

TRIAL AND CONVERSION  
**BEST PRACTICES**

*NSAA Model for Growth*

NATIONAL  
SKI AREAS  
ASSOCIATION



**N S A A**



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For further information on the NSAA Model for Growth or the contents of this manual, please contact the NSAA through the website, [www.nsa.org](http://www.nsa.org), or call (303) 987-1111.





April 2001

Dear Industry Colleagues,

Last year NSAA unveiled the Model for Growth. Since its debut, the model and its findings have generated widespread support as a viable tool for growth opportunities in our industry.

The Model for Growth was created to critically analyze the future of skiing and snowboarding and to give us a better understanding of what the industry will look like over the next 15 years. Founded and developed on data and industry research by RRC Associates from the past 20 or more years, the model makes projections and forecasts based on certain assumptions about the future. Using data from a variety of sources, the model quantifies such unfavorable trends as an increase in “time poverty,” and shifts in demographics such as the aging baby boomer. A critical assumption of the Model is the ever-growing number of leisure industries that directly compete for the limited discretionary dollar.

The true value of the NSAA Model for Growth is in identifying the impacts of various strategic interventions and to determine their effects over time. After extensive analysis and evaluation of numerous possible interventions, we determined that increasing trial and conversion rates holds the greatest potential for sustained growth over the next 15 years. At a national level, the Model for Growth imparts increasing the number of beginners entering the sport by 6 percent each year, combined with the goal of increasing the number of beginners converted into core skiers (currently estimated to be 15 percent) by 1 percent each year to 25 percent.

While the Model for Growth was developed initially at the national level, the opportunities and lasting effects of its theories are best realized at the local level. Growth will be achieved only by the dedicated efforts of individual area operators implementing programs with achievable goals. Each ski area and every region possess unique characteristics that warrant tailored and customized programs and tactics. The Model for Growth supports and encourages individual self-gain and entrepreneurial spirit in order to create and sustain growth.

Since NSAA adopted the Model for Growth in the spring of 2000, many member resorts have made significant efforts to increase their trial and conversion rates. Resorts have transformed, re-organized and upgraded. Examples of cultural changes in organizations and shifts in resources – financial or human – can be seen throughout the industry.

The NSAA Model for Growth is a work in progress. Our efforts to educate and promote the Model for Growth are ongoing and will continue to evolve as we set our sights on growing the industry in the coming year. This manual showcases and shares many of the outstanding examples of trial and conversion programs, as they exist today. It is our hope that the industry will remain focused on this effort and continue to improve upon these concepts.

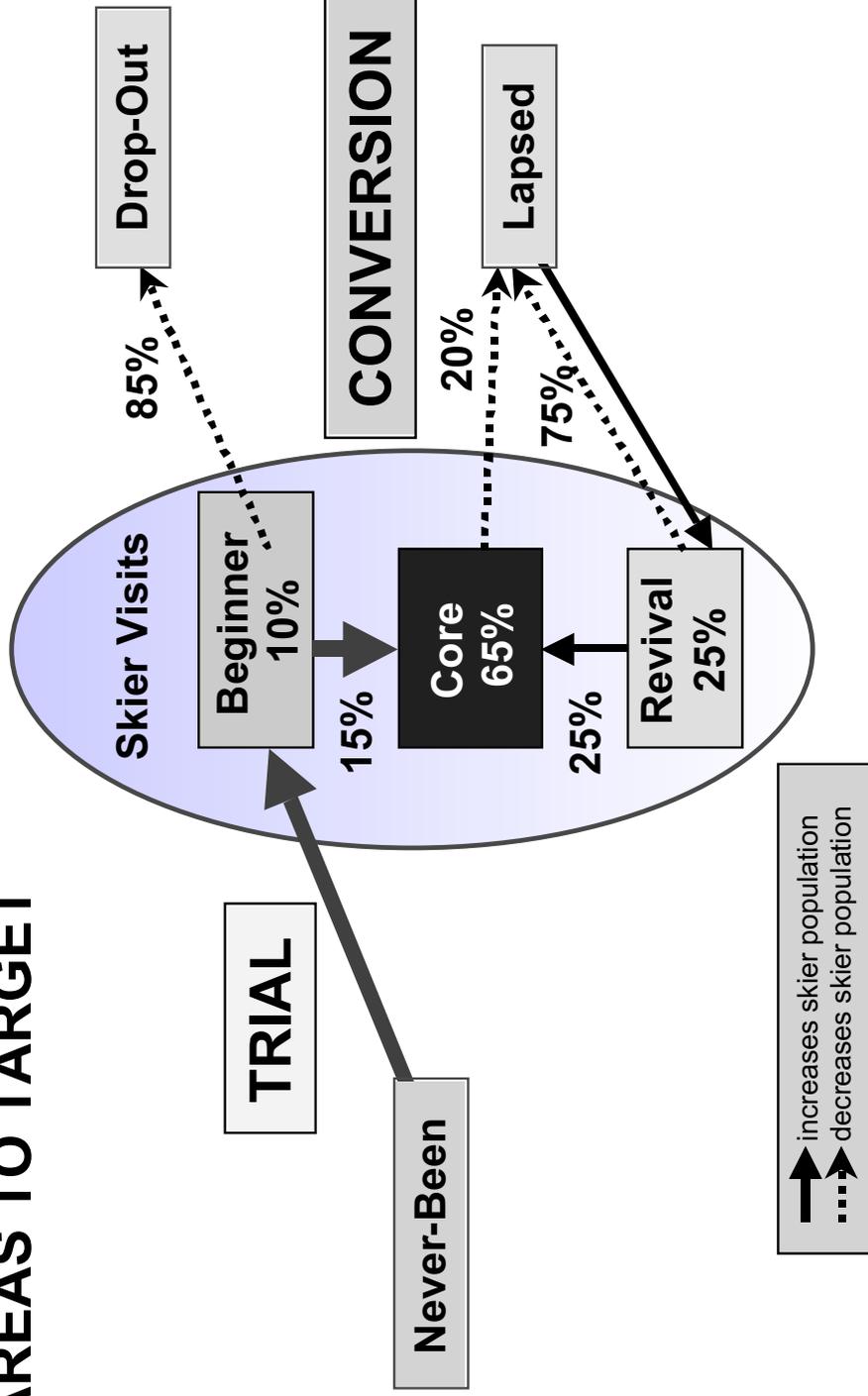
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Berry". The signature is stylized and cursive, with the first name "Michael" written in a larger, more prominent font than the last name "Berry".

Michael Berry

# NSAA Model for Growth

## AREAS TO TARGET





The professional Ski Instructors of America (PSIA) and the American Association of Snowboard Instructors (AASI)—along with every other association, company and publication affiliated with the ski industry—have a responsibility to help change the flat trend in snowsports participation. More than ever, we acknowledge the instructor’s role in developing meaningful relationships and memorable guest experiences. But we know that our association and its members cannot do this single-handedly. We have the tools; area management runs the mountain, but we must put them together seamlessly.



Can national associations for ski and snowboard instructors by themselves rectify the drooping numbers? Realistically, no. Can instructors support area management’s efforts to rejuvenate the public’s interest in skiing? Absolutely. PSIA and AASI can assist by supporting NSAA’s initiatives to attract and retain participants, and by welcoming dialogue about ways in which instructors can support the areas for whom they work. Because of this approach, PSIA and AASI offer their enthusiastic support of the NSAA Trial and Conversion Best Practices Manual.



The contents of this manual suggest strong cooperation between departments in order to achieve trial and conversion objectives, thus breaking down traditional department; “silos” to achieve success. Additionally, these cases reinforce the point that resorts are successful when they create customized consumer initiatives playing to their own strengths at the local level.

PSIA-AASI exists to provide ski and snowboard instructors with a strong foundation through training and certification so they can succeed in any area’s operational system. The fact that PSIA-AASI training can either stand alone or serve as the basis for additional, area-specific training is the main reason ski/snowboard schools enthusiastically endorse the association.

## **VISION 2002**

**Inspiring life-long passion for the mountain experience.**

## **MISSION 2002**

**We support the snowsports industry by encouraging our members to:**

- ◆ **develop personally and professionally,**
- ◆ **create positive learning experiences, and have more fun.**

## **VALUES**

**Fun**

**Relationships**

**Dynamic**

**Innovation**

**Visionary**

**Experiences**

**Risk-taking**

**Flexibility**

**Simplicity**

**Passion**

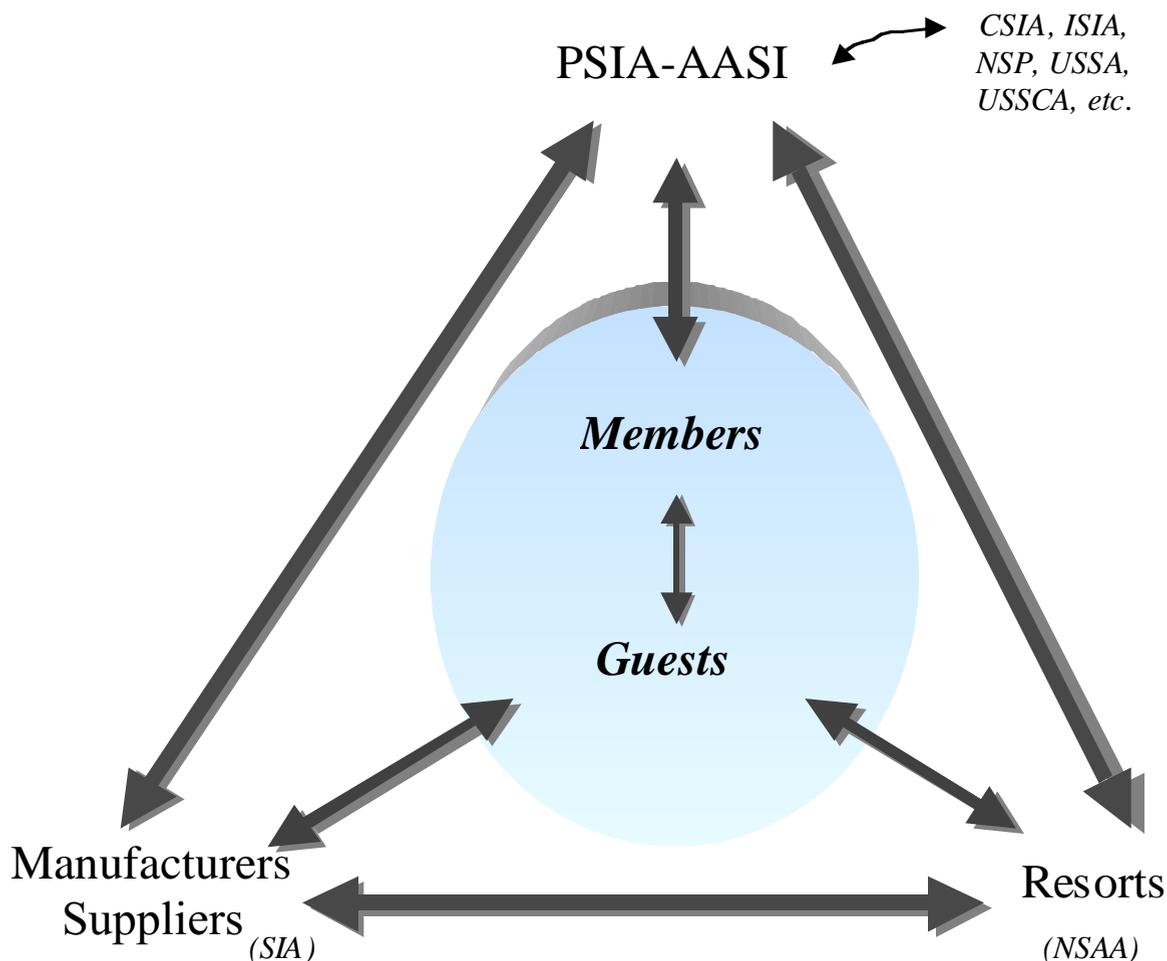
**G**ranted, many areas have chosen to create such variations around PSIA-AASI education materials and resources, marketing their own programs to consumers to gain competitive advantage. Various resorts as well as marketing programs or techniques (such as Perfect Turn and Primary Movements) serve as models of how to build on the flexibility inherent in PSIA-AASI programs. In any event, the most successful programs for trial and conversion appear to be those that cross departmental lines and appeal to specific and well-defined market segment.

The core emphasis of PSIA's American Teaching System (ATS) is to structure programs and services tailored to the individual. Above all, PSIA-AASI curriculum emphasizes the need to address the needs and motivations of the customer, not the technique of the day. This system works effectively whether your program is committed to "direct to parallel," GLM, graduated sidecut method, or more traditional methods, primarily because ATS is committed to satisfied guests, not rigid, rote technique.

It is PSIA-AASI's responsibility to ensure that association membership means something during the hiring clinic (and a membership increase of 51 percent over the last decade to more than 28,000 members today indicates that it does). Once an instructor is hired at the area level, the additional training he or she receives includes the resort's unique marketing message and technical idiosyncrasies with respect to its ski/snowboard school programs. Simply put, each area has a different approach, and it is important to realize that PSIA-AASI is not in competition with the resorts' snowsports marketing programs. PSIA and AASI support the concept of areas branding their schools in a more assertive manner and making lesson taking as one of the prime motivators of a guest to visit their area.

From PSIA-AASI's standpoint, consumers should take lessons. Obviously, we like it when they recognize the value of taking lessons from PSIA or AASI-certified instructors, but we also recognize the benefits of taking lessons from professional instructors—regardless of how they're trained, marketed, or labeled.

## SERVICE RELATIONSHIPS



**T**he association will continue to seek the most effective methods of providing members with the critical foundation of training. It will continue to educate instructors about equipment innovations, the performance characteristics of new gear, and how those variables might affect the ways in which lessons are delivered. It will continue to develop programs and resources to help members meet area management’s expectations. And, it will continue to collaborate with media and marketing partners to impart the benefits of lesson-taking. Above all, PSIA-AASI will continue to look to its members, the areas for whom they work, and the industry at-large to collectively identify ways in which instructors can be of service.

### *Service Relationships*

The above diagram illustrates service relationships between various snowsports constituencies, particularly PSIA-AASI and its primary audience—its members and the guests they serve. Note how these groups are placed in the center of a relationship between our organization, industry manufacturers, and resorts.



