



SKAGIT COUNTY PARKS, REC, AND FAIR

Marketing 480 Spring Internship

Mason Meeker

April 2019 – June 2019



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Introduction

Description of Organization

The Skagit County Parks, Recreation, and Fair department is a county agency that provides opportunities to the community through athletics, youth programs, and hosting several large events each year at the Skagit County Fairgrounds. These events include garage sales, plant sales, the annual SICBA home and garden show, and the Skagit County fair! A couple of the biggest priorities to the department are appealing to a wide demographic of people and building a strong community.

Most of the work I was assigned to was done for the fair division. I had the chance to execute several marketing assignments that would help lead to growth in our department. These assignments included running the social media pages, designing flyers for promotion, and creating a sponsorship brochure to send out to local businesses. Over the course of my internship I have acquired multiple skills that I am confident will help me continue to grow in the field of marketing.



Overview

Job Description

“To assist in the professional development of a marketing student, with hopes that they can transition into a full-time, fully paid seasonal role (summer) as a marketing specialist for the Skagit County Fair. Upon completion of the seasonal role, we would hope the candidate would be ready for the full-time job market as a qualified marketing professional. We feel that we can offer an event-based marketing experience that is hard to beat. There are so many components to market at a county fair.”

Job Responsibilities

- Social Media
 - #1 intern project would be getting Fairgrounds Instagram page started and off the ground
- Contribute to the already established Fairgrounds Facebook page
- Work on Flyer Designs for Skagit County Fair
- Get exposure to other areas of event advertising such as radio, print, flyer canvassing,

- Reader board advertising, email distribution lists
- Work with ideas related to County Fair Theme: Bringing Ewe Shear Entertainment
- Plan content for Official Fair Guide
- Interface with Fair Entertainers to gather information and strategize about how to promote
- Give input on website design, organization & content
- Help develop an overall marketing plan for the 2019 Skagit County Fair
- Other duties as assigned

Supervisor

Aric Gaither

Fair Operations Manager

(360) 416-1353

(360) 708-0394

aricg@co.skagit.wa.us

Skills Acquired

- **Social media management**
 - Content creation and planning skills
 - Ability to effectively communicate with audience
 - Analytics skills
- **Communication skills**
 - Experience writing radio ads
 - Coordinating email databases
 - Creating messages to be sent to email lists
- **Flyer creation within Microsoft Publisher**
- **Event marketing skills**
 - Advertising/promotional skills
 - Working with sponsors/entertainers
 - Time management
 - Interpersonal skills
- **Community Outreach skills**
- **Ability to work efficiently both independently and in a team**

Letter of Evaluation



June 7, 2019

Dr. Cat Armstrong Soule
Western Washington University
516 High Street
Bellingham, WA 98225

Dear Dr. Soule,

It is my pleasure to inform you that Mason Meeker has successfully completed the required hours to fulfill his internship commitment here at Skagit County Parks, Recreation & Fair. Due to his success here, we are hiring him on this summer to fill the role of Fair Marketing Specialist. He will help in all areas of advertising/marketing, but his biggest focus will be maintaining the Fair social media sites leading up to and through the County Fair in August.

During his time with us, he has showed a great amount of competency in flyer design, social media content choice, as well as strong written communication skills. These skills will serve him well in the future in his professional marketing career.

I hope to serve as a positive reference for Mason down the road as he broadens his horizons and rises up in the marketing world.

Thank you for your partnership and for the hard working quality intern you've sent my way.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Aric Gaither", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Aric Gaither
Skagit County Fairgrounds
Fair Operations Manager
(360) 708-0394
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1730 Continental Place
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

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www.skagitcounty.net/fair

Projects

Instagram



Although the fairgrounds division has an already established Facebook page with over 6,800 followers, it was a big goal of ours to create an influential Instagram page to appeal to a younger demographic. The Facebook page attracts mostly individuals between the age of 35-44. We figured creating an Instagram would help generate an avenue for our content to be seen by younger people. Since the page is for a government agency, I had to go through the process of filling out paperwork and meeting with the county communications coordinator for approval. The Instagram page was approved with a launch date of April 23rd, and I have been working ever since to improve the fairgrounds reach to the community.

Instagram Application

@Skagit County Fairgrounds

Social Media – New platform strategic plan

Basic social profile information

Type of site: Social Media

Proposed launch date: 4/23/19

Proposed platform*: Instagram

Proposed account name/handle (eg @SkagitInstaFamous): @Skagit County Fairgrounds (No Space)

Proposed "about us" bio: Official Instagram of SC Fairgrounds, Fair date, Website Link (Copy/Past FB info)

Proposed profile photo/avatar: Skagit County Fair logo

*NOTE: If the platform is being used on a mobile device, the device and internet usage must comply with state Records Retention laws, with the Skagit County Code, and with applicable County policies related to mobile devices and internet. (6.38)

Social media manager information

Name(s) of social media manager(s): Mason Meeker, Aric Gaither

Position and contact information for manager(s): Marketing Intern, Fair Operations Manager

How much time can you devote to site management per day? 1-2 hours Per week? Aric: 5 hours Mason: 15

How do you plan to manage your site if the social media manager is unavailable?

