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Communication for Participatory Development

Research Project

Perceived Implication Versus Received Implication: A Reception Analysis of Indigo  
Skate Camp's Website

I hereby declare this work to be my own, and any work used in this literature review  
has been referenced accordingly.

Due Date: 4 November 2010

Signed.....

## **Abstract:**

Websites are often the link between a community program and the outside world, a portal to a vast audience with which visitors can communicate and open dialogue. Throughout the course of this research project I will attempt to conduct a two-step reception analysis of the Indigo skate camp website, in a manner aimed at challenging perceived implication (what the website creator assumes the viewer is receiving) versus received implication (what the website viewer really is receiving). The first process will be an analysis of the Indigo founders' views on the program and his website, while the second process will compare these views to opinions gathered from subjects familiar with the Indigo program. This will hopefully provide a detailed critique of the website, and ascertain whether or not it is being effectively used to communicate and/or attract potential visitors, while simultaneously providing them with sufficient information of the programs ethos, aims and outcomes.

## **Key words:**

Indigo Skate Camp, CFPD (Communication For Participatory Development), Challenges, Reception Analysis, Sport for Social Change, Skateboarding.

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## Introduction

*"Our duty is very simple and plain. We want to serve the community, and in our own humble way to serve the Empire. We believe in the righteousness of the cause, which it is our privilege to espouse"*

(Mohandas K. Gandhi, 1903).

Skateboarding is a sport that has grown in infamy through its portrayal in popular media, characterised through street culture and petty crime often incorrectly attributed to this traditionally urban sport. While to many, skateboarding may seem only a hobby or pastime, but for some, it provides an escape. As Dallas Oberholzer states on the Indigo skate camp website, "skateboarding takes you places" (Oberholzer, 2009). Over the past thirty years, skateboarding has been transformed from an almost taboo hobby, to mainstream sport that has gained worldwide popularity. Skateboarding now has the ability to change peoples' lives for the better, and provided a platform for many youths to showcase their own abilities.

Indigo skate camp is a skate-park located in the Isithumba community of the Valley of 1000 Hills in central KwaZulu-Natal. The skate-camp has (in the last few years) become a recipient program of the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation, which aims to "promote the use of sport as a tool for social change and celebrates sporting excellence" (Laureus.com, 2010). The aim of Indigo skate camp, according to its website, is to "unite people through skateboarding", whilst simultaneously to "provide a meeting place where we can join in our common passion and be presented opportunities to develop and discover our skills" (Oberholzer, 2009).

What becomes apparent is that the core aim between both Indigo and Laureus is the betterment or enrichment of people through the medium of sport, irrelevant of stigma or stereotype. Both programs stress the promotion of unification among athletes, while

simultaneously stressing the need to cultivate the individual, as a member of a particular team (with the overall team being the society in which we live).

Indigo can be described as being a sport for social change program, which stresses the benefits sport can have on participants and the communities in which they live. Yet how do these programs gain a following or become popular. Many use word-of-mouth advertising, as it is one of the most effective, and cost-efficient ways to market a product or service. Other programs, such as Indigo and Laureus, have developed websites, as they can reach a large audience, and can be maintained by a small group of people (even a single person can create and maintain a successful website).

These websites are often the link between the program and the world, a portal to a vast audience with which visitors can communicate and open dialogue. Throughout the course of this research project I will attempt to conduct a two-step reception analysis of the Indigo skate camp website, in a manner aimed at challenging perceived implication (what the website creator assumes the viewer is receiving) versus received implication (what the website viewer really is receiving). The first process will be an analysis of the Indigo founders' views on the program and his website, while the second process will compare these views to opinions gathered from subjects familiar with the Indigo program. This will hopefully provide a detailed critique of the website, and ascertain whether or not it is being effectively used to communicate and/or attract potential visitors, while simultaneously providing them with sufficient information of the programs ethos, aims and outcomes.