***OPTIMUM PLANNING STRATEGY***  
***FOR***  
***FOSTERING CONVERSION***

APRIL 1, 2001



NSAA MODEL FOR GROWTH; Trial & Conversion  
**The SE GROUP Optimum Planning Strategy**

*We applaud the numerous programs offered by resorts across the country to increase the trial of skiing and riding by innovative advertising, pricing and packages. We encourage more resorts to create similar programs. Yet we also believe that trial is not the problem. The industry will clearly benefit from more opportunities to convert guests to core enthusiasts, but the greater challenge facing resort operators is to provide a complete learning environment that exceeds the expectations of the entry-level guest and thereby convert more “trials” to core participants.*

*It is our opinion that much more focus should be given to the design of facilities that will take the hassle out of the learning experience, particularly facilities related to the first-time skier or rider. There are many aspects of the typical resort operation where entry-level guests are confused, fearful, or anxious about their experience. The hassle can be extraordinary, and we need to re-examine many of our dated facilities to determine how to make our resorts more friendly to first-time visitors. We have entered an age where individuals are looking for instant gratification, personal service and attention, and shorter learning curves. Shaped skis, advanced computer software, and innovative management strategies have given us the tools to service the entry-level visitor in this regard, but we must design facilities to compliment this new philosophy.*

*We have developed an **Optimum Planning Strategy** for fostering Conversion at resorts of any size, in any region, with any market. The five parts of this strategy are designed to plan base area, learning area, and general mountain facilities that foster a rapid and effective conversion of entry-level (trial) visitors into core skiers and riders.*

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## PART I. STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR IMPROVING CONVERSION

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Management should develop a Conversion philosophy as they would create a strategic plan for any business. ***This is the first step in the Conversion planning process.***

- In order to facilitate the strategic plan, it is most productive to conduct a strategy session with department heads and middle and top management of the resort to establish the mission, values, and goals of the program.
- One of the results of the strategic plan is to develop an action plan of short and long term priorities for improving conversion.
- This important step will set the stage for creating a wide range of best practices geared specifically towards improving the conversion rate and fostering the growth of the right corporate culture.

This Strategy has been completed at numerous resorts with great success, and the process is often similar. Identifying the mission, values and goals with the input from key staff members achieves two purposes: 1) it creates a set of fundamental guidelines to help with decision-making during the detailed design of new or upgraded facilities and 2) it sets the stage for management and staff to buy-in to the concept and culture of Conversion.

1. **MISSION.** A core statement which tells the group WHAT you (the resort) are going to achieve; “We will realize the highest conversion rate in our state, with a goal of 30% over the next five years” or; “We will become the premier learning facility in our region”. This mission statement should be concise and pointed. All future energies should be guided by this mission.
2. **VALUES.** Identify values - feelings, morals, or principles - that the resort will not compromise. This could include themes such as safety, honesty/integrity, team work, or consideration of the environment. These value statements should be collected and reviewed to ensure that no goal or action item will compromise any of the core values of the resort operation.
- 3 **GOALS.** What needs to be accomplished at the resort to achieve the mission? This will be general in nature; “We must improve the flow of the rental shop,” “We must improve our welcoming experience,” “We must establish a system to reward employees for successful conversion efforts.”
  - The goals must be obtainable.
  - Determine a timeline for achieving all goals.
  - Review goals periodically (at a monthly Conversion meeting, for instance) to ensure that all efforts are aimed at achieving the goals in a timely fashion.

4. **THE ACTION PLAN.** HOW will the team achieve the stated goals? Establish an action plan for each aspect of the conversion experience. For example, possible items of the action plan for the rental experience could be:
- “We will shift to all shaped skis and eliminate our traditional skis by replacing 33% of our stock every season;”
  - “We will redesign the interior of the rental shop to accommodate the first time visitors in their own area of the facility;”
  - “We will purchase a software system to integrate our rental purchases into the rest of the resort and Welcome Center, thereby reducing cashier bottlenecks and paperwork for the customers.”
  - “We will train ski school employees to serve as boot fitters for individual attention to the customer during that aspect of the experience.”

The Action Plan should be a written document, covering each aspect of the Conversion Experience:

- Base Area Orientation,
- Welcoming,
- Renting Equipment,
- Learning Center,
- Learning Terrain,
- Follow-up and monitoring of progress
- Other ancillary aspects, such as food and beverage, restrooms, and storage/locker area.

***THE KEY RESULT of Optimum Planning Strategy, PART I:***

***All middle and top management will know exactly where the resort is heading in improving the Conversion Experience, and have a very explicit action plan to facilitate achieving this mission.***

## **PART II. UNDERSTANDING THE FIRST TIME VISITOR**

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It is essential to understand the experience of the first time visitor at a ski resort. All departments that have a direct or indirect affect on the first-timers' experience must be evaluated in terms of their ability to satisfy the essential needs of the entry-level guest. Effective mystery shopping and flow diagramming are useful evaluation tools. Evaluate the first timer's experience according to how well your resort accomplishes the following four fundamental elements:

1. **ORIENTATION & UNDERSTANDING.** Conquer the fear of the unknown:
  - Orientation gazebo, info center, knowledgeable ambassadors, excellent signage, minimal lines;
  - Pre-lesson orientation and post-lesson closure with instructors.
  
2. **COMFORT.** Conquer the fear of embarrassment and the fear of getting hurt:
  - Indoor orientation classrooms;
  - Warming areas close to learning terrain;
  - Boot fitting;
  - Comfortable and secluded learning terrain.
  
3. **SATISFACTION.** Rapid gratification and results:
  - Super short shaped skis for immediate turning and exploration;
  - Minimal crowding and line-ups;
  - Exceeding expectations of value.
  
4. **SEQUENCING.** Guide first timers through an unfamiliar process:
  - Send out a "one-pager" or a simple brochure with all inquiries and marketing materials that explains "everything you always wanted to know about your first-visit to the ski area," include a map of the base area in the brochure; keep the language clear to someone who has never visited a resort;
  - Landmarks, clear paths, decision nodes with clear choices;
  - Signage – directional and educational;
  - Use ICONS whenever possible.

## Best Practice: Jiminy Peak New Ashford, MA



At Jiminy Peak, themed signage of their “GETSkiing/GETRiding” program directs the first time visitor from the resort entrance all the way to the rental shop, where they are escorted through the operation and to the learning center by specially-trained employees.

## Best Practice: Copper Mountain’s Union Creek, Copper Mtn, CO

At Union Creek, Copper Mountain successfully incorporates clear paths (note the paved path under the breezeway) and landmarks (“The Schoolhouse” bell tower) to guide first time visitors in a more intuitive and successful way than signage can.



## TWO PRIMARY STEPS IN UNDERSTANDING THE FIRST TIME VISITOR

### 1. THE MYSTERY SHOP

- Focus primarily on the first-timers experience
- Utilize in-house personnel or an outside consultant.
- Understand the flow by observing it first hand, or watching another participant.
- Make diagrams and take pictures of your process, to allow for later study.

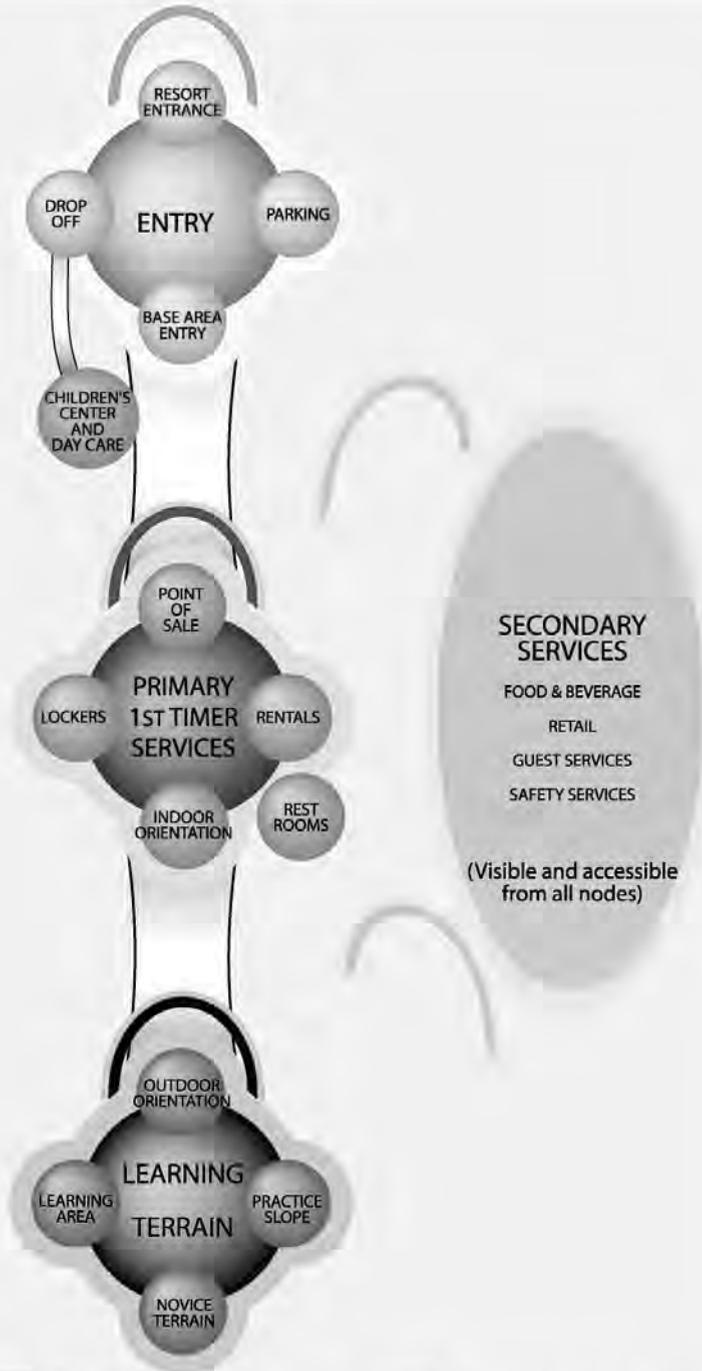
### 2. THE FLOW DIAGRAM

- Use a conceptual sketch outlining the flow of the first time visitor to guide the placement of guest services
  - Combine services according to similar functions - creating NODES of common elements. For example: ticketing, rentals, lockers and indoor teaching space are all functions that a first timer may need at the beginning of the day; grouping them close together makes them easy to find and access.
  - Focus on how functions are connected for smooth flow and ease of use.
- The visitor's flow actually starts before they arrive at the resort. If they have made an inquiry by phone or email, they should be sent a one-page description of what to expect and where to go for their first time experience. Enclose an easy to understand map of the base area that highlights the location of first-timer service needs.

*The following diagram illustrates the conceptual flow of the first time visitor.*

# "MODEL" FLOW DIAGRAM

FOR FIRST TIMERS



## RULES

**LANDMARKS - GATEWAYS**  
Mark the nodes with LANDMARKS - icons which signal the direction guest should flow. LANDMARKS can include architectural elements, flags/banners, lift terminals.

**PATHS**  
Connect the nodes with PATHS, that are defined by surface materials and strong edges. Use signage, icons, colors, etc.

**NODES**  
Create NODES - groupings of related services. Give the NODE an identity with unifying architectural and landscape elements.



**THE KEY RESULT of Optimum Planning Strategy, PART II:**  
**You will understand the physical flow and the emotional experience of the first-timer skier/rider. You will use this experiential and graphical product to determine where base area and mountain improvements are most needed.**

## PART III. RENTAL SHOP ATTRIBUTES

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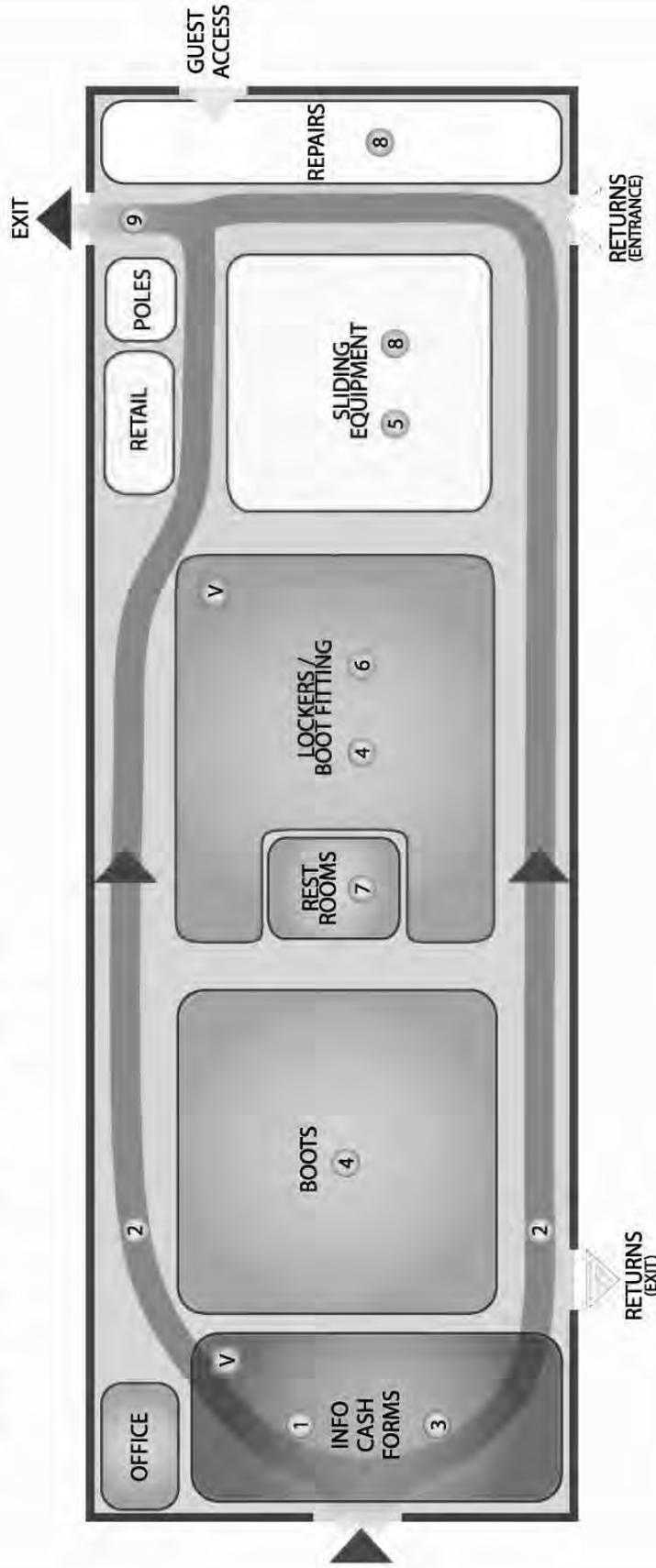
The rental shop is often the single largest aspect (aside from the on-snow experiences) where we lose potential core visitors. While every resort has very specific needs and constraints, there is a right and wrong way to process first time visitors (and all visitors). The following attributes are common to any successful operation, and should be utilized when planning any rental shop renovation or new design. Note how the successful shop will address the four fundamental elements of the first timer's experience: *orientation & understanding, comfort, satisfaction, and sequencing*.

