

Expanding the Promotional Media Mix to Aid the National Parks of Washington Proposal



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Executive Summary:

How can we as students create a proposal to encourage inner city youth and underrepresented groups to become invested in the National Parks system of the North Cascade region to preserve the National Parks?

In such a way we consider:

Sense of place

Education/interest

Demographics

Public knowledge

Nationalism (The importance of national parks to our American heritage)

We propose an expansion of the current promotional and informational services to engage and interact with unrepresented groups within urban areas. The following proposal will include and address all of the above.

Statement of Need:

The national parks have made several unsuccessful attempts to attract underrepresented groups and urban youth to their parks. The national parks liveliness is dependent on consistent traffic of both return and new consumers. These parks help preserve our American Identity and hold great value for environmental preservation.

Project Description:

The expanding of the promotional efforts would include the creation and maintenance of social media outlets (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube), updates and improvements to the website as well as the creation of a new logo specifically for the In My Back Yard program.

Social media is a direct and cost effective way to reach a large audience consistently. In order to maximize the NPS opportunities for potential impact, we have chosen to improve and expand the current mix NPS offers as well as linking the various networks together for easy maintenance and consistent updates. These include:

Facebook (Daily to Weekly): Promotional events, photo submission contests, volunteering opportunities, donation PayPal account linked, fact of the day, program descriptions and promotions, promotional giveaways, link to Constant Contact newsletter

Twitter (Daily- multiple times a day): Fact of the day and trivia, linked to post Instagram photos, animal sightings live tweeted, quick event reminders, hashtags specific to NPS events and programs

Pinterest (Daily- Weekly): Nature specific boards with NPS park pictures

Instagram (Daily- Weekly): NPS specific hashtags, NPS Official account with individual park accounts stemming from that

YouTube (Monthly- Quarterly): GoPro videos (a day in the life of a park ranger), promotional, event, and educational videos

Additional video promotional ideas are provided to reach a younger audience and encourage youth to enjoy the parks. Some ideas include:

Rap Video: to give an informational look at the neighboring national parks as well as being hip

Commercial: A catchy infomercial type deal that would present the information pertinent to the youth through the use of advertising

Park Footage: A collection of woodland park areas and beautiful serene nature accompanied by soothing music to showcase the beauty of the parks

A Documentary: A video including interviews with people about the national parks and factual information that is appealing to the public

The arrowhead logo is currently associated with the National Park Service across the country. The new, differentiated logos will provide a distinct identity for each Washington State park, as well as foster increased attention to the In My Back Yard program.



Figure shows proposed logo for Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park



Figure shows proposed logo for Mt. Rainier National Park

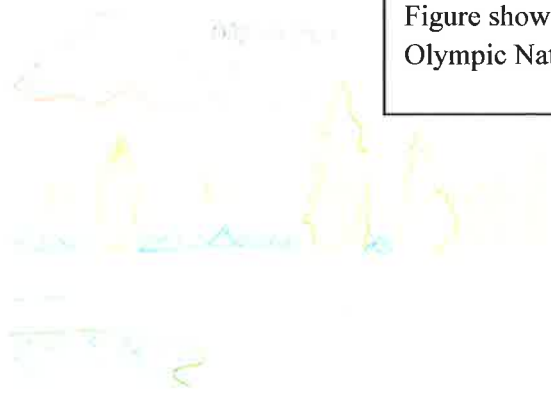


Figure shows proposed logo for Olympic National Park



Figure shows proposed logo for Nez Perce National Park



Figure shows proposed logo for San Juan historical park



Figure shows proposed logo for Olympic National Park

Linking all profiles together with the same hashtags and consistent communications officer will ensure that all social media accounts are protected and held accountable to one person for their upkeep.

One media outlet we've chosen to optimize is the Klondike Gold Rush Seattle Unit's website. While the current website is practical and functional, we have found several

ways to improve the overall aesthetic. Additionally, our added features will help foster an online community rather than merely a resource. These include:

Guestbook: Space for guests to describe their park experiences (blog-like, organized by park), tracked hashtags, photos (from social media outlets: posted with a tracked hashtag – not necessarily organized by park)

“Contact Us”: Brief description of rangers and their mission, FAQs (with a written response rather than links if possible), Email for questions that can be answered ASAP, social media links

Interactive Map: Animals, trails (with difficulty rating), lodging, camping, hazards, safety tips

Get Involved: Event calendar, environmental sustainability tips (e.g. recycling, conserving electricity), volunteering opportunities, donation/ PayPal account linked, junior ranger activities

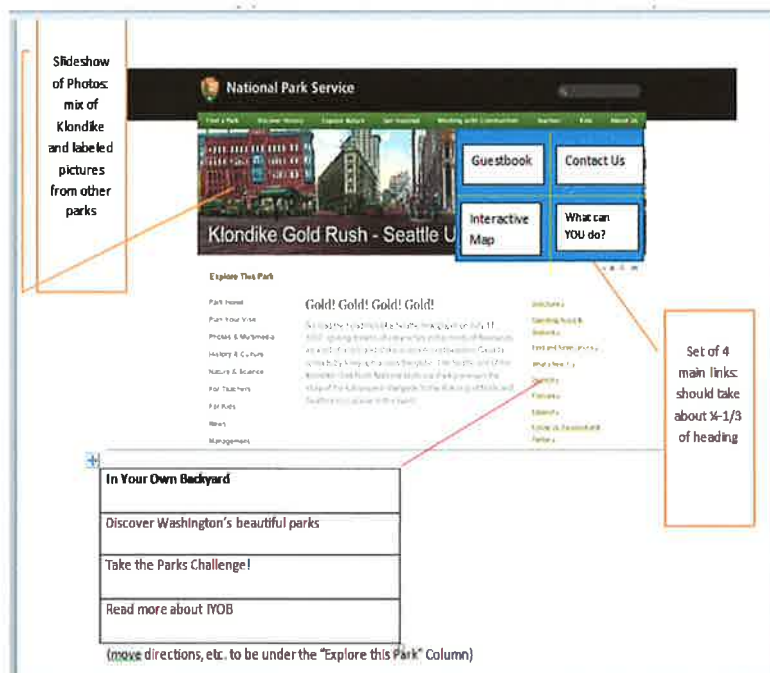


Figure show to left: Improvements to be made on current webpage

Budget Analysis:

As the budget is limited for this project, we have found that all our improvements and additions can be added and maintained within the current salary budget for one employee. Because these platforms can be updated and changed in addition to performing a ranger’s normal duty, the cost is nothing.

The return- on- investment in social media is priceless, we see that with the mass audiences active on social media and websites every day. Website traffic reports as well as social media view counts are easy to access and track online popularity growth.

Benefits:

- Mass audience/ consumer reach with little to no effort
- Personal connection to multiple people within one post, developing online presence within a community
- Adaptable form of media- is always open to change and evolution with growth of park
- Guestbook feature and shared photos will help foster a sense of place: guests can relate to other guests better than employees who they believe to have an agenda

Potential Obstacles/Drawbacks:

- Consistent posting is difficult, communications officer may not be willing
- Communications officer may not be apt to social media and may require training
- Communications officer may require basic webmaster training

Conclusion:

In conclusion, we propose that updating and adding to the plethora of media platforms that the NPS already uses would be beneficial to parks by reaching the urban youth who can interact with the outdoors through an online source. This solution can be put into action at any time and at a minimal cost. Media can provide potential for education, promotion and a source of donations all in one bundle that can be seen in any given short or long term projections. As stated, the solution addresses all of the factors listed in the problem statement, exemplifying the potential for great success.

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