

Pricing and Planning Continuing Education Programs

Tuesday, June 20, 10:15 to 11:45 am

P. Laslett, Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Richmond, Virginia
M. Ross, Longwood Gardens, Inc., Kennett Square, Pennsylvania
L. Vogel, Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, Chaska, Minnesota
G. Drake, VanDusen Botanical Garden, Vancouver, British Columbia
S. Hall, Royal Botanical Gardens, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
D. Himmelman, Mt. Cuba Center, Hockessin, Delaware

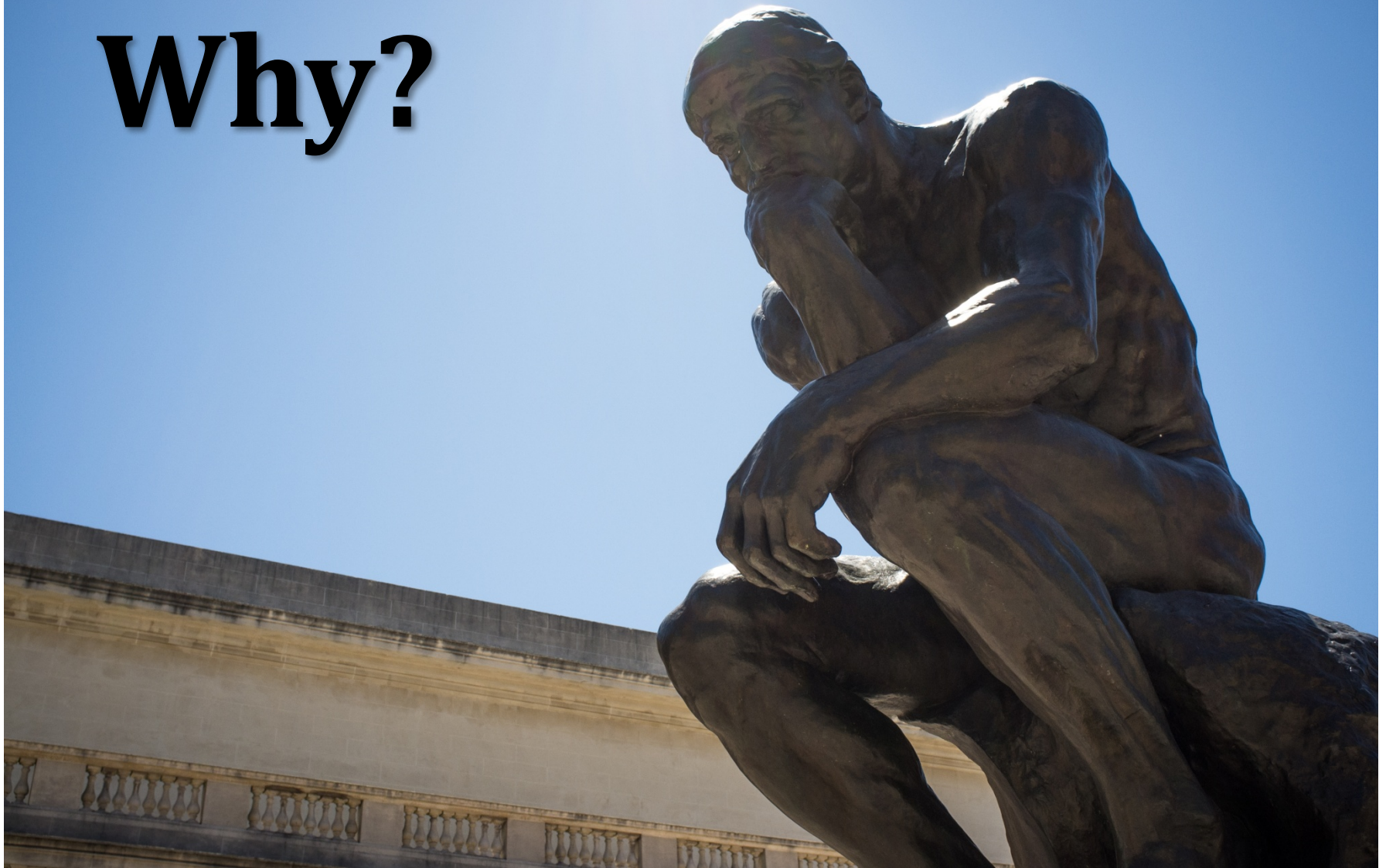


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Why?