## **Literature Review**

For the literature section of this research project, five publications have been selected primarily as case studies. They cover a large array of topics, from the academic challenges facing research in sport for social change, challenges faced by organisers of sports organisations, to concepts and theories used in communication for participatory development. They provide pertinent information to the study as a whole, and help accredit the terms and concepts that will be used throughout this study. The literature review will highlight the literature covered in order to contextualise this study. I will

simultaneously demonstrate need for further study within this field of communication, whilst showing how my research project will contribute to the body of knowledge in its own field of study. I have divided the literature review into two separate chapters, namely literature on sport for social change; and literature on communication for participatory development. The main purpose of this literature review is to show the volumes of literature covered in order for me to sufficiently tackle my research project.

The first publication I will discuss is Fred Coalter's (2007) *A Wider Social Role for Sport: Who's keeping the Score?* This publication attempts to elevate sports from a past-time or hobby to something that is more of a platform for social change. Whereas sport has traditionally been perceived more as the domain of children and athletes, Coalter proposes that there is much more to sport than merely enjoyment and entertainment.

Much like the title suggests, sport in contemporary society now has the "potential to alleviate a variety of social problems and generally to 'improve' both the individuals and the communities in which they live" (Coalter, 2007:1). However, that is not to say that sport for social change is not without its setbacks. Coalter lists four factors which he believes hinders sport for social change research, which in turn affects relevant policy making. The four factors are listed as; *conceptual weaknesses, methodological weaknesses, insufficient conditions* and *limited literature* (Coalter, 2007:1).

Coalter uses the term *conceptual weaknesses* to describe the nature of sport for social change research and the manner in which terms and definitions are often too vague and lack clinical precision. He comments that "such variety and lack of precision raise substantial issues of validity and comparability" (Coalter, 2007:1). This factor could most definitely lead to the field being unofficially deemed non-academic, and would hamper any potential researchers conducting research in that particular field.

The second factor, listed by as *methodological weaknesses* relates primarily to what he describes as a "lack of systematic and robust evaluations of most programmes (Coalter, 2007:1). This factor becomes more challenging for distributors of funds, as the decision of which program to fund relies solely on their shoulders (the funders), without any particular model of evaluation evident to aid in making their final decision.

Coalter's third factor deals with the *consideration of sufficient conditions* which he uses to detail how "participation in sport is a necessary, but not sufficient condition to obtain the supposed benefits" (Coalter, 2007:2). While the perceived benefits of specific sport for social change programs may seem evident, they ultimately do not guarantee success with their target groups due, in part, to a lack of understanding and/or consideration with regards to the participants' external<sup>1</sup> conditions.

Coalter's fourth factor is *limitations regarding literature*. While he feels programmes are contemporary and evolve at an acceptable rate, the literature available to sport for social change organisations is still "selective and fails to provide information on the full complexities of programmes" (Coalter, 2007:02). While this problem seems to be rife throughout academia, it is however not exclusive to the field of sport for social change. Coalter's (2007) work outlines the challenges faced by researchers and practitioners in this particular field, and helps to provide evidence that more academic research is required in the field of sport for social change.

The second publication that has been selected for this literature review is *Analysing Sports Organisations: Theory and Practice*, a publication written in 2003 by John Amis and Trevor Slack. The journal eloquently provides the reader with a study of sports-based organisations, both professional (for example, 'Federation Internationale de Football Association' - FIFA), and non-professional (a social squash league for example – while it may prove competitive, it would not be of a professional standard). The publication highlights the internal and external attributes which most prominently hamper the operation and running of sports organisations and attempts to chart how these attributes affect the sports organisations themselves. Amis and Slack (2003:201) identify the factors *external* to sports organisation as "factors in the task and the general environment".

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<sup>1</sup> External relates primarily to when the participant is not physically participating at his/her particular programs' venue.

On the corollary, they list the factors *internal* to a sports organisation as; “leadership, power and politics, decision making and organisational culture” (Amis and Slack, 2003:201). What becomes evident is how the authors feel that the factors which most prominently effect sports organisations are internal to those particular organisations, rather than external. In a way, the authors seem to promote the belief that the most challenging factor with regard to running a sport organisation is inherent in the organisation itself, through in-fighting, power and politics. This can be directly related to Indigo skate camp as it *is* a challenge faced by Indigo.

