



UNITED STATES POWER SQUADRONS

Mark 4

Official Publication of District 4 - A Unit of United States Power Squadrons

Volume 11

November 2015

Issue 4

Synopsis of the Monmouth University USPS Marketing Project July 2015

By Cdr. David Grill, JN

As many of you are aware, the late Bob Green began an effort to help USPS define who our 'customers' are and identify the gaps between what we offer and what the 21st Century boater wants. Before Bob's untimely death last year he initiated contact with Professor John Buzza at Monmouth University. Professor Buzza teaches marketing on both the undergraduate and graduate levels at Monmouth.

P/D/C Bob Barkalow and D/C Rich Pfaff contacted Prof. Buzza last summer and the professor generously offered to assign a market research project to a group of summer school marketing students at no cost to USPS.

We had hoped to obtain an in-depth statistical study on boat ownership, but given that this was a six week summer session it was not possible. Statistics on boat

ownership and new licensees exist at the NJMVC and the NJSP, but both organizations were unable to help. The problem was not so much a lack of desire but archaic computer systems that cannot provide data in any way other than a total dump that would have to be manually reentered.

What the students (Alyssa Strouse, Mike Inrikovic, Sam Bastone, Jairus Bridges, and Joseph Picuro) did produce was a report and a .PPT presentation addressing how the GEN X, GEN Y, and Millennials prefer to get information and how they prefer to be taught.

We know what our challenges are: Boaters looking to get licenses want it quick and want it easy, we have heavy competition from the for-profit schools, our ABC courses are undersubscribed, we get very few new members from the ABC courses, and there is shrinking interest in our advanced courses. Our demographic is aging to the point that many of our members have aged out of active boating, most of our members have taken all the courses they intend to take, and there are few if any younger boaters coming into (continued on page2)

(continued from page 1)

the organization. We also do the same things we have always done because we have always done them and are not knowledgeable or don't care about changing our methods to reflect the needs of the younger generations.

If we want to turn things around to grow membership and grow participation in courses we need to start by 'targeting' two different demographics; the 40-50 year-olds with the finances and desire to get into 'serious' boating and the 16-30 year-olds who are college students, jet skiers, and small boat fishermen.

How do we do this? For starters, by using on-line advertising and social media, by targeted email blasts using a service like Constant Contact, and by limited use of very targeted print media. We need to move away from our model of weekly night classes over multiple weeks in favor of full-day weekend classes and/or interactive on-line classes with a live instructor. In today's fast-paced society it has become more and more difficult for people to commit to multiple weeknights without having to miss one or more classes. We need to offer payment options that include on-line payments and registration and we should consider offering discounts for a multi-course package. And lastly we should consider offering and promoting free social events with an

educational theme to draw in potential members.

The use of Social Media is the key to success in 2015 and forward. We *must* become adept at using these tools. Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, more....) can capture large audiences at minimal expense. It can keep existing members informed, inform prospective members of what we are about and what we do, get information on what prospective members want us to offer, and can inform boaters about upcoming courses and events. This is done through the use of hashtags, daily posts, promotional and event posts, photos, videos, and articles of interest.

Again, we *must* make this a priority and find or hire the skillsets to develop and use the power of social Media.

An untapped demographic for USPS is the generation in college or recently graduated from college. They have no idea that we exist and no idea of what the possible benefits to them would be in taking courses and/or joining as members.

To entice college students we need to appear where they are both online and in person. Appearances at college career fairs will introduce us to a large student body. USPS will be included in all posts regarding the (continued on page 3)

(continued from page 2)

career fair and those who attend will get information about our programs. At the least, attendees will be incented to check USPS out online. Having a payment plan geared towards students would be a good option to prevent course fees from being a barrier to admission. Package pricing could also keep them coming back for more.

The description above is a summary of the Monmouth University report. Additional details are in the PowerPoint presentation and an accompanying MSWord document. These are available on request. Please email me at dwgrill@gmail.com for a copy.

Our thanks again to Prof. Buzza and the student team of Alyssa, Mike, Sam, Jairus, and Joseph.

Editor's Note: The above report was scheduled for presentation at the D-4 Conference on 7 November, 2015. Due to time constraints it was not given. What are your thoughts on the recommendations? Are there any suggestions as to how to use the report to get new members and retain old ones? Send your remarks to Commander Grill at the above address.

ON THE LIGHT SIDE

This woman rushed to see her doctor, looking very much worried and all strung out.

She rattles off: “Doctor, take a look at me. When I woke up this morning, I looked at myself in the mirror and saw my hair all wiry and frazzled up, my skin was all wrinkled and pasty, my eyes were bloodshot and bugging out, and I had this corpse-like look on my face! What’s WRONG with me, Doctor!?”

The doctor looks her over for a couple of minutes, then calmly says: “Well, I can tell you that there ain’t nothing wrong with your eyesight!”

AROUND THE SQUADRONS



North River Sail and Power represented both the USPS and the National Safe Boating Council at City of Water Day this year at Governors Island at the 7th City of (continued on page 4)

(continued from page 3)

Water Day. There were life jacket relay races, a USPS Borman coloring contest for the children and a knot tying refresher for adults. The North River also provided Line Handlers and Dock help for the 14 free boat rides available that day. The largest water event in NYC is sponsored by the Waterfront Alliance. Paddlers are allowed to camp out overnight after they completed their crossing from both Brooklyn and Manhattan. A Cardboard canoe race takes place as well. Cardboard, duct tape and 2 hours to make a boat. Consider joining us next year! Over 10,000 people attended. USPS WAS THERE.