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What are we covering today?

- Overview and side-by-side of panelists' gardens and education efforts
- Each panelist's approach to planning and pricing continuing education programs
- Breakout: working session to determine how you can better plan and price programs at your institution

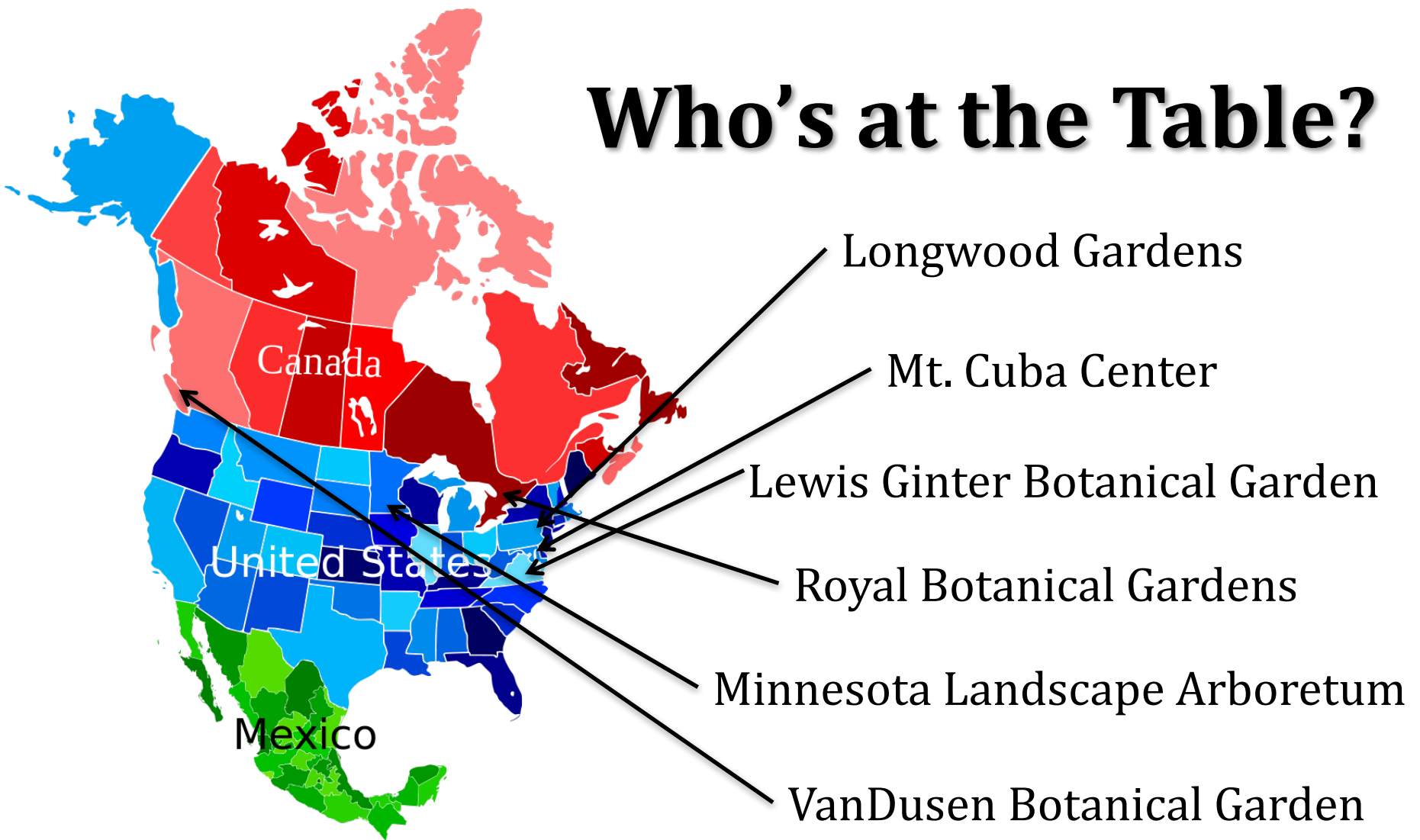


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Who's at the Table?



