Lacey Wegner

AAD 610

Marketing, Media, and Communications

13 March 2016

**Final Marketing Plan: Singing Creek Educational Center**

**Introduction and Overview of Plan**

 Singing Creek Educational Center, which was founded by Karen Rainsong, began implementing pioneer history and nature camps in May of 2015. Singing Creek just recently became a tax exempted 501©3 nonprofit organization and is trying to generate awareness within the Eugene area and surrounding communities. The mission of Singing Creek Educational Center is, according to the website, “To inspire children and families toward an appreciation of natural science and history through hands-on interactive learning” (singingcreekcenter.org). This mission statement introduces the main goals for Singing Creek Educational Center. They want to encourage a better understanding of natural science and history to all children and families. The website also states that to complete their mission they offer a variety of activities and events. The website states, “Our nature and history programs for children and families include school field trips, classes, spring break and summer camps, and special events” (singingcreekcenter.org). Although founder of Singing Creek, Karen Rainsong, has been in Eugene for many years and has made many connections through the community, her organization is still new and the general awareness of the organization is relatively low. Singing Creek is a start up organization that wants to share knowledge and hands-on learning with the Eugene and surrounding areas communities. However, in terms of marketing goals for this organization, they will need to focus on creating a general awareness about the opportunities and activities Singing Creek can offer to children and families.

 My main goal for this marketing plan will be to increase awareness of the nonprofit Singing Creek Educational Center to the Eugene community and surrounding areas. I also want to increase participation of summer camps, workshops and classes, and special events. This goal would include: enticing new customers to frequent the activities and events, as well as strengthen the group of already loyal followers. I want to encourage already loyal customers to spread the word of the organization and generate a higher rate of participation. I would also like to encourage more community partnerships with Singing Creek Educational Center. I believe there are many organizations in Eugene that could easily partner with Singing Creek for an outreach or fundraising event. I am hopeful that my three marketing strategies will help Singing Creek develop and grow as they prepare for future classes and events.

The three marketing strategies that I will include in this plan will be: social media marketing, coupon marketing, and direct marketing. All three of these marketing strategies can be beneficial to the organization by introducing new marketing ideas, as well as enhancing marketing strategies that are currently being used by Singing Creek Educational Center. Through the social media strategy, I will focus on Singing Creek’s website and Facebook page, while also introducing the use of Instagram to the organization’s social media marketing strategies. Singing Creek has a consistent presence on their website, however, they are in need of updating their Facebook page more frequently. Introducing Instagram will continue to promote the organization, while also connecting to a large audience. Coupon marketing will also be important in the development of their marketing strategies. Coupons can have an impact in the type of audience Singing Creek is trying to target by introducing a physical coupon, as well as a digital or cyber coupon. Direct marketing will include sending out newsletters and flyers to a mailing list that can benefit the already loyal customer of Singing Creek Educational Center and new potential customers.

My desired outcomes in using these three marketing strategies will be to increase the amount of ‘sharing’ and an increase of ‘likes’ and ‘friends’ on Facebook while also maintaining online presence. Another outcome would be the increase in participation of events. It would be interesting to see how many people would use a coupon for certain events depending on the discount offered. My final outcome would be to broaden the audience base of Singing Creek Educational Center. This would include marketing to cities around Eugene and building a more broad audience.

**Situational Analysis**

Economic Scan: The economic factors that influence the organization would be the prices of the classes and entry to events and the amount of disposable income that the customers might have. These are important factors because class prices and event entry charges need to be set at a reasonable price in order to accommodate a general audience attendance. Singing Creek makes most of its income on the summer camps that take place in June, July, and August. These summer camps cost $185 per child or $165 each for siblings for one week of camp. The total amount of children that could register for the camps was set at fifteen children. Last year, Singing Creek filled the June and July summer camps. In August only ten children attended the camp. The price of the camp is important in determining how much parents are willing to spend on their child’s summer camp activities.

 Another economic factor would be dependent on the school year. If Singing Creek wants to promote classes and workshops during the school year, they will have to consider how many people will attend a class during the school week. The target age range for these classes would be a child who attends school full time during the week. If possible, promoting a weekend class or initiating field trip tours might be highly beneficial when looking at attendance for classes.