Multiple people in office to help run platform

Is your social media manager(s) authorized to speak for the department? If no, please explain review process for social content Yes, marketing intern will consult Aric before posting/responding to content

Experience managing social media platforms:

(Aric) Skagit County Facebook page, personal Facebook/Instagram/Twitter (Mason)

Social strategy

What are the strategic social media goals your department hopes to accomplish with this platform?

Appeal to a younger audience, Increase Engagement (statistically higher), Increase Awareness/Attendance Appeal to men/women

How will this new social media presence help improve your department's business outcomes? What specific department goals do you hope to accomplish?

- Gain attention from younger people (more diverse)
- Increase Attendance by 5%
- Increase Social Media Engagement by 50% in 1 year

64%

What existing social media platforms could be used to share your messaging? Could they be used rather than creating a new account?

- Facebook
- Lacks hashtags (we'll use hashtags to gain followers)
- Different Demographic

Who is your intended target audience? How does the proposed new platform connect you with your intended audience? How will your posts encourage interaction with your audience?

- Younger Demographic (18-34)
- Giveaways from local businesses
- Hashtags
- Encourage Comments
- Frequent Posts
- Instagram Insights

What is your plan for creating, reviewing and scheduling/posting content that will benefit and engage your audience? (Analytics)

- Fun pictures (Kids, Animals, Rides/Activities)
- Start conversations with stories (Questions/Polls)

Mason create, Aric Review everything posted

How frequently do you plan to update the account? (Best practice is 3 to 5x per week, through shares, original content, etc.)

5x a week, daily while in office

Please provide a brief content calendar outlining your posts for the first six weeks after launch (type of content (photo, video, graphic, share/retweet), proposed messaging, date & time content will be posted)

Vendors, Fair Events, Featured Musicians, Upcoming Dates, Other Spring Events
(cute Animals (hashtags))

How do you plan to manage constituent questions and/or messages, including those that arrive after hours or on weekends?

- Answer as soon as possible (Aric will take lead on this as a salary employee)
- Positive/Nice
- Mason possibly cover for Aric

How will you promote your proposed new platform to attract followers and engage your audience? Have you identified local influencers who could help promote your content? If so, how will you cultivate those

relationships OR build new relationships with local influencers?

- Promote on Facebook
- Hashtags
- Collab with similar Organizations (Skagit Kid Insider, etc.)
- Listserve (Email list)

How will you measure your account's performance? What will you consider success (e.g. More visitors to your events? Increasing followers by 5% per week?) and how will you document that success?

- Use Instagram insights
- Increase followers by 5% weekly
- Contest held on IG, measure how many attendees show up at fair

Records retention

Official Skagit County social media sites are subject to State of Washington public records laws per RCW 40.14. Content related to County business shall be preserved and maintained in an accessible format by use of the County's social media archiving provider so that it can be produced in response to a request. Skagit County uses Archive Social to retain responsive records. Upon approval and launch, new social accounts will be added to Archive Social.

- IG stories, Boomerangs, Polls, Tag Location, Questions

I created several social media campaigns to attract the attention of potential followers. I wanted to give followers a behind the scenes look at what it takes to put on the fair, as well as build hype towards the upcoming event.

#FacesOfTheFair

The faces of the fair campaign was started with the goal of increasing our followers positive affection towards the fair. Giving people a behind the scenes look at what it takes to run the fair may deepen their appreciation for the event. Another goal is to provide an additional way for employees to feel appreciated for their work.



