



Images from Instagram



## Integrated Marketing Communication Campaign

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# Company Introduction

Kayak Pittsburgh is a project of Venture Outdoors, a non-profit organization that's sole mission is to connect everyone to the beautiful outdoors that Pittsburgh, and this region, has to offer. Venture Outdoors is very interested in providing many different people with the opportunity to explore and enjoy the outdoors. The organization works hard in order to extend this opportunity to all people, regardless of socioeconomic status, heritage, skill level or physical capability (Venture Outdoors, 2015).

Venture Outdoors ' first kayaking season for Kayak Pittsburgh was in 2004. It has two locations. One Kayak Pittsburgh location is 14 miles outside of the city at the North Park Boathouse on North Park Lake in a beautiful park. The other Kayak Pittsburgh location is on the North Shore under the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge and next to the iconic PNC Park in the city of Pittsburgh (Venture Outdoors, 2015). This location offers the appeal of a tourist attraction. It is encouraged that the customer paddle around the Point at Point State Park and take in the breathtaking Pittsburgh city skyline from a unique point of view- from the Allegheny River (Venture Outdoors, 2015). Kayaking is not the only sport that is offered at Kayak Pittsburgh North Shore. This location also provides the opportunity to bike to Point State Park and all throughout Pittsburgh's North Shore. Kayak Pittsburgh North Shore excellently serves the greater Pittsburgh community, which varies in age, race, gender, and skill level.



A project of **Venture Outdoors**

Kayak Pittsburgh serves the Pittsburgh community in versatile ways. It is open to a variety of visitors. A curious tourist can rent a kayak on their own or a group of over 10 people can make reservations to kayak together (Venture Outdoors, 2015). Kayak Pittsburgh also offers group rates in addition to working with student activity organizations at local universities. Venture Outdoors ensures that anyone is able to kayak in Pittsburgh. First, the organization's employees offer free lessons to amateur "yakers", allowing virtually anyone to become well versed in kayaking before hitting the water, whether it's the river or the lake. Second, Venture Outdoors charges competitive and affordable prices at Kayak Pittsburgh, allowing many people to be able to partake in the activities offered regardless of socio-economic status.



Image from Gearsuite.com

# Company Research

## Mission

We are a non-profit organization dedicated to connecting EVERYONE with the outdoors regardless of socio-economic status, heritage, skill level or physical capabilities. By encouraging everyone to participate in outdoor recreational activities, Venture Outdoors promotes the Pittsburgh region's unique natural amenities, highlights its excellent quality of life, fosters a greater appreciation for the environment, inspires an active lifestyle and creates a shared sense of community." (Venture Outdoors, 2015).

## Demographics

Kayak Pittsburgh appeals to all ages and genders. Additionally, Kayak Pittsburgh serves all races and heritages. In fact, having an all-encompassing demographic is part of the project's mission. Venture Outdoors created Kayak Pittsburgh in order to give the Pittsburgh community access to the outdoors.

## Target Audience

Kayak Pittsburgh's target audience is very broad. The organization's mission is to connect everyone to the outdoors. This target audience, of virtually everyone, is successfully reached. This is noted by looking at the 987 posts with the hash tag, "#KayakPittsburgh" on Instagram. Posts are made by a variety of people, young and old, who vary in race and gender (Instagram, 2015).

## Psychographics

Kayak Pittsburgh's values center on physical activity, unity, and healthiness. All of these values are increasingly popular in our city and our country. The values of physical activity and healthiness are regarded as important by a large number of the people in Pittsburgh, which causes them to seek out activities that also hold these values.

Kayak Pittsburgh provides an experience that makes people feel unified and happy while being physically active and healthy. These feelings are what people want out of a social activity today.



## Industry & Industry Trends

Kayak Pittsburgh is involved in the hospitality and entertainment industry. This project that is run by Venture Outdoors provides a source of entertainment to consumers in the form of outdoor activities.

According to a report written by H. Ken Cordell (2012) as a part of the 2010 Resources Planning Act (RPA) Assessment, nature-based activities have experienced a surge in participation within the past 15 years. Nature-based activities are activities that take place in nature or activities that directly involve some element of nature. The opportunities and activities that Venture Outdoors, and specifically Kayak Pittsburgh, offers are all nature-based. Therefore, it is not surprising that Kayak Pittsburgh is a popular attraction in the Pittsburgh area.

