LIVE, BREATHE, HIKE:
A CAMPAIGN FOR THE BUCKEYE TRAIL ASSOCIATION

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____________________________________
by
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systems Theory</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialog Theory</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Management Theory</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functional Theory &amp; Volunteer Motivation</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogic vs. Monologic Communication</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Relations Ethics</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deception &amp; Transparency</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict of Interest</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing Plan</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteerism</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Media</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lessons Learned</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

For my professional honors thesis project, I created a campaign and marketing plan for the Buckeye Trail Association. The BTA is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to maintaining, improving, and promoting the Buckeye Trail (Follow the Blue Blazes). The Buckeye Trail is over 1,400 miles long and forms a loop around the state of Ohio (The Buckeye Trail). Through my work with the client, we created the Live, Breathe, Hike campaign. We chose to call it the Live, Breathe, Hike campaign because this slogan corresponds with the three main objectives of the campaign. We want people to live the Buckeye Trail by becoming a Buckeye Trail Association member and set a goal of 500 new members by the end of 2016. We want people to breathe the Buckeye Trail by becoming a volunteer and set a goal of 20,000 total volunteer hours in 2016. Lastly, we want people to hike the Buckeye Trail as a destination. Because it is basically impossible to track trail use overall, I decided to measure this by event attendance. We hope to increase attendance to major events by 25 percent in 2016.

For the campaign, I created a marketing plan for 2016 to help the Buckeye Trail Association achieve these three main objectives. Among other things, I also created social media posts, organized events, and helped with member relations to execute the various strategies and tactics I created to support the objectives.
THEORY

A campaign is stronger with the support of theories. For this project, I focused on systems theory, dialog theory, relationship management theory, and functional theory. Systems theory allowed me to better understand how an organization exchanges resources with its environment. This is especially important for non-profits, which rely heavily on others for resources in exchange for accomplishing goals that benefit that environment. Dialog theory outlines how an organization communicates with its publics. This theory is helpful for understanding the role of social media in facilitating two-way communication and why that is important for a membership-based organization. Relationship management theory examines how relationship quality impacts the dynamics of exchanges in a relationship and is particularly useful for studying the involvement of individuals in an organization. Lastly, functional theory covers the psychological roles that various behaviors serve and is well suited for understanding the motivations of individuals. This theory was perfect for studying the motivations of volunteers.

Systems Theory

Systems theory examines the ways in which organizations consist of various parts and structures that facilitate communication throughout the organization and allow it to achieve its goals. Each organization’s ever-changing political, social, and economic environments play a large role in shaping the organization as a whole. This influence is, in part, due to how organizations and
their environments rely on one another for resources (Lattimore et al., 2012, p. 52-53). According to systems theory, there are open systems and closed systems. Open systems, unlike closed systems, adapt to environmental changes through communication and exchanges of information (Reitz, 2012, p. 42). Therefore, open systems “allow for the two-way flow of resources and information between the organization and its environment” (Lattimore et al., 2012, p. 54). In the context of public relations, organizations with open systems aim to gather information about the strength of their relationships with various stakeholders and the effectiveness of their communications while those with closed systems do not. Rather, organizations with closed systems rely on past experiences and personal preferences (Lattimore et al., 2012, p. 53). Open systems, therefore, allow for organizations to better adapt to their environments.

Nonprofit organizations are open systems that rely on resources from their environments. However, these resources, particularly financial ones, are often insecure due to environmental pressures and constraints. These organizations are expected to work towards accomplishing their missions while also staying afloat financially (Young et al., 2010, p. 153). This can be incredibly difficult for small nonprofits that do not have much funding. Nonprofit organizations often use commercial endeavors to secure a more reliable resource base (Moeller & Valentinov, 2012, p. 365). Unfortunately, pursuing commercial activities can sometimes distract nonprofits from their core mission. Decisions that are good for the mission and decisions that are financially rewarding are
often quite different from one another (Young et al., 2010, p. 154). The mission of the organization should always be the top priority. Nevertheless, as Young et al. (2010) points out, “because nonprofits operate in a market environment, tensions between responding to incentives of the marketplace and addressing the mission pervade virtually all dimensions of their economic decision making” (p. 166). Therefore, it is crucial that nonprofit directors stay mindful of these mission/market tensions and try to strike a balance between them (Young et al., 2010, p. 154). If an organization places too much emphasis on the market-motivated choices, it runs the risk of losing sight of its main mission and failing to fulfill its intended purpose.

While some argue that such commercial ventures detract from a nonprofit’s ability to pursue its goals as an organization, Moeller & Valentinov (2012) argue that this commercialization is an open system’s adaptation to a hostile environment. Open systems regulate themselves through the two-way flow of resources between an organization and its environment. However, nonprofits depend on insecure resources from donors and volunteers in their environment. These resources are often further limited by the various agendas that accompany them and that are imposed on the nonprofit (Moeller & Valentinov, 2012, p. 366). Therefore, “nonprofit organizations must employ self-regulatory mechanisms allowing them to organize the exchange with the environment in such a way as to” secure resources which are in turn used to ensure the continuous pursuit of the organization’s mission (Moeller &
Valentinov, 2012, p. 366). Commercial pursuits serve as a “self-regulatory mechanism” by acting as a resource base that is more reliable than the environment's insecure supply of resources (Moeller & Valentinov, 2012, p. 369). These pursuits do not always distract nonprofits from their missions. Rather, this commercialization can help provide nonprofits with the resources that they need in order to accomplish their missions.

In the case of the Buckeye Trail Association, these commercial endeavors are mostly related to selling merchandise through the trail shop online and at events. These sales serve to supplement the association’s financial resources. While the BTA also sells memberships and charges money for event registration, these should not be considered commercial pursuits because these dues are used to carry out the organization’s mission of “maintaining, protecting and promoting use of Ohio’s longest scenic hiking trail” (The Buckeye Trail, 2015). Trail maps that individuals can use to hike the trail make up a great deal of the BTA’s merchandise sales. These products allow individuals to use the Buckeye Trail and therefore support the mission of the organization while also generating revenue. This is a good example of how commercial endeavors are not always at odds with the mission of the organization. By focusing on gaining new members, retaining members, and encouraging people to attend events rather than emphasizing merchandise sales, the BTA does not let its commercial endeavors get in the way of its overall mission.
Dialog Theory

The dialogic approach to public relations focuses on exchanges between an organization and its publics. This emphasis on two-way communication between an organization and its publics compliments the open systems model (Reitz, 2012, p. 43). Social media, like the dialogic model and open systems approach, also encourage two-way communication. While traditional media such as print, video, and radio tend to limit organizations to one-way communication to their publics, social media allow for dialogue to develop between an organization and its publics. Therefore, Reitz (2012) argues that “organizations engaging in social media and embracing its inherent dialogic nature can function more easily within an open systems approach to public relations” (p. 43). Social media actually help organizations adopt and maintain an open systems model because they encourage active communication. These media serve as tools with which organizations can easily receive feedback from essential publics and stakeholders. Furthermore, social media allow for organizations to communicate with their publics instantly. This allows open systems organizations to gather feedback and adapt to better serve their publics rapidly (Reitz, 2012, p. 43).

Throughout this entire feedback cycle, there is a relationship building between the organization and its publics. Social media play a crucial role in developing these dialogic relationships. Through social media, organizations can better define their identities and even personify themselves. Relating to entities in this way has interesting effects on the dynamic between an organization and
its publics. As Reitz (2012) explains, “Social media help establish emotional connections between consumers and organizations, which in turn can foster strong consumer relations” (p. 49). This type of relationship is most likely especially important for nonprofit organizations because they rely on their publics for resources fairly heavily.

The Buckeye Trail Association relies on a community of members, volunteers, and trail users in order to continue serving its purpose. Because the association is an open system that uses a dialogic approach, social media has a major role in the Live, Breathe, Hike campaign. Before the campaign, the BTA had a Facebook page, a Facebook group, a Twitter, a YouTube channel, and several Meetup groups. The organization posted on Facebook every other day and tweeted at about the same rate. The Facebook group is the most active by far, with members posting and responding to one another several times a day. The Buckeye Trail Association did not use its YouTube profile often and used Meetup as needed for promoting events. While I did not increase the frequency of posting, I increased the planning that went into these posts. By posting more strategically based on research, I believe the social media has become more effective. Also, as part of the campaign, I created an Instagram account for the BTA. This was important for building relationships with the BTA’s publics because Buckeye Trail users were already actively sharing pictures of the trail and using hashtags such as #BuckeyeTrail and #FollowTheBlueBlazes. By creating an account, the BTA joined the conversation. The BTA can now
strengthen relationships with trail users on Instagram by liking and commenting on photos, reaching out to individuals for permission to share their photos, and sharing original content.

The Buckeye Trail Association Facebook group is especially important for fostering community. In the group, BTA staff, members, volunteers, and users can all post photos and experiences, ask questions, share trail updates or other news, request assistance or supplies on the trail, and generally discuss what is going on in the BTA. This group fosters a sense of community between all those involved in the association and allows the BTA to have a better understanding of what matters to the trail users. The group serves as a way for the BTA to receive feedback and better meet the needs of the community.

**Relationship Management Theory**

Fostering relationships with the public is crucial for fundraising as well as public relations. The quality of the relationship between an organization and its publics influences donor behavior. Hon & Grunig (1999) explain that relationship quality has four main elements: control mutuality, trust, satisfaction, and commitment (p. 3). Furthermore, Hon & Grunig identify two types of relationships. In an exchange relationship, one party provides the other with benefits in order to reciprocate past or anticipated benefits from the second party. In a communal relationship, both parties provide one another with benefits because they genuinely care for one another (Hon & Grunig, 1999, p. 3). In the case of donor relations, exchange relationships are comprised of donors
who contribute to nonprofits in order to gain certain benefits while communal relationships are comprised of donors who contribute to nonprofits because they care about the organizations. According to Waters (2008), repeat donors feel that their relationship with a particular nonprofit is a communal one while one-time donors feel that it is more of an exchange relationship (p. 80). This is noteworthy because repeat donors most likely have stronger relationships with the organization as well as more of a sense of community. Because these communal relationships result in repeat donations, nonprofits should aim to build these relationships through communicating with their publics. These donations allow the nonprofit to work towards its goals. As Waters (2008) explains, “For non-profit organisations to continue the provision of programmes and services to the community, it is vital that they dedicate resources into relationship cultivation with all of its donors” (p. 84). Relationship management leads to increased donations and therefore towards greater resources to accomplish organizational goals.

Communication between an organization and its publics in an open system helps foster strong relationships. When an individual has a strong enough relationship with a nonprofit to care about the welfare of the organization, they are more likely to be a repeat donor (Waters, 2008, p. 80). These repeat donations, alongside profits from commercial endeavors and other funding, contribute to resources that nonprofits use to accomplish goals.
Therefore, communicating with publics, including donors, is key in achieving organizational objectives.