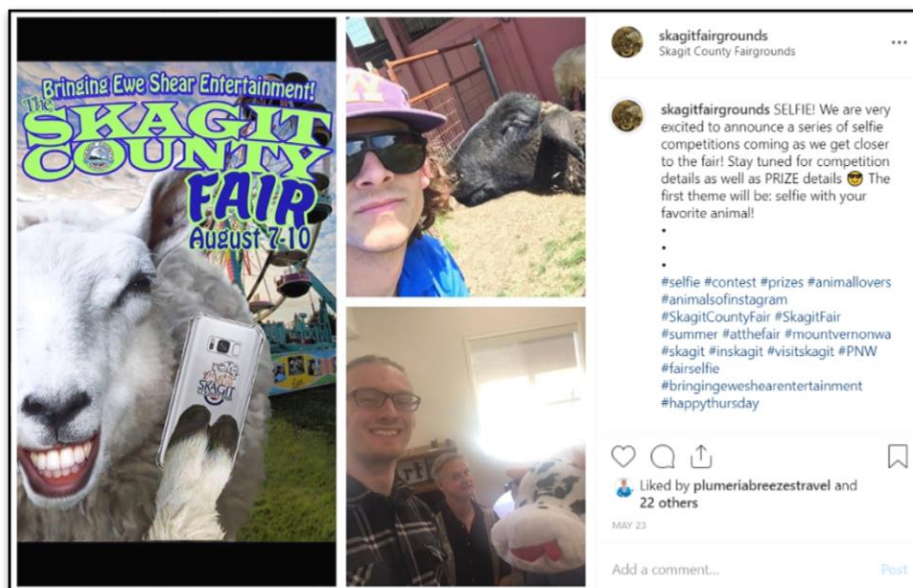
#ArtistSpotlight

The artist spotlight campaign was created to generate excitement for both new and returning entertainers at the fair. Every Friday, performers of all acts are highlighted on the Instagram page to give fair fans an insight to what they can expect this summer at the fair!



Selfie Contest

The selfie contest is currently an idea in the works. I am creating a selfie contest to host on our Instagram page, which will hopefully lead to a nice increase in followers. The theme is going to be “selfie with your favorite animal”, and posts will be required to use a distinct hashtag to be entered in the contest. I am hoping this not only leads to a higher follower count, but also a higher engagement rate on Instagram. We are thinking possible prizes could be gift cards, or tickets to the carnival at the fair. Once we work out the prize details, the campaign will be launched on Instagram. We have already primed the contest online in a previous post to build some excitement!



Promotional Flyers

Using Microsoft publisher, I created lots of posters for promotional use on social media, the county website, and at the fairgrounds. This process often included creating multiple versions of a flyer to satisfy the wants of both entertainers and sponsors. It is crucial to design a flyer that will grab the consumer's attention while simultaneously making the sponsors feel appreciated.

Entertainment Schedules

Community Stage Schedule

Wednesday August 7th

- 12:00 Sunday Speedtrap
- 2:00 Wren & Della Circus Variety
- 3:45 Hametowners
- 6:15 PK Dwyer
- 6:30 Marcia Gaderlan
- 8:00 PK Dwyer

Thursday August 8th

- 12:30 Wren & Della Circus Variety
- 3:00 Sunday Speedtrap
- 3:15 Hametowners
- 4:30 Mervin Baker
- 6:30 Marcia Gaderlan
- 7:45 Derrings Darlings

Friday August 9th

- 12:30 Wren & Della Circus Variety
- 2:00 Sunday Speedtrap
- 3:15 Cassidy Lyons
- 4:30 Nick Anthony
- 6:30 Cassidy Lyons
- 7:45 Nick Anthony

Saturday August 10th

- 12:00 Sunday Speedtrap
- 2:00 Wren & Della Circus Variety
- 2:45 Griffin Family Band
- 6:15 Tom Kisholm
- 6:30 Srensh Daddy
- 8:00 Srensh Daddy

Skagit County Fair: August 7th-10th (360) 416-1350 skagitcounty.net/fair

Main Stage Schedule

Wednesday August 7th

- 11:00 Prozac Mtn Boys
- 12:45 Comedy Magic of Trevor and Lorena
- 1:45 Sunday Speedtrap
- 2:45 Comedy Magic of Trevor and Lorena
- 3:45 KAPS/KBRC Diaper Derby
- 4:45 Ron Stubbs Comedy Hypnotist
- 6:00 Comedy Magic of Trevor and Lorena
- 7:00 Palecat
- 8:30 Ron Stubbs Comedy Hypnotist

Thursday August 8th

- 11:30 Wren & Della Circus Variety
- 12:15 Sunday Speedtrap
- 1:15 Comedy Magic of Trevor & Lorena
- 2:15 Ron Stubbs Comedy Hypnotist
- 3:30 Comedy Magic of Trevor & Lorena
- 4:30 Cheer at the Fair
- 5:30 Comedy Magic of Trevor & Lorena
- 6:30 Ron Stubbs Comedy Hypnotist
- 8:00 Sky Colony

Friday August 9th

- 11:30 Skagit Swings All-Star Big Band
- 12:45 Sunday Speedtrap
- 1:45 Wren & Della Circus Variety
- 2:30 Ron Stubbs Comedy Hypnotist
- 3:45 Chris Eger
- 5:00 Ron Stubbs Comedy Hypnotist
- 6:15 Marlin James Band
- 8:15 Mid-Life Crisis

Saturday August 10th

- 11:00 Jackfruit
- 12:00 Sterling-More than Magic
- 1:00 Ron Stubbs Comedy Hypnotist
- 2:15 Knut Bell
- 3:30 Sterling-More than Magic
- 4:30 Ron Stubbs Comedy Hypnotist
- 5:45 Knut Bell & The Blue Collars
- 7:30 Sterling-More than Magic
- 8:30 Latino Band TBD

