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Assessing Intergenerational Programs through Market Research

Executive Summary

Intergenerational is an adjective that describes something that involves or affects several generations. Intergenerational programs are programs which increase interaction and exchange between people of different generations. There are several benefits of intergenerational programs. Some include generating a sense of purpose for the older adults, reducing a sense of isolation for them, as well as members from each generation learning new skills. Most importantly, younger generations better understand the aging process and learn how to face their own aging more positively. As time progresses, more and more people are understanding the benefits and importance of intergenerational collaboration and as this happens, more programs are being implemented. Through my market research I have discovered many of these programs and have worked to document information about these programs. Some intergenerational programs are more effective than others. For example, a certain intergenerational program can better encourage collaboration resulting in it being beneficial for the participants, both young and old. There should be an accurate method in assessing the effectiveness of intergenerational programs. With a set process, hosts of intergenerational programs can modify their schedules to only hold the effectiveness of these programs, resulting in more beneficial outcomes to the participants.

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Business Context

Industry Description

Consulting is the business of providing advice to people working in a certain field. Consultants usually have some level of experience and expertise that is valuable to the client. Independent consulting is a type of consulting based on providing their expertise to improve the state of their clients company. This can be in the form of improving operations, solving problems, and developing strategies.

Company Description

Four Hawks LLC is a consulting firm based in Batavia. Four Hawks LLC's main vision is "making innovation accessible to all." To do this Four Hawks LLC "helps changemakers create something new, by design." Four Hawks LLC works with nonprofits to improve their success and expand their mission.

Product Description

Encore Batavia is an entrepreneurial community program being developed by Four Hawks, LLC. Led by an Intergenerational Advisory Council, Encore Batavia has

three areas of focus: Purpose, Programs and Placemaking. By encouraging intergenerational collaboration in this program, the attendees will greatly benefit, making Batavia a stronger community overall. Pilot programs under the three areas include an intergenerational playground (Placemaking), the Men's Shed (Programs) and volunteer, paid work and self-discovery (Purpose).

Business Project Description

　　　　As the market research intern at Four Hawks LLC my main task was working on researching current intergenerational programs around the world. The information I collected was used to better understand intergenerational activity. My research will help facilitate the planning for the future intergenerational hub and programs. In the first 3 weeks of my internship, I worked on researching and recording the information I gathered from research of intergenerational programs in the United States. I either got this information directly from the website of the organization hosting the program or through a news article describing the program. While collecting the information on intergenerational programs, I noted trends to better understand how centers in the United States were implementing their intergenerational programs. My market research documented basic information such as the name, type of company, contact information, location, fees while also recording more specific information such as branding and recreational activities.

Name	Type	Website	Contact	Contact Person/Email	Location	Fees	Best Feature	Awards	Description	Social Media	Activities	Branding	Notes
The Villages	Senior Living Community	https://www.thevillages.com/	Use website contact us form		Florida	Purchase home + $162/monthly fee (base)	Villages Grown sustainably grown market and mobile market; Everglades Recreational Complex	NA	Retirement Community with homes from the 160's (Villas), courtyard Villas, cottage homes, Verandas, Designer homes (mid 200's, and Premiem Homes (600K+)	Facebook, email, Instagram, YouTube, Website, Live Cam, Live Chat, monthly Vmail	Pickleball, Bocce, Shuffleboard, Horseshoes, Open Swim, Dog Park, Tennis, Golf, Lap Swim, Air Gun, Triathlon, Water Aerobics, RC Boats, Lawn	"Premier Active Adult Community"	
Encore. Org	Non-profit	www.encore.org	Marc Freedman, Founder	mfreedman@encore.org		Donations via website paywall (1x and monthly)	Online best practice resource sharing. Great resource!	Encore Fellowships: Public Voices and Gen2Gen (deadline 7/15/2020)	NA	Website, blog, podcasts, Facebook, twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn	Virtual events, webinars, resources, annual convenings (Encore.org convenings connect activists, innovators and leaders to learn from one another, build networks, and take action to bring the movement to more locations, sectors and institutions)	"At Encore.org, we believe this population change is as much an opportunity to be seized as a problem to be solved"	Gen2Gen cities report: https://enc ore.org/ge n2gen-cities/ Piloting: 7 programs to try: https://enc ore.org/ge n2gen-cities-soultions/?f b3d-page=9
Seniorplanet	Non-profit	https://seniorplanet.org/about/our-purpose/	use website contact us form	membership@seniorplanet.org	Multiple locations: New York City, New York, Maryland, Colorado, Texas, California	Free for anyone over 60. For anyone under 60, an annual donation of any amount and a volenteering commitment.	Best place for senior's to learn new skills. Countless classes held online. Very large scale and multiple real life events aswell.	2017 Gloria Cavanaugh Award	NA	Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube	Virtual Events, webinars (many that teach seniors about technology), many inperson fitness events. Workshops hosted at their community centers. Provides a comfortable space to learn and work.	"Aging with attitude" "Senior Planet harnesses technology to change the way we age. Our courses, programs, and activities help seniors learn new skills, save money, get in shape, and make new friends."	Really great online resources
Pass it on Network	Non-profit	https://www.passitonnetwork.org/	Moira- use website contact us form	moira@passitonnetwork.org	NA- only online	Free. Donations optional	Best feature is the "connector" website which contains	NA	NA	Facebook, email,	Stricly online. With the primary goal of spreading	The Pass It On Network emphasizes the capacity of older	