The Buckeye Trail Association sent out an appeal letter in the fall to help collect donations for the *Live, Breathe, Hike* campaign. This appeal was incredibly successful, raising about $15,000. The success of the BTA’s appeals can be credited, in part, to the fact that it has communal relationships with many of its donors. These individuals care deeply about the Buckeye Trail and want to support the BTA’s efforts to take care of it. The strength of these donor relationships helps explain why the BTA has a solid base of regular donors. Because they have a communal relationship with the BTA, they are more likely to donate more than once. The BTA communicates with its members through email updates, a quarterly newsletter, and social media. Social media, particularly the Facebook group, are incredibly effective at fostering communal relationships because they allow for two-way communication.

**Functional Theory & Volunteer Motivation**

Functional approaches aim to uncover the psychological functions that various actions and behaviors serve (Lu & Schuett, 2014, p. 70). A functional approach is well suited for examining volunteer motivations because it focuses on the various functions volunteering serves in the volunteer’s life. All outdoor recreation voluntary associations have active and passive members. Many passive members simply pay their dues while active members often participate in opportunities to volunteer (Lu & Schuett, 2014, p. 71). Both types of member are
valuable to nonprofits. However, active members provide more benefits for organizations because they are donating multiple resources, including time and money. Therefore, understanding what motivates members to get more involved is key.

Clary et al. (1998) created a volunteer functions inventory that identifies six dimensions: values, understanding, social, career, protective, and enhancement (p. 1517-1518). While these functions provide a helpful framework for understanding volunteer motivations in general, Lu & Schuett (2014) studied volunteer motivations in outdoor recreation voluntary associations specifically. Lu & Schuett (2014) found that “the motivation for joining [outdoor recreation voluntary associations] was closely tied to civic engagement, social networking, learning opportunities, self-enhancement, resource mobilization, and material benefits” (p. 81). Nonprofits should aim to tap into as many of these motivations as possible and use these motivations to help keep members engaged. While the social networking, self-enhancement, and learning motives were found to be moderately important compared to resource mobilization and civic engagement motives, they are better suited for the goals of the Live, Breathe, Hike campaign because they are tied to the goals in several ways.

Social networking motives are at the heart of encouraging active volunteer participation. Lu & Schuett (2014) explain that centrality is “the extent to which members’ social networks revolve around the organization, and the degree to
which the members’ lifestyles are meaningfully influenced by their membership” (p. 82-83). Their findings suggest that the more central members perceive their experiences with the organization to be in their social network and lifestyle, the more likely they are to actively participate in volunteering activities (Lu & Schuett, 2014, p. 83). They also found that the motivation for social networking has the greatest influence on centrality (Lu & Schuett, 2014, p. 82). This supports McLain’s (2015) findings that many Buckeye Trail users greatly value the sense of community the BTA has to offer (p. 24). Furthermore, fostering this relationship and sense of community simultaneously encourages repeat donations (Waters, 2008, p. 80). Therefore it is crucial for outdoor recreation voluntary associations, and nonprofits in general, to encourage a sense of community among members. The Buckeye Trail Association currently aims to stay a major part of the trail users’ lives by sending out regular member and volunteer emails, posting and interacting with publics on social media, and planning regular events. These tactics allow the BTA to maintain a steady presence in many of the trail users’ lives. I also created several tactics for the Live, Breathe, Hike campaign to help encourage volunteering. These include promoting registration in the volunteer database as a way to stay up to date on opportunities to volunteer, promoting trail work parties, and promoting the 20,000 volunteer hour challenge on social media. While not all of these directly contribute to the centrality of the organization in the lives of its publics, they all appeal to the idea of the BTA community that is central to many of their lives.
The learning motive is especially noteworthy because, according to the *Outdoor Participation Report* (2014), the second most popular reason that Americans interested in outdoor activities did not participate in such activities was that they thought they lacked the skills or abilities to do so (p. 18). Lu & Schuett (2014) found that many members’ motivations to join outdoor recreation voluntary associations were tied to learning opportunities (p. 81). They go on to explain that this insight “demonstrates the importance of... initiating recreational, educational and leadership learning opportunities by providing various organized outdoor recreation trips and conservation activities” (Lu & Schuett, 2014, p. 82). Therefore, by providing educational programming, outdoor recreation voluntary associations can motivate individuals to become members or more active members while also empowering them with the information they need to feel more comfortable using the trail. The *Live, Breathe, Hike* campaign has several tactics that aim to satisfy its publics’ motivations to learn. When promoting events that have presentations, workshops, or other educational opportunities, the BTA tries to mention these aspects of the event. Also, the BTA shares more informational content on its social media. These tactics aim to equip potential volunteers with the knowledge they need to feel more confident and get more involved.

**ETHICS**

In a campaign, as in all areas in life, it is extremely important for one to act ethically. Practicing strategic communications ethically is crucial for building
credibility and fostering genuine relationships with the audience. This portion of the essay outlines the potential ethical pitfalls in strategic communication. This section also presents solutions for how to best deal with these problems as well as reflections on how I dealt with them. I cover my use of dialogic communication, public relations ethics generally, the importance of transparency, how I avoided deception, and how I tried to manage multiple conflicts of interest.

**Dialogic vs. Monologic Communication**

The dialogic approach to public relations mentioned earlier has ethical as well as theoretical implications for strategic communication. Monologic communication, as opposed to dialogic communication, is one-way and is often used by communicators to convey a message to an audience. However, ethical concerns arise with monologic communication because it is one-sided and the focus is usually on the communicator’s goals rather than the audience (Botan, 1997, p. 190). As Johannesen (1996) explains, “A person employing monologue seeks to command, coerce, manipulate, conquer, dazzle, deceive, or exploit” (p. 69). In these instances, the communicators are using the audiences in order to accomplish their own goals (Botan, 1997, p. 196). Dialogic communication, on the other hand, involves more than one communicator. This type of communication differs greatly from monologic communication because it is based in a mutual relationship and isn’t one-way. Rather, it disrupts traditional advertising and public relations approaches because what’s traditionally the audience is able to respond to what’s traditionally the communicator. As Botan
(1996), explains, dialogic communication is “characterized by a relationship in which both parties have genuine concern for each other, rather than merely seeking to fulfill their own needs” (p. 192). Because dialogic communication is relationship-based and takes the needs of all parties involved into account, it is often considered to be more ethically sound than monologic communication (Botan, 1996, p. 196). Therefore, dialogic communication is key for executing a campaign ethically.

I focused on dialogic communication throughout the course of the Live, Breathe, Hike campaign for ethical as well as strategic reasons. Dialogic communication is ethically more sound than monologic communication because it is not manipulative and the publics can actively participate in the conversation. I maintained this emphasis by establishing tactics that fostered community and utilizing media that facilitate two-way communication. The two-way nature of the conversation is key for building relationships and a sense of community in this campaign. For this approach I used tactics such as organizing membership drives and beginning to create a social media campaign starring members of the BTA community to strengthen a sense of community within the BTA. The BTA already has a tightly-knit and dedicated group of members, volunteers, and trail users, so many of my tactics and executions simply reinforced or strengthened preexisting bonds. Social media were particularly helpful in allowing the Buckeye Trail Association to create a dialogue with its publics. Platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Meetup allowed me to disseminate content to
the BTA’s networks. These platforms also gave me the ability to ask questions, respond to comments, answer inquiries, like photos, and otherwise engage with individuals as the BTA. Through these interactions, I aimed to strengthen relationships between the BTA and its publics while also continuing to grow a greater sense of community.

**Public Relations Ethics**

In the field of public relations, professionals are constantly trying to find the balance between the best interests of the client and the public. Bishop (2009) suggests the Authentic Communication-Ethics Litmus Test for deciding whether an action is ethical in the modern public relations world. The test focuses on three main concepts: mutuality, honesty, and integrity (Bishop, 2009, p. 19). In order to meet the requirements for mutuality, the proposed action must be something one can share and discuss with stakeholders, seek input about from those affected, and something one can do while being considerate of stakeholders. The action is honest enough if its something you can honestly tell stakeholders about. Lastly, in order to meet the test of integrity, the action must be consistent with the mission of the organization (Bishop, 2009, p. 19). If an action meets all of these criteria, it should be ethical. However, if it fails to meet one or more criteria, then it is probably unethical and problematic. Bishop (2009) explains that, “It is our professional duty to nurture organization-stakeholder relationships and protect corporate reputation” (p. 19). As the
mediating force between an organization and its publics, public relations practitioners must make sure that the organization’s communications are ethical.

**Deception & Transparency**

Deceptive advertising, or promotions that mislead publics, is one form of unethical strategic communications (Nooh, 2012, p. 34). While deception can produce favorable results at first, it is unethical and will hurt the reputation of the advertiser in the long run. More importantly, deception aims to intentionally manipulate individuals. This is unethical because it misleads others and can cause them harm. Organizations can advertise information as well as pricing in deceptive ways (Nooh, 2012, p. 35). Transparency helps prevent deception and can even correct perceived deception. For instance, the public has a right to know when a piece of content they are consuming is a commercial and when it is not (Drumwright & Murphy, 2009, p. 100). This can get especially tricky with regards to promoting on social media because those promotional messages are alongside posts from the families and friends of the audiences seeing the posts.

The members of the Buckeye Trail Association largely run the organization because it has such a small staff. Many members are heavily involved in the organization and are on the board or volunteer to help in other ways. Also, all members receive regular updates about what is going on within the organization. Because of this member-oriented approach, the Buckeye Trail Association is already fairly transparent. However, there is always room for improvement. One tactic I created for the *Live, Breathe, Hike* campaign was to
create an end-of-year report that breaks down how money was spent within the association. This would allow the less-involved members to understand how their dues and donations are spent within the organization. It was also important to me that I be transparent with the client. While my over-enthusiastic nature sometimes got in the way when I would bite off more than I could chew, I tried to be as honest as possible about what I was going to do for the campaign. Though I could have been more transparent about my progress and completion of certain tasks, I believe that the client was overall comfortable with the amount of disclosure.

**Conflict of Interest**

At the end of January, 2016, I accepted a job with the Buckeye Trail Association. This presented numerous challenges and ethical concerns. As Wasserman (2010) explains, “A typical professional conflict of interest arises when the same individual is expected to fulfill more than one role in regard to the same client” (p. 259). In this instance, I experienced a conflict of interest because I was working with the BTA as a client for my senior professional project while also working for them as a paid employee. Transparency can be used to manage conflict of interest, as disclosure and discourse are crucial to effectively mitigating many of the concerns associated with conflict of interest (Wasserman, 2016, p. 259). One of my main ethical concerns had to do with making sure that I was not getting paid for completing my thesis work. Therefore, I determined that I would not work on anything that is part of the marketing plan I created for the
BTA while I was on the clock at the office. I informed my academic advisers as well as my employer about this decision. This allowed me to draw a line between my role as a student and the role I had just taken on as a professional. While I tried my best to separate my thesis work from my professional work, there were times when I had to consider a task and evaluate whether or not I could do it while at work ethically. For instance, while organizing the Athens membership drive, I occasionally would catch myself replying to emails from Jackie O’s about the event while at work. While I tried my best to separate the tasks, some fell through the cracks. This was especially difficult because I was spending so much time working in the office that it was hard to find other times to meet with the client outside work hours. However, I believe that I did a good job of avoiding directly thesis-related work while on the clock.