 Most of the income for Singing Creek is generated from summer camp and tours of the granary. Singing Creek also generates the occasional income from classes held with partnering organizations. However, most of their income is dependent on attendance from their summer camp sign ups. Singing Creek is also not the only organization that promotes natural science and history. This creates a sense of competition between Singing Creek and other organizations. With this in mind, it is important for Singing Creek to implement new and innovative activities so as to compete with the other organizations and generate income from attendance.

Demographic Scan/Audience Analysis: The general target audience of Singing Creek Educational Center is Eugene and Junction City families with children ages six to thirteen. However, there are also people that have attended a fundraising event who are not from the Eugene area. The general makeup of attendance is both male and female, but summer camp attendance usually includes more females than males. The staff of the organization can also be included in this demographic scan. Besides collaboration with outside entrepreneurs and individuals, all of the staff members currently working for Singing Creek are female. A potential concern for Singing Creek would be that a large portion of the population in Eugene is based off of the population of the University of Oregon. According to the admissions fact page on the University of Oregon website, the median age range for undergraduate students is twenty-one (admissions.uoregon.edu). Although some of these students may have children the age of six, others may not. This means that a large portion of the population of Eugene might not be able to relate to the mission of the organization and thus, will not want to attend classes, workshops, or events.

Cultural Scan: The general cultural background for Singing Creek Education Center can be considered very diverse. The people who represent the organization are from different backgrounds and places, and the people who attend the events are also from different backgrounds. The social values of the organization can also relate to a variety of people. Singing Creek looks to encourage participation within the natural sciences and historical fields of study through hands-on interactive activities. This is an important part of their cultural scan because the type of product they are marketing can relate to a variety of people. Singing Creek also has a website and Facebook page where they can connect to a large and diverse group of people.

SWOC Analysis:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Strengths | Weaknesses | Opportunities | Challenges |
| Cultural Products | The classes, workshops, and events are culturally diverse. These events and classes consist of providing valuable information about the natural sciences and history.  | They should try to promote to more than just children and families. They should try to market students of the University of Oregon more. There are not very many opportunities for the student population.  | There are classes that are offered for the Eugene community and opportunities to partner with other organizations. These classes are available to people of varying backgrounds.  | They are a new organization with the same product as other institutions in the same area. In other words, they have competition in their field.  |
| Pricing |  They offer discounted summer camp attendance for siblings.  | They need to be careful how much they price certain classes and events. Some people will not want to pay high prices for these activities. But also they need to generate income so they need to make sure they are not pricing too low.  | There are many students at the University who would benefit from volunteering or being part of the organization. This could help with keeping some of the generated income from classes and events.  | They are a new organization that offers similar opportunities as other institutions. They have a lot of competition.  |
| Place (Access) | The classes and events are held on a farm near Junction City. There is plenty of parking and room to do a multitude of activities.  | Because the organization is located on a farm, it can be hard to locate. Might lose visitors if they do not know where they are going. It is also not located in Eugene or in the center of Junction City so people might not want to drive all the way out to the farm.  | The farm is huge and can offer a wide variety of space for visitors and events. There is opportunity for many events to occur at the farm.  | The challenge with the place is that it is not accessible to everyone. They would be challenged to provide other forms of transportation and parking services to multiple people.  |
| Promotional Efforts | They have their own website and are on Facebook. They also have an e-newsletter that goes to an email list every month or so.  | They are not on Instagram, and they do not have many posters or flyers being sent around town for classes or events.  | They could benefit from using posters around campus. They could also collaborate with other institutions to promote Singing Creek events  | They could benefit from promoting volunteer and internship positions to the UO campus.  |

**Scheme and Strategies**

I have chosen three different marketing strategies to use for the promotion of Singing Creek Educational Center. These marketing strategies include: Social Media Marketing, Coupon Marketing, and Direct Marketing. All three of these strategies will help in the generating of awareness for the organization.