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Longwood Gardens

Matthew Ross, Coordinator of Continuing Education



- Offered since 1950's
- 3.5 staff, 39% external instructors
- Annually: 168 classes, 6,126 registrants
- Less than 1% cancellations
- Content/formats: floral design,* landscape design,* ornamental horticulture,* short courses, workshops and tours, professional courses, visual arts, online classes, and conferences



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Mt. Cuba Center

Duncan Himmelman, Education Manager



- Offered since 2007
- 4.5 staff, 65% external instructors
- Annually: 130 classes, 3,241 registrants
- 11% cancellations
- Content: gardening, conservation, art, and wellness
- Formats: classes, workshops and lectures, offsite trips



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Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden

Phyllis Laslett, Adult Education Coordinator



- Offered since 1987
- 2.6 staff, 100% external instructors
- Annually: 140 classes, 2,200 registrants
- 13% cancellations
- Content: 8 different program areas
- Formats: Garden walks, demos, lectures, hands-on workshop, studios, symposia



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Royal Botanical Gardens

Sabrina Hall, Customer Programs
Manager



- Offered since 1947
- 2.25 staff, 60% external instructors
- Annually (2016): 156 classes, 3,238 registrants
- 17% cancellations (2016)
- Content: gardening & horticulture, health & wellness, arts, food, horticultural therapy
- Formats: lectures, workshops, multi-session classes, tours, walks, festivals



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Minnesota Landscape Arb

Laura Vogel, Adult Education
Programs Manager



- Offered since 1968
- 4 staff, 90% external instructors
- Annually: 164 classes, 4,247 registrants
- 8% cancellations
- Content: horticulture, fine arts, photography, food and wine, pollinators and environment, healthy living, policy
- Formats: lectures, workshops, demonstrations, conferences, and walks



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VanDusen Botanical Garden

Gillian Drake



- Offered since 1980
- 1 staff, 100% external instructors
- Annually: 97 classes, 1,265 registrants
- 7% cancellations
- Content: gardening, ecology, botanical arts, health & wellness, plants & people
- Formats: classes, lectures, workshops, multi-session classes, walks



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Mission-Based Approach to Programming



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Longwood Gardens

Matthew Ross, Coordinator of Continuing Education



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Mission-Based Approach to Programming

Where does it all begin???



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Mission-Based Approach to Programming

Where does it all begin???

- Same 'ol same 'ol or “We do this every year”
- Solicitation from instructor/lecturer
- Other gardens are doing it?
- Awareness
- Need to pair it with an exhibit
- To interpret a collection
 - Living or non-living
- Audience demand
- It's cool
- It's what popular
- I want to do it
- Someone else wants to do it
- To drive attendance
- For revenue generation
- Or...



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What is your **Mission** Statement?



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Photo by: William Hill



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Our Mission

Longwood Gardens is the living legacy of Pierre S. du Pont, inspiring people through excellence in garden design, horticulture, education and the arts.

Our Vision

Longwood Gardens is one of the great gardens of the world. We strive for innovation in horticulture and display.

We present the arts in an unparalleled setting to bring pleasure and inspire the imagination of our guests.

We contribute to society through excellent and diverse education programs, horticultural research, environmental stewardship, and cultural and community engagement.



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The Importance of Connecting Continuing Education to Your Mission

- How does EDUCATION fit into your mission?
- What is the directive of your education Department or Division?
- Do you provide free programming within your department or division?
- How does this work into the planning process for developing programming?
 - Filtering through the Mission
 - Provides instant “relevance”
 - Connects with your organizations CORE VALUES
 - Platform for partnerships



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The Benefits of Connecting Continuing Education to Your Mission

- Provides justification for programs that may not drive revenue
- Stronger overall connection with programming at your institution
- Increase the likelihood of inclusion in marketing materials
- Organizational support



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Case Study: Utilizing Mission in Course Justification

- Longwood Lecture Series
- FREE Lecture Program
- Access to top thought leaders in the world that were principles on the Main Fountain Garden Revitalization
- 9-part series offered over a 3 year period reaching close to 2,000 in person guests
- Recorded presentations for inclusion in micro-site reaching up to 15,000 views online
- Return on Mission (ROM)