The heading numbers of the following nine attributes correspond with the labels on the diagram at the end of this section.

We have built a "model" rental shop which is an amalgamation of several resort experiences that we observed this winter. We have utilized Best Practices from each and incorporated them into a practical and achievable rental node.

This is by no means the only way to build a rental shop- as no two shops are alike, but it should serve to illustrate how different fundamentals can be incorporated into your shop. Aspects of this model shop can be observed at Jiminy Peak, Mount Snow, Copper Mountain's Union Creek, and Chestnut, as noted. The following attributes are common to any successful operation, and should be the goal when planning any rental shop renovation or new design. Note how the successful shop will address the four fundamental elements.

# "MODEL" RENTAL SHOP



## ATTRIBUTES

- 1 - Orientation
- 2 - Parallel (or separate) paths
- 3 - Elimination of bottlenecks
- 4 - Boot fitting
- 5 - Proper storage of rental equipment
- 6 - Well-pace guest storage
- 7 - Accessible restrooms
- 8 - Proper sliding equipment
- 9 - Sequencing with next steps
- V - Videos

## OPTIONAL FACILITIES:

**SPRUNG STRUCTURE:**  
Skis/Boards if short-term expansion needed; must have communication lines to inside cash registers

**LEARNING CENTER:**  
With its own beginner equipment

**CHILDREN'S CENTER:**  
With its own beginner equipment



1. **ORIENTATION.** It is necessary to inform the guest about what they will encounter and pacify their inherent fear of the unknown. It is helpful to educate them on how to put on and take off their equipment, how to find the ski school meeting place, and how to carry their skis and poles. There are many ways to orient visitors either before they enter or once they are inside your rental shop.
  - Blue Mountain, Ontario mails a simple brochure with all outgoing marketing materials which explains to a first time visitor *in lay terms* what to expect when they arrive at the resort.
  - The resort could run a continuous loop video at locations inside of the rental shop (monitors would be located in obvious areas when individuals may have to wait for service) which shows guests what they will encounter. This could include sections on equipment (how to carry, how to put on, etc.) as well as how to find the ski school meeting place and rest rooms.
  - Rental shop ambassadors have become increasingly common. Many resorts employ personable ski pros to work in the rental shop, before the first lesson meeting time, to greet first timers and help them through this confusing stage of the process.
  
2. **PARALLEL (OR SEPARATE) PATHS.** Create multiple paths for processing different groups of visitors during peak times. Separate paths can be applied to first-timers, night-time guests, people taking lessons, bus groups, children, large crowds, etc.
  - Jiminy Peak, Massachusetts has created two symmetrical sides of the rental shop, that can be split for a variety of purposes. Often, riders are processed on one side, while skiers use the other. During weekdays and some nights, one side of the shop will be closed to save on operational costs. Often Jiminy separates their first time visitors from the repeat visitors by designating one side of the shop for first timers only. This allows Jiminy to place properly trained employees and specific equipment to accommodate first timer's needs.
  
3. **ELIMINATION OF BOTTLENECKS.** A very important aspect of sound rental shop planning is to understand how many visitors are moving through each stage of the process, in order to eliminate bottlenecks. For example, the average waiting time at the cash registers may be twenty minutes, while guests only wait five minutes to receive skis. In order to discover and eliminate capacity imbalances and bottlenecks, it is necessary to measure the throughput of each stage of the operation. This will help you to determine, for example, if the shop is in need of more cash registers, bootfitting stations, or ski technician stations.

A Welcome Center or one-stop point of sale before the guests enter the rental pod can alleviate bottlenecks. Since the cash registers are the location where

traffic is often slowed, having the guests wait in a single register line and purchase all services at once will eliminate the need for an additional set of registers in the rental shop. Appropriate software is a key component of this, which will also aid in data collection for tracking guests, surveying, and measuring conversion rates.

- Homestead, Michigan constructed a Welcome Center, at the entrance to their village, where guests purchase all services. They have also separated their rental shop into two locations, integrating all stages of the process with a customized software package. After guests have their boots fitted in the first shop, they stroll out to the ski storage location (on-snow) where their already-fitted skis are waiting.

4. **BOOT FITTING.** It is important that all guests – especially first timers – are comfortable in their boots. First time guests often end up wearing poorly fitting or wet boots, made even more uncomfortable by wrinkled socks or pants tucked into the boot cuff. Much of this discomfort can be prevented by boot drying systems, and placing a knowledgeable staff member in the boot-fitting area who can provide advice to guests.

- ASC Discovery Centers provide boot fitting with an instructor as a stage of their learn-to-ski process. This takes place in a very relaxed and informal atmosphere.
- Many of the best boot drying systems we've seen are home-made in place by resort personnel. Hunter Mountain, NY, for instance, built a very capable custom system in house for a fraction of the cost of buying pre-fabricated units.

5. **PROPER STORAGE OF RENTAL EQUIPMENT.** Systems for ski/snowboard storage that are flexible, efficient, and clean - both in appearance and maintenance – will help the resort provide faster service to all customers.

- Stowe Resort's Snowboard Rental Shop utilizes a very limited space by storing all bindings separate from the boards. Every board is custom mounted for the customer.
- Several resorts have found that using temporary tent-like structures (Sprung structures) to house skis and poles can be very effective when space is limited. These structures must be linked to the indoor registration/orientation and boot fitting area. At Stratton Mountain, an on-snow Sprung structure minimizes the distance that guests must carry equipment.

6. **WELL-PLACED GUEST STORAGE.** It is often beneficial to place lockable and non-lockable storage units in the central boot-fitting area of the rental shop, allowing guests the ability to store any personal belongings (especially street clothing & shoes) directly in the rental shop and leave the shop worry-free.

- At Chestnut Mountain, Illinois, benches, lockers and cubbies were

incorporated into their new rental shop facility. Customers have the ability to deposit belongings while they are fitting their boots, giving them less to worry about for the rest of the rental process, and the rest of the day.

7. **ACCESSIBLE RESTROOMS.** It is helpful to provide restrooms (either in the rental shop or nearby) during the boot-fitting and storage phase of the experience. Individuals are moving at their own pace during this phase, and may be ready for a quick 'break.'
8. **PROPER SLIDING EQUIPMENT.** Short shaped skis are the most suitable teaching equipment. It is advisable to maintain a selection of well-maintained shaped skis, to satisfy the first-timer demand as well as other rental customers.
  - Jiminy Peak starts all first time skiers on 120 cm shaped skis, which allows for very rapid progression.
  - All rental sliding equipment should be tuned regularly in the rental shop after each use. Rental skis and boards that are tuned regularly will allow beginner skiers and riders the best chance to learn the maneuvers.
  - Learning to ride should not be overlooked. Burton and other manufacturers are producing snowboards that are tailored specifically for the first-timer.
9. **SEQUENCING WITH NEXT STEPS.** The rental shop must be linked with the next step of the system for each segment of guests - learning center, ski school lesson, base lodge, learning terrain, and lift systems.

The rental shop diagram on page 10 illustrates many of the attributes described above. Conceptual in nature, the diagram is an amalgamation of rental operations observed at several resorts. This diagram shows how different fundamentals can be incorporated into *your* shop. The labels at the bottom of the diagram correspond with the possible locations of the nine attributes discussed in the text.

***THE KEY RESULT of Optimum Planning Strategy, PART III:  
You will have the tools and knowledge to subjectively evaluate your rental operation as it relates to the experience of the first-time visitor. You may use this information to improve the rental facility.***

### **Best Practice: Copper Mountain's Union Creek**

*At Union Creek, each first time visitor receives one-on-one attention from a single employee for the entire rental process. This employee will fit the guests' boots, adjust the bindings and let them know where to go and what to expect next. This very unorthodox system successfully eliminates the "factory" feel of most rental operations.*



### **Best Practice: The sprung rental shop structure at Stratton, VT**

*Revolutionary need not be extravagant. This on-snow location for skis, boards and poles substantially reduces the distance that first timers have to walk carrying awkward equipment.*



## PART IV: CHILDREN'S CENTER & DAY CARE

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To ensure that parents have a worry-free day learning to ski or ride, day care facilities and on-snow programs for youngsters must be properly integrated with the resort experience. Day Care facilities and Children's Centers (the indoor space for on-snow programs) should be located in close proximity to one another, with a centralized check-in and reservations area. This simplifies the drop-off and registration process for parents with children of various ages. An ideal facility includes *both* Day Care (0-4 years) and Children's Center (4-12 years), as seen at Copper Mountain, CO, Cannon Mountain, NH and Mount Snow, VT.

The following Children's Center/Day Care attributes should be common to both your Day Care facility and kid's program space.

- Spacious welcome area and check-in. Include adjacent quiet places for parents to calm upset children.
- Consider a child's size and eye-level when designing the indoor space.
- Food service. Facility must have food service capabilities or be close to the main food service area.
- Cubbies or storage units for each child. Include room for skis.
- Allow parents to view their children without the children knowing. This could be achieved by surrounding the outdoor snowplay area with vegetative barriers (parents can peek through), providing an interior wall with one-directional glass that looks into the indoor play area, or maintaining closed-circuit monitors in the base lodge that show a live view of the primary play areas.
- Security. Parents must feel that their children are in safe hands for the day. This should be applied to indoor security (check-in, limited access into facility) as well as outdoor security (fenced-in play areas – separation between outdoor snowplay from general resort activities).
- The outdoor snowplay area, while being separated from other resort activities, should be in a central area. Folks *love* watching kids having fun. This location should be sunny and sheltered from the wind. Kid size furnishings and fixtures. Help children feel comfortable.
- Laundry. Kids have accidents.
- Make facilities available to children of resort employees.

**DAY CARE.** Catering to infants and toddlers (0-4 years of age), this facility should provide typical day care services, with a snowsports twist. The following attributes are specific to mountain day care facilities and programming.

- Indoor sliding ramp. Introduce toddlers to skiing or sliding activities indoors. An early introduction to the sensation of sliding will help plant the seed in this future core skiers' mind.
- Sections for different ages. Separate infants and toddlers.
- Sections for different activities. Provide both quiet rooms and noisy play

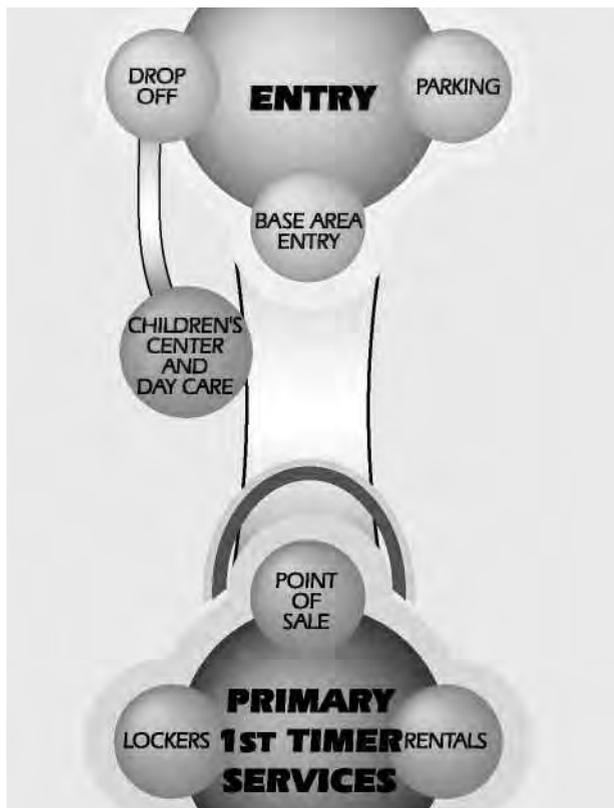
areas; allow play and rest to carry on simultaneously.

- Bright colors, natural sunlight. Provide a warm and cheerful atmosphere.
- Outdoor snowplay. Provide a small, contained outdoor space with a slight pitch for children to sled, try skiing/riding, or simply play outdoors. Cultivate a love of sliding on snow! Stock a selection of sliding toys – including skis – for ambitious children who want to give skiing a try.
- Family area. Give parents an area within the facility to spend time alone with their children, which could be used for meals, snacks, or quiet time.
- Allow parents to watch children play outdoors from a comfortable indoor area.

**CHILDREN’S CENTER.** Catering to children aged 4-12 years, this facility should provide all-day programs, complete with snacks, rentals, instruction and supervision. Programs will likely resemble a traditional SKIwee program. The following attributes are specific to kid’s facilities and programming.

- Flexible seating. A multi-function space may be used for lesson grouping in the morning (and pick-up at the end of the day), then converted into an eating area during the lunch hour.
- Themed programs for different age groups. This could include SkiKids, Mountain Explorers, Racer Chasers, or names specific to the resort’s overall theme.
- Maintain children’s rental equipment in the Children’s Center. This eliminates a trip to the Rental Shop, reducing confusion and increasing efficiency.
- Staggered or continual starting of programs. Some resorts admit children as they flow into the facility, and send groups out as soon as they reach the desired class size. Meals and breaks will also be staggered, decreasing the spatial needs of lunch rooms.

It has been observed that the Optimum Planning of Children’s Center/Day Care facilities should focus on two aspects of the overall experience, 1) the Children’s Center/Day Care *node* and 2) *integration* of Children’s Center/Day Care schedules and programs with on-mountain programming.



1. **THE CHILDREN'S CENTER/DAY CARE NODE.** The Children's Center/Day Care should be connected to the base area entrance and the primary point of sale (Welcome Center), allowing parents the ability to drop off young sters at the beginning of their experience and proceed worry-free. A separate drop-off with short-term parking at the Children's Center/Day Care provides additional convenience for parents, as seen at Blackcomb's Kids Kamp, British Columbia, Taos, New Mexico, and Sugarloaf, Maine. This drop-off should be directly accessed from the primary traffic flow.

2. **INTEGRATION OF PROGRAMMING (TIMING).** Day Care hours of operation and the timing of kid's programs must be coordinated with other on-mountain activities and learn-to-ski/ride programs.
  - Reservation systems for Day Care and kid's programs should be linked with Learn to Ski/Ride programming.
  - Ensure that the finishing time of adult lessons allows enough time for parents to get to the Children's Center/Day Care before kid's programming ends for the day.
  - Timing of the Children's Center/Day Care facility should *encompass* the on-mountain facility hours. For example, if lifts are open from 9am to 4pm, the Children's Center/Day Care hours should be 8am to 5pm. This allows ample time for parents to drop off and pick up their children, allowing them a full day on the slopes.