Social Media Marketing will widen Singing Creek Educational Center’s social media reach. This would include creating an Instagram account. Instagram could be used to promote pictures of activities and events, as well as highlight participants. Instagram would also allow for certain hashtags to be made that can be recognizable to the organization and the collaborations made with Singing Creek. It would be important for Singing Creek to use Instagram when they are conducting classes or having a fundraising event. Pictures should be taken to document the day and then placed on Instagram with a caption. This caption could include a hashtag that recognizes Singing Creek and the event or class. For example, a signature hashtag for this organization could be #SingingCreek or #SingingCreekEdCenter. Hashtags are very simple to use and document the activities and experiences provided by the organization. Instagram posts should also be connected to the Facebook page. This would allow for multiple audiences to learn about any upcoming classes or events. Facebook and website posts should continue to be managed as part of the social media marketing strategy. At this time, Facebook and a website are the only forms of social media that Singing Creek uses to promote their classes and events. In this regard, Facebook and website posts need to be updated weekly and maintained. They should include any funding opportunities for people who visit the website, as well as the Facebook page. Since Singing Creek is a new organization, they are always looking for potential donors. Asking for funding on their website and Facebook page could increase awareness and allow for individual donations to be made. Their Facebook page should also include posts about relevant historical or natural science observations. This might include any partnerships they may be involved in, or general knowledge on the subject of nature and history.

The second marketing strategy will be the use of coupon marketing. Coupon marketing has been a relevant marketing strategy since 1894 and will be a useful tactic for promoting Singing Creek Educational Center’s camps and classes. Coupon marketing can be defined as the “[Discount](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/discount.html) [offer](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/offer.html) printed in [newspapers](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/newspaper.html) or [magazines](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/magazine.html), [attached](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/attached.html) to a [packaging](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/packaging.html), or mailed out. A [consumer](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/consumer.html) [redeems](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/redeem.html) a coupon by presenting it at the time of [paying](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/payer.html) for the discounted [product](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/product.html)” (businessdictionary.com, 2016). Coupons can allow for customers to buy a product or service with the option of a discounted price. The discounted price may make a difference in attendance and participation. I believe this type of strategy will be beneficial to the classes and camps that Singing Creek provides. They could implement this strategy by sending out printed physical coupons to a mailing list or they could make a digital coupon, which could be emailed to an email list. A type of coupon that could be used for Singing Creek would be a discount on the upcoming summer camps. They already offer a discount for sibling participants, but they could also offer a coupon for a cheaper admission. Coupons can be used to entice new customers while also encouraging loyal members to keep attending camps.

The final marketing strategy is the use of direct marketing. This type of strategy can be related to the second strategy coupon marketing. Direct marketing includes sending out newsletters and mail to directly contact the target audience. Direct marketing could also be used in the form of a coupon. Singing Creek Educational Center could directly mail out their coupons in order to promote their summer camps. Singing Creek already sends out an e-newsletter through email, but maybe Singing Creek could develop a program guide and send it out via mail, or email, to their prospective audiences. This program guide could inform visitors or customers on when summer camp registration begins, what the camps will include in terms of activities, what types of classes will be held in the fall, and what events or fieldtrips will be happening during the summer. A program guide could include a coupon for the summer camps, which could then be mailed back to Karen Rainsong or an alternate staff member. Developing a program guide with the intention of direct marketing can increase awareness for this nonprofit organization.

**Implementation**

For the social media aspect of my marketing plan, I want to implement a standard calendar that proposes dates and times of when certain news and information should be posted. The calendar will also include any coupons that might become available on the website to be printed out and redeemed at a later date. The point of the calendar will be to initiate a sense of responsibility and provide valuable information for future or current customers. The calendar will encourage staff at Singing Creek to post exciting news or update viewers on future events, which will bring awareness to the organization. Updating frequently will keep Singing Creek’s viewers interested, but there is also a balance that needs to be maintained when posting on social media. Constantly posting can be overwhelming for some individuals. Singing Creek needs to find the right balance when it comes to posting information about events or classes. Posting on Facebook and Instagram three times a week would be an ideal situation. If there is an event that happens on a random Saturday or Sunday, then another post should be added for the week. However, keeping a steady three posts per week will keep the viewers interested while also not being too overwhelming. For the website, posts can be twice to three times a week depending on any special events happening or any coupons that become available. Websites should remain clean and organized so that viewers are not confused by the amount of information. Too many posts per week and again, people might feel as if they can not catch up with all of the information provided. Singing Creek’s website needs to be engaging, as well as clear for all viewers.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
| Facebook | Post about current news |  | Post about nature and history resources in the community |  | Post about upcoming events or classes |  |  |
| Instagram | Post any pictures taken over the weekend |  | Post any links to important resources in the community |  | Post any pictures that may relate to upcoming events |  |  |
| Website |  | Post any news or information about camps, events, or classes  |  | Post any coupons for camps, events, or classes  |  | Post any news on events during the weekend |  |