Above is a screenshot of a small section of the excel document where I recorded my research on intergenerational programs in the United States. There are a total of eighteen centers/companies with intergenerational programs I documented as part of this internship with more that fell outside the criteria for inclusion.

About four weeks into the internship, I was tasked to research technology solutions to help address a recurring problem that was affecting our team meetings. The lack of a free video conferencing tool that allowed more than 40 minute team calls caused our calls to be cut off early. I was tasked with researching several video conferencing programs and reporting back to find a working solution. Over the course of the week I spent my time recording information on different video conferencing programs. After collecting a considerable amount of programs, I compared them to essentially find the most effective one.

	Name	Price	Info					
1								
2	Zoom	$15 Pro plan price	100 participants 24 hour duration limit					
3	Google Meet	free plan priced plan free till Sept30	free- 100 participants, 1 hour duration 300 hour duration for paid versions. Very easy to use					
4	Microsoft Teams	free plan priced plans	have to have a microsoft account					Suggestions 1. lifesize 2. 8x8 3. Google Meet 4. Webex 5. slack (test)
5	Webex	free plan priced plans	free- up to 50 minutes, 100 participates $13.5 month - unlimited duration					
6	Lifesize	free plan priced plans	free- unlimited duration, 10 participates					
7	GoToMeeting	priced plans	$12 month - 150 particpants, unlimited duration					
8	Free Conference	free plan priced plans	free- up to 5 participants, unlimited duration not as popular					
9	Slack	free	pros- already have a channel made, easy access cons- good for small calls (1-3 people). Can try for Monday meetings but might lag and be slow					
10	8x8	free plans priced plans	free- 50 participants, duration not specificied (probably unlimited)					

Above is a sample from my video conferencing program research.

After collecting the information I was then able to convey my suggestions to Ms. McKenna. To do this I created a one pager with my suggestion for the most effective free and most effective paid program.

Video conferencing –

Note – I have included a paid and free options but I highly doubt that the paid options will have to be used. Even if the free option is not satisfactory, there are countless other free options available which I have the information on.

Free Option

8x8 –
8x8 is a company that provides countless communication services to other

Above is a sample from my one pager. In the previous week I had met with Ms. McKenna and went over her technology needs. I worked to fit as much of the criteria provided as possible and elaborated on the certain features previously discussed in the one-pager. My free recommendation was 8x8 but after testing the product we noticed a great deal of lag and unsatisfactory video quality. My mentor ended up going with the paid solution and purchasing Zoom software.

Next,I was tasked with researching a registration and calendar program for the Encore Batavia. Ms. McKenna wanted the ability to "reserve" spaces at the interim Encore Center (outside spaces at her home) for Batavia residents who wanted to hold events or activities. I researched registration programs and apps that already existed, trying to find one that met our goal.

Calendar/Registration Apps

Name	Price	Features				suggestions
Social Tables	Free plan Priced plans	event planning app (event planning features may or may not be helpful) Floorplan feature to prepare spacing/seating Attendee check-in feature Worth looking into just basic info needed to sign up				
Xing Events	free (for free events)	Online registration tool is free. Very easy to use interface.				**suggestions**
Weezevent	free (for free events)	very easy to use - just have to enter information about the event. Interface allows you to see how many people signed up and other information. Options for paid events and ticket revenue etc. are built in but theres a payment plan for paid events				Most event planning/registration apps are paid or have some sort of paid plan. I would suggest trying the free options in this order
Swap card	free (some features come in a paid plan)	used for networking events but could serve our purpose. Allows the planner to set up exhibtors or presenters which might be useful if theres multiple presentations happening at once at Encore. Mobile access if regular attendees find that easier				1. Weezevent 2. Social Tables 3. xing events (no preference between 3 and 4) 4. swap card 5. FB
Facebook	Free	Easy RSVP. ---easy to publizice, can go along with the Facebook page. Most people will have a facebook account already. Cons- not many features (only guest list/details)				
Google Suite	Free	Form ---> Sheets ----> Calendar -----embed calendar into site				
Teamup	free	Color coded				

Above is a section of my research on registration programs.

