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Visions Editors

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Summary

SUMMARY

The following sections are generalizations were made as a result of an analysis of all comments.

PROBLEMS

One of the problems was that the Fair was too close in time and distance to the Knoxville Exposition. Another problem was that it was in competition with attractions such as the Olympics and EPCOT. The third problem was that more information was needed for the development of a better marketing approach. Fourth, there needed to be a greater public input and greater community acceptance of the event earlier. If there could have been a better public-private relationships, a cooperative instead of a more collaborative effort could have been used. Fifth, a better personnel development plan was needed. Sixth, the fair was undercapitalized for the plans involved. Seventh, the fair was overbuilt and needed a smaller beginning. Eighth, there needed to be more public financial support. The New Orleans Fair only received one-fourth to one-third the support of Japan and Vancouver. Ninth, better press was needed in relation to the media coverage of the World's Fair to improve its image. Tenth, there needed to be a better understanding of the tour bus market as compared to the Knoxville Fair. Eleventh, some of the permanent construction could have been delayed until after the fair. The two most outstanding problems were, though the long range plan was sound and the site was excellently developed, the fair was undercapitalized from the beginning and the marketing approach was wide of the mark.

FEASIBILITY

A feasibility study is the foundation stone for the organizational development of a World's Fair. The essential elements of the feasibility study are the projections. The projections have to be accurate because the site development is directly tied to the projected number and revenue from the feasibility study. The complete planning process directly depends upon the feasibility study because from this the organizational structure, funding, marketing strategies, etc., are developed. There are many assumptions made because a special event is just an idea and the feasibility study brings it into perspective in regards to the reality of

the implementation of the event. Many times there are assumptions made that are not accurate and the feasibility study is one of the few ways of trying to deal with these assumptions. There are two perspectives in regard to testing these assumptions: some tend to be too pessimistic and cautious, others tend to be too optimistic and wish to move ahead. The feasibility study brings these two planning perspectives into focus and essentially helps to determine if an event can be planned successfully. Sometimes the feasibility study is thought of as a static process and only one is conducted. There must be a continued effort at many stages during the planning as well as the execution to revise the feasibility study on the basis of the addition of data as it is collected. This will help to modify a structure as needed. The essential element to a good feasibility study is a continuous process. The one element that may determine the ultimate success of the feasibility study, especially in terms of reality, is the direct involvement of local experts who have some direct knowledge of the market and have some kind of history or track record of special events within the community.

STRUCTURE

The structure, whether public or private, depends directly upon the community involved and should be directly tied to the funding process. If the funding is public, then there must be some direct accountability. If the funding comes from investments, the structure should be private and the officers directly responsible to the stockholders. Whether the structure is public or private, a key element is a structure that allows direct community and public involvement by the maximum number of individuals. The structure that is being recommended is one of openness and inclusiveness, not exclusiveness. Exclusiveness is what causes conflicts and the impression that the community does not have control of its own destiny. The administrators hired must not be of the opinion that it is their operation because it is the community, ultimately, that will have to live with many of the decisions that are made. An essential element to the structuring of any organization is the initial feasibility study.

RESIDUALS

New Orleans had a very specific redevelopment plan for the warehouse district and the World's Fair was seen as a stimulus. The primary emphasis that was given, especially in terms of the site development and redevelopment, was permanent structures and the potential use of the site to complement New Orleans as a city. Much renovation and new structures were planned. In fact, the site was being completely developed around the convention center. Commitments have been obtained for the development of a new shopping mall, entertainment complex, etc. The long term benefits for redevelopment of the site are now being realized. If a short term development plan is used, structures are temporary, site redevelopment is difficult and most long term impacts are lost. The cost to prepare the site is the same; the only difference is in the temporary or permanent nature of the facilities provided. There must be consistency between the fair's objectives and the long-term development perspective of the city involved. There is also a critical balance in

