



Department of Parks and Recreation
Marketing Program

Background

The Prince William County Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) maintains a marketing staff of 5.75 full time employees. This team is responsible for supporting the agency's revenue generating activities by promoting program enrollments and facility admissions. These efforts have supported the collection of nearly \$60 million in revenue over the course of the last five fiscal years.

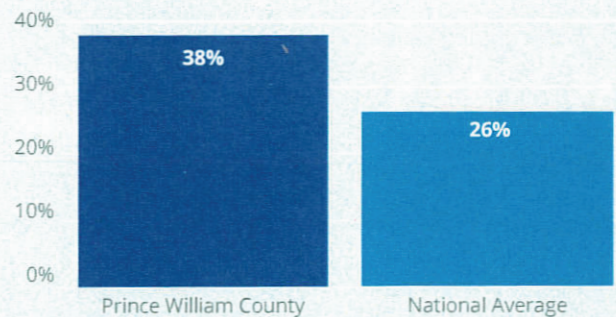
Revenue generation through DPR Services

The Prince William County Department of Parks and Recreation has collected \$59.8 million dollars in gross revenues over the course of the last five fiscal years, averaging just shy of \$12 million each year.¹ For Fiscal Year 2018, the department's budgeted

¹ Actual revenue collected from Fiscal 2012 through fiscal 2016 averaged \$11,949,579 and ranged from \$10,964,909 to \$12,735,102. Total revenue for this period was \$59,747,896.

revenue is \$12.7 million, or about 38% of total budgeted operating expenditures.² Prince William County's budgeted revenue as a percentage of budgeted expenditures is nearly 45% higher than the average of 26% across parks and recreation agencies nationally.³

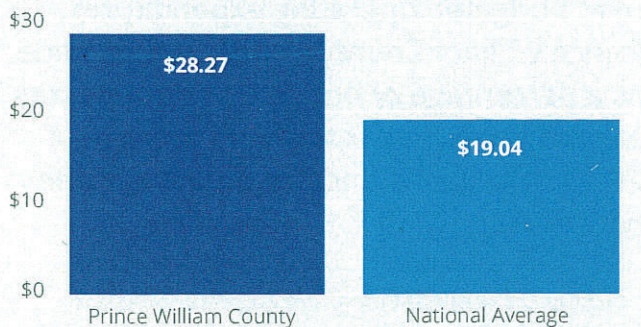
Figure 1: Budgeted revenue as percentage of expenditures



² Total budgeted operating expenditures of \$33,833,741 excludes CIP and CMP expenditures. Actual revenue as percentage of operating expenditures is 37.6%.

³ 2017 NRPA Agency Performance Review: Park and Recreation Agency Performance Benchmarks. National Recreation and Park Association, 2017.

Figure 2: Budgeted revenue per capita



Prince William County's Fiscal Year 2018 budgeted revenue per capita of \$28.27 is more than 48% greater than the median budgeted parks and recreation revenue per capital of \$19 nationally.⁴

This focus on revenue – a model of parks and recreation service provision that seeks to maximize cost recovery levels – helps offset the burden placed on the taxpayer to

⁴ **Revenue comparison:** 2017 NRPA Agency Performance Review: Park and Recreation Agency Performance Benchmarks. National Recreation and Park Association, 2017. **PWC Population Figures:** <http://www.pwcgov.org/government/dept/doit/gis/pages/annual-population-estimates.aspx>

provide parks and recreation facilities and services to the community.

Successful cost recovery through fee-for-service programming requires the maintenance of an effective marketing program within the Department of Parks and Recreation. Inclusive of salaries and operating expenses (the latter being primarily advertising and printing costs), the Department of Parks and Recreation's marketing budget for Fiscal Year 2018 stands at \$850,799, representing about 6.7% of the agency's total budgeted revenue and about 2.5% of the agency's total budgeted non-capital expenditures.