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Professor Bamboozle's Sideshow Stage

Daily Schedule:

- 10:00 to 1:30 Caned Music, Lights, and Sideshow Curiosities
- 11:30 to 1:30 Ballooney Looney
- 2:00 to 2:45 Bamboozle's Magical Critters Show
- 3:15-3:45 Wren & Della Circus Variety
- 4:15-5:00 The Music of Sunday Speedtrap
- 5:30 to 6:00 Wren & Della Circus Variety
- 6:30 to 7:30 Bamboozles Grand Stage Illusion Show
- 8:00 to 9:00 Walk-A Round, Critter Visits, Ballooney Looney
- 8:00 to 10:00 Caned Music, Lights, and Sideshow Curiosities

August 7th - 10th

Skagit County Fair: August 7th-10th (360) 416-1350 skagitcounty.net/fair

Reach: 1,621

Reactions/Shares: 38

These flyers were created to highlight the entertainment schedules of all 3 stages at the fair! On Facebook, a post revealing these schedules had a reach of 1,621 with 38 reactions and shares. I made sure to include lots of pictures and visual elements to appeal to the emotions of the audience. With lots of new performers coming to the fair this summer, this post was very well received!

The Planetarium



Reach: 3,412

Reactions/Shares: 77


The Planetarium flyer recorded the highest reach out of all the flyers I designed. This is a brand-new exhibit at the fair, and the announcement of The Planetarium was extremely well received on Facebook. The post had a reach of 3,412 with 77 reactions and shares. On this project I used a space themed background to catch the audience's eye. I also provided a short blurb to give viewers some information on what to expect from the exhibit this summer! I am very happy with the impact this flyer has been able to have on our page!

Sponsorship Brochure

A crucial part to putting on an event is raising funds through sponsorships. I had the opportunity to practice some B2B marketing and help create a sponsorship brochure that could be sent to local businesses. The goal was to highlight the benefits of being a sponsor. These benefits include various levels of advertisement and fair tickets for the organization's use. There is lots of information about the different levels of sponsorship and the benefits that are included within the packet. Once again, I tried to use visual elements within the

document to increase the reader's emotional engagement. I feel like the packet does a good job of highlighting the benefits potential sponsors will receive, along with including lots of information on the types of sponsorships available.

Full Document



Skagit County Fairgrounds

2019 Sponsorship Brochure


AUGUST
7-10
2019

Another season of activity is well underway at our treasured Fairgrounds. Things kicked off this spring with the SICBA Home and Garden Show, March 22nd-24th. April 12th & 13th saw the Fairgrounds hosting our very own 27th Annual Spring Garage Sale, Antiques & More Event. We will also be hosting our Fall Garage Sale in 2019, September 20-21. These garage sale events have more than 150 vendors, food, and live music! Over 6,000 people enjoy each Garage Sale.

The 2018 Fair saw many successes, and we are confident this momentum will carry into the 2019 Fair. We will be **"Bringing Ewe Shear Entertainment"** at the 2019 Skagit County Fair, which will take place August 7th -10th. The Fair is symbolic of our Skagit County pride, and has been a summer highlight in the valley for over 100 years!

If tradition alone could insure the future, then we would have nothing to worry about. The past holds many treasures, it holds the spirit of what we celebrate as residents of this incredible place. It is our philosophy, that we need to turn to the people of Skagit County to ask for local ideas, talent and support. We believe that boosting the participation of Skagit County residents will result in a fun and successful Fair in 2019 and beyond.

We realize that we are asking for a great deal when we ask for the financial/in-kind support of our sponsors. We respect and value this generosity and want our sponsorship program to offer something of value in return. The Skagit County Fairgrounds is a unique resource, and the Fair is our showcase of Skagit pride. We hope that you share our belief that this is a tradition worth sustaining, and hope that you are able to participate in our sponsorship program at any one of the donation levels shown on the following pages.



The Heart of the Fair... Families enjoying their time together.
Photo by Chris Matthews

Full [PDF](#)

Going Forward

I am extremely grateful to have experienced being an intern for Skagit County Parks, Recreation, and Fair. I have learned valuable skills and cherished the opportunity to help put on an event like the fair. It has taught me a lot about event marketing, working with sponsors, content creation, and running social media campaigns. I have also had the opportunity to network with professionals and work on building relationships in a business setting. I have accepted a job with Skagit County, and I will continue to work with them through the summer. It is my goal to continue to find ways to improve the promotion of the fair. I am hopeful the fair will be a great success, and I cannot wait to experience the feeling of seeing all our hard work pay off this summer!