

LOCKHEED MARTIN'S HALEY'S DITCH ENVIRONMENTAL REMEDIATION AND RESTORATION PROJECT: CHANGING AN URBAN DITCH INTO A COMMUNITY WALKING TRAIL

This complete document can be reviewed on line at <http://www.ldarrylarmstrong.com/2010-HALEYSRUN.html>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The Lockheed Martin Corporation in Akron, Ohio voluntarily cleaned up polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and restored an urban ditch known as Haley's Ditch in a neighborhood adjacent to their plant site. Upon completion of the project, the site was renamed Haley's Run and dedicated as a walking trail to the community. The project has been touted by local, state and federal government officials as a "model" for the way future restoration projects should be done and sets a stage for how to do it right. The communications and community outreach on this project were conducted between January 2008 and June 2010 followed by post evaluations in August 2010.

RESEARCH

The primary, secondary and confirmatory research indicated that various "Low-Tech-High-Touch" (LTHT) and a few "High-Tech- Low-Touch" (HTLT) communications tools could be used. Our initial behavioral assessment of the possible stakeholders that would have an interest in the project indicated that the majority of the fence-line neighbors most likely would prefer LTHT methods. Further, behavioral analysis and confirmatory research indicated these stakeholders were predominantly visual (seeing) and kinesthetic (feeling) learners, confirming the LTHT basis. The stakeholders assessed predominantly had high school educations, had lived in the community for a number of years, were proud of their associations with the industries in the area, showed pride of homeownership and their country and had a sense of history. These traits helped us fashion and shape the community outreach program tactics and messages.

ACTION PLANNING

Two plans and one process were developed. A communication and community outreach plan (C/CO Plan) incorporating LTHT tools was designed to develop relationships with the impacted fence-line neighbors and facilitate the cleanup effort. It focused on using effective and efficient behaviorally-based two-way communications strategies and tactics with measureable outcomes. The C/CO plan used the conventional public relations research, action planning, communications and evaluation (R.A.C.E.) model. Since we have seen projects fail too frequently when crisis management plans were not formulated on the front-end, we developed such a plan to be used in the event of an injury or other issue at the site that would garner media and public attention. Finally, an inquiry and issue process that incorporated the site's communications' representative was developed to ensure the timely answering and resolution of stakeholder and media questions and issues. This process ensured that inquiries were logged and passed to the site project manager for prompt disposition and resolution.

INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES

Among the innovative strategies used: 1) Integration at the outset of the communications team with the technical team; 2) Use of a behavioral analysis and profile to discern fence-line neighbor's communications needs; 3) Establishment of behavioral based measurements; 4) The right project manager - Dave Gunnarson was the best possible choice as a manager for this project. He understood the

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importance of communications and community outreach and was willing to be counseled. His demeanor, understanding of the project and his ability to deliver information in a conversational yet professional style was a major asset to this program; 5) Partnering – The project manager from the outset of the project worked closely with the Western Reserve Land Conservancy and the City of Akron Parks and Recreation to facilitate a future operating agreement to maintain and enhance the community walking trail once the remediation and restoration was completed.

COMMUNICATIONS

Standard as well as innovative communication strategies, tactics and tools were developed and used. Among them were integration of the communications team with the technical team, behavioral analysis of fence line neighbors to help us determine the relationship and learning styles of our audience, development of a unique and comprehensive *Citizen's Guide*, a closeout celebration for the public, and partnering with the City of Akron and the Western Reserve Land Conservancy for future maintenance of the remediated and restored area. A complete list of all the strategies, tactics and tools and their uses is found within the report.

EVALUATION

The following six strategic objectives were developed based on the research. Behavioral measurements were defined for each objective. The performance on all objectives met or exceeded expectations. The outcome of each is incorporated in the report as are the results from the post interviews of 25 of the 32 fence-line neighbors. The strategic objectives for this project were:

1. To develop positive working relationships with key stakeholders in the community, who have an interest in engaging in a conversation about the project
2. To ensure that information on the project is presented factually and in a timely manner to members of the public that have an interest
3. To present the concept in easily understandable language and with appropriate visuals and then engage interested stakeholders in a conversation to understand their concerns and issues and to get their feedback and input
4. To educate and inform the affected, impacted or interested members of the business community about the project and listen to their issues and concerns, and integrate them into the planning for a path forward
5. To sustain interest and support for the project and the community outreach initiative throughout the project so that conflicting interests or concerns are resolved in a timely manner and to the satisfaction of all parties whenever possible
6. To build trust and integrity with the stakeholders through our behaviors.

BUDGET

The original budget for this project was set at \$150,000 – actual expenditures were \$116,962.00.

END OF EXECUTIVE SUMMARY