number of projections and overbuilding a site. Site development in this context refers to all the new hotels and support services that are provided in addition to the base that is associated with the fair. If a site is overbuilt in the long run, and it will depress the economy of an area. There must be a right mix between the individual needs of the fair in rooms, parking, transportation, etc., and the long-run needs and demands based upon the reuse or redevelopment of the site. Another dimension in considering long term versus short term types of site development in special events is the emphasis upon quality. The primary emphasis on long term is quality and the short term is a development to justify a special event. In a long term planning perspective, the fair is seen as a stimulator to speed up development and when a short term planning perspective is used it is seen as a vehicle to stimulate immediate revenue in the area and some side benefits and spin-offs to redevelopment of an area. A special event, such as the fair, is also used as an element to stimulate the private sector to reinvest in an area that is usually having declining property values. Once the redevelopment plans are set, a special event like the fair is committed and the proposal is accepted, many in the private sector can see the profits in both the short and long run. For a quality investment by the private sector, long term benefits are far more important than the immediate because they represent a larger profit potential. There must be some quasi-public agency that stimulates the private investment so as to help the private investor reduce the risk of his/her profit potential. A special event like the World's Fair must be extremely well capitalized. There must be a balance between expectations and development. The source of this capital must come through a quasi-public agency either in terms of federal, state, or local funds.

OPPORTUNITIES

The redevelopment would have occurred, but at a much slower pace. The primary advantage to the World's Fair has been that it has focused, stimulated and developed the resources at a much faster pace. It must be remembered that development is a political process and social events can be used to overcome many of the political barriers to development. The base decision in development to influence the political process is the increase in property values that will continually allow the site to grow in a stable pattern. New areas will be opened for redevelopment. It is the creation of opportunities that is most important and what it depends upon now is how these opportunities are utilized. The one component that must be overcome is the negative image of the fair in relation to the financial aspect and redevelopment must move forward to capitalize on the opportunities created.

RISK

The decision for future special events is a balance between opportunities and risk. The primary focus for any decisions should be a result of a cost benefit analysis, both fiscal as well as social. Some planners will be too conservative and others too liberal. All decisions must be more scientific and based upon hard data that has a high degree

of validity and tempered with hard experience.

This is the first in a two issue series devoted to the Louisiana World Exposition. This first issue is on Problems and Comments. The second will be devoted to Implementation.

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Visions in Leisure and Business

Dear Colleague:

Many times the leisure professional finds himself/herself at a loss in understanding business principles needed to make operations more effective. In this same context, the business community could more effectively utilize personal services to help solve organizational and productivity problems.

VISIONS IN LEISURE AND BUSINESS is an interdisciplinary journal dedicated to addressing the interface between the leisure and business communities. The solution to many of the problems in each of these areas is the ability to obtain many ideas on a single issue. We are asking you to become involved in an idea exchange among the scholars and practitioners to share your experiences in a journal format. Another vehicle that is being used for the sharing process is that each member, program, and agency subscribing to the journal will be asked to complete a questionnaire and an annual directory of programs and services will be available as a resource. It will also be possible for those interested in particular programs to identify individuals who have similar interests through a computer search.

VISIONS IN LEISURE AND BUSINESS is different from other publications because it draws upon a number of disciplines to solve problems and is not locked into defending a particular position. It is a storehouse of information that can help you keep up-to-date on the latest leisure and business methods. The newest, innovative ideas will be presented in a 'how-to' format to help improve operations. Sharing your experiences can help improve other's professional operations.

VISIONS IN LEISURE AND BUSINESS can stimulate your thinking about how to improve your own expertise and skills, thereby, helping the organization with which you are affiliated. The key to professional advancement is competency and having the edge in performance, so that you are a leader not a follower in the profession. Many individuals have an ability to discern a good idea but many do not have an ability to predict trends and anticipate solutions in advance of the problem. Another important ability is seeing the bigger picture and being able to fit pieces together. Your expertise is needed because only through sharing can the perspective outlined above be achieved. No one individual has the complete perspective. Solutions will only come through group action.

This is a personal invitation for you to become a member of an innovative group to share and receive information that will help you and your organization to become leaders in the leisure and business disciplines.

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Programming, and Administration**

VISIONS

Personal Services - - the vehicles to helping the individual change his life, thereby, making a more positive contribution to organizations and society.