There were also conflicts of interest between my role as a student and my role with the client. It was an interesting challenge working with such a small client because there is so much to be done. However, as a student, I eventually had to take a step back and prioritize what I had to do for the project. This prioritization involved picking and choosing what I could and could not do for the campaign. However, what I was able to execute I am proud of and I look forward to executing the other parts of the plan as I continue to work for the Buckeye Trail Association.
REFLECTION

Marketing Plan

The marketing plan I created for the Live, Breathe, Hike campaign aims to foster membership, increase volunteerism, and encourage people to use the Buckeye Trail. The plan has three main objectives: to gain 500 new members by the end of 2016, to have 20,000 volunteer hours between October of 2015 and October of 2016, and to increase attendance to major events by 25 percent in 2016. Because this is a yearlong campaign, I do not yet have final results. Rather, I have status updates that I will discuss below. Also, any tactics from the plan that I did not yet execute will be implemented at some point over the next year as I continue to work for the Buckeye Trail Association.

Membership

At the beginning of January, the Buckeye Trail Association had about 1,000 members. By the end of January, there were 1,149 members (Buckeye Trail Association, 2016). As of late April, the BTA has over 1,200 members. If membership continues to rise at this rate, we will surpass the original goal of 500 new members by over 100 people. Many of these new members joined through one of the campaign’s several membership drives. The membership drives were crucial to the campaign because they embody the sense of community that so many people value about the Buckeye Trail Association. Furthermore, by giving current members the opportunity to buy a gift membership for someone and attend the membership drive with the gift recipient, we created opportunities for
the Buckeye Trail Association to become more central to the members’ lives and therefore increase their involvement in the organization (Lu & Schuett, 2014). These events also included a series of presentations about various aspects of the trail and the organization. These presentations helped educate the new members about the trail. This is essential because one of the most common reasons that people do not participate in outdoor activities is that they feel like they lack the skills and abilities to do so (Outdoor Participation Report, 2014, p. 18). Therefore, the membership drives aimed to increase membership while also mobilizing members new and old.

The Dayton membership drive on January 21 was the most successful and brought in 143 new members. This success was due, in part, to the organizers’ connections to local hiking groups as well as the press coverage the event received. The Dayton Daily News interviewed the main organizer about his thru-hike of the Buckeye Trail, the trail’s history, and other aspects of the membership drive. The newspaper published the story “What you may not know about the Buckeye Trail” online on January 12 and in print on January 15, the week before the membership drive took place (Juniewicz, 2016). This article helped raise local interest in the event. Reaching out to local groups such as the Dayton Hikers group and partnering with a wide range of local outdoor outfitters also helped get the word out about the event.

The Columbus membership drive on April 7 was also a great success, attracting 48 new members to the Buckeye Trail Association. The volunteers
who organized this event also leveraged community partnerships with local outdoor recreation groups and stores to spread the word about the event. Out of the 38 people who registered online, seven bought gift memberships (Constant Contact, 2016). This ratio was an improvement from the Dayton membership drive, which had 12 gift memberships out of 113 online registrations (Constant Contact, 2016). This rise was most likely due to increased clarification about how the current members can attend the event with their gift recipients. We adjusted the registration process to include the option to pay $10 in addition to the $20 gift membership in order to attend the event alongside the new member. These changes were the result of several instances of current members being confused about having to pay to attend the Dayton membership drive with their guests.

The Athens membership drive on April 14 was successful with about 31 guests, including 11 new members. While this might seem small compared to the other events, it is actually quite a success considering the fact that Columbus and Dayton are major cities and Athens is much smaller. I only assisted volunteers in planning the other membership drives, but was the primary organizer for the Athens event. I pitched the event to several news outlets with some success. We managed to get a story with WOUB that went live on April 8, about a week before the membership drive. The interview included conversations about the history of the Buckeye Trail Association, what the Buckeye Trail has to offer, information about volunteer opportunities, and details about the Athens membership drive. While I struggled to get a response from anyone at the Athens Messenger, I did
successfully connect with the paper by reaching out to the editor of the *Perry County Tribune*, one of its sister papers. By contacting the editor, who is from Shawnee, where the Buckeye Trail Association is based, and mentions hiking in her bio on the paper’s website, I successfully started a dialogue and spread the news release to the *Perry County Tribune* as well as the *Athens Messenger*. While only the *Perry County Tribune* published the story, I still felt accomplished in spreading word about the event (“Buckeye Trail membership”). I also recruited the help of local community partners. This included contacting local businesses and leveraging pre-existing personal connections. For example, I reached to my friend, Kate, who runs the *It’s Still Today* campaign and is heavily involved in local outdoor recreation groups. I managed to get her to register for the event, donate a shirt for the raffle, and help share the event on several pages and groups by offering to let her set up a table and sell merchandise at the event.

I created a promoted Facebook post that shared the event with people near Athens based on their interests. I chose to target people with interests such as hiking, trail running, birding, backpacking, outdoor recreation, and other similar hobbies. The post received a great deal of engagement, but Facebook would not let me view the final results, even a week after the event. I would share statistics about how the post performed overall in terms of engagement, but Facebook is reporting this information inconsistently and I do not want to spread misinformation. I can, however, say that the post had a total reach of at
least 2,726 Facebook users (The Buckeye Trail Association, 2016). We only spent $20 on the incredibly targeted advertisement, making it quite cost-effective.

Overall, I am confident that the Buckeye Trail Association will be able to gain 300 new members before the end of 2016. While many of these members will be gained through other methods mentioned in the marketing plan besides the membership drives, these membership events are playing a crucial role in increasing membership while strengthening the sense of community among current members.

**Volunteerism**

The volunteer year goes from the first of October to the first of October the next year. As of April 11, 2016, there are 2233.81 volunteer hours logged so far this year (Volunteer Matters, 2016). However, this number does not include any of the hours from the trail work parties so far this year because people have not yet reported these hours. While this might not seem like much compared to our goal of 20,000 hours, it is actually a decent number considering the time of year because most of the volunteering takes place over the warmer months. As more trail work parties take place and more people volunteer to help with our wide range of summer events, the log of volunteer hours will rapidly rise. One major event that will make these numbers skyrocket is the Buckeye Trail Blitz, an event during which volunteers will try to maintain the entire trail in one day. The event is taking place on National Trails Day and will involve many different people, groups, and other organizations registering to maintain different sections of the
trail. While this is an ambitious goal, it will definitely get a lot of people involved and hopefully foster more interest in volunteering on the Buckeye Trail. Last year, volunteers recorded over 15,000 hours without a Buckeye Trail Blitz. Therefore, between promoting the 20,000-hour challenge and recruiting people for the Buckeye Trail Blitz, I believe that the Buckeye Trail Association volunteers will be able to meet our goal.

Events

While most of the Buckeye Trail Association’s major events occur during the summer, I do have some event statistics that provide a general idea of how this part of the campaign is going. Buckeye TrailFest is the most extensive event that the Buckeye Trail Association holds each year. TrailFest is a weekend of camping, excursions, presentations, and socializing. It takes place at the beginning of summer and has a different location each year. While 98 people registered for the event in 2013 and 2014, this number fell to 76 people in 2015 (Constant Contact, 2016). However, with about three weeks until the event, 85 people have already registered for this year’s TrailFest (Constant Contact, 2016). As we continue to promote the event, contact more community partners, and emphasize the educational opportunities the event has to offer, I have faith that we will be able to successfully increase the number of guests to 95, a 25 percent improvement from last year. Another major summer event is the Emma Grandma Gatewood Solstice Hike. This event is affectionately called the E.G.G.S. Hike and involves rigorous long-distance hiking challenges of 20, 40, 60, and 80
miles to be completed in 12, 24, 36, and 48 hours respectively (7th Annual 2016 E.G.G.S. Hike and Campout, 2016). With a little over two months until the event, there were 12 people registered (Constant Contact, 2016). Over the next several weeks, I believe that we will be able to surpass last year's number of 52 registrants. This is definitely possible considering the fact that I am trying to foster relationships between the Buckeye Trail Association and the trail runner community through social media. For similar reasons, I am also confident that I will be able to increase registration for the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Annual Buckeye Trail Run by at least 25 percent and hopefully even double the number of participants. Last year, the marathon had 11 runners. This year, there are already three runners registered almost four months in advance (Constant Contact, 2016). As we start promoting the event over the summer and contact prominent Ohio trail-runners and trail-runner groups, I believe we will be able to increase the number of registrants dramatically. As the Buckeye Trail Association’s membership and community relations continue to grow, so will the attendance to its major events.

**Social media**

The social media for the Buckeye Trail Association is extremely community-driven. The most successful posts on Facebook were almost always event-related. The main exceptions to this were certain educational posts intended to provide followers with the skills they need to participate in outdoor recreation activities. It is also interesting to note that posts in the Buckeye Trail Association group seemed to almost always get more engagement than those on
the official page. Similarly, the best performing Instagram posts were either related to events or were crowdsourced from other photographers who used “#BuckeyeTrail” or “#LiveBreatheHike” to tag their posts. All of these trends show how significant the sense of community is to Buckeye Trail enthusiasts because posts that involved other Buckeye Trail users in some way almost always performed better than those that did not.

In the future, I will continue to emphasize community-oriented events and aim to crowdsource more content. This crowdsourcing will involve a content campaign featuring photos with quotes from trail users about why they like being a member, volunteering, and hiking. Through initiatives like this, we hope to foster an even greater sense of community and therefore gain more members and volunteers as they feel more connected to the organization.

**Lessons Learned**

While I am definitely pleased with how the campaign has turned out so far, there are definitely some things I would have done differently. First, and potentially most importantly, I would have utilized the Buckeye Trail Association’s volunteers and other employees more in executing the campaign. Delegating certain tasks and tactics to others would have allowed me to accomplish more of the campaign by the end of the school year. As someone new to the organization, I did not feel comfortable asking too much of anyone. If I could go back, I would tackle the campaign with more confidence and ask for the help of others in working to achieve the campaign objectives. For example, I
would ask the volunteer coordinator of the Buckeye Trail Association to post volunteer opportunities on social media and help me with creating training materials about promoting the organization for the volunteers.

There are also many tasks that I wish I had accomplished sooner because they would have lead to better results. For instance, I wish I had pitched the membership drive to media sooner. I should have contacted news outlets a month before the membership drive rather than waiting until two weeks before the event. This would have allowed more outlets to run the story because it would not be competing with so many things so last-minute. I also would have started building relationships with special interest groups and community partners sooner so we would have had more support and opportunities in hosting and promoting the organization and its events. Overall, I think I waited so long to do so many of these things because I was so unsure of myself starting out. Even as I completed my research and found compelling insights that were later supported by the results of my work, I still seemed to doubt myself as an official representative of the Buckeye Trail Association until I accepted a position working for them. I am grateful to be part of such a passionate team striving to finish the work that I started during this professional project.

While there are many things I would have done differently, I learned countless positive lessons. I gained a great deal of social media experience. I had never been in charge of running the social media accounts for an organization, so this allowed me to become more comfortable representing an organization or
brand online. Also, while I have written press releases before, I have never been in charge of reaching out to media outlets. I learned how to strategically start conversations with certain editors and reporters and use pre-existing relationships to spread word about the event. Being interviewed by WOUB was definitely a highlight for me because it was my first time on the radio. I also learned a lot about planning events. It was so rewarding seeing the Athens membership drive come together and having over 30 people in Jackie O’s enjoying themselves.