The external factors which most prominently hamper sports organisations are stated by Aims and Slack (2003:201) as “factors in the task and general environment”. As the authors later describe, factors in the task relates primarily to the current political, social and economic state of a government at any given time. For example, if a country were suddenly plunged into a dictatorship, then it might not even prove possible to run a particular sports programme. While this seems to be a more extreme example, it only goes to show how the contemporary system of government can affect a sports organisation.

The task environment for a sports organisation “comprises those influences that have a direct, day-to-day impact on the way it operates” (Amis and Slack, 2003:207). In this particular context, petrol could be a perfect example of a task environment factor which affects the performance of Indigo Skate Park. Due to the geographical location of Indigo as a significant distance from any major cities (namely Durban), it would cost a lot of money to travel there and back regularly, especially if the cost of petrol continues to rise. While this expense would be factored into the costing of organisations, it would prove difficult to monitor to the constant fluctuation of the petrol price.

More prominently, Amis and Slack (2003) comment on factors *internal* to a sports organisation which could hamper its operation and/or existence. While there are four factors listed, they all deal primarily with issues of leadership. Amis and Slack (2003:201) believe that a successful leader of a sports organisation should possess or display the following traits; “physical, such as height and appearance; possession of

certain abilities, such as intelligence; and personality characteristics, such as conservatism or self-confidence". While these traits are admirable in a leader, they are not necessarily essential to the optimal operation of a sports organisation. A leader does not need to possess one or more of these traits to be successful, yet they would be promoted as beneficial to the participants of the organisation in the way of coming into contact with a positive role model, especially in the position of a leader of a group.

The second factor, stated as "power and politics" (Amis and Slack, 2003:201) is unique in the way that it relates not only to leaders of sports organisations, but also the participants. The authors situate this idea in the reasoning that sport is empowering, and can build the confidence of *all* the participants, not just the leaders. *Decision making*, (Amis and Slack, 2003:202) the third factor is used more prominently by leaders of sports organisations, primarily with regards to issues that directly affect the organisation and its participants.

Directly linked to leadership, this factor is useful for this literature review as it emphasises the need for one leader within a sports organisation, or essentially, a single decision maker. When there are too many people in positions of power, it can lead to infighting within organisations. Thus, in order to reduce conflict and faction creation, a single leader should be selected who represents the best interests of the participants of that particular organisation itself, much like a democratic system of governance.

The final internal factor is stated by the authors, as *organisational culture*. This is defined as "the culture (or cultures) of an organisation, in much the same way as the culture of a country, region or town, comprises those things that give an organisation its meaning and identity" (Amis and Slack, 2003:214). This is generally linked to the participants of an organisation, and how their language/culture/background ultimately shapes the organisation in which they participate. It seems to be very much a two-way process, which the participants shape the organisations in which they feature, but conversely the organisations shape their participants in a positive way.

The above literature has dealt primarily with the factors which are both inherent to, and most prominently affect the operation of sports organisations. However, the rest of this

literature review will deal primarily with social development theory, and communication for participatory development theories and concepts, as the two will become more evidently linked in the greater project which this literature review will serve.

The third publication selected for this literature review is *Implementing Change in Communities: a Collaborative Process*, (1984) by Sarah Archer, Carole Kelly and Sally Bisch. The main objectives of the book are “to bring together an overview of many of the theories and processes that are useful in working with communities and aggregates” (Archer *et al*, 1984: viii). The focal points of this publication (for my wider project) are theories and concepts primarily related to community organization. Indigo Skate Camp, as a social change program, is attempting to liberate its “foster community”, in the way that, while the skate park itself caters more towards the youth in the community, the Indigo programme as a whole serves to better the entire community through its vegetable gardens and language programmes.

A community organisation can be defined as “the process of bringing about and maintaining a progressively more effective adjustment between social welfare needs within a geographical area at a functional field” (Ross, 1967: 17). Thus, it can be assumed that Indigo skate camp could be effectively termed a community organisation. While this may be an “older” definition in terms of current academic literature, it has been used as the core emphasis has still been maintained throughout this definition. On the Indigo Skate Camp website<sup>2</sup>, Indigo’s founder, Dallas Oberholzer, states that the skate camp “will be a productive farm and skills development complex for the community; it will be a learning centre for all, employing and empowering locals and dedicated skateboarders” (Oberholzer, Indigo Website: 2010).