***THE KEY RESULT of Optimum Planning Strategy, PART IV:  
You will have a Children's Center/Day Care that contributes to a positive experience for the first-time visiting parent. The system must be convenient, secure, worry-free, and correspond with the rest of the mountain activities.***

## PART V: THE ON-SNOW EXPERIENCE

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In addition to the role that PSIA/AASI and others play in the first day for any new visitor, the mountain and learning area facilities also contribute to the overall experience. When designing these facilities, it is important to remember that the on-snow experience must be geared toward overcoming the three main fears of learning – fear of the unknown, fear of getting hurt, and fear of embarrassment.

1. **COMFORT.** The learning area must focus on the comfort of the first time visitor. New sliders are unsteady on equipment and lack confidence in their ability to control their movements; the beginner area must provide adequate room for all participants. First timer guests are easily intimidated; natural or artificial barriers should be incorporated to shield the learning terrain from the base area activities and the rest of the mountain.

- At Killington's Ram's Head area and Vail's Gold Peak area, natural topography and vegetation steer fast skiers around first-timer areas.

A warming hut placed in, or adjacent to, the learning terrain provides an on-mountain space geared specifically towards first time visitors. In this friendly and non-intimidating atmosphere, first timers may comfortably interact with their instructors and like-minded individuals that are sharing their experience. This is especially important in colder climates.

- Breckenridge, Colorado has placed a yurt beside one of their primary beginner lifts.
- Jiminy Peak constructed a small (<500 ft<sup>2</sup>) "Sugar House" between their rental facility and primary on-snow learning area. It is used only by the GETSkiing/GETRiding programs as headquarters and provides meeting space before, during, and after lessons. Hot beverages, heat and other services are available.

2. **ACCESSIBILITY.** There must be a well-planned connection between the base area facilities and the on-snow learning area. The learning terrain should be located as close as possible from the indoor facilities (rental shop, rest rooms, ski school, child care). Stairs and uphill climbs should be avoided.

- At Solitude, Brundage, and Jiminy Peak significant grading has been done to place buildings and first-timer slopes at the same elevation.

3. **PROGRESSION OF LEARNING TERRAIN.** There must be a logical and user-friendly progression from flats to beginner and novice terrain. Be very precise about grades; to a beginner the difference between a 6% and a 10% slope is huge!

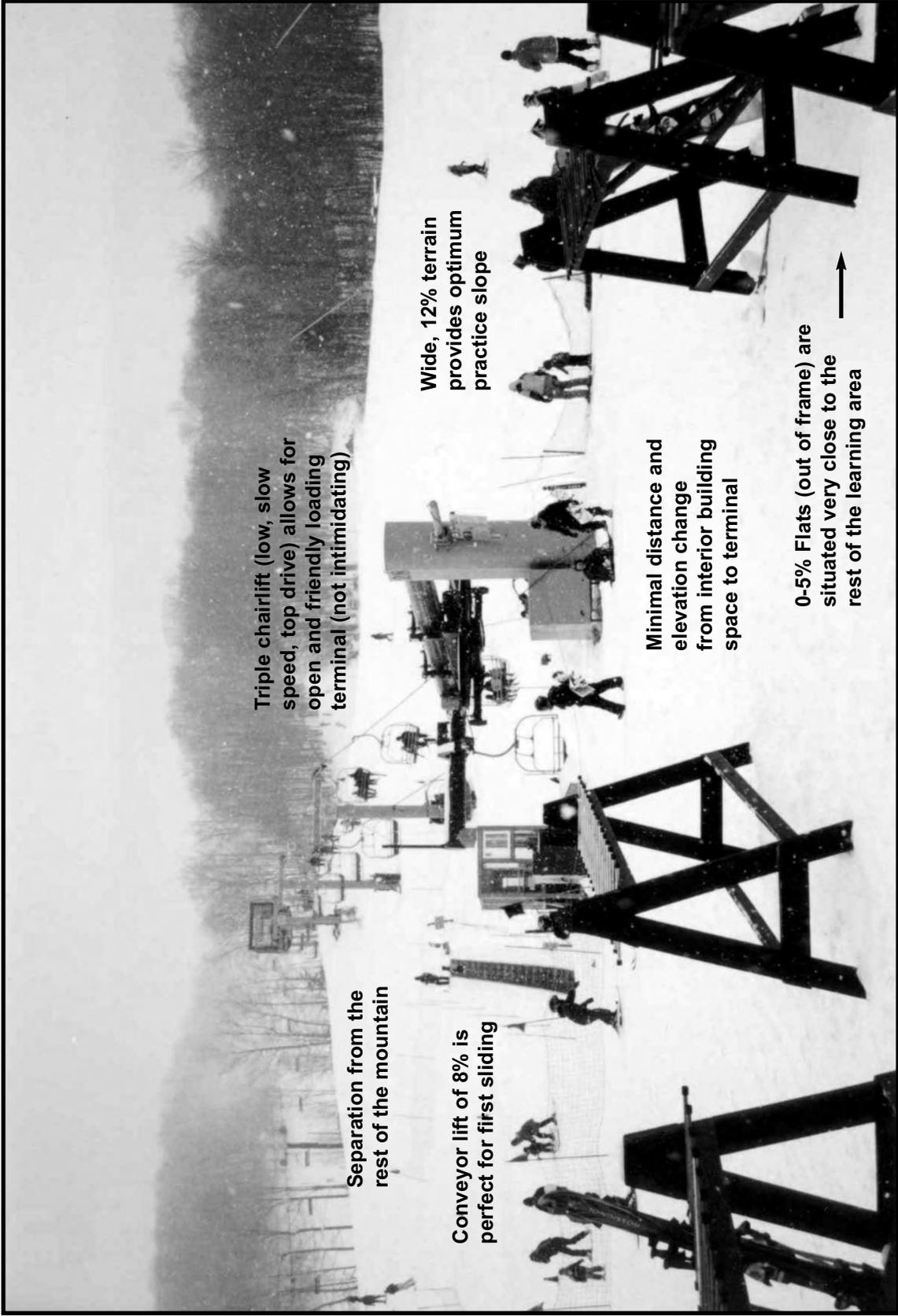
The conceptual diagram on the following page illustrates the progression of terrain that the first time or novice skier/rider will encounter. Moving outdoors from the Primary Services node, they will first encounter flat terrain for on-snow orientation, then move to a low gradient area for the first sliding experience. After mastering controlled sliding, they will move to a slope that allows for practicing linked turns, and finally they will move to the novice terrain that provides them with continuous runs.

It is important to provide enough space for beginning skiers. A crowded facility will increase distractions, reduce the comfort level, and increase the anxiety of the first time visitor. The numbers of guests per acre in the diagram illustrate the expected capacity of each type of terrain. It is important to note that these reflect possible skiers/riders *at one time*, and your beginner visitors will likely move through these terrain stages very rapidly.

# BEGINNER PROGRESSION



The following photo of Mount Snow's on-snow learning space illustrates many key attributes.



**THE KEY RESULT of Optimum Planning Strategy, PART V:**

**You will understand how to provide a non-intimidating and learning-friendly on-snow experience for the first-time visitor.**

## CONCLUSION

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The five parts of this Optimum Planning Strategy focus the planning and design of base area and on-mountain facilities toward reducing hassles and increasing the satisfaction of first-time visitors. Taking the hassle out of the learning experience allows a first-time visitor to fully enjoy the new sensation of sliding on snow, and ultimately, the entire resort experience. A first-time visitor who leaves your resort with a smile and a sense of accomplishment IS MORE LIKELY TO RETURN. Achieving this goal – creating more skiers and riders – will be reflected by increased visitation at your resort, and by growth in visitation throughout the industry.

As with any strategy, success depends on management's commitment to devote the necessary time and resources to achieving the goal. Create an action plan for implementing this strategy that works for you. Use your long-term plans to develop a list of short-term priorities that respond to your immediate needs and available resources. Be creative; many solutions need not be expensive or difficult to implement. Finally, don't lose sight of the motivation and purpose of this initiative: to introduce more individuals to the winter sports and mountain lifestyle that we embrace.

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*Optimum Planning Strategy for Fostering Conversion* by

**Donn Downey**

**Walter Elander**

**Claire Humber**

**Stuart Jones**

**Mike Repyak**

***SE Group***

# *NSAA Member Resorts'*

## TRIAL AND CONVERSION **BEST PRACTICES**

*2000/2001*



**Boreal Mountain Resort, California**  
*Beginner Conversion Program – Free Level 2 & 3 lessons*

**Contact:**     **Jody Church**, Director of Marketing  
                  (530) 426-3666, ext. 185  
                  jody@borealski.com

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**Details:**

- ✓ Every beginner that learns to ski or board at Boreal is given a FREE follow-up level 2 & 3 coupon that allows them to come back for a free lesson.
- ✓ The Level 2 & 3 lesson is designed to get the beginning skier/boarder moving up the hill and advancing without giving up.
- ✓ Free allows the beginner a chance to move up the mountain without a price barrier.

**Results:**

Boreal's Level 2 & 3 coupon redemption to date for this season is 952 of the 17,487 beginner lessons taught (as of 2/20/01) - a 5% redemption/conversion rate.

## **Grand Targhee Resort, Wyoming**

*Learn It, Love It and Live It*

**Contact:** **Susie Barnett-Bushong**, Director of Marketing  
(307) 353-2300, ext. 1312  
susie@grandtarghee.com

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### **Details:**

- ✓ Incorporates all sliding disciplines: alpine, snowboarding and telemark. The program is simple – Introduce a beginner to our slopes and you, the escort, get a FREE all-area lift ticket for the day while your friend, family member, significant other, whoever, is learning a lifetime sport!
- ✓ The beginner gets a two-hour group lesson, full day lift pass for our beginner area and rental package - all for only \$59 (sold separately, the rate would be \$117 so less than half price!)

### **Results:**

Goal for the season was to sell 400. As of (2-24-01), 542 beginners have taken this program. Snowboard and alpine are about even with 260 plus each and Nordic at 20. We estimate end-of-season total at approximately 800.

## **Lookout Pass Ski and Recreation Area, Idaho**

### *Lookout Pass Free Ski School*

**Contact:** **Phil Edholm**, President and General Manager  
(208) 744-1301, ext. 10  
phil@skilookout.com

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#### **Details:**

- ✓ 10 week FREE SKI SCHOOL program for youth ages 6 thru 17 yrs.
- ✓ Sessions on Saturday mornings: Beginners 10:00 to 11:30 AM; Intermediates and Advanced 11:30 to 1:00 PM
- ✓ Lessons are FREE and no lift ticket is required when students are in their lesson groups. Lift tickets are required after the session
- ✓ Volunteer instructors organize and teach the sessions.
- ✓ Local school districts provide FREE bus shuttle service throughout the local community. Local businesses make contributions to offset costs.
- ✓ Bus service for outlying areas is contracted and riders pay a small fare.

#### **Results:**

Average over 2,000 lessons per season.

The Lookout pass free ski school has been an on-going program for over 56 years. Most of the children in our local communities learned to ski here and we are now realizing a second generation of families that participate in the program.

## Ski Cooper, Colorado

**Contact:** **Anne Dougherty**, Director of Guest Services  
(719) 486-3684  
anned@skicooper.com

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### Details:

- ✓ Learn to Ski Program (ages 11 and up) \$35 includes 2 hour. group lesson, ski rental, and beginner lift ticket.
- ✓ Learn to Snowboard Program (ages 12 and up) \$65 includes 2 hour. group lesson, ski rental, and full mountain lift ticket.
- ✓ Kid Ski Package (ages 4 to 10) \$55, class from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00, rental lift and hot lunch.
- ✓ Kids Snowboard package (ages 8 to 12) \$65, class from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00, rental lift and hot lunch.

### Results:

No noticeable increase in lessons.

## Waterville Valley, New Hampshire

**Contact:** Peter Weber, Snowsports Director  
(603) 236-8311, ext. 3135  
pweber.wv@boothcreek.com

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### *Snow Country Passport*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ First visit \$63.00 for two lessons, rental equipment and lower mountain lift tickets for the day
- ✓ Third and fourth lessons are \$49.00 each and participants receive a free season pass after four visits
- ✓ Passport has additional offers from the lodges, restaurants and shops of Waterville Valley ranging from \$25.00 off a one night stay, 10% off your check at Diamond's Edge Restaurant and 10% off your purchase at Town Square shops. Ski Market and Underground Snowboard offer \$40.00 off any purchase of skis or snowboards

### *Welcome to Winter Fun program*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ Every Monday we collect all learn to ski/ride forms and Fed Ex them to Customers First. A letter is sent out w/additional offers to encourage a second and third visit
- ✓ Second visit is \$49.00 for a lesson, rentals and lower mountain tickets plus a free celebration lunch at T-Bars Restaurant, a value of \$10.00
- ✓ Third visit is also \$49.00 for a lesson, rentals and lower mountain tickets plus free goggles at Ski Market
- ✓ Participants get their picture taken when presented with their season pass

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**Results:**

Through February we are at 80% of our total target of learn to ski/snowboard lessons which reflects a 10% increase from last season. 58% of the lessons were learn to ski. 16% of the new skiers came back for a second visit. Of those 16%, 37% came back for a third lesson. 10% of the snowboarders came back for a second day. Of those 10%, 44% came back for a third day. 50% of those eligible for a free lunch redeemed their coupons. 76% of those eligible for free goggles redeemed their coupons. At the end of February, 51% of those who participated in the third day have come back for a fourth day and claimed their season pass.

## Sunday River, Maine

**Contact:** Eric Schandelmeier, Director of Perfect Turn Ski and Snowboard School  
(207) 824-5086  
erics@sundayriver.com

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### *1,2,3 Ski and Ride program*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ Level 1 Ski and Ride priced at \$65.00 for lift, rental and coaching, \$85.00 for Level 2 and 3 upgrade, or \$150.00 for the package
- ✓ ASC All Season Pass given to everyone who completes the program
- ✓ Separate facility for beginners
- ✓ Employee walks beginner through rental process
- ✓ \$5.00 incentive offered to any employee who sells the 1,2,3 package or gets person to upgrade to second and third experience

### *Learn to Ski for Free*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ Promotion with Mobil Oil Co.
- ✓ By purchasing several tanks of gas, person is eligible for first time free with change to upgrade to second and third level for \$85.00
- ✓ Specially designed Rossi Cut skis in 110, 120 and 135 cm. are easy for beginners to use
- ✓ Length of skis increased as skill level increases
- ✓ Snowboard is equipped with step in bindings

#### **Results:**

We measure our program by doing a percentage of commitments to the second and third experience or who purchases a 1,2,3 package up front. Current rate as of 3-11-01 is 35% skiing and 18% riding.

