VIRTUAL MARKETING

Today’s trend is shifting away from traditional media to virtual media with 70% of Americans being online. This session focused on how parks and recreation could use virtual media more in the field. The session discussed social networking, promotion, and use of web pages in accordance to virtual marketing. Virtual marketing is location and time independent for the company and the user, making it more efficient and current.

Internet use was offered as a way of social networking. This type of networking includes emails, text, blogs, and voice chat. Through these different forms of media, communicating to consumers can be done in your desired format. Blogs are also a great way to share new information, receive feedback, and get ideas. Blogging is a growing area because it is not limited to time and space. Tapping into this network will open up ways to have forums and other open communication processes.

Much of a company’s marketing can be done through their main webpage. However, if the webpage is never found it does not matter what is available to the consumers. Google analytics gives a company the option to purchase key words that people would use to look for a business or program. It also provides different charts on who, what, and how often these words or a site is accessed.

Once a strong link to your webpage is created you can add more interaction on your main webpage. This could include links, videos and podcast, and downloads. Establishing links with other companies that you work with, or even to your own pages, brings more people and information to your area. Videos and podcast can also be used for marketing different programs.
Having the ability to download forms and other paperwork not only saves the company money but also makes people go to the website and gives them opportunity to explore it.

A great way for a company to get started with virtual marketing is by checking with staff to see what they know and can do in relationship with virtual media. Next, a company needs to create a virtual marketing plan. This would include what you are going to do now and goals for the future including a timeline. These ideas can help any company including those in the park and recreational field.
Virtual Marketing

Presented
by
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What Is Virtual Marketing?

- Creates and delivers digital content
- Engages and interacts with individuals
- Provides and exchanges information
Why Use Digital Marketing?

- Allows to highly target messages
- Personalizes messages
- Is cost-effective
- Is pervasive
Jump on the ‘Bandwidth’ or be Left Behind…

A few statistics about digital media:
• Today 70 percent of U.S. population or 210,575,000 people are online
• U.S. – top user in the world
• Retired adults spend nine hours/week
• Average searches per month – 77
Moore’s Law

In 1965, Intel’s co-founder Gordon E. Moore stated that integrated circuits including memory capacity and processing speed grow exponentially.

Since 1965, memory and speed of a microchip have been doubling every 18 months and are expected to continue for another 10 years.
Virtual History...

The Internet celebrated its 30th anniversary since the first Internet transmission on November 22, 1977.
How Digital Marketing Changes Advertising

- Gradual reduction of print materials
- Printing off-site by users
- Cost reduction
- Shift away from traditional media
- Highly personalized messages/promotions
Digital Media Spending

Globally
• 2007 global spending increased 28.2 percent
• Other media grew only 3.9 percent

U.S.
• 2007 US spending increase estimated at 18.9 percent
• Other media growth projected at 1.4 percent

U.S. online ad spending grows 13.5 times faster than conventional media
Digital Media Trends

- Increased downloads of music and entertainment
- Followed by video downloads (in 2007 – 36 percent of Internet users watched a TV show or video stream online compared to 28 percent end of 2005)
- One in five adults use social networking media
Advanced Technologies

• Promote virtual marketing opportunities

• Are location and time independent
Social Networking Audience

Social networking has become a key online activity and is estimated to attract more than one billion users within five years.

- Captive audience
- Use regularly
- Form strong relationship with the site
- Adopting social networking as a “digital” lifestyle
Social Networking Happens Now

- Text messaging
- E-mail
- Video
- Blogs
- File sharing
- Voice chat
- Discussion groups
- Online chat
User Groups Include

By type of recreation

• Dog park users
• Runners
• Skate boarders
• Boaters
• Golfers
• Bikers
• Adult learners
• And many more…

Other types of groups

• Ethnic groups
• Foreign language groups
• People with disabilities
• Demographic groups
Virtual Marketing Channels

- Web sites
- Search engine marketing
- Keyword marketing
- E-mail blasts
- Blogs
- Podcasts
- Online banner ads
- Streaming video
- Mobile messaging
Web Site

- Supports most other virtual marketing efforts
- Optimize navigation and organization
- Create high visibility through search engine optimization and search engine marketing

Examples:
- ✓ Provide downloadable maps of parks and services
- ✓ Offer access to area videos, information boards, blogs and podcasts
What Are SEO And SEM?