While the camp may be seen as a place of enjoyment for many skateboarders and locals, it is most definitely a location which helps manifest confidence and life-skills within its

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.indigoskatecamp.co.za/>.

foster community. The vegetable garden, if tended by the community, will not only help nourish the recipients of the vegetables, it will also teach those who tend to the garden basic organic farming principles (which, if are spread to neighbouring communities, will benefit more than just the local community). Through Indigo skate camp, locals can learn a trade such as wood-working or welding (with regard to the building and maintaining of the skate ramps), while the locals can also benefit from learning classes (singing, literacy and life skills classes) held by Mr Oberholzer and his team of educators at the skate park.

The authors (Archer, Kelly and Bisch), continue by looking closely at different models of communication as outlined by Murray G Ross. The three groups are listed as; community development, community organisation and community relations. Within the context of the greater research programme, the most applicable model would be the community development model, which “involves efforts to provide for the community’s advancement towards changes that are desired” (Ross, 1967:17). Due to limitations on space imposed via the criteria of this research project, not all avenues of Ross’ development models will be discussed, only the selected ones which apply to the greater project at hand.

Ross (1967) proposes that there are three types of approaches to the community development model. The *external agency* approach is usually government initiated and funded. This approach does not apply to Indigo skate camp as, as it usually denotes a top-down system of operation by an external consultant. The *multiple* approach “involves teams of experts who provide a variety of services to help the community adjust” (Archer *et al*, 1984:54). The third approach, *inner resources* approach “encourages members of the community to do the assessment and diagnosis of the problem themselves (Archer *et al*, 1984:54). Both the multiple and inner resources approach can be applied to the Indigo Skate Camp, as they involve the collaborative development processes of both an external agent (Oberholzer), and the recipient community itself (the Isithumba community).

Sarah Cardey, in her 2006 paper presented at IAMCR (International Association for Media and Communication Research), titled *From Behaviour Change to Social Change*, studies Communication for Social Change (CFSC) against other dominant communication approaches in the field of health communication. Her paper has been included in this literature review in an attempt to ascertain/define exactly what CFSC is, and how it can be applied to the case study of Indigo skate camp.

According to Cardey (2006:4), CFSC is characterised by the following factors;

focus is on the relationship between individual and social change; social change is more likely to be sustainable if the individuals and communities who are most affected own the process and content of communication; communication should be empowering, horizontal and give voice to the marginalised or unheard members of the community; and outcomes should move beyond the individual towards social norms, policy, culture and context.

CFSC's focus on the relationship between the individual and social change is unique from other communication approaches as it stresses change of the social sphere rather than behaviour or policy change. Whilst behaviour change would be targeted more towards individuals, social change can benefit communities and groups on a large scale. Policy change, while having the ability to affect large numbers of people, is restricted by governments and their change processes which can hamper policy making. Policy changing is covered in "red-tape" and needs to endure numerous processes before a particular change can actually take effect. Policy changes have to be debated at numerous levels, and even if a policy change is passed, it can take years to be implemented into government strategy. Essentially, to see results quicker, social change proponents generally steer clear of attempting to change government policy.

"Social change is more likely to be sustainable if the individuals and communities who are most affected own the process and content of communication" (Cardey, 2006:04). While Indigo has benefitted greatly from input and assistance by Oberholzer, the emphasis definitely seems to be focused on self-sustenance rather than dependence as the Isithumba community hope to one day be self-sufficient. With regard to owning the processes of communication, it is difficult for the Isithumba to own and maintain these

processes (primarily related to the Indigo website), as the community members lack the skills required to maintain the website. However, in a positive compromise, Mr Oberholzer has undertaken this duty with the best interests of the community at heart. From my own visits to Indigo, it has become evident that Oberholzer holds this community close to his heart, and he is very passionate about his foster community.

The third of Cardeys' factors is listed as "communication should be empowering, horizontal and give voice to the marginalised" (Cardey, 2006:04). This relates primarily to the way in which Indigo's team of educators target the community as a whole, rather than marginalising specific members of the community. This is a positive approach as it is not exclusive, but rather inclusive of all members of the Isithumba community.

