

Marketing your Social Enterprise

Seminar Synopsis:

Do you have an idea for a social enterprise? Maybe you are already working for one but you have a great idea for a new trading arm for your organisation? If so, Marketing Your Social Enterprise will provide an ideal test of these ideas. In a highly participative environment you will be able to assess your ideas and their sustainability while learning a range of marketing and other ideas to help you turn your idea into a reality.



Seminar Objectives:

This two day session was for anyone interested in developing a new social business idea whether this is a start-up social enterprise, a trading arm, or a new product or service.

CWA and the Social Enterprise Academy are working in partnership to deliver three 2 day social enterprise modules as part of the CWA Employability Services Project. These unique two day training opportunities are based on SEA modules and specifically tailored to the needs of Community Woodland groups.

Learning Outcomes:-

- Explore different approaches and ways to carry out market research to assess the need for, and benefits of, your product or service
- Develop your capacity to adapt and develop your plans using our valuable business planning process;
- Reflect on your own skills and confidence in project management and plan for your development as an enterprising manager;
- Use your peers and the highly experienced tutor as a sounding board for your ideas.

Making the most of the location:

Inverness was chosen as a central location (partly due to the time of year and to limit travel distances in case of inclement weather) for this course. Anam Cara (www.anamcara.co.uk) was the setting and proved a good choice.

Tutor:

James Hilder was, until recently, Development Manager for Mull and Iona Community Trust (since its launch in 1998). He has led numerous and varied community run developments including assisting with the setup of North West Mull Community Woodland Company. He is also chair of ABSEN (Argyll & Bute Social Enterprise Network).

The Money Tree Part 2 Report

Anam Cara, Inverness : 23rd – 24th February 2012

Programme:

Thursday 23rd February

10.00am tea, coffee and introductions
10.30am course
12.30pm lunch
1.45pm guided tour of Anam Cara
2.45pm – 4.00pm course

Friday 16th September

9.30am course
12.30pm lunch
1.30pm course
2.30pm – 3.30pm workshop led by Lindsey Kelly, SEA Associate Tutor

Delegates:

- Lorna Schofield Knoydart Forest Trust
- Cath Curd Knoydart Forest Trust / Knoydart Foundation
- Jane Tulloch Assynt Foundation
- Claire Hannah Highlands and Islands Enterprise
- Ariane Burgess Findhorn Hinterland Group
- Ewan Young Ullapool Community Trust
- Henry Fosbrooke Milton Community Woodland Trust
- Jean Barnett Dunnet Forestry Trust
- Diane Oliver Community Woodlands Association



Logistics:

- Course location - The Tufty Top, Anam Cara, Inverness
- Delegate accommodation - Delegates booked their own accommodation and a few met up for dinner in town on the Thursday evening
- Lunch and cakes - Anam Cara

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The Course:

The course was based on the SEA Marketing your Social Enterprise module. The participants looked at the existing products across the groups and discussed how triple bottom line follows through to marketing for social enterprises.

Opportunities for external marketing support were highlighted – The Assynt Foundation recently commissioned 3 days marketing support through HISEZ using their own funds matched by HIE.

Topics covered included research, promotion, new products versus new markets, promotion and branding. It ended with a workshop on selling techniques.



“Fantastic networking with some inspirational marketing advice....along with lovely weather, superb views, secret nooks and crannies, great ambience, delicious food, fine company...what more could we wish for?”

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Anam Cara:

Margaret gave a guided tour of the facilities at Anam Cara. This included the tree nursery, permaculture garden and various buildings, many of which are made from recycled and/or natural materials.



View towards Inverness



The main buildings



The tree nursery



Recycled mash tun



This area started out as a drystone wall training project



En route to the permaculture garden



Tufty Top entrance

Feedback:

10 feedback questionnaires were completed. All 10 felt that the event met their expectations. In terms of the location, organisation, catering and facilities; scores were 'very good' / 'good'.

Delegates attended the course to:

- Develop training company activities (community enterprise)
- Develop forest enterprise- wood fuel sales, milled timber
- To improve marketing and selling
- To develop skills in how to market what we do
- Refresher and updating on marketing techniques; particular applications for social enterprise/ community organisations
- Networking
- To help improve the marketing of my organisation and increase community engagement
- Support and information on existing marketing activities
- Meet kindred spirits, opportunity to learn and grow
- I want to start thinking about product design relevant to woodlands and by seeing how I market helps me see if I actually have a product
- Needed to get some motivation to improve our marketing – to users, pupils, students and community – local and wider.

Delegates felt they gained the following benefits:

- Confidence
- Ideas
- Great information, group experiences good or bad
- Networking
- Lots of ideas and inspiration
- Skills in sales conversations
- Networking – good people and contacts
- Improved marketing knowledge
- Better application of sales techniques
- Some additional ideas for how to raise the profile of my organisation
- Also gave me an overview of how to develop and market new products
- Relevant information, networking and contacts
- Some tools to explore my marketing techniques
- Confidence to move forward with project
- Good ideas from others and excellent exercises to use back at base.

Delegates will use their new skills and experience to go on to:

- Put together a marketing plan and strategy report
- Use in selling woodland products
- Use to promote our organisation, products, services
- Prioritise website development
- Advise client groups; apply to my circumstances (promotion of services and client analysis)
- Apply to own community volunteering
- Apply it to my organisation and pass on information to colleagues
- Apply them to sales and marketing of Glencanisp Lodge

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- Go with the flow.... Run with any inspiration that serves the test of time
- Identify my partners so I can move forward
- Use the exercises with colleagues and directors
- Learn more about website, twitter, facebook etc.

Delegates would like CWA to run further training in:

- More on social media for dummies
- Arts/ crafts ideas
- Sharing between groups – take a pot luck approach
- This was my first CWA event, I'd like hands on training on coppicing
- Collecting tree seed
- Using your woodland as a venue
- Running events
- Getting young people involved
- Volunteer director training

All 10 would recommend others to take part in similar events, because:

- To use time effectively to improve delivery of service or product
- Importance of taking the time to consider/ do marketing activities
- Most community based organisations could probably benefit from improved marketing knowledge and practice
- Gives good overview of how to market a social organisation better
- CWA organisations can develop confidence to put themselves and the woodland service/ products in hearts and minds of people
- Great ideas/ activities we can put into action
- Refreshing delivery

Other general comments included:

- This was my first CWA event – it was well put together and the by-product was the networking among participants
- James was a great trainer because he has relevant life/ work experience so he was able to give examples that illustrated marketing tools and at the same time gave ideas for community woodland products/ services
- It would be good to have this course series with coaching from SEA for implementation in between each one
- Very difficult to find venue
- Great food, especially the giant carrot cake and butternut squash curry
- Bit tricky to find
- James as informative as ever!