Most importantly, I learned how to believe in myself and became a part of an incredible community. I am so proud of all the hard work I put into this campaign and I can hardly wait until I have more time to continue executing it. After all of my struggles and all of my doubts along the way, I am thrilled with what I was able to accomplish. Also, I could not have asked for better people to help me along the way. I am now part of a thriving community of people who are passionate about outdoor recreation and I could not be happier. I have already learned so much from the BTA and I look forward to continuing to learn. As someone who is interested in doing communications in-house for a non-profit and loves hiking, I could not ask for a better first job. I am excited to be following my heart, and those blue blazes, on the Buckeye Trail.
WORKS CITED


Constant Contact (2016). Active Events [Data file]. Retrieved from Constant Contact.


DOI:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195370805.003.0017


INTRODUCTION TO THE MARKETING PLAN

For my professional honors thesis project, I created a marketing plan and campaign for the Buckeye Trail Association, or BTA. The *Live, Breathe, Hike* campaign has three main objectives, one for each word. The BTA and I want people to *live* the Buckeye Trail by becoming a member of the BTA, *breathe* the Buckeye Trail by volunteering for the BTA, and *hike* the Buckeye Trail by going out and using the trail. This marketing plan begins with a situation analysis that identifies the problems and opportunities that the BTA currently faces regarding membership, volunteerism, and trail use. The plan then presents research about the target market’s demographics as well as what factors motivate the target market to become members, volunteer for organizations, and pursue outdoor recreation activities. I then identify several key messages to emphasize over the course of the campaign by taking the most important aspects of the situation analysis and motivational research into consideration.

All of this research sets the foundation for the actual plans I created for the campaign. Next, I state the actual objectives that the client and I agreed upon for each part of the campaign. These objectives are supported by more specific strategies that each involve several specific tactics to implement in order to achieve the overall objective. I have included some examples of how I executed these strategies and tactics so far. These examples include screenshots from social media as well as photographs of events. Lastly, I have compiled an appendix of social media statistics, media outreach attempts, and other aspects of the campaign’s execution.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since its inception in 1959, the Buckeye Trail Association (BTA) has strived to provide Ohioans with an excellent trail system that features many of the state’s natural wonders (The Buckeye Trail Story). The Buckeye Trail is over 1,400 miles long and forms a loop around the state of Ohio (The Buckeye Trail). The BTA is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to maintaining, improving, and promoting the Buckeye Trail (Follow the Blue Blazes). The BTA relies on the help of its members and volunteers to accomplish this mission. In 2016 we want to encourage people to live, breathe, and hike the Buckeye Trail. The Live, Breathe, Hike campaign will aim to increase membership, volunteerism, and trail use.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

Live

Problem: Many people who are part of the Meetup groups or who like the Facebook page are not members of the Buckeye Trail Association. In fact, about 73 percent of people who joined a Meetup group for one of the chapters of the BTA were not members of the BTA at the time of joining and only 23 percent of users were members of the BTA at the time they joined a Meetup group (Table 1). Therefore, many people who are interested in hiking the Buckeye Trail are not members. Additionally, in a survey conducted by the BTA to better understand what’s important to users of the Buckeye Trail, about 36 percent of respondents
were not BTA members (Buckeye Trail Association, 2015). This is interesting because these people care enough about the Buckeye Trail to take the time to thoughtfully fill out the survey but have not taken the final step towards becoming a member.

Opportunity: This suggests that many people who love and care about the Buckeye Trail don’t truly understand the importance of becoming a member. We should aim to convey how membership benefits the member as well as the association.

Table 1

*The Number of People Who Join BTA Meetup Groups as Members and Non-Members*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meetup Chapter</th>
<th>Users who joined group as members</th>
<th>Users who joined group as non-members</th>
<th>Users who were unsure</th>
<th>Total members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Little Cities of the Forest</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muskingum Lakes</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami Rivers</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined totals</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>559</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>762</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Data for Meetup groups from Little Cities of the Forest Chapter Meetup (2015), Miami Rivers Chapter Meetup (2015), and Muskingum Lakes Chapter Meetup (2015). The numbers of total members include users who did not answer the question.
**Breathe**

Problem: Many people who do not volunteer for the BTA are interested in doing so. Out of the non-volunteering respondents to a Buckeye Trail survey, one third of them expressed that they're interested in volunteering (Buckeye Trail Association, 2015). Some of these individuals stated that it was difficult to find the time to volunteer. This gap between interest in volunteering and actual volunteering is probably due to people being unaware of all the opportunities to volunteer.

Opportunity: We should aim to increase awareness of opportunities to volunteer. This could include emphasizing chances to volunteer besides scheduled volunteer events. Letting people know that they have the option to volunteer based on their individual skill sets and on their own time could allow people with scheduling conflicts to volunteer. We should also make sure people who are interested in volunteering know to enroll in the volunteer database so that they are notified of opportunities to volunteer.

**Hike**

Problem: Event preregistration for some major Buckeye Trail events has been slightly declining in recent years. According to the *Outdoor Participation Report* (2014), the main reason why Americans interested in outdoor activities did not participate in such activities was that they did not have the time (p. 18). The
second most popular reason was that people thought they lacked the skills or abilities to do so (p. 18).

Opportunity: While we aren’t able to control how much time our audience has, we can continue providing people with informative programming and other educational content to help our audience feel more comfortable about hitting the trail.

Table 2

The Number of People Who Preregistered for the BTA’s Major Events from 2013 to 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burr Oak Winter Hike</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buckeye TrailFest</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.G.G.S. Hike</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run for Blue Blazes Marathon</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Registration data from Constant Contact (2015). These are the preregistration numbers for each event. The actual attendance to most of these events was significantly higher.
Audience Demographics

The Buckeye Trail Association’s audience tends to be primarily male. According to McLain (2015), 69 percent of participants in his interviews were male while 31 percent were female (p. 21). While these numbers are not representative of the overall makeup of the Buckeye Trail Association, they provide a helpful snapshot of the breakdown. The Outdoor Participation Report (2014) found that 54 percent of people who participate in outdoor activities are male and 46 percent are female (p. 11). The Buckeye Trail Association’s audience also tends to be older. McLain (2015) reported that while respondents ranged from age 23 to 84, the average age was 51.5 years old (p. 21). According to the Outdoor Participation Report (2014), 32 percent of people who participate in outdoor activities are between the ages of 25 and 44 while 33 percent are 45 or older (p.10). These statistics suggest that the Buckeye Trail Association has room to grow in regard to expanding their audience to include more women as well as millennial hikers.

The Buckeye Trail Association wants to expand their audience to include more women, millennials, and people of color. According to the Pew Research Center, 55 percent of internet users between the ages of 18 and 29 use Instagram and 31 percent of female internet users use Instagram. Therefore, creating an
Instagram account can help the Buckeye Trail Association appeal to more users and hopefully diversify their audience base.

Figure 1 A sampling of original as well as crowd-sourced content on the BTA Instagram account
Member and Volunteer Motivations

Lu & Schuett (2014) explain that centrality is “the extent to which members’ social networks revolve around the organization, and the degree to which the members’ lifestyles are meaningfully influenced by their membership” (p. 82-83). Lu & Schuett’s (2014) findings suggest that the more central members perceive their experiences with the organization to be in their social network and lifestyle, the more likely they are to actively participate in volunteering activities (p. 83). They also found that the motivation for social networking has the greatest influence on centrality (p. 82). This supports McLain’s (2015) findings that many Buckeye Trail users greatly value the sense of community the BTA has to offer (p. 24). Furthermore, 25 percent of respondents to a Buckeye Trail survey mentioned the social aspect of the BTA when asked why they love being a member and about 27 percent of survey respondents who volunteer mentioned it when asked what they like about volunteering (Buckeye Trail Association, 2015). Therefore, the social aspect of the BTA is very important to members as well as volunteers.

Lu & Schuett (2014) also found that many members’ motivations to join outdoor recreation voluntary associations were tied to learning opportunities (p. 81). They go on to explain that this insight “demonstrates the importance of… initiating recreational, educational and leadership learning opportunities by providing various organized outdoor recreation trips and conservation activities”
Therefore, the BTA should continue to organize and promote educational programming.

**Hiking Motivations**

According to the *Outdoor Participation Report* (2014), the majority of Americans took part in outdoor activities to get exercise (p. 17). The other top motivations for participating in outdoor recreational activities were spending time with loved ones and desire to be close to nature (p. 17). These results more or less complimented the responses to the Buckeye Trail’s survey. 50 percent of respondents mentioned loving nature, 36 percent mentioned exercise, and 14 percent mentioned spending time with others (Buckeye Trail Association, 2015). Therefore, exercise, spending time with others, and connecting with nature are key in motivating people to get out on the trail.

**KEY MESSAGES**

**Live**

- *A BTA membership helps you support the Buckeye Trail year round.*

  Emphasizing how the organization relies on the support of its members will allow more Buckeye Trail enthusiasts to understand the significance of becoming a member.

- *A BTA membership helps you to become a part of the Buckeye Trail family.*
Messages promoting the social aspects of the BTA will help convey the strong connection members feel with one another and encourage others to join.

**Breathe**

- *Volunteering helps you become a part of the Buckeye Trail family.*

Conveying the powerful sense of community among volunteers will appeal to the social motivations of individuals and inspire them to help out.

- *Volunteering goes beyond trail work.*

It's important to let people know that the BTA, as a nonprofit organization, goes beyond tending to the trail. As such, the BTA is looking for people with all types of skillsets to help with day-to-day tasks.

**Hike**

- *Hiking the Buckeye Trail is a great way to connect with nature.*

Sharing images and information related to the natural wonders along the trail will remind people of the beauty and peace that awaits them on the Buckeye Trail.

- *Hiking the Buckeye Trail is a great way to get exercise.*

Emphasizing the numerous ways that exercise, such as hiking and trail running, helps improve physical and mental health will encourage more people to get out and hit the trail.
• *Hiking the Buckeye Trail is a great way to spend time with loved ones.*

Reminding people that outdoor adventures are a great way to spend quality time with people will inspire them to plan their own excursions with loved ones.

**OBJECTIVES**

**Objective 1:** Gain 500 new BTA members by the end of 2016

Metrics: I hope to have at least 167 new members by the end of April. I will be tracking new memberships through our membership database.

Strategy I: Reach out to former and potential members

Rationale: These individuals are all most likely aware of the Buckeye Trail and probably use the trail and would therefore hopefully be interested in helping the BTA

Tactic 1: Contact former members by letter and email

Tactic 2: Contact special interest groups by email and on social media

Tactic 3: Provide volunteers with training materials on how to promote the BTA to others because people are more likely to listen to their friends than the organization itself.

Strategy II: Host membership drives throughout the state
Rationale: This method of recruiting members emphasizes the social aspect of becoming a member and therefore should appeal to people's motivation to become part of the community.

