

Last month, we entered into a Blanket Purchase Agreement with Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 5 of the Department of Veterans Affairs. This new agreement will allow the VISN to issue task orders to SAG for strategic planning, leadership development, and other expert advisory services. This arrangement saves time by eliminating repetitive, individual

purchases and payments; reduces paperwork; and allows for quicker turnarounds on orders.

We thank VISN 5 for the trust they have shown in us, and would welcome inquiries from any other Government organization that might be interested in entering into a similar arrangement. For more information, contact Seth Sinclair at Seth.Sinclair@sinclairadvisorygroup.com.

MAY BLOG POSTS

Here are the articles that appeared in our *Sinclair Speaks* blog in May. Check them out, and all our posts, at <http://sinclairadvisorygroup.blogspot.com/>.

- *Four Steps to Improving Customer Service*, by Chris Domergue. A four-step planning process to help Federal agencies, or any business, improve their customer interactions.
- *Praise Works Wonders*, by Ev Chasen. A discussion of the role of praise in employee performance--when should it be given, how often, and in what ways.
- *How Leaders Make Decisions*, by Seth Sinclair. Learn what leaders should do when faced with a difficult decision, and conflicting advice from their advisors and staff.
- *When to Train Employees--and Why*, by Stan Sinclair. Why many managers are wrongly afraid to send their employees to training--and when they should do so.

Got an idea for a future blog post? Want to write one yourself? Email Ev Chasen at Everett.Chasen@sinclairadvisorygroup.com. Thanks!

ASSOCIATES' AREA

Leadership Retreat: Members of SAG's leadership team will be holding a retreat on June 2-3 to discuss issues related to the future of our company, including our strategic direction and the possibility of building up our internal workforce. If you've got any ideas you'd like to share on this subject, either before or after the conference, contact Seth at Seth.Sinclair@sinclairadvisorygroup.com.

Help Wanted: In anticipation of future projects and growth opportunities, SAG will soon be soliciting candidates for business consultant positions. Responsibilities include supporting our clients and projects by providing strategic planning, business analysis, project management and process reengineering services. Formal position descriptions and application instructions will be posted to our website and on other channels in June.

THE LAST WORD

You are receiving this newsletter because you either are, or have expressed interest in becoming, a client or Associate of Sinclair Advisory Group LLC. To unsubscribe, click [here](#), and type "Unsubscribe" in the subject line of the memo.

Sinclair Advisory group is located at 13665 Dulles Technology Drive, Suite 200, Herndon, VA 20170. Our telephone number is 703-885-8180. We are a Veteran Owned Small Business, an Equal Opportunity Employer, and a GSA Contract Holder (Contract Number: GS-10F-0272V.)

Visit us on the web at www.sinclairadvisorygroup.com.