



Travel Programs: The *GOOD* the *Bad* and the *Ugly*

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What I'll Cover

- Background on the SVSU OLLI travel program
- Information on other OLLIs
- Examples of the good, bad & ugly
- Some tips
- Travel partner options
- Elderhostel research findings about the boomers

The SVSU OLLI and Travel

- Started in 2001
- 1,100+ members
- Will offer 160 classes and 22 trips in 2007-08 (none cancelled)
- Of the 22 trips: two international; three overnight domestic; and 17 day trips





Our Travel Program is Growing

- 2007-08: 22 trips
- 2006-07: 15 trips
- 2005-06: 10 trips
- 2004-05: 4 trips
- 2003-04: 4 trips
- 2002-03: 3 trips
- 2001-02: 0 trips

Who Does What

- SVSU model is “strong staff”
- Committee’s Role
- Director’s Role
- Use of Travel Partners



Finding's from the OLLI Extranet

- 74% of the OLLIs do day trips
- 34% do overnight domestic
- 31% do international



Findings from Extranet (con)

- Seven OLLI's are listed on the "Trips and Travel" page
- Of those seven, only one doesn't appear to be working with TravelLearn



The *Good*



- You can make Money!
- Establish a break even point you feel comfortable with
- We made about \$28,000 on 15 trips in 2006-07 (after expenses)



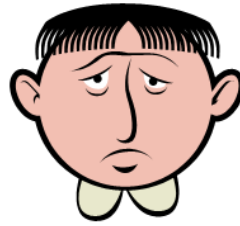
More *Good*



- You can build a sense of community with travel
- Good way to draw in new members
- Single members feel comfortable going alone
- Some trips do exceed expectations!
- Members are full of good ideas for trips

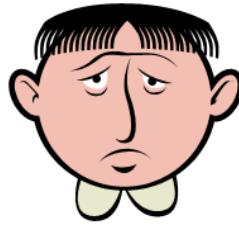


The Bad



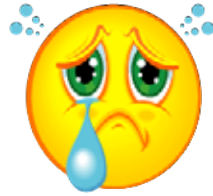
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- Planning trips is time consuming
 - The devil is in the details
 - Make sure people know the “activity level”
 - Matching up room mates is tricky
 - Always count heads
 - Good food is important
 - Cancellation policies are tough to enforce

More Bad



- Sometimes you must cancel
- Minor accidents will happen – have a plan & a emergency kit
- Some sites aren't "bus friendly"
- Members are full of good (and not so good) ideas
- Make sure you understand the cancellation policies – especially hotels
- You can waste a whole day on the Internet!

The Ugly



- Two feet of snow
- Emergency gall bladder surgery
- 21 hour motorcoach ride
- Guns!
- Motorcoaches do break down



Some tips

- Almost everything is negotiable
- Food is important!
- Communicate the details
- Count heads
- Have a leader and co-leader
- Take lots of pictures and show them at large gatherings





More tips

- Differentiate yourself from the competition
- Get creative
- Don't be afraid to copy a little – but kick it up
- Try not to cancel trips – even if you have to lose a little
- Clarify tipping expectations

Even more tips

- Don't over pack the day
- Ask for suggestions from your contacts
- Do some purely social trips
- Smile - and don't let them see you sweat!
- We will ask for your tips later



Marketing – Filling Seats

- Your best marketing is a reputation for offering reasonably priced quality trips
- It may not have to spend a lot of money on advertising – you have “members” the competition doesn’t



How to Tackle International Travel

- Be brave – do it yourself
- Partner with another office at your school – alumni office, international programs, etc.
- Partner with another OLLI
- Partner with another organization or company



Contractual Partnership Options

- TraveLearn
- Elderhostel
- Private companies: Durgan, CIE, Collette, etc.



TravelLearn

- Offers a variety of educational international trips.
- All led by a University professor.
- Each trip is open to anyone affiliated with a college.
- However, your OLLI can offer a trip exclusively.
- You get \$200 for each person that registers through your OLLI.
- The trip maximum is 20.
- One of your faculty can lead a trip. They go for free (air and land) and have input into the itinerary.
- TravelLearn will develop the marketing pieces for you with your logo – including a web page.
- Trips are somewhat pricey, but high quality – responsible for your own air
- They currently are working with about 50 OLLIs.

Elderhostel

- They can provide many of their trips for just your members
- Your OLLI has the option to add transportation or not





Partnering with Private Companies

- The possibilities are endless
- Consider:
 - Where to go for how long
 - Exclusive to your members or not
 - Your itinerary or theirs
 - "*" Level
 - Ratio of structured to free time
 - Pricing and trip min/max
 - And of course, much more



The SVSU International Travel Model

- We find a faculty trip leader & destination
- Develop an RFP
- Identify a travel partner
- Price & market the program
- Offer a pre-trip themed dinner and pre-trip class
- Faculty member and SVSU employee lead the trip
- Conduct an evaluation
- Post trip meeting to share photos & memories



Tips When Partnering

- Don't assume anything
- Talk to others who have used the company
- Ask other OLLIs who they are using
- The least expensive isn't always the best
- We will ask for your input later!



Elderhostel Study:

What Will Baby Boomers Want
From Education Travel?

Conducted in January, 2005

Study Highlights

- The G.I. or Greatest generation preferences
- The Baby Boomers preferences





What the Baby Boomers Want

- Smaller groups
- Hands-on, experiential learning and behind the scenes access
- Accommodations and meals “on theme” where feasible
- Plenty of free time, including meals on your own
- Active programs
- Shorter programs with accessible pricing
- Resulted in the Road Scholar program

Thank You....

- Here's Ellie & Joan
- Then questions
- Then group discussion





Discussion Question #1

- Describe your most successful or unique trip.



Discussion Question #2

- Describe a successful partnership. (It could be with one or more other OLLI's or a corporate travel partner.)



Discussion Question #3

- Share any tips of advice that others may benefit from.



Discussion Question #4

- OK – time to share the “ugly”