DPR's Marketing Program

The Department of Parks and Recreation's marketing team executes a broad spectrum of promotional activities in support of the agency. Though DPR's marketing team provides promotional support for many of the Department's functions that are not

Highlights of the Department's marketing efforts from calendar year 2016 include:

40 Million+

Advertising impressions delivered

5 Marketing Industry Awards

36%

increase in overall web traffic

215,000+

user engagements with Facebook posts

31%

increase in Facebook fans

900,000+

organic Facebook user reach

400

distinct pieces of collateral and signage

74,000

pieces of print collateral produced

2 new websites launched

750,000+ web sessions served

4.98

projects completed per working day on average

Table 1: Marketing projects by year

Start	End	Year	Work Days	Projects	Proj. Daily
8/6/2014	12/31/2014	2014	106	131	1.24
1/1/2015	12/31/2015	2015	261	903	3.46
1/1/2016	12/31/2016	2016	261	1,299	4.98

revenue generating (such as trails) or that are not revenue positive operations (such as community pools), the primary focus of the marketing division’s workplan is supporting the generation of non-golf revenue through fee-for-service program offerings and facility admissions.

The marketing team within the Department of Parks and Recreation works on a marketing agency model, treating our internal customers – the staff responsible for managing and programming our facilities – as clients. Toward this end, we maintain project and account management practices similar to that of a small marketing firm. Within our project management system, we track all of our marketing campaigns as well as the production and administrative activities associated with executing those campaigns.

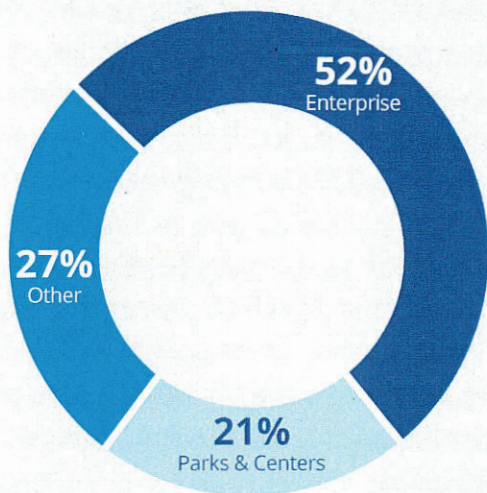
A review of these data shows that the DPR marketing team completed 1,299 work items

in support of our clients during 2016. This was a 43% increase over the previous year’s total of 903. The team averaged 4.98 fulfilled marketing requests per working day; an increase in daily output of 44% over the previous year.

Year-over-year growth in DPR’s marketing output has been consistent since the division implemented its current project tracking practices in August of 2014. Prior to that time, no system for measuring requested and completed work items was in place for the Communication Services Division.

Whether promoting pass sales for our recreation centers, registrations for our summer camp offerings, or admissions to our waterparks, the Department’s marketing team works to understand the targeted audiences and build cross-channel campaigns to effectively promote DPR programs and services. Ultimately, promotional activities

Figure 3: CY2026 output by program area



generally fall into four categories: (1) advertising; (2) website development and maintenance; (3) social media and email marketing; and (4) sales collateral and signage projects.

Advertising

During Calendar 2016 the DPR marketing team managed advertising expenditures of

\$220,539, delivering more than 40 million impressions across print, digital and broadcast outlets. DPR's digital advertising drew over ½ million clicks.⁵ Six thousand nine hundred and twelve total days of advertising were supported by these expenditures.

Online advertising, in the form of social media ads and website banners, accounted for 85% of advertising expenditures. Print advertising expenditures accounted for 11% of expenditures. Television media buys accounted for 5% of expenditures.

The largest share of these funds, 51%, went to support waterpark ticket sales. Summer camps and recreation centers each received about 15% of departmental advertising expenditures, with HR/Recruitment and Parks

⁵ Clicks on our major ad platforms of Facebook, Instagram, Google AdWords, Bing ads, and AdRoll totaled 571,630. This does not include clicks from other display advertising sources where we made direct media buys such as insidenova.com, potomaclocal.com and other such online publications.

