



Austin Parks and Recreation
**LERN Marketing
Review**

September 25, 2012



Austin Parks & Recreation Department Marketing Review



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- PARD's Current Marketing Structure
- What is Marketing
- The marketing review includes Department positive accomplishments and challenges
- Accomplishments and Challenges
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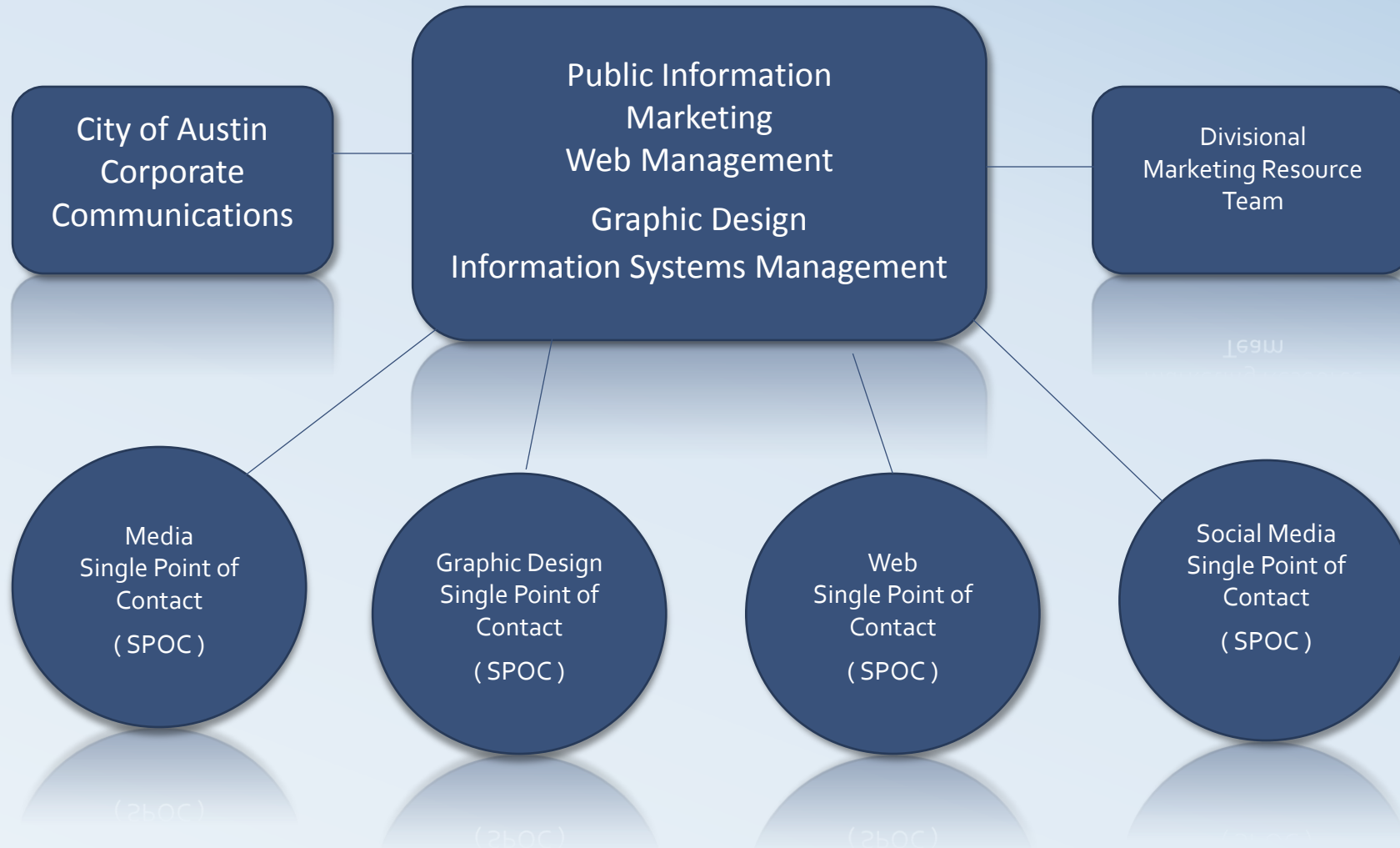
LEARNING RESOURCES NETWORK

Greg Marsello

- Co-founder of LERN
 - Vice President for Organizational Development
 - Foremost authority on marketing plans
 - Heads up LERN's consulting and training, in-house and on-site presentations activities.
- Largest international association in lifelong learning programming
 - Over 50 organizations
 - Marketing research and consultation
 - program development
 - customer service
 - 25% of members are Parks & Recreation Departments



Marketing & Communications Unit



WHAT IS MARKETING?

- Everything we do is marketing!
- You cannot be everything to everyone!
- Numbers are the Department's friends!
- Recreation Departments are shifting from product management to customer management!



LERN Observations and Findings

Positive Accomplishments - *underway*

- Austin community loves its parks
- Marketing Plan – “the best”
- Centralized marketing / SPOCs
- RecTrac purchase
- Community Engagement efforts
- Take care of what we have”
- Marketing Standards
- Incredible number of “Touch Points”
- Expansive and diverse programming
- High community participation with limited marketing dollars
- Proactive Partnerships
- Greater efficiency through contracting
- Progress is being made

LERN Observations and Findings

Challenges

- Marketing is more than promotions; no dollars for market research
- Additional revenue (above budget) should go back to PARD
- No online registration for 24/7 customer access
- Insufficient Marketing budget (LERN standard 10 to 15%)
- Corporate policies and procedures – limit program marketing autonomy
- Limited printed promotions
- PARD visibility –inadequate signage and PARD branding
- “The 5% Rule” – vocal minority drive key decisions; Young adults are PARD’s future
- Capacity – limited due to focus on service delivery rather than facilitator of services
- AustinGo website design – high dissatisfaction by PARD program staff
- Limited data for data-driven decisions
- PARD communications tools do not fully support Austin’s diverse community

LERN Recommendations

- Everyone on the PARD Marketing Team
- Implement RecTrac and online registration
- Continue with printed promotions
- Add more marketing dollars
- Continue marketing standards as a priority
- Continue Cross-Divisional Resource Marketing Team and SPOCs system
- Centralize program registration and staff team as information specialists; bilingual staff would be a benefit
- Community Engagement a priority – best way to build support
- Increase PARD visibility on City's website home page
- Move forward with set data collection and analysis
- Commit to market research
- Build a one-year marketing plan for each center

LERN Report Conclusion

- Improving PARD marketing is vital in Austin's diverse, competitive and growing market.
- PARD must continue to transition to a truly "everything we do is marketing" department.
- Understanding the importance of marketing's role and committing to increase marketing efforts will position PARD for increased community awareness, greater efficiency, and growth.
- Seek consultation and assistance from the LERN team to further enhance PARD marketing.



Staff Recommendations

1. Facilitate FY 2014 site specific One-year Marketing Plans:
 - Specific product and service goals
 - Marketing budget
 - Benchmarks
 - Promotion methods (e-marketing, social media)
 - Timelines and staff responsibilities
2. Propose a dedicated FY 2014 budget for market research and promotions
3. LERN consultation visit and training on customer service/marketing
4. Explore feasibility of dedicated centralized registration staff (informational specialists)