After researching registration programs, I noticed that none met all our criteria of booking spaces and scheduling events. I then tried a different approach and created one using Google suite. In the next few weeks of the internship uptil now, I worked on coding a Google registration system allowing the booking of spaces in the encore center. The system involved two Google forms, two Google spreadsheets, scripts, Google calendars, and a website. The system was two pathed, one for event creators and one for event attendees. Event creators, using a hyperlink on the Four Hawks Encore Batavia website (our dev site), would be directed to a google form that asked for basic information about their event. This would be things like the event name, description, location, and time. The form would be submitted and the responses would automatically be received on a Google spreadsheet. This spreadsheet would have a time based script running that included Objects of the Calendar and Form class in Google Apps Script. This allowed a calendar event to be created on a Google calendar through the script. While this calendar event was being created, I coded a section where a custom google form would be made for each event. This form's link would be posted along with the event on the Google calendar.

Above is a screenshot of the Four Hawks Encore Batavia Page which is where the Google calendar is temporarily located until Encore Batavia has a website developed.

After an event is created through the event creation form through the script, an event would be created like above. The hyperlink in the event description would be for attendees. If Batavia residents wanted to attend the event they would direct themselves to the link which would be another google form. This Google form would ask for basic information like their name and email address. The responses from this form would then be retrieved in another Google spreadsheet. This spreadsheet also has a time based script I coded that would send out email notifications to the event creators whenever someone signed up for their event. I created the Google registration system mainly to create a simple way for Batavia residents to create and sign up for events. I wanted the system to be as straightforward as possible as many of the creators will be older individuals with less knowledge of technology.

Moving forward, I will document the code for the scripts of the Google registration system. The next intern will continue work and update and modify the registration to fit the needs at that particular time.

Business Project Research

How does one assess how impactful or effective an intergenerational program is for its participants?

I researched intergenerational practice in the United States and other countries. By understanding how these programs worked I could assess which programs were the most favorable and advantageous. Pairing this along with a created method would allow individuals who create an intergenerational program to assess how beneficial their program actually is and to make necessary adjustments.

To understand exactly how advantageous certain intergenerational programs were I utilized a psychology study by Frontiers in Psychology. I also looked into previous studies on the subject done by Generations United and a student at Bowling Green State University.

There are limitations to my research. It is difficult to create a completely accurate representation of the advantages of a certain intergenerational program when criteria was not defined prior to my research. Additionally, where it gets even more difficult,

when comparing two intergenerational programs based on how advantageous they are, one cannot completely assess one to be better than the other. Programs are viewed differently for every participant. The goal of my research is not to completely separate the "good" programs from the "bad" but to create a system that assesses programs to find the ones that prove to be the most beneficial or effective to the majority of participants.

There are specific characteristics of an intergenerational program that are extremely important in order to gauge effectiveness. One who hosts an intergenerational program should keep record of these characteristics and be constantly noting down observations as the intergenerational program occurs and after it ends. These characteristics are as follows: favorite part, least favorite part, desire to participate again, emotional response, behavioral response, seniors attitude towards younger participants, younger participants attitude towards seniors, seniors evaluations, younger participant's evaluations. The characteristics are explained below:

Favorite part: According to a study conducted by Annie Stahl, the "favorite part" should be a factor considered in an intergenerational program evaluation. After an intergenerational program, the host must always receive information from the participants. One such piece of information is the favorite part. The favorite is just the point where the participant felt the greatest amount of happiness or satisfaction during the whole program. By recording the favorite part of each participant, the host can then compare data and find the few instances where many participants felt the best during the program. With this information the host can modify the program in order to greatly support the favorite part. For example, in an intergenerational program involving poetry and writing, if many of the participants recorded that their favorite part was the read aloud where they read out their poem or piece or writing they created during the session, a host might extend the time for this activity and allow participants to experience their moment of attention for a greater period of time.

