



Amazing Elf Adventure 2020

Situation Analysis & Strategy for The Muncie Children's Museum

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Problem:

The Muncie Children's Museum hosts an annual, holiday-themed event for families in the East Central Indiana community, involving a scavenger hunt through themed rooms at the Museum. However, with the covid-19 pandemic still affecting our community and new, stricter, guidelines in place, the museum has decided to forgo any in-person activities and develop an online-based programming for the event. They would like to increase overall engagement on social media through this program while continuing to keep the event alive and the community aware of and involved with it.

Situation Analysis

Internal Factors:

Event History, Services, Products, Structures, etc

- The Muncie Children's Museum has hosted Amazing Elf Adventure for YEARS. It was first brought to life in 2012 where it was known as Winter Wonderland, but by 2013, expanded its offerings and became known as Amazing Elf Adventure.
- The event features a holiday-themed scavenger hunt through multiple themed rooms that families can walk through. Interaction with "elves" or staff members are very common, as well as featuring interaction with the items in each room through pre-developed activities. Admission \$4 for non-members and \$3 for MCM members. For non-member families visiting both Amazing Elf Adventure and the museum, admission is \$8.
- The event is made up of various holiday rooms that feature themes such as the Snowglobe Room, the Elf Obstacle Course, and Santa's Workshop. It is developed in the lower level of the organization's main building in Downtown Muncie.

Statistics

- Attendance
 - No specific numbers provided
- Financial Income
 - No specific numbers provided, though event is sponsored yearly.

Controlled Media Content

- Receives yearly coverage from the Muncie Star Press.
- Heavy self-promotion on Facebook. Weekly posts on organization page, create public event page, and boosts ads internally. Receives most engagement.
- Weekly posts on Twitter with link to Facebook event page. Post about event awareness on Instagram. Low engagement.
- Have developed a commercial but low distribution.

Brand/Event Personality

- Holiday-themed event, unique to Muncie and takes a new approach to family activities.
- Strengths = Immersive, inexpensive, and accessible experience for families.
- Have developed a unique and well-designed logo, however, lacks representation of the diverse crowd that the museum wants to attract.

External Factors:

Media Coverage

- Regularly covered in news and family publications throughout East Central Indiana and put on local calendars
 - Examples in comments
- Potential Markets
 - Press Release: An easy way to give more in-depth information to media contacts who are probably looking for programming opportunities like this to share with their audience as we navigate new methods of celebrating the holidays
 - TV/Radio Ads: The museum has capitalized on this before. Develop new commercial and radio ad to push
 - NOTE: review current media contacts list and update with new names, contact info, and outdated contacts from new museum staff.

Partnerships/Sponsors

- Have previously had sponsors for the event that generally fund activities.
- Large potential for sponsors to support financially and with prizes while gaining high visibility through videos and social media posts.
- Could partner with other organizations for a more interactive event.
 - DWTN Muncie very interested in partnering for First Thursday December