**Durango Mountain Resort, Colorado**  
*First Things First and Second Things Second*

**Contact:**     **Collette O'Brien**, Ski and Snowboard School Office Manager  
                  (970) 385-2149  
                  cobrien@durangomountain.com

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**Details:**

- ✓ First Things First is an existing beginner product
- ✓ Second Things Second is a second step lesson for the beginner skier/snowboarder added in 2001
- ✓ Staff has one day of orientation dedicated to guest retention
- ✓ Re-grading and shaping of beginner terrain

**Results:**

The conversion rate from First Things First to Second Things Second is 32%.

## Mountain High Resort, California

**Contact:**     **John McColly**, Marketing and Public Relations Manager  
(780) 249-5808, ext. 231  
jmccolly@mthigh.com

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### *Ralph's Supermarket \$29.00 Lift Tickets*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ Tickets can be exchanged with \$10.00 upgrade for a new skier/snowboarder package (includes a two-hour lesson, complete rentals and an eight-hour lower mountain lift ticket)
- ✓ \$99.00 buys three new skier/snowboarder packages
- ✓ Each package includes a two-hour lesson, complete rentals and an eight-hour lift ticket
- ✓ Participants receive a free lift ticket at completion of program

#### **Results:**

Roughly 20,000 people will enter the sport this season with the Ralph's program. Three-pack sales have risen from 150 last year to over 1,000 this season.

### *3-Pack Beginner Package*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ Three new skier/snowboarder packages for \$99.
- ✓ Each package includes a 2-hour lesson, complete ski or snowboard rentals and a lower mountain lift ticket.
- ✓ Industry statistics say that three lessons most people are proficient enough to be comfortable and competent on their own and the 3-Pack capitalizes on that.
- ✓ At the end of their program they are awarded a free 8-hour, all-mountain lift ticket.

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*Mountain High Resort con't.*

- ✓ Valid throughout the season and lessons need not be taken on consecutive days.

**Results:**

This is the second year of the program and responses have risen 733%, from 150 3-Packs sold last season to 1,100 this year.

## **Brian Head Resort, Utah**

### *Snow Fun 101*

**Contact:** **Craig McCarthy**, Director of Sales and Marketing  
(435) 677-2035  
stephen@brianhead.com

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#### **Details:**

- ✓ \$199.00 buys two Learn-To-Ski or Snowboard packages (all day lift ticket, lesson and necessary equipment)
- ✓ Season pass is presented upon graduation of the lessons
- ✓ An equipment rental add-on price of \$80.00 for the remainder of the season
- ✓ This represents a discount of over 70% of regular prices
- ✓ Winter Sports School guarantees participants will be able to ski or ride after completion
- ✓ Snow Fun 101 participants enroll seven days a week at Brian Head Resort's Navajo Lodge (phone: (435) 677-2049)

#### **Results:**

Have not measured results so far.

## **Ski Plattekill Mountain, New York**

**Contact:** **Danielle Vaytay**, General Manager  
(607) 326-3500, ext. 7  
plattekill@aol.com

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### **Details:**

- ✓ Take any ski school lesson and get \$10.00 off your next private, semi-private or “learn-to” package
- ✓ Instructors hand out coupons to customers at completion of lessons to encourage return visit

### **Results:**

Coupons get redeemed at the ticket windows. We have seen a great increase in lessons and usage of the coupons.

## Ski Snowstar Winter Sports Park, Illinois

**Contact:** Ed Meyer, General Manager  
(309) 798-2666

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### Details:

- ✓ Every person age nine or older who has never skied before gets a free beginner lesson
  
- ✓ After the lesson, each student is given a graduation card which contains a) Your Responsibility Code b) a check-off section for skills completed c) a section for skills to work on d) instructor/student info and e) a section for lesson discounts/ticket discounts (bring a friend and they get the same deal)

### Results:

When customers return cards at next visit a tally is kept.

## **Bogus Basin Ski Resort, Idaho**

### *Learn to Ski or Ride “Passport Program”*

**Contact:**     **Mike Shirley**, General Manager  
                  (208) 332-5122  
                  mike@bogusbasin.com

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#### **Details:**

- ✓ \$199.00/\$149.00 (\$199.00 for ages 12/older, \$149.00 for kids ages 6-11)
- ✓ Includes lifts, lessons & rentals
- ✓ Pre-lesson conducted several days before the lesson (gives never-evers some idea of what to expect)
- ✓ Upon graduation from a four-lesson beginner program, the Passport is awarded for a season pass and rental privileges
- ✓ If guest signs up for classes in February or March, the season pass and rental deal carries over into next season

#### **Results:**

It has been extremely successful without even “maxing out” our inventory of instructors and rental gear! So far this season, we’ve welcomed nearly 1600 participants. Now, the people who used to sit in the lodge watching everyone having fun are having fun themselves! Their ages range from 6 to 60 and they are learning how to ski/board and loving their newly discovered lifetime sport! As a result of this success, we are in the midst of designing an affordable program that will take these brand new guests to that “next level.”

## Stevens Pass, Washington

**Contact:** **Sven Erik Jonassen**, Executive Education Director  
(206) 812-4510, ext. 246  
sjonassen@stevenspass.com

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### *Employee First Trax Coupons*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ Employees are given a coupon that they could give to anyone or use themselves that allows them to partake in the Fast Trax program (a first time ski/snowboard rental, lesson and lift pass session)
- ✓ Once the coupon is redeemed the employee is given two all lift ticket passes (the employee is encouraged to retain their original guest in the sport but these lift tickets can be used however the employee wishes)
- ✓ All guests that participate receive a “Harbor Resorts Advantage Card” (provides the guest with a free lift pass on their next visit and a \$5.00 discount on their lift pass anytime thereafter)

### *Guarantee 1-2-3*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ Guests can purchase a \$99.00 coupon book, good for three visits (1<sup>st</sup> visit includes a two hour lesson, rentals and a lift pass, 2<sup>nd</sup> visit includes a two hour lesson, rentals and a lift pass, and 3<sup>rd</sup> visit includes rentals, a lift pass and a 50% discount on a private or semi-private lesson)
- ✓ On completion of the 3<sup>rd</sup> visit, we guarantee that the guest can successfully ski or ride a blue run
- ✓ Guests also receive a graduation card

#### **Results:**

We are able to measure results with the magnetic stripe system on the “Advantage Card.” This card can be used at all Harbor Resorts (Stevens Pass, Mission Ridge and Schweitzer Mountain).

**Powderhorn Resort, Colorado**  
*First-Timers Spring Lesson Series*

**Contact:**     **Kathy Dirks**, Director of Sales, Marketing and Communications  
                    (970) 268-5700, ext. 2034  
                    kdirks@powderhorn.com

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**Details:**

- ✓ Learn to ski or snowboard this spring and ski or ride FREE for the rest of the season AND December 2001!
- ✓ Price is \$90.00 for all three sessions March 3, 10 and 17 and includes rentals and lift tickets (must be a first timer and must attend all three sessions)
- ✓ We have not fully decided on other benefits but most likely we will offer a December “brush up on your skills” clinic and maybe an incentive to bring another first timer for the same program in January 2002

**Results:**

This is a new program for us and we will know in mid-March some of the results.

## **Whistler/Blackcomb, British Columbia** *Schools on Snow*

**Contact:** **Dan Wilson**, Youth Market Sales Rep.  
(604) 938-7135  
dwilson@intrawest.com

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### **Details:**

- ✓ Offered to elementary schools, secondary schools and youth groups
- ✓ Pricing ranges from \$24.00 for a lift and half day lesson to \$65.00 (weekends) for a lift, full day lesson, rental and lunch
- ✓ Most schools come two to four times so that students can return
- ✓ Schools Discount Card give students deals on lift tickets and rentals if they come again

### **Results:**

Fifteen percent of secondary students are never evers. We measure this by the products we sell. All never evers have to take a Discover Program.

## Vail and Beaver Creek, Colorado

### *Adult Beginner Series Promotion*

**Contact:** Susan Johnson, Sports and Recreation Manager  
(970) 479-4309  
susanj@vailresorts.com

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#### **Details:**

- ✓ This offer for first time adult skiers and riders included a three-day semi-private beginner lesson and three days of beginner lift tickets at Vail for \$99.00 and Beaver Creek for \$109.00
- ✓ A three-day equipment rental could be added for an additional \$20.00 at Vail or \$30.00 at Beaver Creek
- ✓ Days had to be used consecutively
- ✓ Special offer was available opening day (Nov. 17, 2000) through Dec. 22, 2000 and Jan. 1, 2001 through Feb. 14, 2001
- ✓ Participants must be age 15 or older
- ✓ Those who attended three consecutive days of the Beginner Series lessons were given a "Beginner Series Graduate" coupon good for an additional three consecutive days of class lessons for the price of one
- ✓ The Beginner Series II offer for Beginner Graduates from the 2000-2001 season will be valid through Feb. 13, 2002 (prices subject to change)
- ✓ April 1-15, 2001 there will be an offer of three days beginner group lessons, rentals and lift tickets for \$134.00 at Vail and \$145.00 at Beaver Creek (at Vail after April 15 the price is discounted to \$129.00. Vail closes on April 22 and Beaver Creek closes on April 15)

#### **Results:**

Approximately 4,900 people went through the Beginner Series I program at Vail and Beaver Creek combined. Of these participants, 44 percent completed all three days. These numbers translate into 10,600 lessons at an average of 2.2 days of participation. Ten percent of graduates (approx. 215 people) went on to take Series II. Beginner adult lessons for the comparable period last season increased by 37 percent.

## **Snowmass and Buttermilk, Colorado (Ski and Snowboard Schools of Aspen)**

**Contact:** Weems Westfeldt, Dir. Of Operations  
(970) 544-3088  
wwestfeldt@aspensnowmass.com

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### *Beginner's Magic*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ Custom training for instructors, peak performance training (centering), balance orientation (boot accommodation, centering, short skis)
- ✓ Non wedge based: Immediate parallel turns, double guarantee (turns in three days, parallel on blue in six). Generally, guests ski parallel turns immediately, and ski blues in three to four days
- ✓ Beginner's Magic is available for levels 1-4 at package price: lift tickets, equipment and lessons \$99.00 for one day or \$249.00 for three days, with \$89.00 unlimited extensions (guests can continue through higher levels at same price as long as they desire)

### *The Wizard*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ Ski simulator (rolling carpet with harness) at Buttermilk. Miles of no fall, no fear skiing/riding simulation before access to snow. Guaranteed results.
- ✓ \$179.00 for five hours, everything included. \$59.00 for single session as a supplement to regular class
- ✓ Foot Foundation: Mass producible canting in five minutes to develop better balance for all levels without custom footbed or boot grinding

#### **Results:**

As of Feb. 28, 2001 we are tracking a four percent increase in numbers of beginner students, and a slightly higher percentage for the number of beginner lesson days. We have received plenty of positive guest and media feedback. No refunds have been issued on the guarantee this season.

## **Mt. Bachelor, Oregon** *400 Free Beginner Lessons*

**Contact:** **Carly Hogan**, Marketing Manager  
(800) 829-2442  
chogan @mtbachelor.com

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### **Details:**

- ✓ This program offered a series of four weekend days where the first 100 (400) total participants to register received a first time beginner ski or snowboard lesson, a beginner lift ticker and a 2-hour lesson.
- ✓ Participants were then offered a discount to return for another ski/ride program.

### **Results:**

All 400 spots fill with reservations. We had 98% show up for the four day promotion.

## Pats Peak Ski Area, New Hampshire

**Contact:** Bertie Holland, Dir. Of Skier Services  
(603) 428-3245, ext. 114  
bertie@patspeak.com

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### Details:

- ✓ Ski and Snowboard Starter Special: \$48.00 for a one and a half hour group lesson, all day rentals and a lift ticket to our Beginner areas
- ✓ Adult Clinic: ski rentals \$65.00, snowboard rentals \$135.00 additional, one day a week for seven weeks, two hour clinic plus half day of skiing, lunch included, children's program of nursery care with outdoor play available in conjunction—Cub Explorer \$198.00
- ✓ Cashew Program: 12 two and a half hour sessions for ages 3-5, a focus on basic equipment use, learning to turn and stop and being able to maneuver easy terrain and ride lifts \$198.00
- ✓ Five week learn to ski and snowboard program: offered Monday through Friday, must be 6 years old and in first grade by Jan. 1 of year participating, classes kept to a max. of 12 students, includes one hour of instruction and one hour of practice time (a full ski or board rental package available). Lift only \$70.00, lift/ski rental \$90.00, lift/ski rental/lesson \$115.00, lift/snowboard rental \$140.00 and lift/snowboard rental/lesson \$160.00
- ✓ Additional offers: Weekday Parent Ticket \$15.00, Cafeteria Coupon Book \$30.00 worth of coupons for \$25.00, Helmet \$60.00, Goggles \$30.00, Practice Makes Perfect Pass good Sunday through Friday \$150.00 (a \$245.00 savings off regular season pass), Bonus Day—trade in laminated program tag for an all day/all lift ticket (valid Feb. 26 though end of season, free rentals during the program), Last Call Ticket \$10.00 ticket for last two hours of operation during the week

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**Results:**

1,600 Ski Starter Specials sold in 2001, 1,100 Snowboard Starter Specials sold in 2001. Approx. 375 adults participated in the Adult Clinic and 80 children in our Cub's Club. Fourteen new skiers ages 3,4 and 5 participated in our Cashew Program in it's debut season. Over 10,000 students participated in The Learn to Ski and Snowboard Program in the 2000-2001 season. We also needed to expand to two sessions. Over 500 helmets sold first year of offer and again in 2001. Approx. 2,200 coupon books sold. Two hundred thirty pairs of goggles sold in first year. One third of participants redeem Bonus Day Tickets. Seventy five took advantage of the Practice Makes Perfect Pass.

## Tahoe Donner Downhill Ski Area, California

### *“6:1” Group Lessons*

**Contact:**     **Steve Plumley**  
                  (530) 587-9444, ext. 110  
                  ski@tahoedonner.com

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#### **Details:**

- ✓ Limited all group lessons to six students.
- ✓ Created a favorable environment within group lessons.
- ✓ Increased personalized attention to each student.

#### **Results:**

An increase in group lesson sales of 13% and additionally increasing overall skier visits.

