



Parkbus.

What is the issue?

Parkbus is a not-for profit organization that provides scheduled bus service from Toronto and Ottawa to several Provincial and National Parks in Ontario. Their aim is to provide access to the great outdoors without the need of a car. The purpose of this study was to determine a consumer profile, optimal pricing, and a preferred schedule for Parkbus users that will provide an end benefit to both the consumer and organization.

What did the researcher do?

Student researchers, under the guidance of Tom Griffin, created and distributed a survey that covered current awareness of Parkbus, potential interest in their service, and preferred costing and scheduling. Researchers asked customers at the Mountain Equipment Co-op store, as well as other social media platforms. In addition, a comparison with competing transportation options was conducted to offer Parkbus insight into their benefits and weaknesses for different travel parties.

Why is this research Useful?

This research helped Parkbus to understand its potential customers more clearly, helping to tweak pricing, scheduling, pick up points, and benefits to promote to potential users. Businesses and start up entrepreneurs with a similar business concept can use this research to better understand operational decisions that are carried out in this business and potential ways they can increase interest in their target market to use their services.

What were the outcomes?

The study found that Parkbus is better value for most groups interested in visiting Ontario's parks who do not have a personal vehicle. Results also found specific pricing and scheduling preferences. Respondents were more willing to pay higher prices for well-known parks. There are implications for Parkbus to partner with accommodations for people who are unfamiliar or uninterested in camping, but still want to experience nature in a more comfortable setting. Other recommendations include targeting students in Toronto, and cross-promotional ideas with other agencies and service providers.

About the Researcher

Michael Budhai, Shan Chang, John Paul Lopez, Mandy Mak, and Somphone Sasinouan are fourth year students at the Ted Rogers School of Management majoring in Hospitality and Tourism Management.

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This report is available by contacting the Hospitality & Tourism Research Institute directly.

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Ted Rogers School of Management
55 Dundas Street West
9th floor, TRS-3-175
www.htmresearch.ca