## Brand Image and Information Outreach

Kayak Pittsburgh takes a unique and unconventional approach to its brand image. The project depends on the public to contribute to its image. Sharing photos and experiences on social media sites is encouraged. Kayak Pittsburgh has a Facebook page, an Instagram account, and a Twitter account. This social media activity appeals to a youthful audience. In turn, the youthful audience members are attracted to Kayak Pittsburgh by seeing pictures posted by their peers. Kayak Pittsburgh also has a website that is very user friendly and uncluttered. This website does an excellent job at sharing information about pricing, location, and offered services. Websites of this type are attractive to an older audience that may not be active on social media.



GetFitPGH.com

## Public Perception and Satisfaction

By looking to various rating websites, it was found that Kayak Pittsburgh does a great job with satisfying their customers.

Tripadvisor regards Kayak Pittsburgh as one of the Top Boat Tours and Water Sports in Pittsburgh. Kayak Pittsburgh is rated as number 4 out of the top 10 in the area (Tripadvisor, 2015). The Active Cities Pittsburgh website refers site visitors to Kayak Pittsburgh as a good place to find kayaking in the city (Active Cities Pittsburgh, 20105). Yelp users rate Kayak Pittsburgh as the number 1 kayaking attraction in Pittsburgh (Yelp, 2015).



## **Direct Competitors**

Kayak Pittsburgh is not the only kayak rental company in Pittsburgh, which is not surprising since three rivers surround the city. Other companies that provide similar services as Venture Outdoors, through Kayak Pittsburgh, are Just Ducky Tours, SurfsUP Adventures, and the Gateway Clipper Fleet. Just Ducky Tours and the Gateway Clipper fleet are in the same industry as Kayak Pittsburgh because these companies offer entertainment on the water in the city. However, Kayak Pittsburgh stands apart from these companies because it offers a more interactive, physically active experience. Just Ducky Tours and the Gateway Clipper Fleet only feature tours of the city by way of water.

SurfsUp Adventures is more comparable to Kayak Pittsburgh because it offers the opportunity to partake in a water sport. SurfsUP does not offer kayaking. It offers SUP- stand up paddle boarding. Fortunately, Kayak Pittsburgh offers a pretty unique experience compared to its closest competitors.

## **Media Coverage**

Kayak Pittsburgh is featured in articles on About Travel (2015), CBS Pittsburgh (2015), and the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (2014).



# Advertising Analysis

## Kayak Pittsburgh's Current Advertising Efforts

Currently, Kayak Pittsburgh does not advertise in the most conventional ways. There are no commercials, magazine ads, radio commercials, or billboards advertising Kayak Pittsburgh. Instead, Kayak Pittsburgh takes a unique position in marketing and advertising themselves. Venture Outdoors relies heavily on the curiosity of potential consumers in order for their project, Kayak Pittsburgh, to be discovered. For example, if someone wants a water sports experience in Pittsburgh, they may search on rating websites, like About Travel (2015), Yelp (2015), TripAdvisor (2015) and Active Cities Pittsburgh (2015). This is one way that Kayak Pittsburgh finds its way to its audience, or, more accurately, its audience finds their way to Kayak Pittsburgh.

***“Kayak Pittsburgh’s method of advertising is employed for good reason. After contacting Kayak Pittsburgh, the company explained that, as a nonprofit, they have a limited marketing budget.”***

Kayak Pittsburgh also depends heavily on social media. The company promotes itself using Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. On these social media platforms, Kayak Pittsburgh is found in posts made by previous customers with the hash tag, “#KayakPittsburgh”. The company encourages sharing photos and experiences on social media sites. By viewing the posts and pictures made by previous customers, new customers are drawn to this kayak rental facility. Also, Kayak Pittsburgh customers promote the company with self-made videos on YouTube. Kayak Pittsburgh relies on advertisement by word-of-mouth.

In addition to social media, Kayak Pittsburgh relies on their website as a main source in providing the public with information about the company. Promotions, events, pricing, directions, along with other pertinent information is stated clearly on their site (Venture Outdoors, 2015).

