

Project Design Lab 1 Final Project Proposal

Student T.H. excerpted sections ("The Issue", "The Project"):

The Issue

The growth of the snowboard industry over the last decade has given countless young entrepreneurs the opportunity to run a profitable business, from independent board companies to publications to "streetwear". But under what ideals were these businesses founded? And what makes one organization any more valuable to the sport from the next? The positive impact of choices made by these groups are crucial to consider during development. "How will what I do impact the community and ultimately become beneficial to the sport?"

Without taking how the community will benefit from ones' work into consideration, one is more or less looking to make a quick buck. Brands appear, disappear, and reappear at the rate of a mouse click these days, primarily due to an overwhelming sense of regurgitated, popular ideas. While the internet has given these young entrepreneurs a relatively simple way of promoting their ideas, much of what makes a good business or project has been overlooked. While creating an effective business model, Jane Linder and Susan Cantrell from Accenture state that "offering a combination of product and service features, something that offers more value and a new idea" are of utmost importance(Linder/Cantrell, 1). Sounds simple enough.

The real value of snowboarding relies on physical and mental significance. Unless a company involves some sort social or environmental significance during the developmental stages, where is the value? Holden Outerwear, for example, is a good example of a company with environmentally-friendly ideas. From hemp-fiber to eco-minded materials, laminates and even packaging (2), they are extremely conscious of their impact on the community from a global point of view.

The industries focus has shifted off of snowboarding entirely for the most part, and is geared more towards developing the "professional snowboarder image" in an attempt to sell product. Not snowboards, not anything that one would really need to snowboard, but apparel. Flipping through any snowboard magazine today, you'll find an overwhelming number of advertisements, a majority depicting the "if you look good, you'll feel good" idea. While this idea may remain true under a lack of media awareness, where is the snowboarding?

Advertising expensive and unnecessary product aimed at the youth is in many ways preventing the growth of the community, many feeling as if it's a necessity to buy the "latest and greatest" equipment to get started. Thanks to a few non-profit organizations, inner-city and economically deprived youth have been given the chance to snowboard. Athletic & Beyond, a camp and clinic program out of Colorado,

takes inner-city kids out of their daily routines to experience the great outdoors. Nancy Jackson stated that the program "Was a great opportunity to introduce something new to kids who have not been afforded the opportunity to visit a ski resort or participate in such an event." (Jackson, 3). In similar form, The Youth City Program, out of Salt Lake, brought underprivileged youth to Park City, equipment from head to toe as well as lift tickets being provided by the sponsors involved. "Getting these kids to the mountains, and sharing the fun of snowboarding, reminded us all what it's really about" (Schilling, 4) commented Transworld Snowboarding author, Kealan Schilling. The Burton Chill Program also offers a unique program where groups from the inner-city are brought to the mountain one night a week for six weeks. Stephanie, 18, from New York, describes her experiences before and after the program, "(Before chill) I didn't care if I existed. I believed that I had nothing left to live for. I felt I was nothing, I had nothing and nothing mattered.". Due to a family tragedy, Stephan hs been in foster care since age 12. "(After the program) I've learned how to dedicate myself to tasks, to organize myself and get things done," (Kaplan, 5).

There needs to be a greater focus on the sport itself, the lifestyle and snowboarding's therapeutic qualities. By engaging the snowboard community as well as those who wish to become involved in events and various productions around the Northeast region, we hope to only add-on to a growing force of relaying positivity through the shred.

The Project

EC-Boards will serve as a catalyst for the snowboard community in New England to become involved with various events and productions. Our goal is not only to plan fun events in the form of contests & film screenings, but to encourage and provide those less fortunate with the chance to experience what snowboarding has to offer.

Our website, <http://www.ec-boards.com> , will serve as a virtual meeting place for riders to learn about new projects & events as well as inform the general public on how to get involved.

The POW! Program will organize several dates throughout the winter season where all lift tickets, rentals and lessons are free of charge to any student, teacher or faculty member of a chosen school. Applications for the program will be available on our website during August, 2009.

Prizes and Giveaways, taking place on our website and during events, will feature items provided by local businesses. A great opportunity for any small Maine business to earn free advertising space on our website.

Citations

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2. Holden Outerwear, "Environmental Dedication," <http://www.holdenouterwear.com/#/environmental-dedication/>
3. Jackson, Nancy, "Snowboarding comes to the inner-city," Green Valley Ranch, Denver.YourHub.com. January 22, 2008. <http://denver.yourhub.com/GreenValleyRanch/Stories/Sports/Youth/Story~418275.aspx>
4. Schilling, Kaelan, "Shredding For the Kids," Transworld Snowboarding. February 19th, 2008. <http://snowboarding.transworld.net/2008/02/19/shredding-for-the-kids/>
5. Kaplan, Mitch, "Snowboarding with Burton's Chill Program," Kidz N Snow. Date published unknown. <http://www.kidznsnow.com/14105>
6. Del Sole, Chris, "NO Snowboards Allowed!". About.com Snowboarding Guide. Date published unknown. <http://snowboarding.about.com/od/snowboardresorts/i/snowboardingban.htm>