Marketing and Community Outreach in the Finger Lakes Boating Museum
Brian Lynch
Hobart and William Smith Colleges

MISSION STATEMENT

The Finger Lakes Boating Museum

The Finger Lakes Boating Museum is an organization founded in 1997 to preserve the boating heritage in the Finger Lakes region. Over the last century, the Finger Lakes region housed nearly 50 different commercial boat builders. The boating industry supported tourism and development in the region, while providing innovation in boating. The museum's mission is to "collect, preserve and interpret objects relative to boating and boating history... within the Finger Lakes Region and to research, document and disseminate information showcasing boating in the region."

The museum was originally organized by a group of dedicated antique and classic boating enthusiasts. Over the last fifteen years, our collection has grown, along with support from the community. Recently, we have taken the steps necessary to construct the museum by acquiring funds from the local and state governments. With this, we hope to create a center for education and discovery in the Geneva community.

PURPOSE AND HYPOTHESIS

The purpose of my study is to examine the current status of the museum financially, and within the Geneva community. I expect to gain insight into the market for museums, and provide an outlook for future years in budgeting and community relations. By comparing similar maritime museums, I will determine which areas are crucial for the successful development of the museum. I will conclude my study by providing recommendations for the allocation of resources based on our expected First Year Operating Budget.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methods
-Researched museum websites to gain understanding of museum markets and practices
-Compared available budget for the Finger Lakes Boating Museum with budget information of similar museums
-Examined marketing features of museums nationwide, focusing on comparable museums.
-Examined other outstanding budget items in current Finger Lakes Boating Museum budget.

Research Materials
-Museum websites for general research
-Tax Form 990 for budget information
-Finger Lakes Boating Museum First Year Operating Budget for comparison
-Excel for comparative tables and graphs

First, I researched maritime museum websites throughout the country to gain a sense of the role of museums and their function. With this, I was able to identify marketing techniques and community relations through events held by the museums. Additionally, I identified similarities in the websites to see where our website should improve. With this comparison I determined our museum to be a small market museum based on our budget, current membership, location, and size. Next, I explored tax forms to determine specific budget information applicable to our museum. From the Form 990s, I was able to gain information in annual revenue, membership revenue, admissions revenue, retail revenue, and event revenue for fifteen comparable maritime museums. With this, I created a table with these figures, and formed ratios of each variable to the overall revenue. Next, I created scatterplots displaying the trend of each variable's revenue with an increasing operating budget. Finally, I compared my results to our current First Year Operating Budget, and drew conclusions based on my findings.

RESULTS

In my comparative budget analysis, I found these five variables constitute only 39% of the revenue earned by maritime museums. On average, membership revenue makes up 11%, admissions 8%, retail sales 3%, and events 17%. Additionally, the charts show different trends with the growth of operating budgets. As the operating budget increases, membership and event revenues proportionally rise. Alternatively, admissions and retail revenues stay relatively constant.

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

Overall, my research has shown the revenue generated by memberships, admissions, retail, and events in maritime museums. Specifically, I have shown that membership revenue outweighs admissions revenue, and retail revenue is miniscule. Furthermore, events attract a majority of revenue by engaging community interest in the museum. In comparing my research to the First Year Operating Budget, I conclude our expected revenue to be mostly accurate. However, the First Year Operating Budget fails to include event revenue. Therefore, we should focus our efforts on community relations and events to increase awareness and membership. Initially, we should focus on advertising and promotion in the local area. One cost effective form of advertising is a billboard. At $895 a month, billboards offer an efficient way to promote the museum and attract a tourist market. The ultimate goal of the museum is to become a tourism hub and community center for the Geneva area. With an estimated 40,000 weekly commuters through the Geneva area, we can expect to gain recognition among tourists. Along with promotion, we must also focus our efforts on community involvement to gain members and visitors. I propose a family admission rate, partnerships with local organizations, and a focus on classes and events. Most museums in my research have partnered with their local Boys and Girls Clubs branches to bring in children and families. As part of the museum experience, Scouts will earn a badge through classes in model boat building, knot tying, and boating safety. Furthermore, these classes should be offered to the public, as a way to increase the knowledge of boating. Finally, we should also work with the Geneva schools to promote field trips. In sum, once the museum is built, we must establish a sense of the role of museums and their function. With this, I was able to identify marketing techniques and community relations through events held by the museums. Additionally, I identified similarities in the websites to see where our website should improve.

SOURCES


BACKGROUND

We hope you find this template useful! This one is set up to yield a 48x36” (4x3”) horizontal poster.

We’ve put in the headings we usually see in these posters, you can copy and paste and change to your heart’s content! We’ve left our text in red so you’ll know what text you have brought in, and be sure to get rid of anything we put in. We suggest you use black text against a light background so that it is easy to read. Background color can be changed in format-background-drop down color menu.

The boxes around the text will automatically fit the text you type, and if you click on the text, you can use the little handles that appear to stretch or squeeze the text boxes to whatever size you want. You can simply delete the boxes by going to format-colors and lines and selecting no line.

The dotted lines through the center of the piece will not print, they are for alignment. You can move them around by clicking and holding them, and a little box will tell you where they are on the page. Use them to get your pictures or text boxes aligned together.

We suggest you not use semi-transparent fills, which can be troublesome in printing.

How to bring things in from Excel and Word

Excel- select the chart, hit edit-copy, and then edit-paste into PowerPoint. The chart can then be stretched to fit as required. If you need to edit parts of the chart, it can be ungrouped. Watch out for scientific symbols used in imported charts, which PowerPoint will not recognize as a used font unless you used it elsewhere on the poster, and may print improperly if we don’t have the font installed on our system. It is best to stick with Arial, Times New Roman, and Symbol to avoid font problems.

Word- select the text to be brought into PowerPoint, hit edit-copy, then edit-paste the text into a new or existing text block. This text is editable. You can change the size, color, etc. in format-text. We suggest you not put shadows on smaller text. Charts and tables that come in funny, or look bad when you try to resize existing text block. This text is editable. You can change the size, color, etc. in format-text. We suggest you not put shadows on smaller text. Charts and tables that come in funny, or look bad when you try to resize.

Scans

We need images to be 72 to 100 dpi in their uncompressed .tif file per square foot of image. For instance, a 3x5 photo that will be 6x10 in size on the final poster should be scanned at 200 dpi.

We prefer that you import .tif or .jpg images into PowerPoint. If you are designing your poster on a PC and using digital pictures generated on a Mac, be sure to convert them to .tif or .jpg before bringing them into PowerPoint. PICT files will display but not print.

Preview: To see your poster in actual size, go to view-zoom-100%. This is a good way to be sure your pictures are going to look OK.

Feedback: If you have comments about how this template worked for you, email to sales@megaprint.com.

We listen! Call us at 800-590-7850 if we can help in any way!