Figure 4: Avg. daily marketing output over time

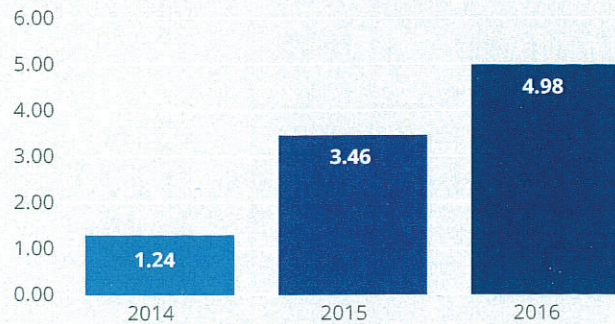
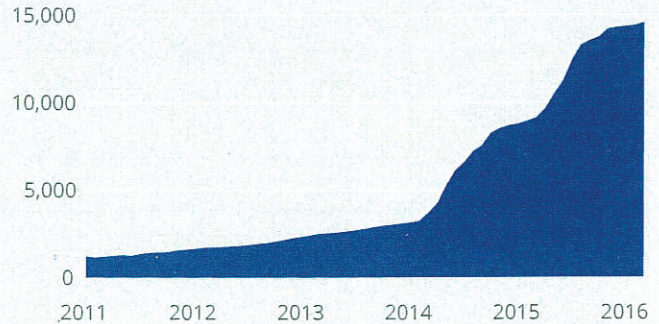


Figure 5: DPR Facebook fans over time



& Centers rounding out the top five with 13% and 5% respectively. The remaining 1% of the advertising budget was dedicated to promoting releases of Leisure Magazine.

Social Media & Email Marketing

As of June 2017, the Department of Parks and Recreation's following across social media outlets totaled more than 35,000 people, with the agency's opt-in email list totaling 21,424 subscribers.⁶ Because both of these groups represent patrons who have actively selected to connect with DPR and receive our information, these are high-value marketing channels for the agency.

Social Media

Organic social media outreach – distribution of content on social media other than paid advertisements – are an important component of DPR's outreach efforts.

As 2016 wound to a close, the main DPR Facebook page had 14,708 fans, up 31% from the previous year. Over the course of 2016, posts from DPR's primary Facebook presence reached 368,618 users, generating more than 10,032 user engagements.

The Facebook presences for DPR's water-parks performed well too over the last year. The number of people liking Splash-Down's Facebook page rose by 31% and the number of page likes for Waterworks grew by 55%.

SplashDown-related Facebook posts reached 157,650 users during 2016, via 345,134 impressions (an average of 2.18 impressions per user). Each post, on average, was displayed 5,951 times (impressions) and reached 2,718 unique users. Splashdown's average reach per post and average impressions per post were up by 40% and 122% year-over-year respectively.

⁶ 35,365 across all active platforms as of June 20, 2017.

Figure 6: SDWP Facebook fans over time

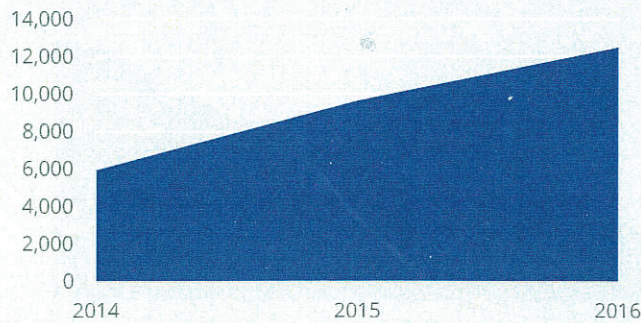
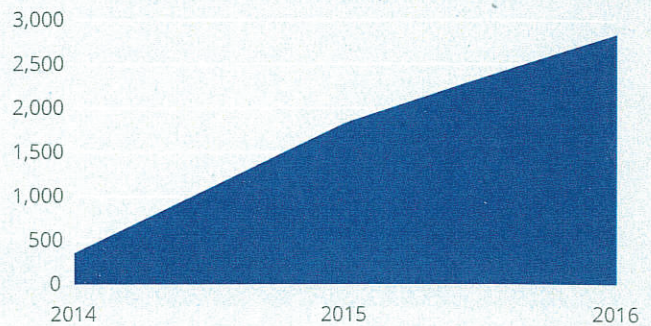


Figure 7: WWWP Facebook fans over time



Waterworks-related posts reached more than 32,000 users via nearly 67,000 impressions (2.09 impressions per user on average). The typical Waterworks post garnered 1,115 impressions and reached 534 users. Post reach and impressions for Waterworks were down by 7% and 15% on average respectively for 2016 over 2015.

