



President's Retreat April 25-27, 2008

TECHNOLOGY/MARKETING

Technology—Web 2.0

This is the new paradigm for the Web. Rather than simply as a one way information source, now the web is focused on social networking, the next generation of communicating in a text-based, user-generated content (UGC), viral communication way.

Definitions:

Viral—you tell 3 people, who tell 3 people who then each tell 3 more people and so on. In the end, you have communicated with 100's of people

UGC—means content that each person posts on web. This means that one person is not the gatekeeper responsible for web content. Involvement breeds commitment! Involvement breeds pride in ownership

www.meetup.com

Discussed at June meeting, can join a existing meet up group and talk about club events, or start one and draw in people to club events.

Used by: Orlando, Ft. Lauderdale

Advantages:

- Gains exposure for your club with minimal efforts
- Can join other active meet-up groups and cross-promote your ski club activities such as biking, dining out nights, golf as well as ski meeting and trips

LinkedIn.com

A Facebook-type of social networking site for professionals with jobs—the exact demographic we are looking for

Used by: Tampa (Pattie Housewright)

Advantages:

- You create your “profile” with as much or as little info as you want (college, associations, clubs you belong to, your interests or just your name)
- Then you invite friends/colleagues to “link in to your network”
- Power of a “spider web”—you have 10 friends in your network, and they have 10 other people in their network which is linked to your network and so on.
- FSC Linked In group has been created that you can link to as well. A link to this Linked In group will be posted on FSC website. Each club should do the same.

YouTube.com

Used by: Orlando (Debra Musik)

Advantages:

- Any club member can post a video clip, photo show of club activities, and trips on the web.
- Great way to show how much fun club has on ski trips.
- Add a link to your site and encourage your travelers to post their video clips, pics and photoshows here. Encourage them to share via email with other tripper or their other friends. (Have a “how to” description for those who are technology “challenged” or newbies)

(If every person on the trip forwarded an email link to 2 or 3 of their friends to show them what a great trip they just took, that could result in lots of trip exposure. This goes to the concept of viral marketing and getting others to market for us)

- Add clips to the website that spotlight your charity activities as well as things your club does that are not ski related
- Because of the way keyword search is set up on You Tube, recommend everyone include the club name in the title, for example:
- Orlando Ski Club—2008 Season trip party
- (Keywords are now called “Tags”) snow skiing, Florida, Orlando,
- parties

GREAT IDEA: Disposable video camera available at Walgreen for \$30. Provide to trip leader (Orlando)

www.Facebook.com www.myspace.com

Used by: Clearwater

Advantages:

- Targets a younger demographic
- Facebook= more college and young professionals
- MySpace= college and younger

Consider setting up a group page. Get your trip leaders and travelers to check it out.

Photo-sharing on the web

- Take advantage of photos to:
 - demonstrate the fun of club trips/activities
 - spread the word about the club—when someone posts pictures they are proud and take ownership—more likely to share with friends
 - Multiple Opportunities
- On club website:
 - Have trip leaders post/submit photos of the trip to be on website. TRIP REPORT/WRITE UP SHOULD ALWAYS BE POSTED ON WEBSITE. (Jacksonville reports that the highest traffic to their site is trip report pages—people check reports on last year’s trips when they look to sign up for current year trips.)

- Have link to outside sites that host pictures (see next). Numerous on-line sites allow members to create and share albums:
 - Flickr
 - Snapfish
 - Shutterfly
 - Comcast Photoshow
 - Walgreens

Each site has specific strengths and ways to implement. To assist clubs, participants volunteered to draft “how to document” for each service to be distributed at June meeting.

GREAT IDEAS:

Put information on photo sharing album (link, address) in newsletter to send out to all members to see fun on trip

Have TL bring a universal photo card transfer or ask all trippers to bring cable to transfer photos to person with computer on trip. Can buy 1 Gig flash drive for TL to get all pictures.

Ask each tripper to pick out 5 best photos and send to TL

Miscellaneous Technology Suggestions

- **Blogs:** Develop a space for Trip Blog. Trip leader in charge, can add a few lines each day of trip, or assign for selected people to do. Easy technology available for download. Have webmaster set up and password protect.
- **Multiple URLs** to capture searches and drive traffic to your main website. For example, TampaBaySnow Boarders.com, TampaBaySkiersandBikers.com. URLs are cheap (as low as \$9.00 per year) and can be directed to your main site
- **Google Analytics**—track hits on your website, provide reports on demographics, all for free.
- **Email**
 - Develop consistent club email address for officers (E.g., president@clubname.com--with each change of Officers can redirect email to personal email used
 - Sign up for free email (hotmail, yahoo, msn, gmail) that use exclusively for club business
 - Develop email address for each trip (e.g. Snowmass@clubname.com)
- **Update Club website often:**
 - Add a page/link on website for membership. Frequent question “How do I join?”
 - On Trip Selling page
 - add Map of Area
 - link to Snowcam at resort
 - link to weather report
 - pictures of each type of lodging offered, shot of property (if link to property website, understand that prices are often listed. As date gets closer, property may put rooms “on sale” which may be lower than your pricing.)
 - Feature club charity work/activities
 - Add interactive link so be able to post different ski stories of interest to our members—can get RSS feed to accomplish this.