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Gardening on a higher level

**Mt. CUBA
CENTER**

Mission + Revenue Generation

Mt. Cuba Center

Duncan Himmelman, Education Manager



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Programming Approach

- All programming is mission driven
 - Appreciation of native plants/habitats/conservation
 - Goal: “take action” at home, community, *etc.*
- 4 categories of courses:
 - Gardening; Conservation; Art; Wellness
 - Use our on-site assets: gardens, staff, *etc.*
- Class Structure:
 - 1 day sessions or multiple day sessions
 - 1.5 hour “walk & talk” is minimum time for a class (\$25)
 - Workshops: professionals + homeowners
 - Lecture Series (new 2017) – 1 hour (\$20)
 - Off-site multi-day excursions: (new 2017) – Shenandoah; Delmarva Peninsula



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Programming Approach

- Certificate Program (begun in 2014)
 - 14 required courses (158 hrs)
 - 4 graduates 2015
 - 8 graduates 2016
- Intentions: develop MCC identity as “the” place to get steeped in native plants/conservation – not intended as entrée to employment
 - Homeowners
 - Land trust folks
 - Already employed wishing to transition...



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Programming Approach

- Attractive to our Audience
 - 50-65 y/o; educated; leisure time; live within 1 hr. drive
 - High quality experience (content and presentation)
- Unique to Mt. Cuba Center
 - 33 gardens in the vicinity! Brand identity is important!
- Pricing Model: **Challenging! (33 gardens)**
 - Start with per hour rate
 - Adjust for topic (plants & gardening vs. art)
 - Materials fees *included* in price of class
 - Class fee includes garden entrance fee
 - Does not include staff salaries /overhead



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Member vs. Non-member

- Do not have a membership program
- Have “Season Passholders” (i.e. members):
 - 10% off Certificate courses only
- Pricing: no Member/
Non-M differential



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Revenue Generation

- New focus at Mt. Cuba Center
- No weddings; no commerce (*i.e.* shop)
- Endowment: doesn't last forever
 - Objective is to develop revenue streams over next 20 – 25 years
 - Visitation: 2016: 46% of MCC income
 - Education: 2016: 54% of MCC income
 - 2017: increase each by 5 to 8%



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Revenue Generation

- All classes must make a profit (break-even +1)
 - cover all class expenses
 - pricing model does not include staff salaries, overhead
- Marketing is key:
 - Our website
 - E-blasts from Education (targeted to students)
 - Monthly newsletter to all MCC associated people
 - Social media: FB, Instagram



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How to Increase Revenue?

- Increase class pricing?
- Certificate Program: minor pricing increase?
- Offer second tier Certificate?
- Offer sections of classes in evenings/weekends
- Go slightly off-mission???
- Offer more classes in the November to March time frame? (MCC is closed to visitation Nov – April)
- Market classes as “Exclusive” approach?
- Professional level programs?
- Marketing: new strategies?



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Mt. CUBA
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Gardening on a higher level

Thank you!



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Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden

Pricing Strategies: Position Yourself for Success

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden

Phyllis McLeod Laslett, Adult Education Coordinator

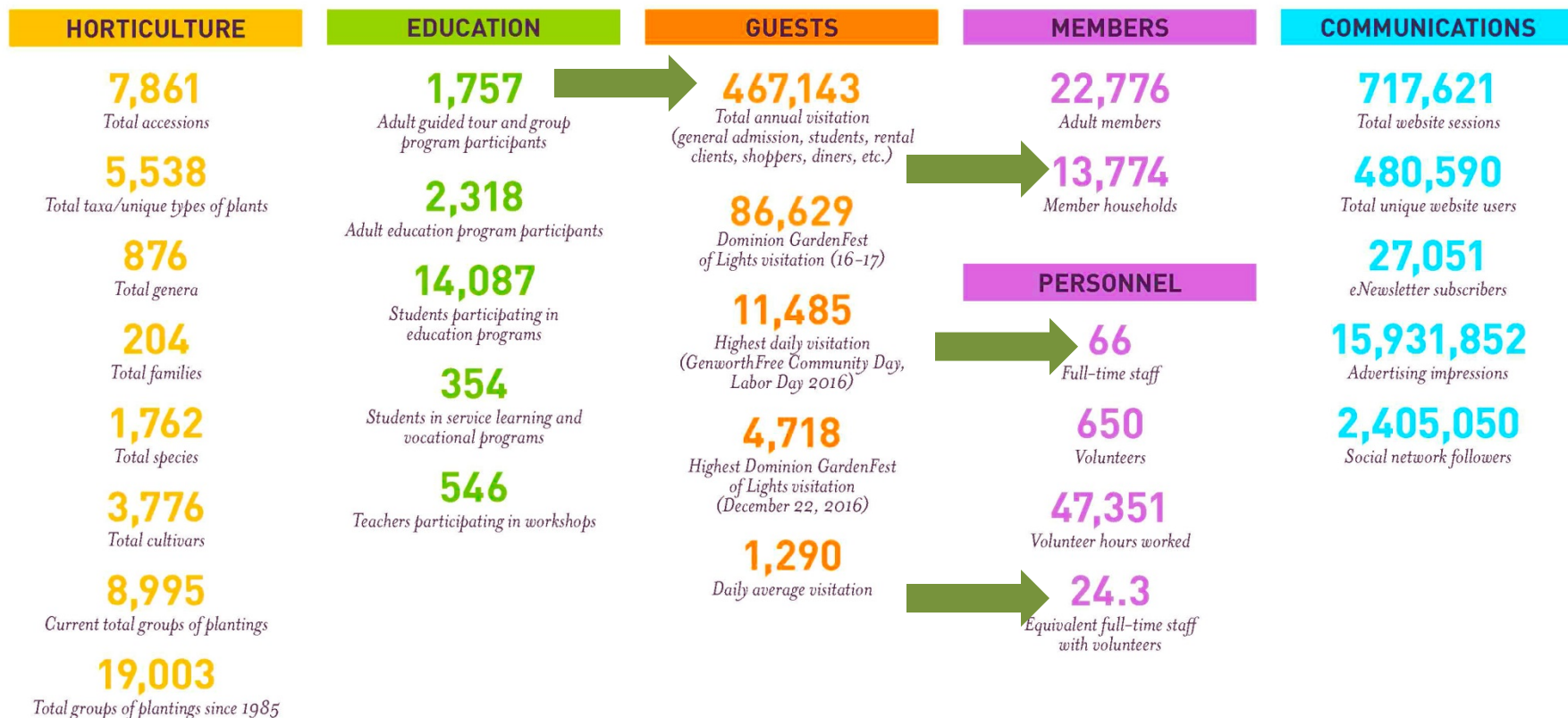


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BY THE NUMBERS



Calendar Year 2016

LEWIS GINTER BOTANICAL GARDEN: 2017-2022 STRATEGIC PLAN

17



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Adult Education at Lewis Ginter

More numbers

263 / 998

\$10 / hr

Staff & volunteers are free

Non-member price pegged to cost of admission

Instructor compensation: more than some, less than others

Rule of thumb for break-even

Formula

5-hour class = 2, 2.5 hr classes

5-hour class @ \$40 base rate + 2 prep hours =

\$280 instructor fee / Cost of class = \$50 (5 hrs x \$10)

6 minimum

Max is 12 = ok

Max is 10 = recalculating



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Consider

- Class offerings at mission-driven non-profits are discretionary purchases
 - Avocational
 - Social
- What does your community want?
 - What makes your offerings unique?
 - Availability? Unique collections?
- Practicalities
 - Competition
- Strategies
 - Negotiation
 - Ride the wave
 - Analysis



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Consider a Certificate Program

Fits the niche between community colleges and university offerings

- Lewis Ginter:
 - Gardening & Garden Design, Floral Design, Certificate of Competence in Botanical Illustration
- Pros
 - A way to organize existing classes into a logical sequence
 - Creates a motivation
 - Simplifies planning
- Cons
 - Attendance in upper level classes drops off
 - Need to provide incentives for students completing course to come back
- Care and feeding
 - Find an easy way to track student progress; semi-annual reports
 - Step up handouts & materials: notebooks / folders
 - Show that you take it seriously



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Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden

Thank you!



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Nuts & Bolts: Determining Prices

Sabrina Hall, Customer Programs Manager



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Nuts & Bolts: Determining Price

- Mission-driven but with revenue-generating targets
- How much instructional time? What type of program?
- What are your base costs/expenses?
- What is your competition offering?
- How are registrations processed?
 - By staff or Online: incorporate 'booking fee'? Hidden in cost or upfront as add'l fee?
 - Provincial/State taxes? Added at the end, or rolled in and rounded up?
- Based on above responses:
 - What's your break even # of registrations? Is this attainable?
 - Is the program able to run at a loss (loss leader based on mission)?
 - Member discount?