Tactic 1: Hold a membership drive in Dayton (January 21, 2016)

Tactic 2: Hold a membership drive in Columbus (April 7, 2016)
Tactic 3: Hold a membership drive in Athens (April 14, 2016)

![Figure 4 Images of the Athens membership drive at Jackie O's](image)

Tactic 4: Invite BTA members to hold/organize a membership drive in their area

Tactic 5: Promote membership drives to current members and special interest groups in the area via social media

![Figure 5 A promotional Facebook post from a community partner](image)
Strategy III: Convey how membership benefits the member

Rationale: Many Buckeye Trail users need to understand how a BTA membership would benefit them in order to commit to a membership.

Tactic 1: Create a series of social media content featuring testimonials from BTA members
Tactic 2: Promote the scholarship to student groups and make sure they are aware it is only available to BTA members (Through February and March)

Strategy IV: Convey how membership benefits the BTA

Rationale: Buckeye Trail users should understand how supporting the BTA through membership benefits the organization as a whole.

Tactic 1: Series of graphics demonstrating the financial value of a membership to share on social media and in the Trailblazer newsletter

Tactic 2: Update people about things we did with their help via social media and newsletters (Trailblazer and volunteer newsletter)

Objective 2: Have 20,000 total volunteer hours by the end of 2016

Metrics: I hope to have 3,000 volunteer hours logged by the end of April. The low expected number for the volunteer hours is due to the fact that most volunteering happens over the summer months when it's warm. I will be tracking volunteer hours through the organization's Volunteer Matters software

Strategy I: Create awareness of opportunities to volunteer

Rationale: While people struggle to find time to volunteer, many of them aren’t aware of the full spectrum of opportunities to do so.

Tactic 1: Promote skill based volunteering more by posting open volunteer positions and asking anyone who is interested to reach out to us about their skillset
Tactic 2: Promote registration in the volunteer database as a way to stay in the loop.

Tactic 3: Send an email to current members as well as special interest groups directing people to the website to register in the volunteer database by end of February.

Strategy II: Organize a series of trail work events

Rationale: People enjoy working with other members of the Buckeye Trail family to help maintain the trail.

Tactic 1: Continue to hold trail work parties throughout the state (starting in April)

Tactic 2: Hold a Buckeye Trail Blitz on National Trails Day (June 4) during which volunteers work to maintain as much of the trail as possible

Tactic 3: Reach out to OSU’s athletics program to try to coordinate a work party with a particular team (still working out details)
Strategy III: Launch and promote the volunteer challenge on social media

Rationale: Last year’s volunteer challenge was quite successful. Therefore, turning the objective into another volunteer challenge will help motivate people to contribute.

Tactic 1: Create a content series featuring testimonials from volunteers to encourage others to volunteer

Tactic 2: Promote opportunities to volunteer on social media platforms as well as in other groups and pages

**Objective 3:** Increase attendance to major events by 25 percent

Metrics: For all events that involve preregistration, I will be using Constant Contact to compare current registration numbers with the numbers from past years.
Strategy 1: Continue to host events on the trail

Rationale: These events appeal to social motivations through their size, educational motivations through their programming, exercise motivations through their activities, and motivations to be close to nature through their settings.

Tactic 1: Brrrrr Oak Winter Hike 2016 (February 6)

Figure 9 The BRRRRR Oak Winter Hike Facebook event
Tactic 2: Promote Winter Hike Series as a whole

Figure 10 An Instagram post promoting the winter hike series

Figure 11 A particularly successful Facebook post following an organized hike in late November
Tactic 3: Buckeye TrailFest 2016 (May 12-15)

Figure 12 A Facebook post promoting Buckeye TrailFest that received a great deal of engagement including 16 shares

Tactic 4: E.G.G.S. Hike 2016 (June 16-19)

Tactic 5: Run for Blue Blazes Marathon 2016 (October 1)
Strategy II: Provide Buckeye Trail users with educational opportunities

Rationale: Empowering Buckeye Trail users by giving them information about outdoor recreation will allow them to feel more comfortable pursuing outdoor activities.

Tactic 1: Promote informative content on social media

![Facebook post](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

*Figure 13 A Facebook post sharing an informative blog post from REI*

Tactic 2: Continue educational programming at events
WORKS CITED


Little Cities of the Forest Chapter Meetup (2015). BTA Little Cities Chapter Member List on 12-11-15 [Data file]. Downloaded from http://www.meetup.com/BTALittleCitiesChapter/members/


Appendix A

Facebook Statistics

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date/Time</th>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Media</th>
<th>Organic reach</th>
<th>Paid reach</th>
<th>Post clicks</th>
<th>Likes</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Shares</th>
<th>Link Clicks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/25 5:00 PM</td>
<td>Here's some more pictures from yesterday's trail marathon. Thanks for your hard work, everyone!</td>
<td>Photo</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/9 7:40 PM</td>
<td>The Buckeye Trail Association is now on Instagram! Make sure to check us out at <a href="https://www.instagram.com/buckeyetrailassociation/">https://www.instagram.com/buckeyetrailassociation/</a> or @buckeyetrailassociation!</td>
<td>Graphic</td>
<td>963</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/18 8:50 PM</td>
<td>Please take this quick survey to help the BTA learn more about what our hikers care about most, how we can better develop the Buckeye Trail, and how we can grow together as an organization. Complete the survey to receive a code for a 20% discount on a BTA membership! <a href="http://bit.ly/1SZD7qK">http://bit.ly/1SZD7qK</a></td>
<td>link to survey</td>
<td>829</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/30 8:50 PM</td>
<td>Photos of the Little Cities of the Forest and Miami Rivers Chapters hiking from Cedar Falls to Old Man's Cave yesterday. Thanks for coming out, everyone!</td>
<td>photo</td>
<td>1569</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/1 1:50 PM</td>
<td>It's #GivingTuesday! Support the work of the BTA by contributing to our Live, Breathe, &amp; Hike campaign today! <a href="https://www.crowdrise.com/livebreathhikebuck%E2%80%A6/%E2%80%A6/buckeyetrail">https://www.crowdrise.com/livebreathhikebuck…/…/buckeyetrail</a></td>
<td>Link to Crowdrise</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/1 5:30 PM</td>
<td>It's #GivingTuesday! Don't forget to contribute to the BTA's Live, Breathe &amp; Hike campaign today to help make the Buckeye Trail the best it can be!</td>
<td>Graphic</td>
<td>372</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/13 4:50 PM</td>
<td>Plan on ordering online from Amazon this season? Benefit the Buckeye Trail while you're at it! Click the link below to try AmazonSmile and the program will contribute to the BTA when you purchase eligible items. <a href="http://smile.amazon.com/ch/31-6050747">http://smile.amazon.com/ch/31-6050747</a></td>
<td>Graphic</td>
<td>625</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/19 5:40 PM</td>
<td>Need a last minute gift idea? Get 20% off a Buckeye Trail Association membership when you buy it as a gift for someone</td>
<td>Graphic and link to</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/29/15</td>
<td>8:15 PM</td>
<td>** Else! Bring someone you care about into the BTA family today! <a href="http://bit.ly/1O02Q1P">http://bit.ly/1O02Q1P</a>**</td>
<td>Website</td>
<td>615</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/1/16</td>
<td>1:45 PM</td>
<td>** Happy New Year, everyone! Thanks so much to all of our volunteers for helping us surpass our 10,000 hour Volunteer Challenge in 2015. We have big plans for 2016 but we're going to need your help! Go to <a href="http://www.buckeyetrail.org/involved.php">http://www.buckeyetrail.org/involved.php</a> to learn more about how to get involved and don't forget to sign up to be a volunteer to make sure you stay in the loop about opportunities to volunteer!**</td>
<td>Graphic</td>
<td>778</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/15/16</td>
<td>6:15 PM</td>
<td>** Introducing the Buckeye Trail Winter Hike Series! Check out these awesome events across the state. See you on the trail!**</td>
<td>Flier</td>
<td>896</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/22/16</td>
<td>7:00 PM</td>
<td>** Wow! What an impressive showing last night at the Buckeye Trail membership drive in Dayton. We signed up 143 new members. Almost everyone attended and we gave them a warm welcome. This is the single largest membership increase in BTA's history. This is how our community partners roll in the Outdoor Adventure Capital of the Midwest!**</td>
<td>Photos</td>
<td>1452</td>
<td>1267</td>
<td>73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/23/16</td>
<td>5:00 PM</td>
<td>** Please take this quick survey to help the BTA learn more about what our hikers care about most, how we can better develop the Buckeye Trail, and how we can grow together as an organization. Complete the survey to receive a code for a 20% discount on a BTA membership! bit.ly/1SZD7qK**</td>
<td>Link to survey</td>
<td>1707</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/25/16</td>
<td>2:00 PM</td>
<td>** The BRRRRR Oak Winter Hike is coming up! Make sure to mark your calendars for Saturday, February 6!**</td>
<td>Link to article</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/26/16</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
<td>** BRRRRR Oak Poster**</td>
<td>BRRRRR Oak Poster</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td>Link</td>
<td>Link Type</td>
<td>Shares</td>
<td>Comments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>------------</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/3/16</td>
<td>1:00 PM</td>
<td>Starting to get cabin fever? Take advantage of this great weather and come out to one of the winter hikes on the Buckeye Trail this Saturday! Follow this link to interact with the flier and get more info: <a href="http://bit.ly/1JU4cvs">http://bit.ly/1JU4cvs</a></td>
<td>Link to flier</td>
<td>838</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/4/16</td>
<td>3:00 PM</td>
<td>Just a few more days!</td>
<td>Facebook event</td>
<td>733</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/7/16</td>
<td>5:00 PM</td>
<td>Thanks for coming out yesterday, everyone!</td>
<td>Photos</td>
<td>1095</td>
<td>1121</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/9/16</td>
<td>3:00 PM</td>
<td>Looking to make the most of this snow? Check out these Ohio State Parks that offer sledding locations! <a href="http://bit.ly/15s156T">bit.ly/15s156T</a></td>
<td>Link</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/9/16</td>
<td>5:15 PM</td>
<td>Share your love of the Buckeye Trail this Valentine’s Day! Get 20% off a Buckeye Trail Association membership when you buy it as a gift. Bring your special someone into the Buckeye Trail family today! <a href="http://bit.ly/15s156T">bit.ly/15s156T</a></td>
<td>Link to store</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/10/16</td>
<td>1:00 PM</td>
<td>Looking to have a winter adventure with the whole family? Check out these winter activity ideas from REI. See you on the trail! <a href="http://ow.ly/YaiZ5">http://ow.ly/YaiZ5</a></td>
<td>Link</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/11/16</td>
<td>5:00 PM</td>
<td>Help us achieve our goal of 20,000 volunteer hours in 2016! Go to <a href="http://www.buckeyetrail.org/involved.php">http://www.buckeyetrail.org/involved.php</a> to learn more about how to get involved and don’t forget to sign up to be a volunteer to make sure you stay in the loop about opportunities to pitch in!</td>
<td>Link</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/18/16</td>
<td>8:00 PM</td>
<td>#tbt to snowy hikes on the Buckeye Trail back in the day</td>
<td>Photos</td>
<td>959</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/23/16</td>
<td>9:50 PM</td>
<td>It’s National Invasive Species Awareness Week! Check out these 9 ways to help prevent the spread of invasive species. <a href="http://www.nisaw.org/meetings/2016/toolkit/">http://www.nisaw.org/meetings/2016/toolkit/</a></td>
<td>Link</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/8/16</td>
<td>9:50 PM</td>
<td>Join us in St. Marys this Sunday for the third event in the 2016 Cabin Fever Hike Series, the Spring Forward Hike! <a href="http://bit.ly/221ajmr">bit.ly/221ajmr</a></td>
<td>Link to meet up</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/10/16</td>
<td>10:00 PM</td>
<td>Buckeye TrailFest is May 12-15 this year! Register today to join us in Zoar for a weekend of workshops, outings, presentations, and so much more!</td>
<td>Link to website</td>
<td>1573</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Link</td>
<td>Likes</td>
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<td>Comments</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/15</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
<td>There's a group hiking part of the West Union section this Saturday! For more information check out the Meetup event: <a href="http://bit.ly/1M5SLJ">http://bit.ly/1M5SLJ</a>. Don't forget to join our Meetup groups to stay up to date on the latest events on the trail!</td>
<td>Link to meetup</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/18</td>
<td>8:45 PM</td>
<td>Registration for the 7th annual E.G.G.S. hike opens this Sunday, March 20th! Sign up to join us June 16-19 this summer for a weekend of hiking challenges, camping, and fun! Go to <a href="http://www.buckeyetrail.org/eggs.php">http://www.buckeyetrail.org/eggs.php</a> for more info.</td>
<td>Link to website</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/21</td>
<td>8:30 PM</td>
<td>Thinking about hitting the trail for a few days this spring but don't know where to start? Check out this helpful list of tips from REI!</td>
<td>Link to REI</td>
<td>1370</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/24</td>
<td>9:40 PM</td>
<td>Submissions for the BTA Academic Scholarship must be received by April 1! For more info check out <a href="http://www.buckeyetrail.org/scholarship.php">http://www.buckeyetrail.org/scholarship.php</a></td>
<td>Link to website</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/26</td>
<td>11:00 AM</td>
<td>Come join us at our Athens Live, Breathe, Hike Membership Drive April 14 at Jackie O's Pub &amp; Brewery! For just $20 you can become a member of the Buckeye Trail Association and partake in a night of food, drinks, music, presentations, raffle prizes, and fun! Register today!</td>
<td>Link to website</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/28</td>
<td>8:30 PM</td>
<td>Look at this awesome submission to the #LiveBreatheHike Photo Contest by Courtney Denning of This Ohio Life! To learn how to submit your own #BuckeyeTrail photos to the contest, visit <a href="http://www.buckeyetrail.org/photo.php">http://www.buckeyetrail.org/photo.php</a>. All submissions are due by April 18! Also, make sure to check out Courtney's blog at thisohiolife.com!</td>
<td>Link to website</td>
<td>1091</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/30</td>
<td>10:20 AM</td>
<td>Check out this great blog post from Summit Metro Parks about the Buckeye Trail!</td>
<td>Shared post</td>
<td>1034</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>47</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/31</td>
<td>5:30 PM</td>
<td>Shared Athens membership drive event</td>
<td>Facebook event</td>
<td>696</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/10</td>
<td>7:20 PM</td>
<td>A huge thank you to all the new BTA members who joined us at the</td>
<td>Photos</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Sugar 63**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Likes</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4/11/16</td>
<td>9:45 AM</td>
<td>Welcome to the BTA family! Check out this piece about the Buckeye Trail on WOUB Public Media and don't forget to register for the Athens membership drive this Thursday! Visit <a href="http://buckeyetrail.org/memberdrive/athens.php">http://buckeyetrail.org/memberdrive/athens.php</a> for more info!</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/11/16</td>
<td>4:00 PM</td>
<td>The Buckeye Trail Association is hosting a membership drive at Jackie O's this Thursday! For $20, you'll receive a one year membership to the BTA, a drink, pizza, a raffle ticket, entertainment, and a night of interesting presentations. This is a great opportunity because one year memberships are usually $25! Become part of the BTA family today and help support our mission to maintain and protect the Buckeye Trail! See link in event description for ticket details.</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>2366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/12/16</td>
<td>3:00 PM</td>
<td>Don't forget to submit your Buckeye Trail photos to the Live, Breathe, Hike Photo Contest by April 18!</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Appendix B**