- **Protect your web site investment**
 - Have club webmaster document all aspects, passwords, details about website to insure against loss of information to pass on. Post this somewhere
 - TEMPLATE AVAILABLE
 - Have a backup of website—store on removable hard disk or on line backup
 - Set up a secure area on your website dedicated to critical club files such as minutes, membership database, accounting software, files. Have it password protected. This provides protection in case something happens to Club Officer. (Jacksonville)

FSC Marketing Strategies

Define a relevant Message for our audience

- The “low price” message is not working anymore due to the pricing advantages offered by the Internet and with the number of groups that offer ski trips. We are not the only game in town anymore.
- All of our efforts should be directed to answer: WIIFM? (What’s in it for me)
- Focus should always be on your audience and what you can do for them.
- Question: What DO ski clubs offer:
 - Camaraderie—you never have to ski alone or with someone not at your level, a group of fun-loving people with the same active interests, a great conduit to getting to know others (social networking)
 - Convenience—it’s the easiest vacation you’ll ever take. Just pick a trip, write a check and show up. The planning is done for you, saving you the time and effort of planning a vacation
 - Knowledge (Experience)—the hotels.com concept—with us, you’ll know what you’re getting—we’ve been there, we know the lodging properties, where to eat, where to get equipment
 - Value
 - This is the most difficult to communicate, because value is relative and can mean different things to individuals.
 - Ski Clubs are NOT offering the LOWEST PRICE.
 - Ski Clubs ARE offering TRIP VALUE
 - the value of an experience (Mountain top dinner, costume party, nastar race)
 - the value of not having a vacation ruined
 - the value of other people’s knowledge, help and companionship
- Sell the Sizzle, not the steak (see article from Nat’l Ski Club Newsletter)
 - We don’t have the cheapest “steak”/trips
 - Sell the fun, the convenience, the experience
 - Don’t apologize for cost, turn extras on trip into an advantage (offering a special dinner/activity that people wouldn’t do on their own, offering upgraded or ski in/ski out accommodations, condos)
- Think “outside of the box” on trips
 - Sell the TRIP, not the destination
 - Family Trip (to Snowmass or Steamboat)
 - Women’s Ski Clinic Trip (Taos)

- Luxury Trip (Deer Valley, Beaver Creek)
- First-to Last Lift of the Day Trip (Jackson Hole, Purgatory/Durango)

- Single Parents Trip (Tampa offering 2008/9 because of requests of single parents for lodging together)
- Singles Trip (Couples will come too)
- Ski & Spa trip

- Include activities that will appeal to different segments
 - Cooking classes/demonstrations
 - Wine tastings
 - Bartending instructions if property has a bar
 - Gourmet dinners (either pre set or reservation blocks)

- Different trip configurations
 - Tiered lodging on same trip—an upgraded rooms or co-managed upscale property
 - 4-5 day trips (e.g., Monday-Thursday/Friday trips to drive-market destinations, Thursday thru Monday trips)
 - Combination of 7-day, 4/5-day overlapping option on same trip (pick up people who want to save money, or those who can't take time off)

- Contact organizations that offer ski trips and offer to put the trip together for them
 - Tampa making offer to legal society go on trips every year
 - Hospital groups put together trips for their Medical Staffs

- Christmas/New Years trip—while more expensive than low season, some people do choose to go skiing then. Take advantage of Resorts that can offer value (Keystone, Ogden, Breckenridge). Position it as a Family reunion trip

Start Grassroots Efforts

- Co-market with other Activity clubs
 - Jacksonville connected with an online social club, www.SocialsSpiritsJax.com
 - Look for snow sport “groups/teams” in your area. (google)
 - Vero Beach found UCF SnowBoard Team`
 - Co-promote & Market to other Activity groups
 - Jacksonville teamed up with a dive shop to co-promote dive trips and ski trips via a banner ad that appears on both websites (www.scubatiger.com)
 - Choose clubs/sports that have similar commitment to equipment, non-competing times of activity, or activities that your club also engages in
 - Suggestions, golf clubs, bike clubs (both great combo with Breck Summer Camp trip)
 - Co-Promote & Market to other Not-for-Profits
 - Google to find, “Council for the Arts” in Vero

- Take advantage of local events
 - Hang club banner at tailgate party for local college/professional football games
 - Tampa took advantage of Jazz Event—booked meeting kickoff at restaurant in area of Festival for a time before the Festival.
 - Win-Win; Restaurant was going to have staff there for event, so just guaranteed that their would be business earlier as well
 - Jax people got great parking because they were early, had their kickoff

before the Jazz Event and then all walked to the Jazz event together—turn-out was even better, because people saw it as a combo with the Jazz Event

- Restaurant hung Jax banner for the Jazz Event, so everyone saw it
- Partner with a not-for-profit to gain visibility and human local interest
 - Partner with local Susan B Komen Breast Cancer Foundation on a women's ski clinic trip, or any trip and build in \$\$ into trip for donation, or to cover expenses for Breast Cancer patient to go skiing.
- Take advantage of Technology buzz
 - Wii Ski—club buy a Wii or borrow one, set up a “Ski Run” at a local venue with big screen TV and have a ski night—introduce people to skiing and to your club.

FSC Florida Skier Efforts

- Establish an FSC *Marketing Plan Challenge*
 - Work with local University, make a class project for real life situation
 - Tap into thinking of marketing students and younger generation
 - Assignment: Develop a MP for the Florida Skier
 - Winner would present the Plan at November Meeting
 - Winner get trip
 - FSC works to get comp trip—donated from Resort/Wholesalers
 - Work with NSAA to get published in journal or resort work to get published
 - Same concept could work for Advertising/Publicity Courses—design an advertising campaign/slogan, design a PR/Internet approach
- Establish FSC Associate College Clubs
 - Long term effort (3-5 years)
 - Change FSC By-laws
 - Start with USF to take advantage of Toufic's position, then promote to other colleges
 - Work with Student Advisor or Rec Coordinator, FSC could bid a trip (high density, over school holiday,)
 - College would run it with their people,
 - FSC would just use our knowledge and buying power to make the trip happen and successful.
- Develop a Luxury trip component for FSC RFP