

**Columbia Gorge Arts and Culture Marketing**  
**SWOT Meeting Notes**

**Strengths**

A name: The Gorge  
Artists  
Proximity to PDX  
Travel OR/WA  
Food/wine/adventure – people coming – add arts  
History  
Recreation  
Beauty  
Singular place - river, people, historic community  
Transportation  
Endless inspiration  
Diverse arts- music, theater, multi-dimensional  
Regional economic development entity in place  
Historic settlement of region/tribes – very rich cultures  
Agriculture  
Wineries/Breweries  
Climate/Sunshine

**Weaknesses**

Volunteers- same 10 people because of population  
Lack of facilities/lodging  
Perception of art as exclusive – high cost  
Transportation – long drive

- Shuttles/vans/monthly vans/busses
- Hampton bus

Bi-state/counties/funding  
Lack of school support  
Connection the artist = isolated pockets/community  
Message focus  
Seasonality  
PDX media perception  
Perceived as all recreation  
Fragmented marketing  
Leadership infrastructure unknown  
Chambers not investing  
Not marketing arts and culture as why to come  
Recreation group may not equal wine or art  
River/divider mentality  
Vast region of distances  
Climate can be a challenge seasonally (but weather infrastructure in place)  
Visitors don't know what to do  
Perception of outdoor rec only  
"Gorge" still fuzzy as a brand

**Opportunities**

River= opportunity – bridges- play up on bridge – bridge the arts  
Partnerships with businesses to money  
Clearinghouse of info – one site for cultural ID  
Seattle (seasonal residents can sell Gorge)  
Travel writers (most focus on recreation)  
Work with tourism organizations – WA/OR – combining would help  
National ID as straight as Mississippi/Santa Fe  
Open studios  
Cross recommendations/promo  
Art adventures off beaten path – find niche  
Great to explore  
Coordinate – calendar – have at other events

Art as partic(?) = white water raft/photo  
Hotels/motels – hang art  
Diverse business models  
Arts journey/story (map/grid  
Cultural tourism  
Cultural arts pass  
Develop partnerships in business community – wind energy developers? Area wineries?  
Show the value of tourism to locals  
Connecting with culinary travelers  
Create a unified message  
Appeal to urban tourists  
Boutique hotels, resorts, hostels

### **Threats**

Perception that arts/culture does not equal support  
Competition for audience  
Bias versus quality of rural experience – affects quality of partnerships  
Gas prices – value?  
Territoriality  
People who do not like tourists  
Population/lack of leadership  
Provincial thinking – not wider pic/region  
Camps – arts versus historical museums versus bikes versus ski  
Family culture – McDe Biggs (?) = arts (food=Memory)  
Infrastructure  
Artist studio Tour – fundraising a challenge – raise \$ regionally  
Not feeling comfortable in small communities  
Fear of the unknown  
Don't see the value of tourism.  
Funding restricted by government boundaries.  
Fossil fuel availability  
Economy

### **Big Ideas**

A general brochure – one concise pamphlet/map  
Kitchen concierge – people who live here market; understand what's here and talk, power of recommendation  
One person (contractor) – looks at all minutes/ calls all  
Get a marketer  
We have assets/investments/assns. – data stream to OR/WA tourism. Make Soup! We have Santa Fe.  
Kiosks and local artists/concierge to direct to artists

### **Money?**

Organization  
MCED – CGTA – sponsorships and memberships and 10 hours of time (staff)  
Support tech in gorge=donate!  
Coalition/leaders= no money!  
One time investment? Campaign  
Contribute to get coordinator. Prof. devo(?) for younger staff. Interns. Access=open.  
Seasonal build – campaign- message. What do we want every hotelier to know?  
C.T. coalitions and this coalition= 10%= 10 h.p.w. person  
Arts toll booth!

### **Ideas #2**

Bus Tours – arts and wine  
Baby step Oregon Days of Culture participant  
Gateways on region  
Arts and culture month  
Social media  
“Hubs” – cultural trust/travel Oregon  
A Brand. Umbrella brand. Use that bug everywhere.  
Be a coalition. Have a cause.

Must be sustainable.

"Go see tell"

- Sparkloft – Martin Shoal
- Go See Oregon

A month vs. small and repeatable? Both?

Brand: assets, message?

- Sustainability

Santa Fe= way of life/gorge too

Market: PDX? Seattle? People who care re: arts. Tri Cities/Spokane/Walla Walla

Local People. Lots don't know the wide Range of what's here already

Younger generation education arts and culture in schools.

Traveling local. Pull off highway.

Sell something to people already here. Gateways/billboards.

### **Opportunity**

Recreationalists = money/ lot to offer

- Hours?
- Seasons?
- Widows
- X-marketing
- Day pass
- Mothers of gravity sports

Links to sites/events

Cross-marketing/pollenization

South central WA vs. Mt. Hood "region – CRGUA = site/calendar

Listings online

Facebook=start

Challenge of getting info loaded

### **\$/Orgs.**

Start!

Arts build comm. program = planning money to get to next level

WA=Project packages support Oct./April.

Travel OR match. Grant.

Americorps

Partnerships with key hotels/service providers

- May= head on beds
- Months ahead of time=great event to attract visitors
- Messages
- Speakers – rotaries

Every 3-4 months host something for stakeholders – or eblast 'em! Hotels etc.

Certification program – Q training

Include arts and culture – VIP card for all staff working with tourists. Free admission.

Family tour for frontline folks (hotel, galleries) on cultural tourism

### **Next Steps**

Home?

MCCED?

- Fiscal agent
- Expensive versus freelancer

Planning \$

MMT grassroots prog. – 2-way listening tour

Donated desk/phone?

Notes/ dist list

FB page

April – WA Cult. Comm. In Skamania

C.G.A.C.C.