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Paddling in Paradise



Variable Operating Expenses	
Instructor's Fee	\$100.00
Materials Costs	\$0.00
Brochure Development Graphic Design Fee	\$28.21
Printing Costs	\$25.64
Other Expenses	\$0.00
Total Expenses	\$153.85
Revenues	
Number of Registrants	19
Program Cost per Participant	\$45.00
Projected Gross Revenue	\$855.00
Net Revenue Contribution	\$701.15
Profit Margin	82%



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Junior Gardener's Club

Variable Operating Expenses	
Instructor's Fee	\$2,240.00
Materials Costs	\$250.00
Brochure Development Graphic Design Fee	\$14.10
Printing Costs	\$12.82
Other Expenses	
Total Expenses	\$2,516.92
Revenues	
Number of Registrants	19
Program Cost per Participant	\$150.00
Projected Gross Revenue	\$2,850.00
Net Revenue Contribution	\$333.08
Profit Margin	12%



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Multi-Session Programs

Variable Operating Expenses	
Instructor's Fee (10 week session)	\$660.00
Materials Costs	\$0.00
Brochure Development Graphic Design Fee	\$28.21
Printing Costs	\$25.64
Other Expenses	\$0.00
Total Expenses	\$713.85
Revenues	
Number of Registrants	20
Program Cost per Participant	\$125.00
Projected Gross Revenue	\$2,500.00
Net Revenue Contribution	\$1,786.15
Profit Margin	71%



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Intoxicating Plants: Tequila & Mezcal

Variable Operating Expenses	
Instructor's Fee	\$0.00
Materials Costs (Tequila and Mezcal)	\$370.00
Brochure Development Graphic Design Fee	\$28.21
Printing Costs	\$25.64
Other Expenses (Catering)	\$625.00
Total Expenses	\$1,048.85
Revenues	
Number of Registrants	25
Program Cost per Participant	\$75.00
Projected Gross Revenue	\$1,875.00
Net Revenue Contribution	\$826.15
Profit Margin	44%



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RBG Tea Festival



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Revenue Estimates	
Vendor table fees (24 @ \$150)	\$3,600
Admissions (\$16 GA, aim for 150)	\$2,400
Projected Gross Revenue	\$6,000
Expenses Estimates	
Tea cups	\$1,200
Pipe and drape	\$350
Coffee/muffins for vendors	\$150
Brochure	\$250
Signs	\$250
Door prize	\$100
Projected Total Expenses	\$2,300
Projected Net Revenue	\$3,700
Projected Profit Margin	62%



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RBG Tea Festival

Revenue Actuals	
Vendor table fees	\$1,950
Admissions (540 tickets sold)	\$4,875
Gross Revenue	\$6,825
Expenses Actuals	
Tea cups	\$1,130
Pipe and drape	\$315
Coffee/muffins for vendors	\$165
Brochure	\$250
Signs	\$250
Door prize	\$75
Total Expenses	\$2,185
Net Revenue	\$4,370
Profit Margin	64%



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Build an Institutional Pricing Chart

Category	Program Details	Non-Member
Family	2-hr program (Child/Adult)	\$10/\$15
Lectures	Speaker's Series (Members \$6)	\$18
General, 2-hr	Miscellaneous	\$25 + up
Sessions (8 weeks)	Botanical Watercolour	\$165
Sessions (10 weeks)	Yoga, Tai Chi, Drumming	\$125
Professional Workshops	Half-day Workshop	\$100
	Botanical ID Workshops (2-day)	\$310

10% Member Discount on all programs

* Student, Staff and Volunteer rates

Many of the same “types” of programs will begin to fall into a category, and your net revenue calculations will become less