## **Sunburst Ski Area, Wisconsin** *Learn to Ski Student Program*

**Contact:**     **Laura Nelson**, Marketing Director  
                    (262) 626-8404  
                    info@skisunburst.com

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### **Details:**

- ✓ Students are invited to participate in a series of four one-hour lessons, which are designed to teach beginning students the basics of skiing safely.
- ✓ The package includes a lift ticket, rental equipment and four weeks of lessons. Sessions are 2.5 hours long and consist of a one-hour lesson with the remainder of the session open for free skiing.
- ✓ Once students have completed the program they automatically become members of the Sunburst Ski Club, which entitles them to substantially discounted skiing for the rest of the season.

### **Results:**

850 students have participated in this program during the 2000-2001 season. Positive feedback from your advisors. Increased confidence of students. Increased cooperation and cohesion. Continued partnership in the Sunburst Ski Club membership. Increased family participation in the sport.

## Okemo Mountain Resort, Vermont

### *Double Tracks*

**Contact:**     **Scott Clarkson**, Director of Marketing  
802-228-4041

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#### **Details:**

- ✓ This program invites all First Tracks and Double Tracks learn-to-ski/ride package participants (ages 7 and up) back for 50% off their next group lesson or equipment rental package, or for \$10 off a one-hour private lesson.
- ✓ The offer is valid for one full year from the date of their original lesson.
- ✓ The offer includes a personalized savings certificate mailed to the participant's home within 10 days of the first lesson.
- ✓ A special web page prepares beginners for their next visit.
- ✓ A grand prize drawing is offered to those who complete two visits this year for a chance to skis, goggles, gloves and a midweek getaway to Okemo next season.
- ✓ The Flex Card is a frequent skier card that sells for \$99 and gives the bearer 25% off weekends and holiday lift tickets and 30% off midweek, non-holiday lift tickets.
- ✓ After a new skier or rider returns for their next lesson they are mailed an invitation for a free Flex Card good for the remainder of the season.

## **Wachusett Mountain Ski Area, Massachusetts** *Guaranteed Easy Turn Program*

**Contact:** **Tom Myers**, Marketing Director  
(978) 464-2300, ext. 3700  
tom@wachusett.com

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### **Details:**

- ✓ Regular one-day beginner package cost \$55 and included a beginner class lesson, rental equipment and a beginner lift ticket.
- ✓ A two-day GET package cost \$85 and included beginner class lesson, rental equipment and an all-area lift ticket. Two-day participants also had the option of receiving a complimentary “Passport to Skiing” discount card to give them \$7 off all future visits.
- ✓ Direct Mail – the first phase was to reach 5,000 beginner package purchasers from the previous season with a December mailing. The second phase was a second mailing to 5,000 beginner package purchasers this season with an offer reaching their homes within two weeks of their visit.
- ✓ Ski Instructor Incentive Program – Ski school instructors were provided with business-card sized coupons encouraging them to give them their one-day beginner package participants to get them to upgrade to second-day package.

### **Results:**

1,416 second-day GET packages sold through mid-March 2001, a 72% increase over the same period last season. 531 second-day GET packages redeemed through mid-March 2001, a 56% increase over last season. 262 instructor incentive cards redeemed through mid-March 2001, a 70% increase over last season. 46 second-day package participants received the Passport to Skiing, representing 9% of those individuals redeeming a second-day package.

## **Tyrol Basin Ski and Snowboard Area, Wisconsin** *Learn to Ski and Snowboard Free*

**Contact:** **Don McKay**, General Manager or  
**Jon Winkler**, Marketing Director  
(608) 437-4135

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### **Details:**

- ✓ We invite skiers on Tuesday nights, families of skiers and snowboarders on Wednesday nights and snowboarders on Thursday nights to take part in this introductory program at no cost.
- ✓ The program on Tuesday and Thursday nights is limited to ages 11 and older and includes a free beginner area ticket, free equipment rental and a free 3-hour lesson. The program on Wednesday night is for families only and includes children as young as 6.
- ✓ As a follow-up to the program, we offer a “Continue the Fun” package, which includes three night lift tickets, three night rentals and a follow-up lesson for \$59.95. There is also a one-night packages for \$19.95.

### **Results:**

Over the past five years, we’ve attracted almost 3,400 guests. We have converted at least 150 of them into season passholders and 75 have purchased our 12-Pack Booklet, which includes 12 All-Day tickets and 12 All-Day rentals. Over the three years that we have offered the “Continue the Fun” packages, 250 guest have pruchased the package and 90 people took a follow-up lesson.

## **Mad River Mountain, Ohio**

### *Master the Mountain*

**Contact:** **Samantha Rufo**, Director of Sales & Marketing  
(937) 599-1015, ext. 211  
srufo@skimadriver.com

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#### **Details:**

- ✓ This program offered weekly skiing or snowboarding with a picture pass, lessons, and rental equipment if needed.
- ✓ The foundation of the program was that the group leaders were given incentives to encourage their friends, families, colleagues, and neighbors to join the program.
- ✓ The more people they enlisted the lower the price of the pass, and the more incentives for the group leader.
- ✓ By focusing on this selected group of people, our marketing was extended beyond our traditional avenues. New doors were opened to us in previously unattainable areas including private companies & organizations, selected schools, and government agencies.
- ✓ In addition to the grass roots effort, we targeted new and beginner skiers and snowboarders through some traditional and non-traditional marketing including: direct mail, POS in off site locations (ski shops, schools), internet, and collateral materials.

#### **Results:**

Some of the key results from this program included a ski/snowboard participant increase of 110% with a dollar increase of 117% from our record 99/00 season. We considered these numbers and the positive community feedback a success. We helped numerous people get comfortable with the sport and hopefully encouraged them to come back in the future. By providing a leadership role to our customers we were able to direct them to action, guiding them through all the steps to make it on the slopes.

## Chestnut Mountain Resort, Illinois

**Contact:**     **Stewart Stoffregen**, Marketing Director  
                  (815) 777-1320  
                  stewart@chestnutmtn.com

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### *Season Pass Appreciation Night*

**Details:**

- ✓ Discounted food and drink specials
- ✓ Live entertainment that night
- ✓ Free group lesson for pass holder
- ✓ Can bring a friend along & that friend can receive Lift, Lesson, and Ski Rental for only \$15 or Lift, Lesson, and Snowboard Rental for only \$21 anytime after 4:00pm. (One friend per pass holder)
- ✓ Receive one entry into a nightly give-away drawing and a chance to be entered in the Grand Prize Monthly Drawing (Must be present at drawing to win)

**Results:**

Measured through our ticketing system and will be calculated at the end of the season.

### *Late Season Pass Sale*

**Details:**

- ✓ Starting February 19, 2001 to end of ski season
- ✓ Passes are on sale now for \$200 (Regularly \$300)
- ✓ Passes are valid for the remainder of the 2000/2001 season and all next season too

**Results:**

Measured through our ticketing system and will be calculated at the end of the season.

## Blue Mountain Ski Area, Pennsylvania

**Contact:** **Sandy Harlan**, Marketing Manager  
(610) 826-7700, ext. 210

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### **Details:**

- ✓ For the past two years, we've aggressively targeted the college market by offering a \$10.00 off lift ticket with college I.D. Monday through Friday (non-holiday)

### **Results:**

We know it's working by the number of college students asking for the discount.

## **Vail Resorts Inc., Colorado** *PEAKS at Vail Resorts*

**Contact:** **Katie Veine, Manager**, Direct Marketing  
(970) 845-5700  
kveine@vailresorts.com

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### **Details:**

- ✓ Program features include free membership, Resort Charge privileges, point earnings, accrual and redemption and added benefits such as discounts on pre-purchased, multi-day lift tickets.
- ✓ Members earn PEAKS points every time they purchase lift tickets, equipment rental, ski or snowboard lessons, dining, lodging, car rentals and more.
- ✓ Each PEAKS membership can have up to eight members, which encourages entire families to participate.
- ✓ Certificates can be redeemed for awards such as free lift tickets, ski or snowboard lessons, \$50 off dining or lodging (more than 80% redeem for lift tickets).
- ✓ It is a year-round program offering point earnings and redemption for summer and winter activities.
- ✓ Members can apply for a PEAKS Visa card on which they earn 2 PEAKS points for every dollar spent.

### **Results:**

Enrollment doubled from 1997 to 2000 and consistent growth is expected this season. Point earnings have more than doubled from 1997 to 2000. Cost savings due to more targeted marketing as a result of member data capture.

## **Mountain Creek Resort, New Jersey** *Incredibly Perfect Offer Program*

**Contact:** **Ryan Hartigan**, Internet Marketing Manager  
(973) 827-2000, ext. 509  
rhartigan@mountaincreek.com

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### **Details:**

- ✓ A direct mail piece was sent to a targeted segment of our previous pass and Creek Card (frequency card) holders in early fall. Shortly, thereafter, the program was made available for sale online at MountainCreek.com.
- ✓ To qualify, one team leader had to assemble a group of an additional five people to purchase passes. The 6<sup>th</sup> pass was free.
- ✓ This translated to an average savings of \$49/pass for participants. Rates for midweek/twilight passes started at a savings of \$100/pass.

### **Results:**

Season pass sales for this season hit 13,500, an increase of nearly 400% over the previous season. Secondary results of this campaign included nearly doubling the size of our email newsletter subscribers through the ordering process.

## **The Canyons, Utah**

### *Utah Honor Roll Season Pass Program*

**Contact:** **Heather S. LaPerle**, Director of Marketing  
(435) 615-3321  
hlaperle@thecanyons.com

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#### **Details:**

- ✓ Junior high and high school students who achieve honor roll status may purchase an Honor Roll Season Pass at a special price.
- ✓ This season Summit or Wasatch county students could purchase the honor roll pass for \$45, and a student from anywhere else in Utah could purchase it for \$99.
- ✓ In partnership with local schools, we promote the pass at the beginning of the school year so students will work toward honor roll status.

#### **Results:**

This year we have begun to hear anecdotal information from our college sales reps that freshman college students who had skied three years on honor roll passes in high school were now choosing to commit more than \$300 to buy a college pass. We anticipate that this will continue and the kids who were once honor roll students and became committed college skiers will continue to ski or ride as working adults.

## Snowshoe Mountain, West Virginia

**Contact:**     **Joe Stevens**, Communications Director or  
                  **Kelly Stern**, Executive Producer  
                  (304) 572-5636

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### Details:

- ✓ In recent years Snowshoe has invested in video production facilities on the mountain and this year purchased a satellite truck.
- ✓ With the video production capabilities and the satellite, Snowshoe has been able to send video to media outlets throughout the Southeast and to national networks.
- ✓ Snowshoe has produced its own stories on resort expansion, ski safety, adaptive skiing and weather.
- ✓ Snowshoe submitted relevant holiday footage (Santa, Thanksgiving turkey on skis) that aired on The Weather Channel, ESPN and others.

### Results:

These submissions and others led to one of Snowshoe's best Decembers ever and enable the resort to beat the budget for March.

## Bear Mountain Resort, California

**Contact:** **Greg Ralph**, Dir. Of Marketing  
(909) 584-0203  
gralph.bm@boothcreek.com

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### Details:

- ✓ Adequate beginner terrain (50+ acres, nine runs, one surface Poma, one Magic Carpet, one triple chair and one high-speed detachable quad) to serve approx. 700-800 people in one day
- ✓ At the base of the mountain is the Learning Center where first timers are directed to tickets, rentals and lesson vouchers
- ✓ After the Learning Center guests are directed to zone #1, the shuttle loading area where there are benches and sections of turf type carpeting. While waiting for the shuttle, beginners are taken through dryland training (how to put on the equipment, balance on the equipment and do some basic sliding). The shuttle takes beginners to the top of the beginner terrain to learn basic skills before riding a chairlift.
- ✓ Separate drop off areas for skiers/boarders
- ✓ The snowboard Smart Terrain in zone #2 is a flat area made to enhance the basic front foot in binding skating skill and walking balance. It also has a gentle rise to simulate an unloading ramp at the top of a lift
- ✓ Zone #3 has a slight decline to help facilitate sideslipping on the heel edge
- ✓ Zone #4 is groomed as a 'baby half pipe' that allows the guest to easily go back and forth on the heel edge (zone #4 is also where the guest learns to slightly shift their weight on the board and start to feel the turn)

### Results:

Through March 1, 2001, we have sold 19,008 first timers lift, lesson and rental packages and 4,427 have redeemed their bounce back coupon (a 23 percent retention rate). Thirty nine percent of the skiers and 16 percent of the boarders have used their bounce back coupon. These numbers compare to 26 percent skier and seven percent boarder for the 1999-2000 season.

## Winter Park Resort, Colorado

### *365WP Love Your Mountain*

**Contact:**     **Joan Christensen**, Communications Director  
(970) 726-1565  
joan\_christensen@mail.skiwinterpark.com

#### **Details:**

- ✓ This is a multi-faceted program that was created to link employee recognition with the resort's current marketing messages that include: "Is it wrong to love a mountain?"; "Endless Summer, no thanks"; and "Go to your happy place"
- ✓ The name of the program – 365WP – is a reference to the resort's annual snowfall average of 365 inches, as well as loving the mountain 365 days a year.
- ✓ The scope is company-wide and involves all departments.
- ✓ Employees who consistently motivate, support and inspire their co-workers are recognized for their positive influence on the resort's culture with t-shirts and ball caps with the 365WP logo and messages.
- ✓ Each week an employee is featured on the daily snow report with a brief statement why they live and work in Winter Park and it is their "happy place."
- ✓ The employee newsletter feature a profile on a a selected 365 WP employee that describes how Winter Park feeds their passion for the mountains and why is remains their "happy place."

#### **Results:**

The evidence of the succerss of this program is apparent to anyone visiting the resort. Employees are more upbeat, positive and enthusiastic than in previous seasons. Morale has been higher, employee retention is higher, guest compliments have been more frequent, guest complaints have declined and skier visits are up this season.

## Wintergreen Resort, Virginia

**Contact:**     **John Kirchner**, Ski Area Manager  
                    (804) 325-8055  
                    johnkirchner@wintergreenresort.com

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### *Learn-to-Ski or Learn-to-Ride Program*

**Details:**

- ✓ Complimentary learn-to-ski or learn-to-ride lesson offered with every rental
- ✓ Program in its 16<sup>th</sup> year

**Results:**

This season to date we have taught 11,500 learn-to-ski lessons and 4,100 learn-to-ride lessons.

### *Multiple Visit Program*

**Details:**

- ✓ Offered through individual elementary, junior high and high schools, both public and private
- ✓ Average cost is \$25.00 per visit (includes lift, rental and lesson)
- ✓ Participants ski and ride with same instructor each visit

**Results:**

This season 22 different schools have participated, with an average of four visits per school. There have been 682 participants, with a total of 2,786 visits. Twenty schools are repeat customers with several going back ten or more years.