**Instagram Statistics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Likes</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/25/15</td>
<td>5:30 PM</td>
<td>Great job everyone who ran and helped out with the Run for Blue Blazes Trail Marathon! Yesterday was a blast. Thanks for all of your hard work! #buckeyetrail</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/27/15</td>
<td>2:30 PM</td>
<td>Check out these gorgeous fall colors in Cuyahoga Valley National Park along the #buckeyetrail</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/30/15</td>
<td>7:00 PM</td>
<td>Hope you all get the chance to get out there this weekend and follow the blue the blue blazes on the #buckeyetrail!</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/31/15</td>
<td>3:20 PM</td>
<td>Happy Halloween from the #buckeyetrail! Great job carving this pumpkin, Randall Roberts</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/31/15</td>
<td>6:40 PM</td>
<td>Things are getting spooky on the #buckeyetrail! Happy Halloween, everyone!</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/8/15</td>
<td>11:30 AM</td>
<td>Thanks everyone who came out to the final Buckeye Trail Crew Work Party of the year! Thanks to your hard work, we now have 2,200 more feet of #buckeyetrail to enjoy!</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/9/15</td>
<td>10:00 PM</td>
<td>Sugar #northcountrytrail #optoutside</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/11/15</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
<td>When you’re out there on the #buckeyetrail, don’t forget to look up!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/16/15</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
<td>Beautiful skies over Cuyahoga Valley National Park #CVNP #buckeyetrail</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/18/15</td>
<td>4:45 PM</td>
<td>Even overcast days are beautiful on the #buckeyetrail!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/25/15</td>
<td>1:30 PM</td>
<td>This Black Friday, join @rei and #optoutside on the #buckeyetrail!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/25/15</td>
<td>5:00 PM</td>
<td>Big things are coming in 2016 but the #buckeyetrail is going to need your help!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/1/15</td>
<td>11:30 AM</td>
<td>The hike along the #buckeyetrail from Cedar Falls to Old Man’s Cave was a blast on Sunday! Thanks for coming out, everyone! #livebreathehike #hockinghills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/1/15</td>
<td>5:15 PM</td>
<td>It’s #givingtuesday! See the link in our bio to contribute to the BTA’s #livebreathehike campaign today and help us make sure that the #buckeyetrail is the best it can be!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/2/15</td>
<td>5:00 PM</td>
<td>Check out this beautiful painting of the #buckeyetrail by the talented @jessicamaronart! #livebreathehike #cvnp</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/13/15</td>
<td>5:15 PM</td>
<td>Plan on ordering online from Amazon this season? Benefit the #buckeyetrail while you’re at it! Click the link in our bio to try AmazonSmile and the program will contribute to the BTA when you purchase eligible items.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/18/15</td>
<td>5:00 PM</td>
<td>We’re getting in the holiday spirit here at the Buckeye Trail Association!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/19/15</td>
<td>8:00 PM</td>
<td>Need a last minute gift idea? Follow the link in our bio to get 20% off a Buckeye Trail Association membership when you buy it as a gift for someone else! Bring someone you care about into the #buckeyetrail family today!</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/23/15</td>
<td>2:45 PM</td>
<td>The beautiful Blue Hen Falls, just one of many great destinations on the #buckeyetrail! #livebreathehike #cvnp Photo by @christinamaria1287</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/25/15</td>
<td>12:30 PM</td>
<td>Happy Holidays from the BTA! #buckeyetrail #livebreathehike</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/29/15</td>
<td>8:15 PM</td>
<td>Be part of the Buckeye Trail Membership Drive in Dayton on January 21! Tickets are $20 and include a one-year membership in the BTA, beer, pizza, raffle prizes and more! Already a member? Give a gift membership. Everyone is welcome! See link in bio for more info. #buckeyetrail #livebreathehike</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/1/16</td>
<td>3:45 PM</td>
<td>Happy New Year, everyone! Thanks so much to all of our volunteers for helping us surpass our 10,000 hour Volunteer Challenge in 2015. We have big plans for 2016 but we’re going</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
to need your help! Our New Year’s Resolution? 20,000 volunteer hours. Go to the link in our bio to learn more about how to get involved and don’t forget to sign up to be a volunteer to make sure you stay in the loop about opportunities to volunteer! #buckeyetrail #livebreathehike

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Likes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/15/16</td>
<td>3:45 PM</td>
<td>Introducing the #buckeyetrail Winter Hike Series! Check out these awesome events across the state. See you on the trail! #livebreathehike Jan. 16 - Hocking Hills Winter Hike Continuous starts from Old Man’s Cave from 9 to 11 a.m. Jan. 18 - Hueston Woods MLK Jr. Day Winter Hike Meet at 9 a.m. at the Lodge at Hueston Woods State Park Jan. 23 - Bowerston and Belle Valley BT Circuit Hike Meet at 9:30 a.m. for up to two days of hiking Feb. 6 - Buckeye Trail Hike in Findley State Park Meet at the Nature Center in the Campground at 10 a.m. Feb. 6 - BRRRRR Oak Winter Hike Meet at Burr Oak Lodge at 10 a.m. Feb. 14 - United Way Hike for Health Register 1 to 3 p.m. in the Canal Room at the City of Saint Mary’s Utility Building</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/25/16</td>
<td>3:00 PM</td>
<td>A view like this is definitely worth braving the cold! #buckeyetrail #livebreathehike Photo by Brice Gordon</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/1/16</td>
<td>5:45 PM</td>
<td>Starting to get cabin fever? Take advantage of this great weather and come out to one of the hikes on the #buckeyetrail this weekend! Check out the link in our bio to see all the hikes in our winter hike series #livebreathehike</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/4/16</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
<td>There’s nothing quite as peaceful as a snowy hike on the #BuckeyeTrail! #tbt #LiveBreatheHike</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/9/16</td>
<td></td>
<td>Thanks everyone who came out to the #BuckeyeTrail BRRRRR Oak Winter Hike this weekend! #LiveBreatheHike</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/9/16</td>
<td></td>
<td>Share your love of the Buckeye Trail this Valentine’s Day! Get 20% off a Buckeye Trail Association membership when you buy it as a gift. Bring your special someone into the #BuckeyeTrail family today! See link in bio for more info.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/18/16</td>
<td>8:00 PM</td>
<td>#tbt to snowy hikes on the #BuckeyeTrail back in the day</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/13/16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Great photo of Devil’s Bathtub in the Hocking Hills by @mattsay87! #BuckeyeTrail #HockingHills #LiveBreatheHike</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/15/16</td>
<td>5:30 PM</td>
<td>You’re invited to attend the Buckeye Trail Membership Drive in Columbus on April 7 at The Old Bag of Nails! Tickets are $20. You’ll become a member of the Buckeye Trail Association and be invited to an evening of fun, food, drink, short presentations and raffle prizes. Sign up today! Already a member of the BTA? Buy a gift membership for someone who’d love to be a part of the #BuckeyeTrail family! Go to bit.ly/btcabs for more information. #LiveBreatheHike</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/28/16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Look at this awesome submission to the #LiveBreatheHike Photo Contest by @thisohiolife! To learn how to submit your own #BuckeyeTrail photos to the contest, visit the link in our bio. All submissions are due by April 18! Also, make sure to check out Courtney’s blog at thisohiolife.com!</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sugar 66

