

Session: Overcoming the Challenges to Sustained Programming for Outdoor Recreation Facilities

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Note Taker: Tom Fassbender, Red Tail Outfitters; redtail@hbc.com

Reduced staff – funding

Recognition of need our value for providing services

Interplay between entertainment and education – What is our job?

School funding for out of school learning

Outreach to different audiences – Thinking differently

 Going beyond the school as our primary audience

Justifying our existence

Identity confusion – who and what we are / doing.

Trends:

Loosing site of 'mission' and need to raise revenue

Increased cost of energy

Being recruiters or mentors

Marketing 'what is our message' – reignite our message

Our role as a recruiter for conversationalists

How do we integrate 'nature' into participant's daily lives?

Nature center education

Letting others determine what our goals are

How do new trends effect our current values

Making environmental values more attainable for younger students

Being in control of our mission

-Reaching the changing demographics

How do we find out what?

 Do people want to do when they go outdoors: i.e. Geocaching

Changing needs (programs/ how the resources are used, impact natural resources.

How do we get kids to 'fall in love'?

 By engaging with nature

Counteract the negative messages of media around environmental issues

Karen

Need to be community based: . . . research

Know your customers

 72 Benefits

 56 Sources

 38 User Groups

1. Know your customers – groups of users
2. Know your benefit message
3. Things

Localize – Make neighbors feel welcome

Package services to membership – one time fee vs. daily rate

Nature center THINK TANK

Larger community events to raise awareness

Program Examples:

Grandparents day – intergenerational

Lorax – running wild (women running to raise money for center)

Perma-culture – look it up

Serving social problem through nature

TNC

Revised Revenue

Mission Revenue – Multiple visits

Developing partnerships to move to more sustainable users

Tom:

Justify our existence

Managing for fiscal sustainability

Budget 11 – 20 percent revenue -31 percent to date

Board wanted doubled revenue – changes made

Accessed programs for efficiency

Increased program fees

Process to access quality

Group scheduled – larger percentage of return, encouraged larger groups

Need to answer hard questions

Tracking by breaking items down, appeases ‘bean counters’

Maurice

Mantra: providing visitors with a frequent positive experience in the outdoors

Large amounts of dollars from big groups but require a larger investment of time – Not frequent, only one time

Strong Partnerships with Early Childhood Program (both groups needs were met: dedicated space, and fees compensate one paid position.)

Children are given very frequent experiences outdoors (same group year round)

Partnership – White Bear center for the arts required space for painting classes – serve both and gained strength through diversification

Partnership – East Metro integration district (4 – 7th grade) paired with St. Paul students learned about each other while learning about the environments. Less cross cultural lessons and more on environment

Tom Anderson

Issue – transportation to rural site

Friends groups Scholarship fund

Sold the benefit of the experience in nature

Selling the message to community

Because of private organization, they were not allowed to charge school groups and school groups were facing difficulties getting buses to site, so a scholarship program was established and a compelling story was used to gain funding.

Adopted an outreach program to go into schools – program became a marketing tool to get kids to attend nature center
It is now a sustainable program
In order to make the ‘sale’ they had to adapt the story to the audience.

Common Themes or Gaps in BP

Marketing the story – benefits

Creating alliances

Approach message from community’s perspective

Story – about creative piece

We are under attack

 We are being forced to redefine our selves

 Need to discuss values

As we find success we need to toot our own horn – weather nature center or parks or open spaces

Nature Deficit Disorder

Should we be assessing our rules “Off-trend”

Example of fantastic forts

Message directed at users

Need to justify why ‘we’ are here

Few people have attachment to the outdoors

Join forces with private sector

Are we teaching the right thin

Top Priorities for move summit forward:

Selling ourselves as leaders in science through the environmental and hands on learning

Shared Values

 Our role in developing math, science skills in our efforts

 Competing in the global economy –

Kids reached earth through experiences – engaged in nature – interdisciplinary

We are all allies to each other

Bring forward –

 Contacts or challenges

Help us indemnify what an environment

Literate child “looks like” What does an environmentally conscious person look like and how do we take them from K through 12

Continue learning with experience in natures

Find ways to teach young adults to enjoy and learn in nature

Market to the fear factor

Find ways to immerge multi entry points

Facts:

We are content – may have set our

We are being forced to change

It maybe marketing us better?

Review for – value added programs

Issues Moving forward?