The implementation of coupons can be connected to the social media calendar, or they can be a separate strategy. Coupons could be connected to the social media calendar by being available during certain times during the week. Similar to how some organizations promote their events. For example, the Hult Center has created a special deal on Wednesdays where all show tickets are half off the original price. Singing Creek could do something similar to this strategy by promoting ten dollars off summer camp on Thursdays each week. If people sign up for summer camps on Thursday, they can get a ten dollar off coupon that will be applied to their total. This is a fun way of engaging an audience and providing a discount for everyone. Another way to implement coupons could be through a mailing list. Coupons could be sent out to customers a couple of weeks before the summer camp registration opens. They could then either send in their coupon with their check, or they could pay online while using a code that can be found on the coupon. If people are given the option of receiving a discount, there might be a chance of increase in attendance.

The final strategy will be implemented through the use of couponing or a program guide. Direct marketing is used to send out direct mail to a potential audience. In this case, Singing Creek could send out coupons to their potential or veteran customers. As stated earlier, coupons could be sent out two weeks before registration opens, giving customers plenty of time to check dates and schedules and register for the camp. Another way to implement direct marketing would be to send out a program guide that included new and upcoming information for the next few months. This program guide should be sent out a month before the event or classes begin. This would allow for time to register as needed, as well as check scheduling since Singing Creek’s target audience is children and families. The program guide would need to be created a month before it went out to prospective customers, which would mean planning in advance and creating events and classes or workshops that can fill the program guide.

**Evaluation**

 The evaluation of all three marketing strategies for Singing Creek Educational Center will be important to document and record. The evaluation part is essential in seeing how many people are using the website, how many people are ‘liking’ the Facebook page or Instagram photos, and how many people are using coupons either online or through a direct mailing list. All of these implementations need to be evaluated for future promotional strategies.

 Evaluation of the website will be through the Word Press website design evaluation statistics. These statistics can be found on the ‘dashboard’ page and provide information on how many people visited the site per day. For the Facebook page, evaluating this social media strategy is through looking at how many ‘follow’ and ‘like’ the page. This also includes how many ‘friends’ Singing Creek has on their Facebook page. Instagram is similar to the Facebook evaluation in that to look at the evaluation, Singing Creek will just need to see how many followers they have and how this number has changed over time. Another way to evaluate both Facebook and Instagram is through the likes and comments on posts and pictures. The more likes and the more positive comments, the more recognition and awareness Singing Creek will receive.

 The evaluation of the coupon and direct marketing can both be evaluated through how many coupons are used when signing up for the summer camps. If people are redeeming there coupons then the marketing strategy and promotion can be considered a success. With direct marketing, it is harder to evaluate how well the strategy is working. However, one idea to evaluate this strategy is to take a poll of how many people came to an event based on reading about it in the program guide. This will at least give Singing Creek staff a general sense of how many people read and received the program guide.

Recommendations for future promotional strategies could include creating a better connection with the student population. If Singing Creek wants to target Eugene, they need to develop workshops or classes that might be beneficial to the university students. Although this would essentially mean changing part of their mission statement, this could be a great way to engage all demographics and all types of people. This is, of course, a future recommendation; one that should be looked at only after Singing Creek has created a steady membership and customer base. Singing Creek could also work to become partners with other organizations in the community. They are already working with some institutions, but there is always room to grow and become partners with organizations that could help generate awareness and increase revenue for Singing Creek Educational Center.

**References**

Rainsong, K. (2015). Welcome to the Singing Creek Educational Center! singingcreekcenter.org. Retrieved March 04, 2016, from <http://singingcreekcenter.org/>

BusinessDictionary.com <http://www.businessdictionary.com>. Retrieved March 04, 2016.