The fourth of Cardeys' CFSC factors is that "outcomes should move beyond the individual towards social norms, policy, culture and context" (Cardey, 2006:04). While there is a lack of a clear link between Indigo's approach to community development and policy change, there is a definite emphasis on benefitting a group of people rather than just a few individuals. These four factors seem to encapsulate exactly what characterises CFSC.

The fifth and final, albeit brief, publication included in this literature review is *Participatory Communication: a Practical Guide* (Tuftte and Mefalopulos, 2009). The publication is distributed annually by the World Bank, and its main aim is "to provide perspectives, tools and experiences regarding how to go about it with participatory development strategies" (Tuftte and Mefalopulos, 2009: v). The main reason for including this publication in my literature review is in order to include a table, drafted by the authors, that highlights the key differences between monologic and dialogic communication, and the way these different modes of communication affect development programs.

Essentially the two approaches are different as one highlights the existence of feedback, between the project co-ordinator(s) and the project recipients; while the monologic approach highlights more of a top-down approach which generally benefits the project co-ordinator(s) rather than the project recipients. Indigo skate camp can be said to be

employing a dialogic method of communication with which they empower the project recipients, reminiscent of the CFPD (Communication for Participatory Development), (Kincaid and Figueroa, 2007/2009) model focuses on human development rather than societal impact (CFSC).

**Table 2.1. The Main Features of Communication Modes**

	MONOLOGIC (one-way communication)		DIALOGIC (two-way communication)	
	Communication to Inform	Communication to Persuade	Communication to Explore	Communication to Empower
<b>Main purpose</b>	Raise awareness, increase knowledge	Promote attitude and behavior change	Assess, probe and analyze issues, prevent conflicts	Build capacities, involve stakeholders
<b>Main model of reference</b>	One-way (monologic)	One-way (monologic)	Two-way (dialogic)	Two-way (dialogic)
<b>Preferred methods and media</b>	Predominant use of mass media	Predominant use of media	Heavy use of interpersonal method	Use of dialogue to promote participation

These articles have been selected for this literature review as they are all critical to the study and topic, and show that while a certain degree of academic study has been undertaken, there is more that can or needs to be undertaken with regard to participatory communication and development. The overall aim of this literature review was to show that critical authors' work has been read and understood, and the key themes and concepts, which they have already spoken about, will be applied later through rigorous application and analysis in the wider research project.

## Research Methodology

This methodology section of the research project will help define the methods I will be using and applying to gather my research findings, and outline exactly how the research itself was gathered. A research methodology is important in a post-graduate research

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<sup>3</sup> Table captured from Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009 - *Participatory Communication: a Practical Guide*) page 13.

project as it shows the thought processes employed by researchers, and more importantly, the reasons why they have chosen to employ certain methods.

For my research project, I decided to use an interpretive paradigm. Without jumping too far ahead, I find it necessary to outline exactly what a paradigm is, and why it needs to be highlighted in a research methodology.

Paradigms can be defined as “different ways of knowing based on different sets of interrelated assumptions about theory and research” (Merrigan and Huston, 2004:326). My personal interpretation of a paradigm is almost as if it were a particular colour of glass, and anything viewed through a particular colour of glass will adopt and assume certain characteristics of that glass itself. In essence, a paradigm is used to identify how a researcher will take his or her dissertation, and the manner in which they will use and interpret their information and theory.

### Interpretive Paradigm

Interpretive researchers, as defined by Baxter and Babbie (2004) deal with human nature. They state that “human action is purposive; it is action intended to accomplish some purpose; humans act based on the social web of meanings in which they are embedded, and their actions are attributed meaning by others from within that same system of meaning” (Baxter and Babbie, 2004:59). The main reason for employing this particular paradigm is in order to provide academic grounding to the question posed throughout the dissertation. Human action is meaning-laden, and as such, any questions regarding human activity should always be studied within the contexts of their meaning. My dissertation deals with human beings and the way they use and consume their mobile phones, and any information that I have gathered, I believe should be viewed in context within a greater societal picture. Mobile phone use is a very public and social activity, as it connects groups of individuals and groups of people together in an often public manner. If it were to be studied solely on the actions of mobile phone users without be place in context, it may seem very foreign.

