

Develop a New Marketing System, Initiative #14 (STRATEGIC GOAL 1: Develop Excellent Management Systems)

Problem Statement

The department's historical use of marketing has been inconsistent, and is often perceived as an "extra" expenditure rather than a continual, strategic investment with verifiable results. We currently do not have clear and consistent messaging for either broad statewide marketing, or specific targeting by park unit and/or topic. Additionally, partnerships with concessionaires (for example Reserve America (RA)) collect relevant information from millions of park visitors that is currently available but mostly not utilized by state parks as a marketing tool.

Traditionally, the Department's marketing efforts have been funded by RA who contractually deposits \$200K annually towards this effort. This annual funding is channeled via the Parks Foundation but this fiscal year (2014-15) no funding has been made available towards marketing DPR. No other source of funding has been provided towards this important endeavor for the past several years.

Internal marketing efforts within DPR are almost non-existent. Employees are often unaware of events and/or programs within their own park, sector, district, or department.

Synergies are non-existent between DPR and other entities for the purpose of marketing. Parks annual visitation of over 70 million people is an excellent treasure to other entities that would be willing to expose DPR to even larger audiences by creating synergetic marketing campaigns that are relevant to both entities.

Initiative Description

As identified by the Transformation Team, a professional Marketing Program should be an investment utilized by State Parks. This Initiative will identify and analyze marketing opportunities to quickly move the Parks department to the 2017 Desired Future State. It is anticipated that the department will retain outside skilled marketing consultants in collaboration with DPR experts to aid in the evaluation of the current marketing efforts and together with the committee members, recommend and implement a well-funded and comprehensive "Marketing Program".

Anticipated Benefits of this Initiative

1. A comprehensive and multi-leveled "Marketing Plan" will maximize DPR **exposure** to the public and its value will be proven via measureable results of increased visitation and revenue.
2. **Visitation** trends and behaviors will reflect the intended goals of marketing messaging. This output will help address the relevancy of California State Parks to

all demographics – young, elder, diverse cultures and ethnicities, different financial backgrounds, relevancy to a wide spectrum of education amongst park visitors, international visitors, American visitors, and other important demographics.

3. The department will be more **visible** through positive messaging and Mission reinforcement. As a result, public support will grow and legislative representation will be more attune with the Department's public benefit in areas such as public education, health, recreation, and land management.
4. The Department will show itself as a **contributor** to the overall California economy thus attracting vibrant political, industry, academia, and the public's support.
5. Results through marketing excellence will increase **Californian's knowledge** about the value and importance of parks, and how parks provide meaningful benefits for health, education, and inspiration for each visitor.
6. A well-developed and professional DPR marketing structure will elevate "**consciousness**" and will inspire Californians to become more involved with DPR volunteer and partnership programs.
7. DPR could potentially become the **content leader** for "California Parks" (municipal, county, federal, state, and others) thus enhancing the vibrancy of each CORE program and the relevancy of DPR to the State and to the nation as the premier Park system in the world.
8. **Employee** exposure to well-managed marketing campaigns will increase employee pride, productivity, quality of work, and desire to belong to the DPR team.
9. Contributions in the areas of partnerships, volunteerism, fund-raising, endowment financial support, gifts, and more will increase, thus creating a **catalyst of community involvement** that will touch all Californians, as a person, community, industry, government, non-profits, and more.

Anticipated Implementation Challenges

1. Funding large-scale, tailored marketing efforts will initially be a challenge. DPR will need to find seed money to initiate a professional Marketing program that matches a system as big and diverse as DPR. The seed money could be legislative (rev gen project), or it could also be attained through a non-profit organization.
2. Once established, the marketing program would be a self-paid enterprise by the higher revenues produced from marketing campaigns.
3. The diversity of individual Districts within DPR might make it difficult to agree on marketing messaging. Several types of messaging should be implemented.

Process

1. People

- Committee members
 - o Andy Vasquez (co-chair), Administrative Officer III, Orange Coast District
 - o Jared Zucker (co-chair), Associate Governmental Program Analyst, Division of Boating and Waterways
 - o Steve McCormick, Special Advisor, Resources Legacy Fund
 - o TBD
 - o TBD
 - o
- Key participants (or participating organizations)
 - o TBD
 - o

Initial Tasks

This initiative will analyze, select, and implement a “Marketing Program” for the department. This framework is essential to unify existing marketing efforts in order to improve message delivery throughout the state. The implementation of strategies and tools may not be achieved by all park units, but those used will provide an enhanced degree of consistency, quality, and content based on the target audiences they intend to attract. Revamping the department’s marketing program will require the following:

- A. Determine available and possible future funding
- B. A rigorous assessment of park services offered and desired (market analysis)
- C. Utilization of expert skilled partners in coordination with DPR staff to:
 - a. Identify areas of potential revenue enhancement via marketing
 - b. Develop a marketing plan that includes measureable results
 - c. Include utilization of currently available information data bases
- D. Determine funding available to decide level of implementation of Marketing Plan
 - a. Hire outside skilled consultants and managers, working with a Transformation Team Planning and Innovation Committee.