Email Marketing

The Department of Parks and Recreation’s email marketing program is consistently high-performing, having been recognized with Constant Contact’s All Star Award for 6 consecutive years.

DPR sent promotional email blasts to over 37,000 recipients during 2016, with an average open-rate of 46.36.9%. This bested the government industry average by nearly 90% and the leisure/recreation/fitness facility industry average by 160%. Our click through rates were also solid, averaging 16.51% for

2016 over 2015’s 15%. Perhaps most importantly, our opt-out rate closed the year at less than four-tenths of one percent (.039%).

Finishing 2016 with 18,799 subscribers in our email distribution list, DPR saw 42% list growth last year.

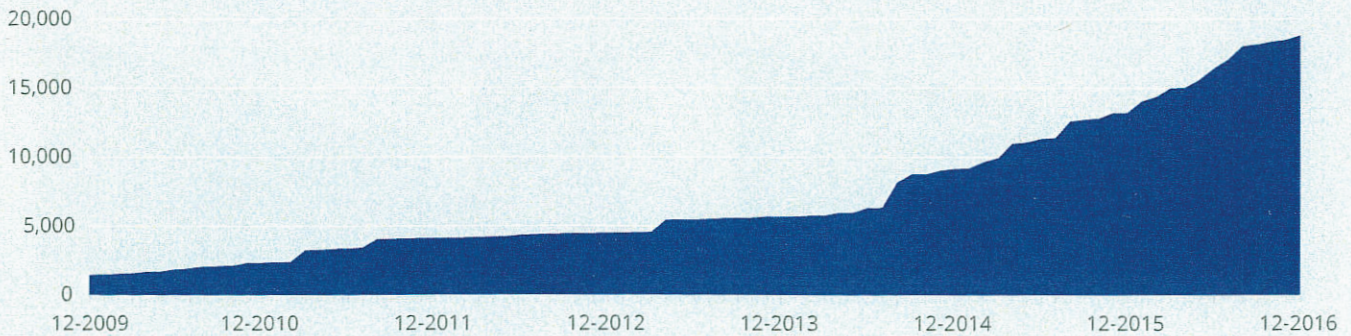
Website Development & Marketing

Calendar 2016 was DPR’s best year on record in terms of web traffic, with the number of sessions served topping 750,000 across DPR’s public facing web properties. Year-over-year, visits to DPR’s webpages were up more than 36%.

Table 2: Traffic to DPR sites

	Web Sessions	Page views
2013	212,500	859,241
2014	449,200	1,367,376
2015	553,175	1,640,348
2016	756,401	1,906,061

Figure 8: Email list subscribers over time



The Department's marketing team completed two significant public-facing web projects during 2016, launching new websites for both SplashDown Waterpark and Waterworks Waterpark. On the heels of these changes, the waterparks' websites collectively served more than 320,000 sessions and nearly 700,000 page views. The Splashdown website outperformed the previous year in terms of total traffic with a 38% increase in the total number of sessions and a 43% increase in the total number of page views. Waterwork's new website similarly outperformed its previous iterations, with sessions 32% and page views 34% higher than 2015.

Collateral, Signage and Environmental Design

Calendar 2016 saw the production of more than 220,000 individual print collateral pieces and 109 individual signs by the CSD team through the execution of 372 print design projects and 48 signage design projects.

Flyers produced for DPR's recreation centers alone accounted for more than 74,000 printed pages.

Leisure magazine accounted for the largest share of production expenditures (47%), followed by recreation centers (23%), and combined parks and centers sites (16%). All other clients' printing and signage needs cumulatively accounted for the remaining 13%.

Production at this scale requires DPR to maintain substantial design talent on staff, with one full-time dedicated graphic designer, one part-time graphic designer, and two additional positions whose duties include additional design work. An accomplished team, graphic design projects executed by DPR staff have won recognitions from the American InHouse Design Awards, the Hermes Creative Awards, the City-County Communications Association, and the Virginia Recreation and Parks Society.



Prince William County

PARKS & RECREATION