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*Wintergreen Resort con't.*

### *Multiple Visit Program*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ Offered for college students
- ✓ \$139.00 for five-visit program (includes lift, rental and lessons)
- ✓ Earns credit for P.E. class

#### **Results:**

Six colleges and universities participate so far. There are 624 individual participants. Forty percent of the participants are new skiers or riders.

## Alpine Meadows Ski Resort, California

**Contact:** **Greg Relsch**, Director of Sports Services  
(530) 581-8202  
skialpinedirski@telis.org

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### Details:

- ✓ Use of short carve skis
- ✓ Terrain enhanced beginner terrain
- ✓ Data base for beginner visits
- ✓ Direct mail repeat offer 2 for 1

### Results:

Direct mail post card for repeat visit. We are just starting to see the postcards being redeemed (2/28/01). We hope to see by the end of March some significant results.

## **Holiday Valley, New York** *NYS Learn to Ski 1-2-3*

**Contact:** **Jane Eshbaugh**, Director of Marketing  
(716) 699-2345, ext. 4004  
jeshbaugh@holidayvalley.com

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### **Details:**

- ✓ State-wide program supported by NYS Dept. of Economic Development
- ✓ Extensive print and TV ad campaign using tourism \$s
- ✓ \$79.95 for three sessions including lift, lesson and rentals
- ✓ Third session includes all area lift ticket and is good at any participating NYS area
- ✓ Database of all participants made available to areas for next season's direct mail campaign

### **Results:**

Coupons are redeemed—skiers must put name and address on coupons and we track them. As students complete third session they are offered a “Strive 4-5” package of two more rentals, lessons and all area lift tickets for \$79.95.

## **Suicide Six, Vermont** *Novice Nirvana*

**Contact:** **Chuck Vanderstreet**, Manager  
(802) 457-6661  
email@woodstockinn.com

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### **Details:**

- ✓ For \$40.00 per person you receive a group ski lesson, rental equipment, ticket to beginner area
- ✓ Bring in the ad and receive an additional mid-week lift ticket to come back and practice

### **Results:**

Hundreds of customers have turned in the newspaper ad.

## **Park City Mountain Resort, Utah** *Legacy Ski and Ride Program*

**Contact:**     **Laura Murphy**, Marketing Director  
                    (435) 647-5443  
                    lauram@pcski.com

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### **Details:**

- ✓ Free never-ever lesson, lift ticket, and rental offer open to all students K-age 18 in the state of Utah
- ✓ Pre-registration require for participation
- ✓ 4,400 children per year exposed to skiing/boarding
- ✓ Follow-up offer for a group lesson/lift ticket/rental package for participant and immediate family members for \$10.00 per person with \$50.00 cap
- ✓ Follow-up offer for \$99.00 season pass to “Legacy Kids”

### **Results:**

4471 children taught during the 99-00 season; 4259 children taught during the 00-01 season; 14% redemption rate of bounce back offer; participants from 56 Utah cities and towns.

## Smugglers' Notch Resort, Vermont

**Contact:**    **Larry Edelson**, Ski & Ride Division Manager  
(802) 644-1129  
ski-ride@smuggs.com

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### Details:

- ✓ One day First Timer Program for \$49.00 (includes beginner mountain lift ticket, rental equipment, and one-hour group lesson)
- ✓ Three day program for \$99.00
- ✓ First day free through numerous promotions; participants encouraged to upgrade to the three day program for \$49.00 (giving them an additional two days for the price of one)
- ✓ At the completion of the three day program, we offer discounted rates on passes and badges

### Results:

We have not yet analyzed the success of this program. It seems popular, the progression is easy and we've received several positive comments.

## Crystal Mountain, Washington

**Contact:** **Stacy Schuster**, Dir. Of Sales and Marketing  
(360) 663-3011  
stacy@skicrystal.com

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### Details:

- ✓ \$39.00 for a first time package which includes a four-hour instruction, equipment rental and lift ticket
- ✓ After purchasing the package participants are eligible to purchase three more two-hour packages for only \$99.00

### Results:

Considered a success—final numbers not in, but we've sold approx. 184.

## Arapahoe Basin Ski Area, Colorado

**Contact:** Leigh Hierholzer, Dir. Of Marketing and Sales  
(970) 496-7067  
leighh@dundeerealty.com

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### Details:

- ✓ Take three lessons starting with a beginner lesson and after the third lesson receive a free season pass valid for the remainder of the 2000-2001 season
- ✓ Amount paid for the three lessons must be equal or greater than the retail cost of the season pass (retail \$149.00)
- ✓ Coupon is not valid in conjunction with any other coupon or discount offer (limit one season pass per offer, no resale of coupon or pass allowed)
- ✓ \$29.00 learn to ski or board package available Sunday through Friday, Jan. 1-Feb. 15, 2001 (adult or child package available, includes beginner hill lift ticket, recreational rentals and two-hour lesson available at 10 a.m.)
- ✓ Advertised on A-Basin website, CSCUSA and Gems websites (also on Front Range radio)

### Results:

Sold 213 \$29.00 lessons for a revenue \$6,119.00. Twelve season passes have been earned as of March 15, 2001 (a 5.6 percent conversion rate).

## **Inland Northwest Ski Association, Washington** *EZ Ski/Ride 1-2-3*

**Contact:** **Tom Stebbins**  
(509) 466-0510  
info@ski-inlandnorthwest.com

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### **Details:**

- ✓ This three-visit lesson program enabled skiers to go to any of the participating mountains – 49 North, Lookout Pass, Mt. Spokane, Schweitzer, Silver Mountain.
- ✓ The print collateral focused on taking the first-timer through the entire process of their first experience on the slopes. This included a web-site or on-mountain reservations system, e-mail confirmation system, directions to each mountain and their respective parking areas, where to find the ski school office at each mountain, how to dress, etc.
- ✓ The entire media budget of \$30,000 was spent on outdoor and television advertising.
- ✓ The program had exactly the same elements at each mountain thus making it easy to promote and eliminating consumer confusion.

### **Results:**

Total packages sold at all mountains – 2,171.  
Total revenue at all mountains - \$151,948.30  
Total promotional cost - \$48,586

## Loon Mountain, New Hampshire

**Contact:**     **Dave Anderson**, Dir. Of Marketing  
                  (603) 745-6281, ext. 5517  
                  danderson.lm@boothcreek.com

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### **Details:**

- ✓ Coaches are committed to having all beginners able to take the gondola to the summit and ski or board down during their first day (if they are not able then they can come back for a free Intro Lesson)

### **Results:**

Total Intro Package Participants: 4,419 (compared with 4,165 for the entire of last season). Number who returned for free additional instruction: 782 or 13.2 percent. Number who upgraded to \$63.00 Mountain Class Package after first day: 2 percent. Out of the 4,419, 853 or 18.8 percent returned to Loon this season.

## **Sierra-At-Tahoe, California** *Come Back Program*

**Contact:** Tracy Owens Chapman  
(530) 659-7453, ext. 130  
tochapman.st@boothcreek.com

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### **Details:**

- ✓ All first-time adult lesson participants are invited to come back for a second lesson via a “come back” coupon that is personally handed to each beginner by their instructor at the end of their first day.
- ✓ The coupon offers a second day of learning that includes rental equipment, lift ticket and instruction for \$39, effectively making the total cost of the two-day learning package \$99.
- ✓ The coupon requires participants to enter their name, e-mail address and postal address for redemption. This information is added to a database and they are sent a follow-up letter with an additional coupon inviting them back for a third experience, offering a another discount of \$20-off for a learning package.
- ✓ The coupon also lists the name of the participant’s initial instructor. The instructors receive a \$5 bonus on their paycheck for every coupon redeemed.

### **Results:**

Year to date, the Snowsport School has experienced a 29% retention rate, far exceeding the relatively flat industry average.

## **Mt. VanHoevenberg Nordic Ski Center, New York** *Trailmarkers*

**Contact:** **Rebecca Dayton**, Ski School Director  
(518) 523-2811  
vanhoxc@capital.net

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### **Details:**

- ✓ Every 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class in the local athletic sections (approximately 7,500 square-miles) is offered a day of free skiing, including a trail pass, equipment rental and ski instruction.
- ✓ The program offers the free day on any school day from January to March.
- ✓ Schools are allowed to bring up to 50 students per day, as well as teachers, administrators and chaperones.
- ✓ To encourage students and their parents to return, a marketing packet was handed out to each participant, which included a free trail pass for any child who returned with a parent in addition to literature about the sport, the local programs and all the Olympic venues.

### **Results:**

The results after two years are encouraging. The program expanded by more than 50 % in its second year. This season, participation increased to 1,100 students, school staff and chaperones. 20 schools visited over 25 days.

## **Mount Sunapee, New Hampshire**

### *Get Into Skiing/Boarding*

**Contact:** **Dyke Shaw**, Director of Marketing  
(603) 763-2356, ext. 160  
dshaw@mtsunapee.com

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#### **Details:**

- ✓ The program includes an introductory ski or snowboard lesson, rental of new short-shaped skis or a state-of-the-art snowboard and unlimited use of the South Peak beginner area for the day.
- ✓ The cost for the first lesson is \$49. After completing the first lesson, the guest has the opportunity to purchase another two lessons with rentals for \$50, thus the three-lesson package is \$99.
- ✓ To market the program, we formed a unique alliance with Gordon's Pies – now the “Official Pie of Mount Sunapee.” Gordon's Pies can be found in every supermarket chain in New England.
- ✓ The relationship with Gordon's has become so strong that for the upcoming season Gordon has created new packaging for his pies. One panel will be allocated to Mount Sunapee to communicate the chance to get involved in winter alpine recreation. Gordon estimates that more than 2.4 million pies will be sold in the coming year.

#### **Results:**

Through our new program and increased advertising promotion with Gordon's Pies and other companies, we are tracking an increase of about 27% in “Get Into Skiing” and about 30% in “Get Into Boarding.” Additionally, we are seeing high returns on the second and third repeat lessons that are helping to establish new clientele who are now invested in Mount Sunapee and the winter recreational experience.

## **Ski Gold Mountain, California**

**Contact:**    **Pat Fox**, Hill Manager  
(530) 836-2317

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### **Details:**

- ✓ Process of continuing historical longboard races program
- ✓ Developing on additional historical events of the pioneer ski days at Eureka Mountain and Plumas County

### **Results:**

Increased racers, public, and area improvement due to change of operations from last year.

## Attitash Bear Peak, New Hampshire

**Contact:** John Urdi, VP Marketing & Sales  
603-374-2368  
jurdi@attitash.com

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### *Three Day Learn to Ski and Ride Experience*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ Three days of experience to get comfortable with the sport.
- ✓ Price break – they save \$55 when buying all three days up front or even by upgrading after the first day.
- ✓ A Rossignol backpack full of goodies for them to take home.
- ✓ A coupon good for \$150 off a complete beginner ski or snowboard equipment package.
- ✓ When a guest completes the three-day experience between 2/25/01 and 3/25/01, they receive a pass good at all American Skiing Company New England resorts for the remainder of the season.
- ✓ Special offers to return to the resort on both clinic packages and lodging.

### *Prime Time Pass*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ One-time offer of the \$199 Prime Time Pass.
- ✓ The pass was available for sale from 2/17/01 through 3/18/01 and valid 2/25/01 through the end of the season at all of the American Skiing Company New England resorts.

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### *Season Pass "Bring a Friend" Program*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ When one of our existing season pass holders introduce a new passholder to us who has not had an American Skiing Company pass within the past two years, we will give the existing passholder a \$100 break on their pass.

### *Perfect Turn Multi-Week Youth Ski Program*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ This program offers very reasonably priced skiing and riding opportunities to middle and high school aged children in the Boston area, Sea Coast, Southern New Hampshire and Southern Maine.
- ✓ The program rewards frequency with more attractive pricing as well as an additional free day when payment is made before December 1 of that season.
- ✓ Skiers and riders participate in a five-week program and can come back mid-week or on Saturday or Sunday (pricing breaks for midweek and Sunday are greater than Saturday, which is peak time). Those paying before December 1 also receive a sixth week free as a bonus.
- ✓ Vouchers are issued if the participant misses sessions so that they can come back with their family.
- ✓ The program includes deeply discounted lift tickets, rental equipment and lessons to encourage parents to register their kids.

### *Sprint Perfect Turn Discovery Center*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ In 1999 we built the Discovery Center to encourage and develop skiers and riders. The facility itself is state-of-the-art and designed to eliminate the perceived hassle of learning to ski and ride.
- ✓ From the multi-station registration areas to the "pods" where guests meet their instructors and are fitted for equipment to the theater where high-energy snowsport videos are shown and the couches and fireplaces after the lesson, the learn to ski process has been made hassle-free, convenient and more fun.

#### **Results:**

Our retention rate has increased to nearly 30%.

## Crystal Mountain Resort, Michigan

**Contact:** **Karyn Thor**, Director of Skier Service  
(231) 378-2000, ext 6501  
karynthorr@crystalmtn.com

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### *Get Skiing*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ \$50 Introductory Lesson: includes all area lift and rental, two-hour lesson. Repeat offer mailed to participant within 2 weeks. Offers 50% off next lesson, 50% off all day any day ticket or 50% off all day ski rental. Three repeat visits, one offer per visit.

### *Frequent Slopes Cards*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ 20 lift tickets, completely transferable paid up front. Fill-a-Quad pass is \$199 per person, unlimited pass.

#### **Tracking:**

We ask everyone who takes a lesson if they have taken one here before. This way we are able to track our repeat lessons. It is entered in a place of zip codes in our POS program.

#### **Results:**

The Frequent Slopes Card is very popular with corporations. Fill-a-Quad Pass significantly increased our number of pass holders. No measurable results yet.

After on year of our tracking program, we were able to say that 46% of our lesson participants have taken a lesson with us before.

## Marshall Mountain, Montana

**Contact:** **Bruce Doering**, General Manager or  
**Rick Heilman**, Marketing Director  
(406) 258-6000  
ski@marshallmountain.com

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### Details:

- ✓ Created one of only three adaptive ski-learning programs for the physically impaired within our ski school.
- ✓ Created an agreement with Lost Trail ski area to accept our season passes and vice versa at no extra charge to season pass holders for either ski area for this season to boost sales of on hill amenities such as concessions, gift shop sales, ski school programs, rental shop revenues etc.
- ✓ Created a program for the implementation of a snowboard terrain park and features including an operations and training manual, a hiring manual, incident and maintenance reports and an environmental impact statement.
- ✓ Expanded seasonal operations to extend into spring, summer and fall months by implementing mountain biking opportunities, a mountain boarding school, concerts and festivals and a summer adventure camp.
- ✓ Implemented trade agreements to stimulate client based growth via unutilized television advertising.
- ✓ Expanded the Marshall website to include all areas of operations.