The second key reason for making use of an interpretive paradigm is due to its inclusion of interpretive theory. This theory advocates the use of local knowledge and/or a heuristic framework. I believe that the involvement of interpretive theory gives the researcher more individual control over his/her dissertation, and liberates them from critical theory written by other academics. In a way it almost gives the researcher a more powerful voice with which they can command their research and use their acquired knowledge to interpret their findings, rather than merely read and repeat other prominent academics.

## Objective Research

The debate between objectivity and subjectivity is one that seems to dominate many a research methodology. Having read numerous books on research approaches, it seems necessary for me to state my overall position with regard to my dissertation and the manner in which it relates to my own personal convictions. Having touched on objectivity and subjectivity in my first year of post-graduate research, I was almost filled with more questions than answers. How is it possible for a researcher to study a field in which they should have a great deal of interest, yet conduct research that shows no prior evidence of personal opinion on the matter at hand? An interesting point discovered in *The Basics of Communication Research* by Baxter and Babbie (2004), when perusing through the glossary, under the heading of objectivity it read "Doesn't exist; see *intersubjectivity* and Chapter 3" (Baxter and Babbie, 2004:426). This in itself could be the perfect example of a subjective position on the matter of objectivity versus subjectivity. The difficulty is in the way researchers approach their dissertations, and the way they conduct themselves. In a way, the researcher is almost expected to distance him or herself from the study, in a way that makes their motives and desires (regarding the outcome of the study) seem transparent.

Objectivity (if it exists), can be defined as "not influenced by personal feelings or opinions" (Deely, 2010:14). This is where the main problem comes in to the objectivity versus subjectivity debate. Is it possible for someone to write in a completely objective manner? The main problem I notice with this as a researcher is that people conduct

studies in fields or areas of expertise which interest *them*. If one has been well read in a particular area, then they would have an even mild opinion on the field in which they have been versed. Objectivity by definition implies that a researcher is to have no personal feelings toward a given topic, yet research is conducted by people or academics who feel compelled to conduct studies.

If studies were conducted objectively by researchers who had no personal opinion on the topic of enquiry, then they would have no personal passion which would be inherent in their written work. Going as far as saying that I agree that objectivity does not exist by definition, I would agree that it is possible to write in an objective manner. An objective style of writing emphasises the lack of personal conviction with which a researcher may write, in a way that subjective writing is often laden with emotive language.

### Observer-As-Participant Role

As stated previously, I will be employing an active member role. When viewed in light of observer-as-participant role, active member role may be slightly misleading due to the involvement of the word active in the title. While I am an active member in my research group, throughout this research dissertation I have attempted to distance myself from the research group itself in order to maintain a sense of objectivity. I have done this by taking on an observer-as-participant role. The observer-as-participant role is defined as "a form of qualitative fieldwork in which a researcher has minimal involvement with group members, and group members are aware of the researcher's role" (Baxter and Babbie, 2004:426).

This role further helped me to retain a sense of formality throughout my interviews and group sessions, as it helped facilitate power-relations as researcher-interviewee, rather than Colin Murphy (myself) – associate. This role, as stated by Baxter and Babbie, is used well in conjunction with interviewing, which is "the foremost activity of the observer-as-participant role" (Baxter and Babbie, 2004:426).

## Data Gathering

My primary method of gathering data was distributing questionnaires among my two research partners for them to fill out. These questionnaires were only a few pages in length and were straightforward and simple so as not to lose my recipients attention. I did this so that completing the questionnaires did not take up too much of the respondents' personal time. I did not put a time limit on the time the recipients had to complete the questionnaire, although I did request that respondents attempt to complete the questionnaire within a few days. I did this in order for them to complete the questionnaire succinctly, in order for me to continue with the collation of my data. I used a nomothetic approach to my research project, using only questionnaires to gather qualitative data from my respondents. I did this primarily because it was a simple process, and I felt it was in keeping with the nature of my research project. The project is not a groundbreaking or revolutionary study, but more of an attempt at answering a simple question, which I feel garners the use of simple methods.