Search Engine Optimization - SEO

The process to increase number of visitors to the site by ranking high in the search results of a search engine – it includes all efforts to make the site better!

Search Engine Marketing - SEM

Performance-based ads purchased in a real time auction at a pay-per-click rate and paid inclusion to increase the positioning and visibility of sites and drive traffic!
SEO Guidelines

- Write appropriate titles/descriptions
- Create appealing “main” pages
- Develop correct site architecture (to promote search engine “spiders”, algorithms)
- Purchase performance-based placements and ads (pay-per-click and paid inclusion)
Thoughts on Finding the Right “Key” Words

- Consider your customer’s interests – What keywords will he most likely use?
- Optimize your Web site content, especially main/landing page
- Evaluate cost of keywords (bids are based on demand)
- Compare providers - (Google – CPC (cost-per-click) and CTR (click-through-rate) impact rank – Yahoo – driven by CPC only
Example

Google AdWords
E-mail Blasts

- Use a high quality e-mail list or better yet
- Compile an opt-in list (get permission first)
- Provide a clear method to opt out
- Avoid buzzwords like “free” and “act now”
- Include a clear call to action
- Keep content short and succinct
- Limit links to avoid confusion

Examples:
✓ Provide opt-in program to promote new services, special events, important news
✓ Guide traffic to Web site and special features
Blogs

• The blogosphere is now 70 million Web logs wide
• About 120,000 new Web logs are created each day
• 1.5 million posts per day
• 1.4 new blogs are created every second
• 17 posts are made every second
“Blog” Importance

- Bloggers are the new influentials
- Blogs build trust
- Blogs can drive traffic to your site
- Reporters use blogs as sources
- Blogs are cheap, cheap, cheap – (free)
- Blogging builds relationships and credibility
Rules of “Blog”

- Know your audience
- Engage your audience
- Stay current
- Stay credible
- Conversational
- Consistent
- Be a “real” host (with profile and no ghost host)
Online Chats and Message Boards

• “User Generated Content” – UGC is here to stay (YouTube, MySpace, etc. are no fads)
• Ad spending on UGC sites increased nearly ten times in 2006
• Provides a forum for participation and sharing, monitor and manage responses

Example:
✓ Provide updates on events and services, such as the opening of a pool and provide space for comment
Podcasting

- Promote programs
- Support recruitment and retention of staff
- Provide information
- Reach diverse groups
- Can be highly targeted

Examples:
- Create training and sightseeing audio
- Provide relevant current news
Podcasting Research

Almost Two in Five Have Heard of Podcasting

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Audio Podcast Listening Shows Slight Growth

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<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>13%</td>
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Online Banner Ads

- Complements other online marketing efforts
- Uses flash to create attention and drives traffic to your site
- Provides highly target exposure by site and region

Example:
✓ Create ads for special events such as festivals, park openings, new services
Streaming Video

- Requires simple video equipment
- Creates excitement
- Provides atmosphere and information

Examples:
- ✓ Invite visitors to contribute video footage
- ✓ Create events through “feature” presentations
Mobile Messaging

• Reaches mobile phones and other hand-held devices
• Selectively targets consumers
• Keep messages short

Examples:
✓ Create alert system to warn against ozone, fire, storms, etc.
✓ Provide information about local services, such as pool and park closings, up-to-date trail reports
## E-Government Research

Top four e-government countries in 2006  
(availability of online information and electronic services, privacy and security and public access)

1. South Korea  
2. Taiwan  
3. Singapore  
4. U.S.
Where do we Start?

- Ascertain budget and staffing capabilities
- Determine minimum of three strategic new media service areas
- Create a strategic virtual marketing plan
  - Choose three to four areas of online media
  - Develop action list for implementation
  - Create timeline
- Train Google Analytics
Google Analytics

“Analyzes your Web site’s traffic, who your users are, where they come from and how they interact with your site.”

• Free service from Google
• Helps to improve ads, site traffic
• Highly informative, data driven
Must Have… Google Analytics
Questions?