3/31/16 | #tbt to sunny days on the #BuckeyeTrail circa 1964-1977! Do you have any BT photos from before 1990? Submit them to the #LiveBreatheHike photo contest before April 18! See link in bio for details. | 13

4/4/16 | Come join us at our Athens #LiveBreatheHike Membership Drive April 14 at Jackie O’s Pub & Brewery! For just $20 you can become a member of the Buckeye Trail Association and partake in a night of food, drinks, music, presentations, raffle prizes, and fun! | 7

Appendix C

Twitter Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Tweet</th>
<th>Media</th>
<th>Likes</th>
<th>Retweets</th>
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<td>11/11/15</td>
<td>6:45 PM</td>
<td>The BTA is now on Instagram! Make sure to follow the account and share your photos on Instagram using #buckeyetrail.</td>
<td>Graphic</td>
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<td>443</td>
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<td>11/18/15</td>
<td>9:00 PM</td>
<td>Please take this quick survey to help the BTA learn more about what our hikers care about most, how we can better... <a href="http://fb.me/7yxFhosBR">http://fb.me/7yxFhosBR</a>.</td>
<td>Facebook link</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/25/15</td>
<td>1:30 PM</td>
<td>This Black Friday, join rei and #optoutside on the #buckeyetrail! You'll be thankful you did.... <a href="https://instagram.com/p/-hJxHXS5fq/">https://instagram.com/p/-hJxHXS5fq/</a></td>
<td>Facebook link</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/25/15</td>
<td>2:30 PM</td>
<td>Please take this survey for 20% off a buckeyetrail association membership! <a href="http://bit.ly/1SZD7qK">http://bit.ly/1SZD7qK</a> #LiveBreatheHike</td>
<td>Graphic</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11/30/15</td>
<td>9:00 PM</td>
<td>Photos of the Little Cities of the Forest and Miami Rivers Chapters hiking from Cedar Falls to Old Man's Cave... <a href="http://fb.me/7wEXmqTr5">http://fb.me/7wEXmqTr5</a>.</td>
<td>Facebook link</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>234</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/1/15</td>
<td>5:30 PM</td>
<td>This #GivingTuesday! Don't forget to contribute to the BTA's Live, Breathe &amp; Hike campaign today to help make the... <a href="http://fb.me/3X0mCBk1R">http://fb.me/3X0mCBk1R</a></td>
<td>Facebook link</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>260</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/1/15</td>
<td>1:00 PM</td>
<td>It's #GivingTuesday! Support the work of the BTA by contributing to our Live, Breathe, &amp; Hike campaign today!... <a href="http://fb.me/7TboTSFLL">http://fb.me/7TboTSFLL</a></td>
<td>Facebook link</td>
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<td></td>
<td>245</td>
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<td>12/13/15</td>
<td>5:00 PM</td>
<td>Ordering from Amazon this season? AmazonSmile will contribute to the BTA for your purchases <a href="http://smile.amazon.com/ch/31-6050747">http://smile.amazon.com/ch/31-6050747</a></td>
<td>Graphic</td>
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<td>5:45 PM</td>
<td>Need a last minute gift idea? Bring</td>
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<td>1/16</td>
<td>2:00 PM</td>
<td><em>HappyNewYear</em> everyone! Sign up to be a volunteer today to stay in the loop for 2016! <a href="http://bit.ly/1U1BUJ">http://bit.ly/1U1BUJ</a></td>
<td>Graphic</td>
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<td>296</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/15/16</td>
<td>6:15 PM</td>
<td>Introducing the Buckeye Trail Winter Hike Series! Check out these awesome events across the state. See you on the... <a href="http://fb.me/7Jxp4k01f">http://fb.me/7Jxp4k01f</a></td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>1/22/16</td>
<td>7:00 PM</td>
<td>I posted 27 photos on Facebook in the album &quot;Buckeye Trail Membership Drive in Dayton&quot; <a href="http://fb.me/6Y9KyyPma">http://fb.me/6Y9KyyPma</a></td>
<td>Facebook link</td>
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<td>258</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/23/16</td>
<td>5:00 PM</td>
<td>Please take this quick survey to help the BTA learn more about what our hikers care about most, how we can better... <a href="http://fb.me/8WPzDedAn">http://fb.me/8WPzDedAn</a></td>
<td>Facebook link</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/25/16</td>
<td>1:45 PM</td>
<td>The BRRRR Oak Winter Hike is coming up! Make sure to mark your calendars for Saturday, February 6! <a href="http://fb.me/3r2l4nzHo">http://fb.me/3r2l4nzHo</a></td>
<td>Facebook link</td>
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<td>248</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2/1/16</td>
<td>5:45 PM</td>
<td>Starting to get cabin fever? Come out to one of the hikes on the #buckeyetrail this weekend! <a href="http://bit.ly/1U44vs">http://bit.ly/1U44vs</a></td>
<td></td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/3/16</td>
<td>5:00 PM</td>
<td>Join us at the BRRRR Oak Winter Hike this Saturday! <a href="http://ow.ly/XUrFz">http://ow.ly/XUrFz</a></td>
<td>Flier</td>
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<td>2/4/16</td>
<td>3:00 PM</td>
<td>Just a few more days! <a href="http://fb.me/3Ly7CP67">http://fb.me/3Ly7CP67</a></td>
<td>Facebook link</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>2/4/16</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
<td>There’s nothing quite as peaceful as a snowy hike on the #BuckeyeTrail! #tbt #LiveBreatheHike</td>
<td>Photo</td>
<td></td>
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<td>152</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/5/16</td>
<td>1:00 PM</td>
<td>There are two great hikes happening on the #BuckeyeTrail tomorrow! Join us in Burr Oak or Findley State Park <a href="http://ow.ly/XZibK">http://ow.ly/XZibK</a></td>
<td></td>
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<td>2/7/16</td>
<td>5:00 PM</td>
<td>I posted 16 photos on Facebook in the album &quot;BRRRRR Oak Winter Hike 2016&quot; <a href="http://fb.me/7KvE19BZ4">http://fb.me/7KvE19BZ4</a></td>
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<td>2/9/16</td>
<td>5:15 PM</td>
<td>Share your love of the Buckeye Trail this Valentine’s Day! Get 20% off a Buckeye Trail Association membership... <a href="http://fb.me/12ok1r205">http://fb.me/12ok1r205</a></td>
<td>Facebook link</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/10/16</td>
<td>12:00 PM</td>
<td>Looking to have a winter adventure with the whole family? Check out these winter activity ideas from REI. <a href="http://ow.ly/Yaivr">http://ow.ly/Yaivr</a></td>
<td>Link</td>
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<td>2/11/16</td>
<td>5:00 PM</td>
<td>Help us achieve our goal of 20,000 volunteer hours in 2016! Go to <a href="http://www.buckeyetrail.org/involved.php">http://www.buckeyetrail.org/involved.php</a> to... <a href="http://fb.me/44xI1a6Zx">http://fb.me/44xI1a6Zx</a></td>
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<td>-----</td>
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<td>-------</td>
<td>----------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/18/16</td>
<td>8:00 PM</td>
<td>#tbt to snowy hikes on the BuckeyeTrail back in the day</td>
<td>Photo</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/23/16</td>
<td>9:45 PM</td>
<td>It’s National Invasive Species Awareness Week! Check out these 9 ways to help prevent the spread of invasive species <a href="http://www.nisaw.org/meetings/2016/toolkit/">http://www.nisaw.org/meetings/2016/toolkit/</a>...</td>
<td>Link</td>
<td></td>
<td>257</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/10/16</td>
<td>10:00 PM</td>
<td>Buckeye TrailFest is May 12-15 this year! Register today to join us in Zoar for a weekend of workshops, outings,... <a href="http://fb.me/3qmEnzrmZ">http://fb.me/3qmEnzrmZ</a></td>
<td>Facebook link</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>123</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3/15/16</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
<td>There’s a group hiking part of the West Union section this Saturday! For more information check out the Meetup... <a href="http://fb.me/6VcDjVmvM">http://fb.me/6VcDjVmvM</a></td>
<td>Facebook link</td>
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<td>202</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3/18/16</td>
<td>8:45 PM</td>
<td>Registration for the 7th annual E.G.G.S. hike opens this Sunday, March 20th! Sign up to join us June 16-19 this... <a href="http://fb.me/4KhstZkaB">http://fb.me/4KhstZkaB</a></td>
<td>Facebook link</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/20/16</td>
<td>3:20 PM</td>
<td>A great shot for the #LiveBreatheHike photo contest! Submit your BuckeyeTrail shots today! <a href="http://bit.ly/1T2gJhte">http://bit.ly/1T2gJhte</a></td>
<td>RT</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/21/16</td>
<td>8:30 PM</td>
<td>Thinking about hitting the trail for a few days this spring but don’t know where to start? Check out this helpful... <a href="http://fb.me/7ENi1cC7w">http://fb.me/7ENi1cC7w</a></td>
<td>Link</td>
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<td>3/24/16</td>
<td>9:40 PM</td>
<td>Submissions for the BTA Academic Scholarship must be received by April 1! For more info check out... <a href="http://fb.me/3SDEwvwu">http://fb.me/3SDEwvwu</a></td>
<td>Facebook link</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/26/16</td>
<td>10:50 AM</td>
<td>Come join us at our Athens Live, Breathe, Hike Membership Drive April 14 at Jackie O’s Pub &amp; Brewery! For just... <a href="http://fb.me/7WCUswk8m">http://fb.me/7WCUswk8m</a></td>
<td>Facebook link</td>
<td></td>
<td>230</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/28/16</td>
<td>8:30 PM</td>
<td>Look at this awesome submission to the #LiveBreatheHike Photo Contest by Courtney Denning of This Ohio Life! To... <a href="http://fb.me/SCjxQNS">http://fb.me/SCjxQNS</a></td>
<td>Facebook link</td>
<td></td>
<td>232</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/29/16</td>
<td>7:25 PM</td>
<td>Find out how you can @hikethebt through #summitmetroparks and learn about its history: <a href="https://medium.com/@metro_parks/follow-the-blue-blazes-">https://medium.com/@metro_parks/follow-the-blue-blazes-</a></td>
<td>RT</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/30/16</td>
<td>10:20 AM</td>
<td>Check out this great blog post by Summit Metro Parks about the Buckeye Trail! <a href="http://fb.me/4Mu5n5q7y">http://fb.me/4Mu5n5q7y</a></td>
<td>Facebook link</td>
<td>183</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/7/16</td>
<td>1:45 PM</td>
<td>@Glen_Helen will celebrate partnership with @hikethebt The Buckeye Trail at #EarthDay ribbon cutting.</td>
<td>RT</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/10/16</td>
<td>7:20 PM</td>
<td>A huge thank you to all the new BTA members who joined us at the membership drive in Columbus last week! Welcome to the BTA family!</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="image" /></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/11/16</td>
<td>9:45 AM</td>
<td>Check out this piece about the Buckeye Trail on WOUB Public Media and don’t forget to register for the Athens... <a href="http://fb.me/J3L8Uj6p">http://fb.me/J3L8Uj6p</a></td>
<td>Facebook link</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/11/16</td>
<td>8:50 AM</td>
<td>The Buckeye Trial, @hikethebt, has over 1,400 miles of trails in a loop around Ohio. Hear more about this @woub. <a href="http://bit.ly/1qiRugQ">http://bit.ly/1qiRugQ</a></td>
<td>RT</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/11/16</td>
<td>3:50 PM</td>
<td>The Buckeye Trail Association is hosting a membership drive at Jackie O’s this Thursday! For $20, you’ll receive... <a href="http://fb.me/2Gg2vq2Ko">http://fb.me/2Gg2vq2Ko</a></td>
<td>Facebook link</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/12/16</td>
<td>3:00 PM</td>
<td>Don’t forget to submit your Buckeye Trail photos to the Live, Breathe, Hike Photo Contest by April 18! <a href="http://fb.me/7JRk2GU8">http://fb.me/7JRk2GU8</a></td>
<td>Facebook link</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>147</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix D