Competitors

- The Muncie area offers many family-friendly activities during the holidays that fit into a range of budgets, physical restrictions, and allow for variety. Shows, parades, and concerts are very popular but the most similar activities to the Amazing Elf Adventure are held at Minnetrista and Ball State. Minnetrista usually holds more exclusive and expensive events while Ball State is more affordable and accessible. However, Amazing Elf Adventure is the only activity of its kind in the immediate area.
- Minnetrista
 - **Enchanted Luminaria Walk.** Enjoy sweet treats, winter crafts, carriage rides and music at this free community event. Don't forget to check out this year's luminartists in the Indiana Room, a fun train ride in Oakhurst Gardens and holiday shopping in The Orchard Shop at Minnetrista. The MITS Trolley will provide transportation between Minnetrista and the Wysor Depot Friday night, and between Minnetrista and Ball State's Rinard Orchid Greenhouse and Glick Center for Glass on Saturday night. At Minnetrista, pick-ups will take place every 15 minutes along St. Joseph Street across from The Orchard Shop.
 - **Gingerbread House Family Workshop.** Create a gingerbread masterpiece with your family at Minnetrista! Enjoy sweet cookies and holiday music, meet and take photos with Gingy the gingerbread man, and explore his magical castle. Cost is \$25 a house; member discounts apply.
- Ball State University
 - **Holiday in Bloom Open House,** Dr. Joe and Alice Rinard Orchid Greenhouse at Ball State University. "Holiday lights, musical performances, hot cocoa, marshmallows, refreshments and a children's activity, as well as beautiful orchids in the warm tropical environment of the orchid house. Visitors also can walk next door to the Marilyn K. Glick Center for Glass for glass blowing demonstrations, follow the luminaria to the David Owsley Museum of Art and the Charles W. Brown Planetarium and ride the MITS Trolley to Minnetrista for the Enchanted Luminaria Walk that night."
 - **E.B. and Bertha C. Ball Center Holiday Open House.** "In conjunction with the Enchanted Luminaria Walk, tour the beautifully decorated Ball family home at 400 Minnetrista Blvd., listen to musicians, and see local artisans. Free admission."
 - **Ball State Holiday Choral Concert,** Sursa Hall, Ball State University. "BSU's choral ensembles present two concerts in celebration of the winter holidays featuring well-known seasonal favorites and holiday music. Ensembles include the Chamber Choir, Concert Choir, University Singers, Statesmen,

Women's Chorus, and University Choral Union. Tickets are \$5. One free student ticket with ID in advance at Emens box office, or \$5 at the door."

National Statistics

- Children's Museum in general have trouble retaining visitors and are often seen as unwelcoming, uninteresting, and unengaging.
 - Generally aim not to welcome everyone due to their specific audience... when asked how welcoming different organizations types are, only 60% of respondents said that Children's Museums were—the lowest of all types. This is because children's museums *are* unwelcoming to a massive group of people who are generally engaged by the others: Adults without children.
 - A smaller percentage of people are attending cultural organizations with children under 18. The percentage of people in the US attending cultural organizations with children has declined 12.5% in the 12-year duration spanning years 2006 – 2017. This makes sense given the changing demographics, psychographics, and behavioral characteristics of people in the United States. Today, there are 1.7x more US households *without* children than there are US households *with* children. The percentage of US households with children has declined from 50.9% with children in 1970 to 36.2% with children in 2017, and the average household size in the US has declined from 3.24 people per household to 2.58 people.
 - Children's museums aim to engage children, but adults are visitation decision-makers who assess the experience. Sure, the experience is often designed to engage adults in the creation of meaningful moments with their little ones, but adults considering their experiences at children's museums may filter them through the lens of their children's perceptions and experiences. And the experience is not specifically designed for adults. Interestingly, we often find that this experiential mismatch manifests itself in several otherwise unexpected ways. Only 605 of visitors to different organizations say that they are satisfied with their experience at a children's museum.

Audience Analysis:

Low and middle income families in Delaware County, Indiana.

Situation

- Lacks Diversity in public image/logo.

- Want to retain the amount of visitors they have, overall engagement, and event reputation that has come from their in-person event so that they can continue to hold it in the future.

Organization

- Event has attracted members, non-members, and school groups throughout the holiday season.
- Hire seasonal workers as well as year-round staff members to organize event.