Lackawana Power & Sail Squadron greatly reduced the Raritan Bay lobster population at its annual Lobster BBQ hosted by P/C Caroline Markham on September 19th. 9 Squadrons were represented and great time was had by all. Thanks

Caroline.



Lackawanna along with Barnegat were successful in running the children's poster contest. Posters were presented at the D\$ Fall Conference with the following winners getting \$25 each. Posters will be entered I USPS national contest in Orlando in February.

6-8 Caden Gueci Barnegat Bay
9-11 Sarah Hannah, Lackawanna
12-14 Alexandria Holt
Lackawanna

Give children in your squadron a chance to compete. Run the contest next year.



At Lobster BBQ, all fair ladies with Commander Pfaff's boat in background flying the USPS Ensign

NEW YORK BOAT SHOW
NEWS

The 2016 New York Boat Show is scheduled Wednesday, January 6th to Sunday January 10th at the Jacob Javits Center located at 655 West 34th Street NYC 10001. Main Entrance: Eleventh Avenue at 35th Street. USPS Day is Wednesday the 6th. There is free admission with your membership card.

Show Information and discounted parking coupons (\$12/10hours) are on the web site www.nyboatshow.com We need volunteers to help at the USPS booth. We are requesting volunteers for 2-3 hours shifts. You will have free access to the show on the day you assist.

To CLARIFY information: We will have ONLY 1 booth at the show, inside

the JJ Center, The simulator will be at our booth, NOT with the Discover Boating Booth. Yes, it will be tight. So with that, we will keep the brochures to 2; ABC and USPS University. Flyers to 3; one for each District listing courses and seminars. We will not have room for separate squadron handouts, Sorry!

The hours of the show and coverage needs are:

January 6–10, 2016

Wednesday, January 6 12:00pm to 9:00pm

Thursday, January 7 12:00pm to 9:00pm

Friday, January 8 12:00pm to 9:00pm

Saturday, January 9 10:00am to 9:00pm

Sunday, January 10 10:00am to 5:00pm

It is critically important for volunteers to sign up on the D4 Web site www.usps-d4.org in advance or contact North River Commander, Kim O'Connell so we can properly manage the booth. We are only given a certain number of badges per day. As a tri-state show we have included D2 & D3 to demonstrate the comprehensive offering of classes and seminars.

The exciting addition this year is the "Boating Skills Virtual Trainer" unit from National that simulates boating skills. This will be an important education for parents and children alike. Additional time will be required to be trained as a facilitator before the show if you are interested.

It is expected that the USPS booth will be the hit of the show thanks to the Virtual Trainer which is on loan from USPS. Extra volunteers needed badly to control the visitors expected.

GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR OUR MEMBERS WHO VOLUNTEER TO MAN THE SHOW TO TRY THEIR HAND AT THE SIMULATOR.

NEW MARINA IN NEW YORK CITY

North River Power Squadron, as part of its virile public relation program, reached out to the organization opening a new Marina to be located

(continued on page 6)

(continued from page 5)

just before the Brooklyn Bridge at Brooklyn Beach Public Park. The Marina, named One 15 Brooklyn Marina is due to open early next year welcomes boating organizations to participate in their outreach to the boating public, both new and old. Two percent of the marina's revenues will be contributed to supporting free and low cost community boating, as well as providing a world-class facility on which these programs can thrive. They call this platform their community dock.

The community dock will be one of the largest docks in New York City, making up nearly 25% of the square footage of dock space in the marina.

The Marina will exceed all aspects of the Americans with Disabilities Act and adhering to the principle of access with dignity, this dock will be fully open and accessible to the public.

Slips and space on this dock will be shared amongst community partners, some of whom are listed below.

The community dock will include:

- A large fleet of cutting edge sailboats, centrally owned and professionally maintained, of a quality that matches the city we live in.
- A recreational sailing club tailored to New York Harbor and Brooklyn Bridge Park which members of the public can access for a reasonable cost.

- Spaces for kayaks and kayaking instruction, including a protected beginner basin.
- Small boat sailing programs in a protected basin for kids to learn to sail.
- Access for existing community and non-profit boating programs to New York Harbor.
- A top quality sailing school with world class instruction and curriculum design.
- Potential for other clubs, such as a fishing or motor boating club, in the future.

Free and low cost boating experiences will be coordinated by their community partners (which hopefully will include USPS) and a full program will be developed over time.

The Marina coordinators have expressed interest in having North River Power Squadron coordinate and collaborate in running training and seminar sessions at the Marina. Further details will be provided as available.

D-4 salutes North River for its public relations efforts on behalf of USPS and urges all members to volunteer at the boat show and the new Marina. With New Jersey already inundated with boaters who have been issued their safe boating certificates and New York facing the same problem in the near future, we must seek out all boaters where they boat, provide them with further education and solicit them for membership. The plans for

(continued on page 7)

(continued from page 6)

this Marina, with the inclusion of new sailors and kayakers should be great for USPS.

Mark 4 is the official publication of District 4, USPS. Published 4 times a year. P/D/C David J. Meshulam, AP, Editor, Gail Merson, Assistant Editor, with the help of many loyal members. Articles and announcements from squadron officers and members are welcome by email at DJMGEM@AOL.COM

D4 FALL CONFERENCE

Here are your conference representatives at work at the D\$



conference on 7 November, 2015



Our thanks to all who attended as well as representatives from D2 and D3.