



Nottingham Trent University
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In introducing the HOOF network for East Midlands the main priority for all networks was highlighted as encouraging and sustaining participation in the equine sport.

A number of key developments highlighted the value of the network including: **Development of an Equestrian portal** to provide a user friendly search engine for potential participants seeking riding establishments, and as a tool to raise standards in the industry.

Capitol Funding - examples of the fund demonstrated what was available to support the industry as further funding opportunities will be available from 1/4/2012. It is pound for pound matched funding, whose main focus is on 16+, with increased participation as its main output.

Future Capitol Funding opportunities will be promoted through member bodies, and the HOOF Regional Networks.

A useful source of other funds and information are the County Sports Partnerships, who have officers available to assist. Further funding streams are



available through this channel. Contact the BEF Regional Co-ordinator for contact details.

Use of Social Media to encourage participation:

Such tools are simple and free to use and access, and can promote the industry to a very wide range of potential participants.

Liam Killen's presented the value of using such media:

1. It can build an audience
2. Help you engage with customers and so sell more product
3. Build your brand and so drive traffic to your website and business

To emphasise the value of such tools as Facebook, Liam supplied the following statistics:

- More than 500 million active users
- 1 in 14 of the global population
- Network of friends
- 113,680 like horse riding
- And the fastest growing demographic is the over 35's

Twitter is micro-blogging of which there are:

- 750 tweets per second
- In the top 15 most visited websites worldwide
- Is a conversation tool

YouTube:

- 2 billion videos watched each day
- Hundreds of thousands of videos uploaded daily
- 24 hours of video uploaded every minute

You should find your local audience through;

- Media
- Schools
- Social events
- Sports



Liam gave some tips around developing content such as keep it short and sweet, make it real for people, don't promote your business too heavily, make it search friendly and give it time to take off.

'Take Back the Reins'

A programme being delivered in partnership with the John Lewis Partnership, currently being piloted as a means to encourage participation particularly by those who may have ridden previously. It is targeted at riding centres to support their efforts to encourage participation.

1. Centre has to be accredited to a members body
2. Each Centre has to attend a customer care workshop
3. The centre has to be a member of the Regional HOOOF Network and willing to work in partnership
4. Have trained staff and be willing to give feedback.

Access to the programme and the centres will be through a national on-line portal, supported by the facilities of a national marketing campaign, and will include facebook groups, twitter, websites etc.

National roll out and the customer care workshops are scheduled for the early new year.

WORKSHOP

To begin this process the group were asked to utilise the Sport England customer description criteria and address the following:

What would their customer journey look like at your centre?

The audience were split into 3 groups. Each group were given a typical market segmentation profile, in this case an 'Alison' or an 'Elaine' (see Appendix 1)

In order to focus thoughts for each group guiding questions were added:

1. What will they be feeling?
2. What are their needs?
3. What solutions can your centre offer to enrich the experience?

The following were the major points raised by the groups

Feelings:

Apprehension
Excitement
Nerves
Lack of Confidence
Isolation
Exhaustion
Self-esteem

Needs:

Value
Fitness
Relaxation
Social
Friendship
Structure
Goals
Enjoyment
Achievement
Professionalism
Inspiration

Solutions:

- Welcoming and Friendly by all staff who should be identified
- Re-assurance and understanding
- Confidence building
- Approachable
- Identify their fitness needs
- Tour of the premises and introduction to staff
- Tidy and clean yard
- Meet the Horses
- Flexibility of Booking
- Refreshments

- Immediate feedback and identify focus for next time
- Adults only
- Age and maturity of teaching staff
- Children's lessons
- Regular instructor and horse at start
- Flexible goal approach – as competitive or not as wanted
- Ease of payment – card facilities
- Provision of equipment and specialist clothing
- Prior information available on website



Appendix 1

Summary of profiles of Elaine and Alison – to view full profiles see http://www.sportengland.org/research/market_segmentation.aspx

ELAINE

Empty nest career ladies

Age group 46-55

Married

Full time employment and owner occupier

Typically a mid-life professional who have more time for themselves since their children have left home

About Elaine

Elaine is 53 and married with two children who have now left home. Having picked up her career again after the children went to school, Elaine is now a full time senior teacher. In a few years' time she'll consider dropping her hours ready for retirement, but for now she's enjoying the career opportunities and chance to stretch herself. When Elaine gets home from work she enjoys a glass of wine while making a healthy dinner for herself and her husband. They chat over dinner and might even call their son who is away at university, though inevitably they'll be talking to his voicemail.

Elaine goes to a class at the gym one evening a week and enjoys watching dramas or reading a book other nights. Weekends see her going to the stables, gardening or going for a long walk with her husband.

Motivations for Elaine

The main motivations for Elaine are enjoyment and keeping fit where her scores are above the national average.

Weight loss is an important factor for Elaine which suggests she uses sport to keep looking good and feeling fit.

Socialising, improving performance and taking children are also a factor for this segment, whilst competition is much less relevant.

Barriers for Elaine

Over a third of this segment give their main barrier as 'health, injury or disability'. This is below the national average which suggests that whilst an issue for some, Elaine is less impacted by health issues than other adults. 24% of this segment has a long standing illness, disability or infirmity.

'Other' barriers (including no opportunity and economic factors) are also a factor for a quarter of this segment, with work commitments impacting on a fifth.

What does Elaine like to do?

Elaine enjoys a range of cultural activities, at levels close to the national average or above average in some cases.

Friends and family top her list, followed by television, reading, shopping, listening to music and eating in restaurants.

An above average proportion of this segment spend their leisure time with friends and family, reading, shopping, music, eating out, on days out, gardening, on the internet/emailing and going to the theatre or concerts.

This suggests that Elaine has more free time and some disposable income to enjoy culture and socialising.

Although sport is not a top priority, the proportion that has undertaken sport or exercise in the past year is close to the national average.

ALISON

Mums with a comfortable, but busy, lifestyle

Age group 36-45

Married

Housewife stays at home

Children of school age



About Alison

Alison is 38 and married with two children, aged 6, and 3. As a stay-at-home mum her career is temporarily on hold, whilst her husband works as an accountant. Alison's life is busy. She does the school or playschool run, takes the children to music and horse-riding lessons and keeps the house in order. After putting the children to bed, Alison often spends an evening at PTA meetings. This year she is involved in organising the school fete.

Alison manages to attend a few exercise classes each week whilst her youngest is at playschool, and the family go swimming at the weekend. Concerned about a healthy diet for her family, Alison gets organic vegetables delivered each week. She may enjoy a well-deserved glass of wine while she's cooking dinner.

Motivations for Alison

The main motivations for Alison playing sport are keeping fit (46%), enjoyment (42%), taking the children (29%) and losing weight (14%).

Taking the children is a more significant motivation for Alison playing sport than it is for the overall adult population, (29% compared to 8% of all adults).

'Training/taking part in competition' and 'improving performance' are much less significant motivating factors for Alison.

Barriers for Alison

26% of this segment give their main barrier to playing sport as family, compared to 7% of all adults.

Work commitments are a barrier for 24% of this segment.

'Health, injury and disability' are considered a barrier to playing sport by 11% of this segment. Similarly, 11% of this segment describe themselves as having a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity. 'Help with an injury/disability' is a motivating factor for 1% of this segment to play sport.

How to reach Alison

Most responsive to: Magazine advertising

Preferred information channel: Telephone

Preferred service channel: Mobile

Decision style: 'Intuitive' – Alison prefers simple but straightforward messages, and doesn't like to be overwhelmed by facts and figures.