

Draft Marketing Plan: Spring On Board national effort

Overview

April 21-25, 2015 is **Spring On Board** week, a national effort to encourage people to take a boating education course, online or in person.

During this week, all corporate, public and nonprofit boating safety entities will conduct a joint public affairs effort to encourage all boaters (no matter their experience level) to take a boating education course. Course providers have agreed to offer course incentives (e.g. discounted rates, prizes, etc.), while states, nonprofits and other entities have agreed to focus all messaging heavily on this one issue.

Program Timeline

November 2014: Create working group of course providers, state educators and other interest groups to put together the program (see **Partner / Interest Groups** section for details).

January: Meet to discuss creation of collateral (see **Collateral** section for details).

February: First draft of all deliverables due.

March: Complete deliverables and push out to states and all partners.

April: Execute external outreach program (see **External Outreach section for details**).

Partner / Interest Groups

There are many interest groups that should be represented in this effort. Below is a partial list, broken down based on industry type:

Nonprofit Partners: National Safe Boating Council (NSBC), US Sail and Power Squadrons, National Water Safety Congress (NWSC), NASBLA, Boat US Foundation and others.

For-Profit Course Providers: Boat Ed, Fresh Air Educators and others.

States and Federal Government: State boating educators, BLAs, Coast Guard Auxiliary, Coast Guard Boating Safety Specialists and others.

Internal (Partner) Outreach

The program will develop a “virtual” press kit that will contain digital versions of all collateral. In addition, the collateral will be stored and retrievable from the NASBLA web site.

The program committee will partner with the NSBC and NASBLA staff to push out the information and collateral material to all partners and interest groups using the same formula and strategy currently employed for the “Wear It” and “Operation Dry Water” Campaigns.

NASBLA and the NSBC will be instrumental in executing this program, based on their previous success with these two, highly regarded, efforts.

The most important element of creating a successful national program is to inform partners and participants and get buy in from industry leaders.

External outreach

External outreach will be conducted to the public using a variety of time tested public relations tactics in concert with newer social media efforts. Individual partners, agencies and organizations will execute this basic public relations effort. A sample of how the program might be executed is bulleted below:

- Monday (April 21): Send customized press release to media contacts and post to agency Facebook page.
- Tuesday: Tweet out reminder, contact local newspaper to place news story about the issue.
- Wednesday: reach out to local education community with e-mail, Facebook Post or direct contact.
- Thursday: Retweet reminder for people to sign up for a course.
- Friday: Appear on local radio to discuss weekend course options.
- Saturday: Conduct discounted in-class course.

Individual efforts at external outreach are what will make this program a success.

Collateral:

For the first year, collateral will be kept simple in order to facilitate the program launch.

Collateral material includes:

Facebook home page: Instead of developing a stand-alone web site, the program should create a primary home on Facebook. Partners, such as NASBLA, the NSBC, the NWSC should be asked to repost the program material to their web sites. The recreational boating community does not need any new, stand-alone web sites.

Execution check list: This one-page, bullet check list will give basic instructions to partners on how to execute the program (it could look similar to the “sample” included above.)

Customizable press release: This will be the most important piece of collateral for participating agencies and partners. A press release not only informs the public and media, it also gets every potential partner to understand the program itself.

FAQ: Those tasked with executing this national effort must anticipate and answer potential questions about the program.

List of participating course providers: The program must send out course a list of course providers who have agreed to participate in the program.

Draft