Least Favorite part: In a study held by Annie Stahl, the "least favorite part" factor is extremely important in evaluating an intergenerational program. After an intergenerational program, the host must also ask participants what was their least favorite part in the program. This could be an instance where participants felt incredibly bored, uninterested, or disengaged. By recording this information, the host can obviously work on modifying the program and cutting out the parts where most of the participants felt disengaged.

Desire to Participate Again: A factor in the evaluation in the study held by Annie Stahm was the desire to participate again. After an intergenerational program, the host must ask the simple questions: would you desire to participate in this program again? Since there might be bias in the response to this question, it should be done anonymously. For example, if there is a form at the end of the program that asks this question to the leaving participant, the participant is more likely to be honest and give an accurate answer instead of if the host directly asks the participant this question. By collecting responses from participants about their desire to participate again, hosts can easily gauge interest in their programs.

Emotional Response: According to the Generations United Handbook, the emotional response is extremely important to consider. In addition to questions asked at the end of the program, the host must also gauge interest and emotions during the program. This is extremely important as seeing and recording participants' reactions during the program might be a more accurate representation of the program's success rather than questions that could be answered with bias. A suggestion would be to have a helper working alongside the host, to record this data. The emotional response is extremely simple, it's the emotions that are displayed by the participants as the program progresses. The participants identity is not important in this case and they could simply be numbered. By recording emotions presented during the program, hosts can look over what parts of the program resulted in positive emotions while at the same time, compare two programs based on the amount of positive vs negative emotions recorded.

Behavioral Response: In a psychology study held by Frontiers in Psychology, behavioral response was recorded. Behavioral Response is a characteristic that is an extremely special case. It is not required for behavioral response to be recorded but in some cases it would be possible. Behavioral response is the analysis of a participant's behavior after the program has ended. This obviously cannot be recorded directly by the host, but could be recorded in unconventional ways. For example, the host could ask a family member of the participant to gauge his behavior after the program has ended and the participant has returned home. The relative could then report back the host and describe the behavior the participant showed. The host could then use this information to gauge the effectiveness of the program. If the participant behaved "positively" after the program, there's a great chance that the participant benefited from the program.

Seniors Attitude Towards Younger Participants: Annie Stahl uses attitude as a factor in her evaluation of intergenerational programs. The main focus of intergenerational programs is to encourage collaboration and activity between people of different generations. While the intergenerational program progresses, someone must keep a

record on how the seniors interact with participants of the younger generation. By doing this, the host can assess how much intergenerational activity the intergenerational program produces. Not only can the person recording gauge how much collaboration is taking place, he or she can also gauge attitudes and emotions between the participants of each generation.

Younger Participants attitude towards Senior Participants: Annie Stahl uses attitude in not only one by two ways in her system of evaluating intergenerational programs. Similar to the reasons above, the attitude of the younger participants to the seniors is also extremely important. By recording how the younger participants interact and collaborate with the senior participants, the host can understand how the intergenerational aspect of the program is working and better understand program effectiveness.

Senior's evaluations: According to the Intergenerational Program evaluation toolkit by Generations United, one of the most straightforward ways to assess a program's effectiveness is through the amount of satisfaction the participant feels throughout the program. At the end of a program, the host should record evaluations from each of the participants and modify the program based on the feedback received. By recording the evaluations of senior participants, the host can get a general idea of what the participants felt about the program.

Younger Participants Evaluations: According to Generations United, it is extremely important to separately record the evaluations of the younger participants. Some programs can be viewed differently due to the age of the participants and that age group's general interests. The goal is to have a program that meets both the senior and younger participants expectations.

Business Project Key Learning & Recommendations

The key takeaway from my business project is that through a set evaluation of an intergenerational program, the host can get a better understanding on how the participants benefited from the program. This information can be crucial in modifying or stopping the program based on feedback and results.

My advice for Ms. McKenna would be to use the method of evaluation as a resource. The method could give insight on how effective a program is to a certain extent. It will ultimately represent a broad representation of the results of an intergenerational program.

Works Cited

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as why recording the effectiveness of intergenerational programmes should be done in the first place.

Stahl, Annie. *AN EXAMINATION OF AN INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAM AMONG OLDER ADULTS WITH COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT.* 2016. Bowling Green State University, Thesis. https://etd.ohiolink.edu/!etd.send_file?accession=bgsu1471433531&disposition=inline A study on the effectiveness of intergenerational programs. Goes into detail on several mental disorders some elderly suffer from and assess how these individuals are affected differently. Held a local intergenerational program called P.L.A.C.E (Partnered Learning Activities and Connected Experiences). Used certain factors in recording the effectiveness of the P.L.A.C.E programs, which students and older adults participated in.

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