## Data Collation and Analysis

The data collation and analysis section of this research project will be undertaken in two separate sections. However, the second section will refer back to the first section, as that will form the basis of the reception analysis between the two groups of respondents. Section one will deal primarily with the data and interviews related to Dallas Oberholzer; while the second part of this chapter will deal with the responses gathered from my research peers who gave their opinions and ideas of the Indigo skate camp website.

### Dallas Oberholzer

Dallas Oberholzer is the founder and operation officer of Indigo skate camp, and can be described pretty much as the man who put Indigo on the map of skateboarding and cultural tourism. When I visited Indigo with my research group, I managed to interview Dallas and ask him a few questions about the operations of Indigo (namely the power relations inherent at Indigo), the challenges of running a successful CFPD program, and

his opinions on the Indigo website and whether or not he felt it was currently up to standard with other cultural tourism programs.

From the first few questions (namely 2 through 4), it was established that the website had been up and running for the last seven years, and was developed by Anton (sic) from Cape Town with the help and input of Dallas. The website had not been updated in over a year, which gave my research project great use-value. Many projects are often criticised as they do not deal with real-world issues or problems, however my project was deemed<sup>4</sup> to have great use-value as the website needed to be updated in time for the Christmas period when a lot of skateboarders would be heading to Indigo skate camp to participate in the program.

A useful bit of information gathered from Dallas was that he felt that currently his website did effectively communicate with potential Indigo visitors<sup>5</sup>. However, he clearly stated in question 3 that the website had not been updated in over a year. It appears too contradicting that while he states the website is an effective communication tool, he simultaneously states that it needs to be updated. One of the pleasures of living in the digital age is that ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies) provide users with a sense of mobility and the liberation from the traditional confines of the traditional office-work setting. In order to successfully “compete” against other similar projects, it is necessary for a website to be up to date with the most recent and useful information. What can be proposed is that the manager of Indigo could enlist the help of a local up-and-coming web designer who could update and maintain the website as a manner of building up a portfolio of work, or someone who could maintain the website for a reduced fee. A website can be deemed a window to the world, in that it is the first point of contact for many people across the globe, and as such, needs to be updated constantly.

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<sup>4</sup> In email correspondence between me and Dallas it was stated by the latter that the project had great use value for his program.

<sup>5</sup> This information was gathered from question five.

Similarly, Dallas felt that the Indigo website was laid-out in logical and flowing manner. This is purely a subjective opinion, and cannot be academically proven or disproven. On a personal (and again subjective\_ level, I do tend to agree with Dallas that the website is "user friendly" in its layout and flow. The website provides ease of use for visitors and simultaneously provides numerous photographs and information on Indigo skate camp.

With regard to the power relations inherent at Indigo skate camp (question 8), Dallas stated that he was "then boss", and he had employed some "educators" to manage the children on a daily basis. It became evident that Dallas had to conform to certain regulations imposed on him by his funders (namely the Laureus foundation), and he had also divided power among some people working underneath him in order for the program to run even when Dallas was not present at the camp. This is a primary example of the *multiple and inner resources approaches*, which "involves teams of experts who provide a variety of services to help the community adjust" (Archer *et al*, 1984:54). The *inner resources* approach "encourages members of the community to do the assessment and diagnosis of the problem themselves (Archer *et al*, 1984:54). While the "educators" employed by Indigo may not be deemed professionals, they provide a level of friendship and camaraderie to the children that many professionals would not be able to maintain.

The second last question posed to Dallas aimed to identify some of the challenges faced by Dallas in running a successful sport for social change program. Dallas felt that most of the challenges associated with running Indigo were external to Indigo itself, and primarily focused on the lack of local government support, while the key factor was that due to the fact skateboarding is still not recognised as a mainstream sport.

The external factors which most prominently hamper sports organisations are stated by Aims and Slack as "factors in the task and general environment" (Amis and Slack, 2003:201). As the authors later describe, factors in the task relates primarily to the current political, social and economic state of a government at any given time, so Dallas may be correct in his belief that Indigo is hampered by lack of government support.

The last question was a rather unrelated question which asked Dallas how he pictured Indigo in the next ten years. He hoped to see more skate ramps, accommodation, more gardens, more infrastructure, and he hoped the program as a whole would become more education-focused. This only goes to prove his level of commitment and enthusiasm for his "foster-community".