Event Form

Name of event:

Date of event:

Time of event:

Location:

Goal:
Target audience:

Message for target audience:

Description of event:

Budget:

Promotions

   Groups to reach out to:

   Social media channels to utilize:

   Media Outlets and Reporters to contact:

How guests will register for the event:

Programming

   Speakers:

   Prizes:

Overall guest benefits:

Appendix E

Membership Drive Checklist

Name of event:

Date of event:

Time of event:

Primary volunteer(s) organizing this event:
Goal:

Target audience:

Location:
Factors to keep in mind:
• Preferably a local craft brewery that has space to host a large, private group
• What’s the capacity of the event space?
• Keep food in mind, does the brewery sell food or can you order pizza?
• What’s the parking like?
• Do they have a projector, microphone, and other equipment for speakers and announcements?
• Do they have table(s) for display(s)?
• When does the establishment require a final count? Is this flexible?

Suggested sponsorship guidelines for location:
• Request space free of charge
• Request discounted food and drinks
• Request for establishment to include event on website (calendar) and promote it on social media
• In return, the BTA will
  o guarantee a certain amount of sales
  o promote establishment on website and social media
  o make sure to get permission to use the logo

Budget:

Food: preferably local pizza
Factors to keep in mind:
• Preferably local pizza
• If the establishment where the event is taking place sells food, they will probably require us to purchase their food
• try to get pizza for people with dietary restrictions if possible (i.e. gluten free, dairy free or no cheese)

Beverages (arrange for at least two different beverages to be available for guests to redeem with drink ticket)
• Alcoholic beverage:
• Non-alcoholic beverage:

Promotions
• Groups to reach out to via Email:
  o BTA Members
  o Local special interest groups

• Social media channels to utilize:
  o Create Meetup event
  o promoted posts on Facebook
  o spread word in general on:
    ▪ Twitter
    ▪ Instagram
    ▪ Facebook (both on the page and in the group)

• Media outlets to contact:

• Places to distribute fliers:
  o libraries (public and university)
  o community centers
  o location where the event is being held

Registration
• How guests will register for the event: Constant Contact (???)
• How much does it cost to register? Does this vary by date?
  o $20 until one week before membership drive (20% discount), then it’s $25
  o Date the price of registration be raised:
• How long will registration be open?
• Is there a cap on how many tickets we can sell? (e.g. maximum occupancy of location)
• What about gift tickets?
  o Person purchasing gift ticket must pay an additional $10 if they would like to attend as well

Programming
• Speakers:

• Raffle Prizes: (List partners and prizes they provide. Recommended $50 value for prizes from partners.)
Agenda (what will the schedule for the evening be?)

Volunteer needs at event
- Person to staff BTA table/trail shop
- Person to collect raffle tickets and handle the raffle at the event
- People to handle on-site registration
- People to prepare and handle name tags (check-in)
- Person to coordinate pizza delivery/pick-up, paper plates, napkins, plasticware, trash can, etc. (If applicable)

Appendix F

Sample Email to Media

Hi Deb,

My name is Sally Sugar and I work with the Buckeye Trail Association (BTA). I noticed that the Perry Country Tribune published a story about our BRRRRR Oak hike this winter. Thanks so much for helping us spread the word about the event, it was one of our most successful winter hikes yet! Your bio on the newspaper’s website says that you enjoy hiking and other outdoor activities, so you’re probably already familiar with the trail, but just in case, here is some background info: The BTA is a nonprofit organization dedicated to maintaining, protecting, and promoting the Buckeye Trail, Ohio’s 1,400+ mile long-distance, scenic hiking loop. The trail goes through a great deal of the surrounding area, including places such as the Hocking Hills, Burr Oak, New Straitsville, and Shawnee.

The BTA relies on the support of its members to accomplish its mission. In many ways, the Buckeye Trail is a trail by the people and for the people. The BTA is currently holding a series of membership drives throughout the state. The Athens membership drive is taking place at Jackie O’s on April 14 at 6:00 p.m. Through this membership drive, we hope to recruit new members, mobilize people to help care for the southeastern sections of the trail, and gain support for the work of the BTA. Through this event, we hope to get people interested in preserving a trail that would otherwise go un-preserved. This is especially important during this time of year because more and more people are starting to hit the trail as the weather gets nicer.

I’m reaching out to you to see if someone at the Tribune would be interested in
doing a piece about the trail to help us get the word out about the event. If not a story, any help promoting the event would be greatly appreciated! Also, if you aren’t interested in covering the event or simply aren’t able to do so but know someone who might be interested or able, any information on who to contact would be incredibly helpful! Either way, thanks so much for your time and I look forward to hearing from you!

Best,
Sally Sugar
Buckeye Trail Association

For more information about the BTA, check out: http://buckeyetrail.org/bta.php
For more info about the membership drive, check out: http://buckeyetrail.org/memberdrive/athens.php

Appendix G

News Release for Athens Membership Drive

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BUCKEYE TRAIL MEMBERSHIP DRIVE SET TO BRING TOGETHER LOVERS OF THE OUTDOORS

Athens, OH

With spring here and summer fast approaching, hikers of all skill sets and from all walks of life are preparing for their warmer-weather adventures. For Ohioans, many of these excursions will take place on Ohio’s Buckeye Trail, a long-distance trail that spans over 1,400 miles of the state.

The Buckeye Trail Association (BTA) is a nonprofit, grassroots organization dedicated to maintaining, protecting, and promoting the trail. The BTA relies on the support of its members to accomplish its mission and make sure that the trail remains one of Ohio’s premier hiking experiences.
“In many ways, the Buckeye Trail is a trail by the people and for the people,” said BTA representative Sally Sugar. “People formed the BTA in 1959 to give Ohioans a hiking experience similar to the Appalachian Trail. Ever since, our members have been the lifeblood of the organization. Without them, there wouldn't be a Buckeye Trail.”

The BTA is hosting a series of membership drives throughout the state to bring lovers of the outdoors together in support of its mission. The Athens membership drive is set to take place at Jackie O’s Brewpub on April 14 at 6 p.m. People who register for the event will receive a discounted BTA membership and enjoy an evening of entertainment, food, drink, presentations, and socializing with fellow outdoor enthusiasts.

“Through this event, we hope to recruit new members, mobilize people to care for the Southeastern sections of the trail, and gain support for the work of the BTA locally,” said Sugar. “We want to get people interested in preserving a trail that would otherwise go un-preserved. This is especially important during this time of year because more and more people are starting to hit the trail as the weather gets nicer.”

The BTA has deep roots in southeastern Ohio. It’s based in the historic village of Shawnee, nestled within the Wayne National Forest. Also, some of the trail’s most popular sections are located in the region, including Old Man’s Cave in the Hocking Hills. Those interested in the Athens membership drive can visit http://buckeyetrail.org/memberdrive/athens.php for more information.

END
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Contact: Sally Sugar
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Phone (work): 740-394-2008
Email: ssugar@buckeyetrail.org

Founded in 1959, the Buckeye Trail Association is the leader in building, maintaining, protecting and promoting use of Ohio’s longest scenic hiking trail for our citizens, communities and partners. We provide outdoor recreation, opportunities to volunteer, education, access to the varied resources of Ohio and
local economic benefits. The Buckeye Trail, Ohio's State Scenic Trail, is a sustainable hiking trail that provides a safe and unique experience throughout the state reflecting the diverse resources, people and stories of Ohio. The trail is a dedicated, recognized and protected route developed and maintained by the Buckeye Trail Association, an organization reflective of the diversity of the trail. The Buckeye Trail Association works in close partnership with communities, organizations and agencies around Ohio creating a legacy for present and future generations. For more information, please visit http://buckeyetrail.org/.

Fast Facts about the Buckeye Trail

- The Buckeye Trail (BT) is Ohio’s long distance hiking trail created in the image of, but unique from, the Appalachian Trail.
- Only about a dozen hikers have "Thru-Hiked" the entire BT in one trip, but hundreds of hikers have completed the trail in pieces by "Section Hiking" it.
- The BT varies greatly along it’s 1,400+ miles from popular portions at Hocking Hills State Park, Cuyahoga Valley National Park, and the Little Miami Scenic Trail to the Miami & Erie Canal Towpath, the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath, the northern terminus at Headlands Dunes State Nature Preserve on Lake Erie, to the Ohio River Bluffs at Eden Park... and many more.
- The BT traverses 48 counties and through nearly 100 different communities in Ohio.
- The BT was designated Ohio’s state trail in 1967.
- The development and maintenance of the BT is dependent upon the great work of hundreds of volunteers who devote thousands of hours so that millions of hikers can enjoy the best of Ohio from the BT each year.
- The BTA is actively developing relationships with private landowners to develop the trail off road into more scenic settings around the state.
- The BTA is in need of support by the citizens of Ohio to succeed with our mission. Support comes in many forms - volunteerism (check out www.buckeyetrail.org for our opportunities) membership (join us for our member drive in Athens April 14th at Jackie O's) and participation at our signature events (join us at Buckeye TrailFest in historic Zoar Village May 12-15 or the Emma Grandma Gatewood Solstice EGGS Hike on June 17-19)
Appendix H

Sample Email to Prospective Community Partner

Hi Alex,
My name is Sally Sugar and I work for the Buckeye Trail Association. I’m friends with Kate Vancouver and she sent me in your direction. The BTA is having a membership drive in Athens at Jackie O’s on April 14 and I'm reaching out to you to see if OU Outdoor Pursuits would be interested in being one of our community partners for the event. This would involve donating a raffle prize (we recommend something of a $50 value, but that’s definitely flexible) and in exchange, we would promote your organization on the event page as well as at the event.

Also, regardless of OU Outdoor Pursuits’s interest in being a partner, do you think you guys could help get the word out about the event to students? As an OU student, I’d love to see more people our age committed to supporting Ohio’s premier long-distance hiking trail! Any help sending an email to your members, mentioning the membership drive at meetings, sharing our event on social media, or anything else of that nature would be greatly appreciated!
For more info on the membership drive, check out http://www.buckeyetrail.org/memberdrive/athens.php
We also have a facebook event for the drive https://www.facebook.com/events/207835486256686/
Thanks so much for your time and I look forward to hearing from you!

Sally Sugar
Buckeye Trail Association