

Making Sense of the Market

Exploring Opportunities for

M²: The Institute for Experiential Jewish Education

November 2019

In July 2019, M²: The Institute for Experiential Jewish Education hired Rosov Consulting to conduct a preliminary study of the market in which they operate.

To better understand the needs and interests of likely candidates for M² programs, the Rosov team conducted interviews with a carefully curated sample of Jewish professionals to answer the following questions:

- **Why do Jewish professionals pursue professional development (PD) experiences?**
- **What are the types of PD Jewish professionals are generally seeking, in terms of structure and content?**
- **How are Jewish professionals perceiving the market of PD offerings in terms of quantity and quality?**
- **How do Jewish professionals weigh and choose from different PD options?**
- **What sort of PD is of interest to professionals in sectors typically not reached by M²?**
- **Why do professionals choose not to enroll in M²?**
- **Do the colleagues of M² alumni constitute a viable market for recruitment?**

Sectors of Interest

Youth Serving Organizations 2	<i>Not a sector that is underserved by M²</i>		
			
Community Organizations 5			
Day School 5			
Congregational/Part-Time Education 8			
Early Childhood Education 5			

Sole Participants | 6*
M² alumni who are the sole professionals from their organization to have participated in an M² program.

- ⌚ Whether or not the coworkers of such alumni might be valuable targets for future M² participation

* Two "sole participants" were not the only individuals from their organization to participate in M².

Near Miss | 8
Jewish professionals who inquired about or who were solicited to participate in M² programs, but who did not enroll.

- ⌚ Why they decided not to enroll, and whether there was anything else M² could have done to solicit their participation

Non-Inquirer | 11
Jewish professionals who have not been in contact with M², but who are prime candidates for M² programs.

- ⌚ Professional development interests and needs of this group, as well as their perspective on prior professional development experiences

WHAT WE KNOW NOW

- **Jewish professionals are intentional in their pursuit of professional development.** They seek experiences that are salient to their specific work and to their career stage. They are also looking to keep their professional passion, knowledge, and skills fresh by learning from the best and the brightest in their field.
- **Most Jewish professionals are hungry for high-quality professional development experiences** that speak to their needs, and most do not find the market of professional development experiences to be oversaturated.
- On the whole, **most Jewish professionals prefer (1) professional development experiences with colleagues who work in similar settings and (2) cohort-based experiences.** However, those who are relatively new to their role prefer one-off experiences to time-consuming cohort experiences.
- **M²'s program offerings are well-aligned with their recruitment of senior professionals** who tend to seek professional development opportunities that are focused on leadership, self-reflection, and relational work, as opposed to opportunities that are focused on more rudimentary skill- and knowledge-building.

FUTURE MARKETS

- **Early Childhood Education (ECE) professionals and educators may be better reached by establishing an M² presence at ECE-focused conferences**, since this is a primary form of professional development sought by professionals in this sector (e.g. the Paradigm Project conference, family and children sections of the URJ Biennial, and Federation-led ECE conferences).
- **Senior professionals in other sectors that are currently underserved by M² would also be better reached by establishing presence in the sectors' professional networks**, and the Jewish professionals in these sectors—including day schools, community organizations, and congregational/part-time education—would likely benefit from M² programs.
- **The workplaces of M² alumni are potential sites for recruiting future M² program participants**, provided that the coworkers of alumni are eligible senior professionals, and providing that budgets and schedules allow for their participation.
- **M² would benefit from a deferral process for professionals who are invited to participate in their programs but must decline due to scheduling conflicts**. The seriousness with which M² takes its application process positively communicates the gravitas and high caliber of the program to potential participants, but the lack of a deferral process may be a deterrent to the future participation of professionals who would otherwise very much like to attend.

GETTING THE WORD OUT

- **More aggressive marketing and recruitment for M² programs—that are clear and understandable to target audiences as relevant and interesting opportunities—may benefit M²'s recruitment process significantly.** For instance, unless a professional has already heard of M² programs, “M-squared” does not signify anything immediately recognizable or indicate the content or nature of M²'s work.
- The relevance and value of professional development program content is arguably the most important factor that Jewish professionals weigh when considering PD options. **It is imperative that M²'s marketing and recruitment communications make an effective value proposition to Jewish professionals** that is based in an understanding of the types of professional development that are most compelling to Jewish professionals in different professional sectors and of different levels of seniority.
- Those who have participated in M² and understand M²'s portfolio of program offerings think very highly of them. Because reputation among professional peers is a significant factor for Jewish professionals weighing professional development options, **involving M² alumni in recruitment may benefit M²'s market reach.**
- When organizational decisionmakers are unfamiliar with M², they are not likely to fund staff participation in M² programs. **Targeted marketing directed towards organizational decisionmakers—those who control professional development budgets and oversee professionals who are eligible for M² programs—may enhance the effectiveness of M²'s recruitment efforts.**



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