### Results:

Skier counts for the ski season are up by 6000 people, season pass sales have improved by 20% and web site activity was up over 5000 hits beyond last winter season. Overall, we are experiencing the best season in five or six years.

## Snowbird Ski & Summer Resort, Utah

**Contact:**     **Bob Black**, Director of Mountain Operations  
                  (801) 933-2133  
                  bblack@snowbird.com

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### *Return to Ski (offered Saturday and Sunday)*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ \$50 intermediate to advanced skiing package includes one-day lift ticket, class lesson and shaped ski demo.
- ✓ This program attracted an average of 30 people per day, mostly locals from the Salt Lake Valley.

### *Evening Return to Ski (offered twice a week)*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ Free night skiing, shaped ski demo and carving/shaped ski pointers from instructors on Chickadee beginner slope (did not include boot or pole rental). Manufacturers such as Dynastar and Rossignol provided much of the demo equipment and were on hand to advise, etc.
- ✓ This program attracted as many as 100 people per evening.

### *Evening Learn to Ski or Snowboard (offered twice a week)*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ \$30, 2.5-hour program includes lift ticket, equipment rental and instruction
- ✓ This program attracted 10-40 participants per night with a 3-1 ratio of snowboarders to skiers.

### *Other Programs*

- ✓ Local youth programs included incentives and discounts for families to return to Snowbird at a later date or have family lesson participation during youth programs.
- ✓ Snowbird also offered packages that included shaped demo skis, instruction and lift tickets.

### **Results:**

These programs attracted mainly local (Salt Lake Valley) skiers and snowboarders. Predicting attendance and weather were two of the most consistent obstacles with the above programs. Snowbird also offered free night skiing/snowboarding throughout much of the season as an added value/après ski activity to our lodging guests.

## **Sugar Bowl, California** *Fast Track Program*

**Contact:** Bill Hudson, Marketing Manager  
(530) 426-672  
bhudson@sugarbowl.com

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### **Details:**

✓ First timers, learning to ski or snowboard is easy with the Fast Track Program. This intro to snow sports package includes a 2-hour lesson, rental equipment and lift ticket good on 6 lifts, including: Jerome Hill, Christmas Tree, Nob Hill, Meadow, Iman's tow and White Pine. Present your Fast Track ticket for \$15 off any future purchase of a Fast Track or All Mountain Package ('00-'01 season only). Adult ...\$59 Young Adult.... \$49

### **Results:**

We will have results at the end of the season.

## **Greek Peak Mountain Resort, New York** *Mountains of Fun First-Time Learn to Ski or Ride Program*

**Contact:** **Gayle Kryger**, Director of Marketing  
(800) 955-2754  
greekpeak@lightlink.com

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### **Details:**

- ✓ Affordable pay as you go three times (each visit includes rental and lesson)
- ✓ Promoted through strategic partners McDonalds, Dick's Clothing and Sporting Goods Stores, and all local ski shops (coupons obtained can be redeemed at any one of three local resorts)
- ✓ Supported by Stratton Mountain, VT (providing Stratton lift discounts to participants and a week-long vacation prize drawing)
- ✓ Offered every day and night except Martin Luther King Day and Presidents Day
- ✓ Participants receive Kodak One Time Use Cameras
- ✓ A discount voucher for returning for the second visit is sent to the participants home
- ✓ After the third visit participants can purchase a season pass for \$134.00, a savings of \$65.00, OR they can receive a voucher for 50% off lift and rental on a return visit AND Stratton Mountain, VT provides free discount cards which allows them to ski Stratton for 50% off midweek and 25% off weekends and holidays
- ✓ Staff treats "Mountains of Fun" participants like future customers
- ✓ Guest services has desk in lobby to sign in participants, explain the program and answer questions

### **Results:**

Program has been in place since 1993. To date we have had 60,000 participants. A high percentage of current Greek Peak Mountain Resort season pass holders are former Mountain of Fun participants.

## Jiminy Peak, Inc., Massachusetts

**Contact:** **Sally Johnstone**, Director of Sales and Marketing  
(413) 738-5500, ext. 415  
sjohnstone@jiminy.com

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### Details:

- ✓ Website section on [www.jiminypeak.com](http://www.jiminypeak.com) devoted entirely to beginners—what to wear, what to expect, where to go, etc.
- ✓ E-coupon for skiers to receive a free lift ticket when they bring a friend for a GETSkiing program
- ✓ Website linked to [www.getskiing.net](http://www.getskiing.net)
- ✓ Radio commercial played locally to entice new skiers to Jiminy Peak
- ✓ Accessible price: \$49.00 for limited area lift ticket, lesson, and short ski rental (includes money back guarantee that you will learn to turn both ways and to ride a lift)
- ✓ On site signage directs first time skiers to their special rental shop entrance (ski instructors available to answer questions and help fill out forms)
- ✓ New building called the Sugar House built so first time skiers have a special gathering place to meet their instructor, ask questions and get their boots checked (students return to the Sugar House at the end of their lesson)
- ✓ Special information booth in base area
- ✓ All GETSkiing participants receive a GETSkiing card at the end of the lesson which entitles them to purchase a lift, lesson and rental package for \$59.00, a savings of \$21.00 (the fifth lift, lesson and rental package is free)
- ✓ At the end of the lesson we also offer a voucher valid for the second day package—all-mountain lift ticket, lesson and short ski rental—at a reduced price

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- ✓ Email contact maintained with participants (using the Welcome to Winter Fun program by Customers First to contact all first time ski and snowboard renters, not just participants)
- ✓ GETSkiing program started at Jiminy Peak a few years ago as GLM or the Guaranteed Learn to Ski program (brainchild of owner Brian Fairbank and a team of ski school instructors)
- ✓ Program developed around use of short shaped skis (newly available when the program started)
- ✓ All GETSkiing instructors volunteer to teach first time skiers (instructors are some of the best that Jiminy Peak has and are all trained extensively in the pre-season as well as throughout the season so that methods and progressions are consistent from instructor to instructor)

**Results:**

Prior to this year, we tracked participants return visits by offering the second lesson package at a substantial discount at the end of the first lesson. If a student bought the day #2 package, we counted that as a 'return visit.' Our second-day return rate for adults in the GETSkiing program was around 45%. This year, the GETSkiing Card allows us to electronically track participants up to their fourth visit through our ticketing system. To date, 49% of cardholders have made their second visit, and more than 10% have made it to their third or fourth visit. In addition, we survey every participant at the end of his or her lesson. The different categories are always rated higher than 9.5 on a 10-point scale.

## American Skiing Company: East

### Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont

(Western resorts participate in some portions of the program)

**Contact:** **Maggie Loring**, Dir. Of Perfect Turn  
(207) 824-4644  
mloring@ascresorts.com

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#### Details:

- ✓ Mobil promotion: Fill up the tank three times and get a three day learn-to-ski package
- ✓ Participate in the three time experience and after the third time you get a special season pass. Two resorts are also offering discounts on rentals and additional lessons with use of the special season pass
- ✓ Guests who participate in the three time experience are eligible for discounted rates on purchase of ski and snowboard equipment
- ✓ Guests who purchase the three time package receive a coupon book with discounts on resort products, videos, magazines and a commemorative book (new for next season)
- ✓ People-skills are evaluated more highly than skiing skills when hiring new staff
- ✓ All staff must go through relationship-building as a tool for retention training (new and returning staff)
- ✓ Staff meeting and special on-snow training sessions include problem-solving and innovation discussions
- ✓ Trainers specializing in first-time procedures are available to staff during lessons
- ✓ Pros provide technical training on basic stance/alignment issues
- ✓ Pros paid incentives for each lesson taught that purchases the second and third experience (pro return sales and upsell performance is tracked and used for evals.)

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- ✓ Two resorts re-claiming parking spaces for flat teaching terrain
- ✓ Rental product located in learning facility
- ✓ Lessons available throughout the day
- ✓ Pros meet guests in learning facility and help to fit equipment (short video segments shown that introduce clothing, equipment, etc., loaner clothing provided for those unprepared)
- ✓ Videos shown that preview terrain, learning process and future opportunities
- ✓ Guests and pros return to an indoor location where a supervisor helps them to debrief the experience and helps to finalize the next step
- ✓ Guests wear yellow buttons with the Perfect Turn logo on them and their name (resort staff recognize these buttons and offer help and support)
- ✓ All resort orientations feature the program (resort staff who do not ski or ride are encouraged to learn by participating in this program)

**Results:**

We measure the guest retention rate (number of first time guests who convert to three time visits) through the ticketing system. We also are tracking the other products our learn to ski and ride guests purchase (ticketing products only).

# GLM Pro Assessment Sheet

Coach:

Trainer:

Comments/Recommendations:

	PRESENT	STRENGTH	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Welcome</b></p> <p>Personal Greeting Appearance Makes Eye Contact</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Use of Guest's Names</b></p> <p>Smile; Body Language Determine mood of guests Provide "comfort" activity</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Team Building</b></p> <p>Establishes group common ground Communicates competence Shows empathy</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Discovery</b></p> <p>Establishes trust/rapport</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Use of generative/ high gain questions</b></p> <p>Uses logical progression of questions Listens empathetically Makes eye contact; smiles;     uses positive body language Encourages guest; dignify efforts of guest</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Foreshadowing</b></p> <p>Establishes credibility Efficient explanations Purposeful movements Natural language/ body language States Purpose States Process</p> <p><b>States Payoff</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Mini-Summaries</b></p> <p>Training: Examples of     mini-summary statements With guests: Provides a     mini-summary for each     guest at each cycle of     coaching model Involves guest in mini-summary;     encourages guest to speak Natural language/ body language Provides input that is customized     and specific to each guest Handles objections in a positive manner Uses all tools at disposal</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Engagement</b></p> <p><b>Asks for return</b> Summarizes consequences and     payoffs individually Is direct, concise, confident Understands process for upgrade or sale;     makes it easy Celebrates guest's decision</p>			

Component complete for GLM Initial Training \_\_\_\_\_

Component complete for Stage 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Component complete for Stage 2/3 \_\_\_\_\_

## Steamboat, Colorado

**Contact:**     **Jim Schneider**, Director or  
                      **Johanna Hall**, Manager  
                      (970) 879-6111)

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### *Champagne Powder Club*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ Offered weekends Nov. 23, 2000 through Dec. 12, 2000
- ✓ \$29.00 includes one all-day and one half-day clinic, rentals and lifts
- ✓ Participants receive a Champagne Powder Club Card good for 50 percent off next three days of lessons, lifts and rentals with a sixth day of skiing free
- ✓ Promoted locally and on Front Range through radio and newspaper

### *Learn to Ski and Ride Weekends*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ Offered Dec. 2-3, 2000 and Dec. 9-10, 2000
- ✓ \$18.00 includes half-day clinic and lifts
- ✓ \$21.00 includes half-day clinic, lifts and rentals

### *First Timer Clinics*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ Offered daily throughout season
- ✓ All-day and half-day clinics, lifts and rentals packages are available

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### *Preview Lift and Beginner Area*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ Terrain regarded over summer to provide more consistent pitch
- ✓ Fencing and Egress rearranged to provide safer, more user friendly environment and teaching area

### *Sidewinder Magic Carpet Lift*

#### **Details:**

- ✓ Former handle tow removed and replaced with 200' carpet for Kids Vacation Center Skiers
- ✓ Snow graded to more consistent pitch

#### **Results:**

For the first three weekends of the season we had a total of 224 participants and of those 128 went beyond the first two days .



**Steamboat**

Introducing our new

# *Champagne Powder™ Club*

Steamboat's innovative program  
for first time skiers and riders.

Get your friends and family  
members into skiing and  
riding this season with the  
only program to offer \$29

learn to ski or ride weekends  
11/23-12/19. This price includes

lessons, lift and rentals. After your first

lesson, you will receive your next 3 lessons, lifts  
and rentals for 50% off and earn the 6th day of skiing FREE.

Special learn to ski packages for kids too!

*Just bring this flyer to the ski school office  
or call 1-800-299-5017 for details.*

## Northstar-At-Tahoe, California

**Contact:** **Bobby Reader**, Director of Guest Service  
(530) 562-3599  
breader.ns@boothcreek.com

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### Details:

- ✓ Dec. 9-10, 2000 we participated in a regional promotion—"Free For First Timer's" (included free one hour and forty-five minute ski and snowboard lesson for children and adults with free lift tickets and rental equipment)
- ✓ We use the latest technology of skis and snowboards (Dynastar Agyl, Osin Swivel bindings) designed to make the sports easier
- ✓ Instructors have monetary incentive to maintain a higher retention rate within their group and private lessons
- ✓ New rental facility with an RTP computer system (the first time a guest rents their demographic information is entered and on future visits the guest only needs to provide their name and all information is brought up automatically)
- ✓ We publish weekly ski tips on our web site, many of which focus on beginner and low intermediate skills and offer insider information such as a "first timer" check offering suggestions on everything from proper clothing to safety and tips for getting around the resort
- ✓ Vertical Improvement Program (VIP) is a free lesson program for levels 6-9 skiers and snowboarders ages 13 and older which gives skiers/riders an opportunity to increase their skill level, provides a return avenue for lapsed skiers/riders and gives lower level skiers/riders a goal to work toward
- ✓ By aligning facilities such as the Guest Services Center, indoor changing rooms, lockers and overnight ski and snowboard storage, newcomers to the sports now have an easier time reaching learning areas

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- ✓ We offer “Smart Terrain,” snow that is sculpted in a way that makes learning much easier (significantly large areas of the mountain have been developed for Smart Terrain for all levels of skiers/boarders)
- ✓ The Heads Up Safety Garage is a new center located at mid-mountain in a high-traffic zone. This outlet is used to educate guests on skier/boarder safety, Your Responsibility Code and mountain etiquette. Captain Safety characterizes the Safety Garage and invites people to his zone to share safety tips and win prizes
- ✓ First Time ski and board package was reduced for this season by \$5.00
- ✓ New this year was the Lodge and Learn vacation package (includes two nights' lodging and a First-Timer ski or board package for the first day, and a lift ticket for the second day)
- ✓ “First Timer Offer” letter was mailed to all participants in the \$52.00 lesson package with a bounce back offer for another visit to Northstar (7,000 letters will be sent out over the season)
- ✓ New signage was installed around the resort to better direct beginners to the Snowsports Learning Center

**Results:**

None so far.



NATIONAL  
SKI AREAS  
ASSOCIATION



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