

RBFF State R3 Program Grants Iowa Department of Natural Resources/Fish Local Campaign

Overview

In the spring 2018, the Iowa DNR launched the “Fish Local” marketing campaign in the Des Moines metro area to promote nearby fishing locations to suburban audiences. With a growing urban versus rural population, the DNR is trying to find ways to make fishing more accessible and raise awareness that residents are welcome to fish locally. The marketing campaign leveraged the DNR’s Community Fishing Program, which is partnering with city governments to develop and promote fishing ponds in city parks and recreation areas. The DNR also targeted inconsistent and lapsed anglers who reside in these communities.

Partners

Cities of Altoona, Ankeny, Bondurant, Clive, Johnston, Norwalk, Pleasant Hill, Polk City, Urbandale, Waukee and West Des Moines.

Benefits

- Fish Local offered the opportunity to partner with communities in ways that were mutually beneficial to their goals of providing outdoor recreation and the DNR’s goals of increasing fishing participation. This was accomplished through consistent branding, sharing promotional content, social media posts and through special events.
- The marketing campaign targeted communities with customized “where-to-go” information that ended up being very popular! The Google Fishing map, postcards, and magazine ads featured unique community fishing spots they could be accessed in a matter of minutes.
- The Fish Local branding is being used across the Des Moines metro at 123 fishing locations. The branding will help create a consistent, recognizable look for accessible, community-based fishing locations in Iowa.

Results

License sales results from the postcard and email campaign to casual and lapsed anglers included:

- Gross revenue of \$45,345 and net revenue (ROI) of \$24,976.16
- 12.6% lift compared to control for people receiving just the email
- 6.8% lift for people receiving just the postcard
- 9.9% lift for people receiving both the email and the postcard

Facebook results:

- 3,434 Facebook referrals to Fish Local web page
- 41,042 people reached through Facebook ads
- 160,582 impressions from Facebook ads
- 2,864 click throughs on Facebook ads

Web results:

- 10,599 referrals to the Fish Local web page
- 14,613 views of the Community Atlas Google map



This email was sent to lapsed anglers in the Des Moines metro which highlighted local ponds to fish and contained links to purchase a license and to the Fish Local webpage.



Support

“The Fish Local marketing campaign is of the most successful efforts we have undertaken, with positive revenue results and long-lasting partnerships with communities.” – Joe Larscheid, Fisheries Bureau Chief



Lessons Learned & Future Plans

- Customized information on a local level works!
- Email and postcards combined were effective, with email continuing to be the most effective. Postcards were more successful when they contained customized information.
- Social media creates engagement, raises awareness and helps drive web traffic. The DNR is continuing to work on ways to track purchases from social media.
- Digital strategies (banner ads, video-streaming) are not as effective at driving web traffic as email and social media.
- Community partnerships take a lot of work, but leveraging an already existing program with marketing efforts and dollars is smart, efficient and provides more impact overall.
- The DNR plans to take Fish Local statewide as marketing dollars allow. The focus will be on signage, social media, email and efficient postcard mailings.



Methodology

The Fish Local marketing campaign ran from May 20 – July 15, 2018 and targeted 11 communities in the Des Moines metro area. The campaign included multiple components:

- Campaign landing page (www.iowadnr.gov/fishlocal) which featured a searchable Google map, Local Hot Spots and events calendar.
- Postcard mailing with customized local hotspots (using variable data printing) for each community to 15,639 casual or lapsed anglers, along with two emails. Within the target group some received just a postcard, some just an email, and some both a postcard and an email.
- Standalone email to 50,000 that met demographic criteria from a local TV station with an email database that supported Fish Local messaging.
- Ads in *Iowa Living* magazine, which customizes magazines for each of the 11 communities in the metro area.
- Fish Local “public fishing” signs at 123 ponds or lakes.
- Facebook-promoted posts using “lookalike audiences” similar to those who match the target audience, along with imported email addresses for targeting. Social media content promoted the Fish Local page, Father’s Day and included two “Live” sessions at local ponds.
- Digital advertising on the Weather Channel, a local TV station, geo-fencing of certain lakes and a :30 pre-roll streaming video.
- Community promotions including newsletter articles, clinics and events, and social media promotions.



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An advertisement used on the weekly fishing report, Iowa DNR site, and across social media which linked directly to the Fish Local page.