



TMC MARKETING

CASE STUDY

Kenosha Fire Department

How a Recruitment Video Sparked a 22% Surge in Applicants and a Lasting Public-Sector Partnership

INDUSTRY

Public Safety / Government

SERVICES

Video Production
Content Strategy

ENGAGEMENT

2021 – Present

Client Overview

The Kenosha Fire Department (KFD) serves the City of Kenosha, Wisconsin, providing fire suppression, emergency medical services, hazardous materials response, and technical rescue. Like many fire departments across the country, KFD has faced growing challenges in recruiting new firefighters — particularly in attracting a diverse candidate pool that reflects the community they serve.

TMC Marketing began working with KFD in 2021 when the department reached out for help with a recruitment video designed to support their diversity and hiring initiatives. That single project evolved into an ongoing video production and content strategy partnership that has spanned years and expanded into multiple public-sector engagements across Kenosha County and the surrounding region.

+22% Applicant Increase	116K+ YouTube Views	3.5× More FB Reel Views vs. Dept. Content	5+ Partnerships Earned
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The Challenge

When KFD first reached out to TMC Marketing, the department was facing critical recruitment challenges that threatened their ability to maintain staffing levels and build a department that reflected the diversity of the Kenosha community:

- 1. **All-Time Low Applicant Numbers:** Applications for firefighter positions had dropped to historic lows, making it increasingly difficult to fill open spots and maintain adequate staffing across the department.
- 2. **Diversity Gap:** The department's applicant pool did not reflect the diversity of the community KFD serves. Leadership recognized this as both a strategic priority and a public service responsibility.
- 3. **Reaching the Right Audience:** Traditional recruitment methods — job boards, print ads, and word of mouth — were not reaching the younger, more diverse demographics the department wanted to attract. KFD needed a modern approach to tell their story.

TMC Marketing's Strategy

TMC Marketing approached KFD's recruitment challenge as both a storytelling opportunity and a strategic content initiative — producing video content that would humanize the profession, showcase the department's values, and reach audiences that traditional methods could not.

Phase 1 — Recruitment Video: "Be Part of Something More"

A professionally produced recruitment video featuring real KFD firefighters, highlighting the daily realities of the job and the department's commitment to diversity and community service. It launched ahead of the 2022 application cycle for maximum impact.

Phase 2 — Showcasing Firehouse Life

TMC shifted to humanizing the department by showing life inside a firehouse. The centerpiece was "A Day in the Life of a Firefighter" — TMC embedded with KFD's busiest station for an entire 24-hour shift on the Saturday of 4th of July weekend. This was complemented by community-facing content like cooking segments and interview preparation guides.

Phase 3 — Documenting the Path to Becoming a Firefighter

Focused on what it takes to earn a spot on Wisconsin's third-largest fire department, which runs one of the toughest Basic Recruit Training (BRT) programs in the state. TMC produced "Rise of the 12 Strong," a multi-part documentary following recruits through the grueling training process — building recruitment interest and community pride.

Facebook Reels: High-Performing Short-Form Content

TMC produced a steady stream of Facebook Reels showcasing training, department culture, and recruitment messaging. TMC-produced reels averaged approximately 8,600 views each vs. roughly 2,500 on the department's own content — a **3.5× performance difference** that underscored the value of professional content strategy in short-form social formats.

YouTube Channel Growth Strategy

TMC managed KFD's YouTube presence with a content calendar designed to build long-term viewership. Titles, thumbnails, and descriptions were optimized for search and discovery, resulting in significant organic reach for a municipal department channel.

Results: Recruitment Impact

The recruitment video launched ahead of KFD's 2022 application period and delivered immediate, measurable results:

+22%

Increase in firefighter applicants following the launch of the TMC-produced recruitment video — reversing a trend of historically low application numbers.

"This project resulted in a 22% increase in applicants. Their efforts on the video project were formally recognized by CVMIC through its 'Member Spotlight' program."

— 2022 KFD Annual Report, Fire Chief's Message

Industry Recognition

The Kenosha Fire Department was honored with the **2022 CVMIC Member Spotlight Award** for their efforts in diversifying the department through the recruitment video produced by TMC Marketing. This recognition validated both the department's commitment to building a more representative workforce and the effectiveness of video as a recruitment tool in the public sector.

Results: Content Performance

Since becoming KFD's video production partner, TMC Marketing has produced 18 videos for the department's YouTube channel. The content has generated significant reach for a municipal government channel — well beyond typical public-sector benchmarks.

116,181	7,344	910	1.66M	4.66%
YouTube Views	Watch Hours	Subscribers	Impressions	Avg. CTR

Top Performing YouTube Content

Video Title	Views	Watch Hrs	CTR
A Day in the Life of a Firefighter *	84,666	6,038	4.42%
Cooking with Fire Ft. Lt. Mike Zoerner	8,428	415	6.56%
Recruitment: "Be Part of Something More"	5,742	174	9.23%
Rise of the 12 Strong: Part 1	4,804	438	5.38%
B Shift Training: Hose Advancement	2,979	11	4.19%
Interviewing Tips for KFD	2,359	34	6.90%

** TMC embedded with KFD's busiest station for an entire 24-hour shift on the Saturday of 4th of July weekend — one of the department's most demanding days of the year.*

Facebook Reels: TMC vs. Department Content

Beyond YouTube, TMC produced a series of Facebook Reels for KFD that dramatically outperformed the department's own social content. Across 8 TMC-produced reels, total views exceeded 68,900 — averaging roughly 8,600 views per reel, compared to approximately 2,500 views per reel on KFD's two internally produced pieces.

	TMC-Produced Reels	KFD-Produced Reels
Number of Reels	8	2

Total Views	68,900+	~4,900
Avg. Views per Reel	~8,600	~2,500
Performance Index	3.5×	1× (baseline)

This contrast highlights a consistent pattern: professionally produced short-form content, even for a municipal audience, significantly outperforms organically created posts. The combination of strong storytelling, professional editing, and strategic framing gave KFD a social presence that connected with their community and reinforced recruitment messaging.

The Ripple Effect

One of the most significant outcomes of the KFD partnership has been its compounding impact on TMC Marketing's public-sector portfolio. The quality of the work produced for KFD has directly led to new engagements with organizations across Kenosha County and the surrounding region — a testament to the value of doing excellent work for the right client.

Organization	Scope of Work
Joint Fire & Training Academy (JFTA)	Specialized content production and strategic consulting
Kenosha County & City of Kenosha	Public-sector content and strategic digital assets
Kenosha County ADRC	Accessible, authoritative community-focused content
Salem Lakes Fire & Rescue	Strategic support and content for regional fire services
Somers Fire Department	Strategic support and content for regional fire services
Oak Creek Fire Department	Recruitment video and short-form content production

This expansion from a single recruitment video into an ongoing, multi-organization partnership demonstrates the power of strategic content production in the public sector. When the work speaks for itself, the relationships follow.

Need video content that delivers real results?

Contact TMC Marketing to learn how strategic video production can support your recruitment, community engagement, and organizational storytelling.

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