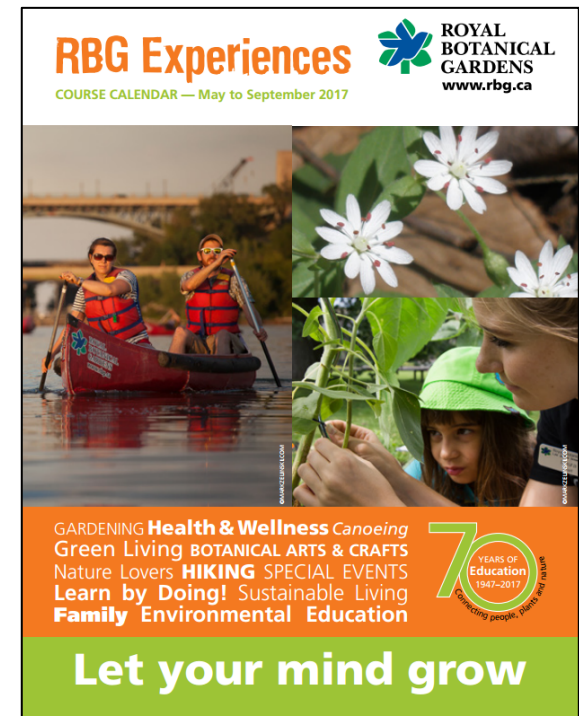
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Get the most out of a program

- Beg, borrow and steal ideas - modify and build around criteria that will make them succeed at your institution
- Winner/early sell-out?
Offer an additional class!
- Loser? Don't be afraid to let it rest
- Social media and website:
 - Pictures, pictures, pictures!
 - Publication to feature programs
 - E-blasts (targeted or generic)
 - Facebook, Twitter, Instagram



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Adding Value without adding Cost

Gillian Drake, Customer Programs Manager



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Adding Value without Adding Cost

What is Value? - Value is personal

Know Your Community

What do they care about?

What do they want for themselves?

What do they want for the community greater good?

Do they even want more stuff?

Do they want information that they can get online?

Do they want a fun and enriching experience?

What will they pay more for, because they find value in it?



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Adding Value - The Experience And The Stuff

THE STUFF - TAKEAWAYS

Items made in class: compost teabags, herbal vinegars, planted containers

Seeds

Plants (4" class demos, tree donations)

Hand lenses

Demo made during class

Books/other donations



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The Stuff - Consumables



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The Experience

You want people to feel great about participating,
and about your organization.

Make it:

- Welcoming
- Fun, personal and positive
- Educational and relevant
- Easy to take part
- Unique
- Of the highest professional standards



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The Importance of the Experience

Every new class participant is potentially a donor

It can be far more than a class

- Facilitate emotional and social connections
- A key part of the lifetime engagement with the Garden
- The enhanced relationship is a very positive feedback mechanism for future registrations, membership, bring-a-friend, giving to the Garden



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Exclusive Opportunities

- Hang out with staff gardener
- Build something in the Garden (ie lasagna garden)
- Behind-the-scenes
- Small batch beer never available again



Sell it as exclusive:
“class limited to 15 participants”
with “long-time staff gardener”



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Use Your Best Resources

Plants - Your collections!

- Get the class outside for a while.
- Participants have a breath of fresh air, diversified learning experience, deeper engagement with the garden, increased probability of retaining information, introduced to unknown parts of garden.
- Clearly warn participants to come prepared!

Longer-term benefits for your Garden

- New audiences have a taste of the garden
- Course becomes more appealing to Garden Guides, who then spread the info to other guides, visitors



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Use Your Best Resources

The Experience – Use Your Best Resources

People

- Garden staff
- Volunteer Teaching Assistants – they work every class because we can't
- Contract instructors

Set them up for success

- assist instructors to use the garden – show them plant examples, locations for activities, route for walk
- Keep them informed of garden news
- Office Volunteer to summarize evaluations



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Use Your Best Resources

Places:

Library, classroom, greenhouses?



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Knee Deep In The Organic Veggie Garden

Participants learn:

- Class-specific objectives
- In a multi-sensory way

But also:

- That VanDusen sends all the food to the Food Bank, and that the summer camp kids do the harvesting
- That VanDusen runs summer camps
- VanDusen's overarching sustainability guidelines
- The importance of the ecosystem approach to gardening



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First evening

- Presentation by staff from local brewery and botanist on staff at VBG
- Microscopes showing resin on hops, germinated barley
- Tasting of two beers brewed specifically for this event, from materials collected in the Garden

Second evening

- tour & tasting at Bomber Brewing



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When Should You Give It Away For Free?

No additional costs incurred

Celebrating those who “Garden for the Greater Good”

K-12 teachers & PAC

BC Housing Community Garden sites

Bring-a-friend last minute discount for registrants

Vouchers for instructor to give away



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Breakout Session: Let's Get to Work!



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