Reel Fun
Vermont 2015
An RBFF State Innovative R3 Grant-based Initiative

#ReelFunVT photo contest winner, Calvin Trudo
Program Overview & Objectives

• New to Vermont for 2015; Summer campaign June - September

• Multi-agency initiative – Vermont Fish & Wildlife, Vermont State Parks, Vermont Tourism & Marketing, Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation

• Goals:
  • Attract both existing and new anglers to fishing in Vermont
  • Educate anglers of Vermont’s diverse fishing opportunities
  • Create annual program aimed at boosting fishing participation, and fishing license sales, in Vermont State Parks
Recreational Fishing Landscape in Vermont

- Participation relatively stable across the last decade
- Small increases in license purchases among:
  - 20 to 30 year olds - particularly in Chittenden County, 25% of state’s population
  - Youth anglers – resident and non-resident
  - Adult non-resident licenses of all types – e.g. season, 1-day, 3-day, 7-day, combination etc.
- Decline in sales of resident combination hunting and fishing licenses
- Minimal past effort to target specific audiences in order to boost participation
Target Audiences

- **State park visitors** – primarily young families, parents ages 35-44
  - Captive audience; Record attendance in 2015 – 1 million visitors

- **Chittenden county residents** – primarily young singles
  - Area home to highest number of young residents in Vermont; numerous colleges / universities
  - Large section of world-renowned Lake Champlain falls in this county
  - Strong outdoor recreation scene across various activities

- **Residents of Massachusetts, Connecticut, Albany NY along I-91 corridor**
  - Past license sales data shows consistent trend of fishing license purchases by residents of this area
Methodology

- Collaborative effort – F&W, Vermont FPR and Tourism & Marketing

- Advertising vehicles:
  - YouTube – regional
  - Print media – local, regional and national; general news media and fishing-specific
  - Radio – local
  - Web / digital – local, regional and national; Department website
  - Television – local
  - Public transportation – local

- Earned media via news releases, story pitches etc.

- Social media – Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, both F&W and FPR

- Grassroots, word-of-mouth promotion by staff at Vermont State Parks

- Signage and brochures at Vermont State Parks
Strategic Promotions

• Reel Fun program promoted heavily in conjunction with Vermont’s Free Fishing Day – June 13
• Held “Reel Fun Fishing in State Parks” week in late July
• Created season-long #ReelFunVT photo contest
Ad Examples

Chittenden County Print Ad

Chittenden County Bus Ad

Digital Web Ad
Park-specific fishing brochure

- Brochures tailored for each of the 10 participating state parks
- Info on loaner tackle kits
- Fishing tips
- Info on how to purchase a license
- Info on ReelFunVT photo contest
30 Television Ad*

* A 15-second version was also utilized during the campaign on YouTube
2015 Reel Fun Vermont photo contest winners announced

MONTPELIER, Vt. – Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department and Vermont Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation today announced the winners of the 2015 Reel Fun Vermont photo contest, a component of the recently-created Reel Fun Vermont fishing program aimed at making fishing in Vermont State Parks more accessible to park visitors.

Vermont State Parks and Vermont Fish & Wildlife announce “Reel Fun” program for 2015

MONTPELIER, Vt. – Vermont State Parks and the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department are teaming up this season to promote and enhance fishing opportunities for campers and visitors at state parks across Vermont through the recently created “Reel Fun” program.
Vermont anglers reel in awards

Posted: Nov 02, 2015 6:23 PM EST
Updated: Nov 02, 2015 6:23 PM EST
By WCAX News

BURLINGTON, Vt. - Vermont anglers reeled in some big catches this year and some are being showcased by the state.

It's part of Vermont Fish and Wildlife’s "Reel Fun Vermont Photo" contest where anglers submitted pictures of their catch.

The winners this year: Calvin Trudeau and his bluegill, Peter and Lucie Armata with a largemouth bass and yellow perch and Mariele Welch also with a largemouth bass.

They won a variety of prizes.
Results - YouTube Ad Component

- **Duration:** June 3 – June 30, 2015
- **Total views:** 130,142  **Minutes watched:** 32,212
- 76% male viewership, 24% female
- 14-second average view duration
- **Top states by views:** Massachusetts – 52,253; Connecticut – 19,783; New York – 15,091; Vermont – 15,091; New Hampshire – 10,361
- **Viewership by age:** 25-34 (40%), 35-44 (31%), 13-17 (23%)
- **Top 3 viewing devices:** Mobile phone (38%, 49,462), computer (35%, 45,586), tablet (19%, 25,110)
Loaner Tackle Kits
Reel Fun in Vermont State Parks – Tackle Component

• 10 high-traffic, fishing-oriented parks selected for year one
• 3 loaner, user-friendly fishing rods and tackle kits provided to each park
• Park-specific fishing brochure – tips, license info
• Support to park staff
Results - Tackle Kit Usage Highlights

• 150 tackle kit sign-outs from 8 reporting parks
• 90 rods signed out at Silver Lake State Park
• Visitors excited and appreciative of kits – some even surprised by their availability
• Mix of use by kids & adults, as well as family use
• Purchase of fishing license a common deterrent for adults across various parks
2015 Fishing License Sales Highlights

• Resident Fishing: + 1.22%
• Resident Youth Fishing: + 2.8%

• Non-Res. Fishing: + 1.28 %
• Non-Res. Youth Fishing: + 10.11%
• Non-Res. 1 Day Fishing: + 4.27 %
2015 Resident Fishing License Sales Highlights

• Dramatic increase in women anglers over the age of 65: + 24%
• Chittenden County women over 65: + 86%
• Chittenden County youth anglers: + 11%
# 2015 Nonresident Fishing License Sales Highlights

Out-of-state audiences targeted through YouTube ads, state park promotions and range of advertising / communication strategies

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<th>State</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>Youth</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 Day</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>Women</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Youth</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Overall</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3 Day</td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>10.5% (women 12.5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>28% (women 13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>3.5% (women 12%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusions

- Modest resident license sales gains
- Strong non-resident license sales increase
- Strong increase in participation by youth and women; More research needed on these trends
- Opportunity to expand Reel Fun campaign to year-round, statewide program
- Potential correlation between promotional strategies / state park resources, and nonresident license sales increases
Future Planning

• Positive feedback & upward trending license sales means program continuation in 2016 and 2017

• Strengthen state park component:
  • Enhanced training for park staff; Improved signage of program / equipment
  • Explore Reel Fun ice fishing opportunities
  • Advertise program more broadly – e.g. camping / tourism guides
  • Explore Reel Fun “day pass” options and other supportive license options to further increase accessibility to fishing
  • Better incorporate Reel Fun program & VT fishing license info into visitor reservation process
  • Gather better contact information from tackle kit users

• Continue & expand Chittenden County & I-91 corridor outreach strategies; range of initiatives proposed
  • Promote in local venues (ReelFun Day with minor league baseball team -- Lake Monsters)
#ReelFunVT photo contest 3rd place winner, Marielle Welch

#ReelFunVT photo contest 2nd place winners, Peter & Lucie Armata
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