

ABSTRACT

CREATIVE PROJECT: Increasing Participation in Outdoor Education through Multimedia Marketing

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Camp Adventure is an outdoor education provider that has been operated by Muncie Community Schools since 1994, and served over 100,000 students. In recent years, however, participation at Camp Adventure has seen a steady decline. Participating county schools have opted out of the program and ceased their financial contributions, leaving Muncie Community Schools to shoulder a greater portion of the financial burden. Due to this decrease in participation and funding, Camp Adventure is in danger of closing (J. Leslie., personal communication, February 8, 2011).

Even as Camp Adventure faces possible closure, contemporary research reveals significant benefits of outdoor education. Cognitive benefits include increased concentration, easier management of attention deficit symptoms, reduced stress, and improved standardized test performance (Kaplan, 1995., Taylor et al., 2004., Leiberman and Hoody, 1998). Other benefits include improved physical health and strengthened self-esteem (Sheew, Sujana, Wade, 2008., Louv, 2009).

The purpose of this project is to increase participation at Camp Adventure among school and community groups through the creation of two multimedia marketing tools. The first tool is a promotional video for potential user groups, explaining the services offered at Camp Adventure. The second tool is a website including photography, detailed descriptions of facilities and

programs, administrative forms, and teaching materials. These promotional tools will help increase participation at Camp Adventure by accomplishing three objectives: (1) Raising awareness of the Camp Adventure facility and its services. (2) Advertising the value and relevance of Camp Adventure's services. (3) Opening channels of communication between Camp Adventure and its current and prospective users. If this project is successful in increasing participation at Camp Adventure, it will secure this resource for future Muncie students, and provide an example for other outdoor education facilities.