Demographics

- Families/Kids in Delaware County
 - StatsIndiana
 - There are just under 11,000 households in Delaware county that could be potential viewers, those who are married with children (6,627) and single parents (4,081).
 - 15,600/15,800 of the students are enrolled in public school
 - Could target schools/classes to participate as a group activity to make up for field trips... Charge usual fee to give teachers a full package of videos to show in class for scavenger hunt.
 - Average household income in 2018 = \$43,096, Poverty rate = 25%
 - Keeping activity free will be appealing to low and middle income families
 - Impacts Experience

Communication

- Marketing Tactics:
 - Facebook Events
 - Website
 - Local Print and Online News
 - Flyer Distribution in schools
 - Word of Mouth

Target Consumer Profile

- Young mother, age 28-45, with 1-4 kids who are home for christmas break. The family is struggling to find the same festive and interactive activities they usually do around the holidays and the festivals without any kid-oriented activities just aren't enough. She needs a low-cost, low involvement activity for her kids to do while she prepares for the holidays and turns to social media for help. There, she sees the Children's Museum is posting video scavenger hunts that can be done in any order and at any time as well as hosting an outdoor scavenger hunt in Downtown Muncie.

Strategy

Methods

1. Logo Updates/Additions
 - a. As discussed previously, the current Amazing Elf Adventure logo, although well-designed and attractive, lacks representation of the diverse crowd that we want to attract to the museum and this event.
 - b. Develop multiple elf characters that reflect elves of many races, physical capabilities, genders, etc.
2. Online and/or Outdoor Scavenger Hunt
 - a. Online Scavenger Hunt
 - i. <https://raceroster.com/articles/engage-your-participants-with-a-virtual-scavenger-hunt>
 - ii. Post 2 videos a week asking participants to spot the hidden message, theme, elf, etc. OR post pictures with riddles/clues and ask them to solve a series of them. Person who responds first with the correct answer will receive a prize.
 - iii. Drive heavy traffic to Facebook page as well as increase visibility of potential sponsors.
 - iv. <https://www.mobilemarketer.com/ex/mobilemarketer/cms/news/social-networks/20422.html>
 - b. Sell At-Home Elf Kits that include small toys and crafts, elf license, and personal video from our elves.
3. DWTWN Muncie First Thursday's
 - a. Join the December First Thursday as one of the main events.
 - b. Develop partnership with other businesses downtown to build a scavenger hunt for participants to walk through.
 - c. Social Media/Outdoor Hybrid Scavenger Hunt
 - i. <https://carmellaconsulting.com/2019/08/19/social-scavenger-hunt/>
 - ii. Pick up "map" at Children's Museum, stop at businesses throughout Downtown Muncie to take pictures with an "elf." Must post on Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook with a special hashtag.
 - iii. Can promote sponsors through print materials such as map or accompanying flyers while also obtaining support from downtown businesses.
 - d. Real elf either at ending point or walking around greeting participants
 - i. Bonus points for participants if they take a picture or selfie with the elf and post to social media with special hashtag.

- e. Potential to develop partnership for this event that could be used for the foreseeable future and attract a crowd to the event that we don't always reach through DWTWN Muncie's audience.
- 4. Radio and TV ad
 - a. Have lined up a videographer to make a 30 second tv and radio commercial for the event. Will make it more general so we can use it for the next few years.

Recommendations:

The redesign/addition to the current logo is a really important aspect of this project. However, we may have to evaluate its feasibility at this time due to my current schedule and the materials and/or documents we have surrounding the logo and its development and design. Essentially, the more documents we have, the less redesign work I will have to do making it an easier and quicker project.

In order to make the most of this event, taking advantage of both DWTN Muncie's First Thursday event with the potential to continue to do this in the future, as well as running our own "event" either all online or with a more interactive experience will give us the most potential to bring in some revenue and keep the integrity of the event alive, as well as easy since both events will align in terms of necessary setup and materials needed.

Deliverables:

- Social Media Content for 2 months
 - Promotional and informational materials to be posted throughout November.
 - Pictures or videos depending on chosen type of scavenger hunt to be posted throughout December.
- Potential for development of new logo with focus on diversity and inclusion
 - Depending on what kinds of documents we have that concern the development and design
- Map and Flyer for public use during First Thursday and throughout December.
 - Scavenger hunt map or brochure.
- Press Release for media contacts explaining new event.
- Radio and TV ad for general event