The second part of this reception analysis was to ask similar questions to two members of my research group, in order to assess their opinions of the Indigo website, and simultaneously gather their opinions on what challenges they felt would be faced by co-ordinators/organisers of sport for social change programs.

For this section I will not address each question individually, although I will attempt to provide an overall consensus of opinions from the two respondents. The general criticism of the Indigo website relayed the fact that the website had not been updated in quite some time. Both respondents felt that if the website were to compete with other similar projects, it would need to almost feel as if the project spoke of more recent events. In one instance, under the "news" tab, it reads, "Indigo Skate Camp's (sic) current news for 2009" ([indigoskatecamp.co.za](http://indigoskatecamp.co.za), 2010). If, in the event that the website cannot be updated on a regular basis, then the respondents recommended that whoever updates the website should steer clear of using a date-emphasised style of writing. For example, instead of writing "current news for 2009", rather merely write "current news". In the event that the website is not updated in a timely manner, then this will alleviate further instances of this recurring problem.

The respondents noted that certain pictures had not been hyperlinked properly, as when a particular picture was selected to view, another un-selected picture was enlarged. This was not deemed to be too much of a big problem. With regard to the pictures, the respondents noted that more photographs of the "afternoon learning sessions" should be posted, as this would make a welcomed inclusion after numerous skateboarding pictures.

The "ethos" tab on the homepage was well received as it almost seemed to contextualise the entire program, and was useful to understand the thought processes behind Indigo

(and Dallas's motivation). The ethos tab seemed to answer so many questions for the viewers of the website. Particular questions that may spring immediately to mind may include the question as to why did Dallas choose skateboarding, and why set up a skate camp in KwaZulu-Natal. Questions such as these only add to the allure of Indigo as a truly magnificent skate park, set in a truly unusual area.

The general consensus of the respondents was that in order for Indigo to well and truly compete for tourists, it needs to be updated regularly, although the content on the website itself is inviting and offers a great deal of insight into what constitutes Indigo.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, there are a number of challenges faced by coordinators of sport for social programs. Sport for social change programs are challenging to run no matter where they are situated, although location does play a key factor. If a program was to gain *external* support, then it may be prone to infighting, or *internal* problems. On the corollary, if a program were to have sufficient internal support, the challenges faced may be external to that particular program. While neither of these is evident at Indigo, the general consensus regarding sport for social change programs is that there is an overall lack of government support.

If the government ever expects charitable causes to be self-sufficient, then they need to invest capital into projects that show initiative, and may reap profitable results (not fiscal dividends). When local people want to take a stand and help one another, they unfortunately need to be financed by foreign funds. Africa needs to distance itself from dependency on foreign aid, and start looking after itself.

What can be learnt from this research project is that one should never dare to think outside of the box, and that magic can be found in the least likely of places.

*"If you build it, they will come"*

(Field of Dreams, 1989)

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## Appendices

### Questionnaire for Dallas Oberholzer

1. Could you please briefly describe what Indigo skate camp is all about?

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2. How long has it been since you created your website?

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3. How long has it been since you updated your website?

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4. Who maintains your website?

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5. Do you think the Indigo website effectively communicates with potential visitors?

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6. In your opinion, does the website contain enough information regarding the project, its aims and outcomes?

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7. Is the website laid-out in a logical and flowing manner?

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8. What power relations are inherent at Indigo skate camp?

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9. What are some of the difficulties/challenges in running a successful sport for social change program?

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10. How do you picture Indigo in ten years?

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Thank You

### Questionnaire for Respondents

1. Have you visited the Indigo website? Yes  No
2. Are you familiar with the Indigo skate camp? Yes  No
3. Having visited the website, what would you say are its negative aspects?

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4. Having visited the website, what would you say are its positive aspects?

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### Contractual Permission to Interview Subjects

Name:

Contact Number:

E-mail Address:

I, the above, hereby declare that I have read and understood the attached ethical clearance form. And as such, give permission to Colin Dean Murphy to interview myself for his postgraduate research project. The results he achieves may be published in any form, and I trust his discretion to use the results wisely and in my best interests.

Witness (Print Name):

Date:

Signed: .....

Date:

Signed: .....