Kayak Pittsburgh’s method of advertising is employed for good reason. After contacting Kayak Pittsburgh, the company explained that, as a nonprofit, they have a limited marketing budget. This is why the company focuses so strongly on cost-free social media (Kayak Pittsburgh, personal communication, November 12, 2015).

### Strengths

Kayak Pittsburgh has a very strong following and many mentions on social media platforms. Interest is drawn to Kayak Pittsburgh at no cost to the company through a crowd that is reached by viewing posts made by previous customers. Kayak Pittsburgh tactfully uses social media to display the views that customers are able to see while kayaking, creating a highly visual and inviting advertisement.

### Weaknesses

Unfortunately, Kayak Pittsburgh does not advertise well to new customers. Often times, people become customers of Kayak Pittsburgh after finding the company on a social media platform or signing up along with their peers at their school, university, or club. This is a free way to advertise, however, it requires and depends on the efforts of previous customers. Kayak Pittsburgh has a limited their ability to advertise to people who have not heard of the company or do not have friends that have been Kayak Pittsburgh customers in the past.

*This image is an example of a customer-made YouTube video that advertises and supports Kayak Pittsburgh.*



### Kayak Pittsburgh's Brand Personality: Unique Feature/ Characteristic

Kayak Pittsburgh offers a unique experience: kayaking with a view. Kayak Pittsburgh is the only kayak rental facility on the North Shore. Usually, people gather at the North Shore in Pittsburgh to attend a concert or watch a professional sporting event. At Kayak Pittsburgh, the customer is given the opportunity to become a part of his or her own entertainment. The customer at Kayak Pittsburgh is able to partake in physical activity while enjoying themselves and experiencing the city in a new way- from the water!



# Brand Identity Analysis

## Name

“Kayak Pittsburgh” keeps it simple. It also exposes the values of the company to the potential consumer. *Kayak* is a verb in the present tense form that is associated with the kayaking, a popular sport. It elicits a sense of action. The word *Pittsburgh* is utilized for three reasons. First, it promotes the local atmosphere of the two kayak rental locations. Second, it emphasizes and exemplifies the pride that Pittsburgh residents have for their city. The citizens of Pittsburgh express a high, overall sense of pride for the city’s sports teams, local businesses, and community atmosphere. By employing the word *Pittsburgh*, potential customers will associate this business with the same qualities and values that they attribute to their city. Third, the use of the word *Pittsburgh* is a marketing effort to attract tourists. By using the name of the city in the name of the company, tourists will find it more easily and be more inclined to become customers of this Pittsburgh-based company.



## Logo

The Kayak Pittsburgh logo design is simple, following the name of the company. This simple, clean design promotes the quality of being a natural. This feature is extremely appropriate for a company that promotes outdoor activity. It is also functional in representing Pittsburgh, an up and coming “green friendly” city.

The logo also utilizes the concept of the Point and the three rivers that surround Pittsburgh: the Allegheny River, the Monongahela River, and the Ohio River.





### Signature Colors

The signature colors of Kayak Pittsburgh's brand identity are white, green, and yellow/gold, which are used in the above logo. White is used as a clean, modern base color. Yellow may be used in order to reference Pittsburgh's sports teams' colors of black and gold, which are widely accepted and boasted by the city. Green is used for two reasons. First, the color green is most commonly associated with the outdoors. Venture Outdoors and Kayak Pittsburgh highly promote getting outside and experiencing the nature that this region has to offer. Second, green is the color that is associated with being a responsible, eco-friendly user of resources. Kayak Pittsburgh is a green company.

### Slogan

The company currently has no slogan.

### Fonts

The font that is used in Kayak Pittsburgh's logo is sleek, slim, and modern. All three of these qualities speak to the company's green, eco-friendly nature, as discussed in the section on Signature Colors.



Image from Gearsuite.com

# Creative Brief

## Target Audience

Jenna is an 18-year-old student at the University of Pittsburgh. She wants to make friends and have fun, *Instagram worthy* experiences while away at college.

## Communication Objectives

The audience will

- gain brand awareness
- find, follow, and “like” Kayak Pittsburgh on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook
- feel motivated and able to fill a void in their lives with the happiness and the healthy activity that Kayak Pittsburgh provides
- post pictures of their experiences on social media platforms

## Product Features and Benefits

1. **Feature:** Kayak Pittsburgh provides an experience that is social media ready.  
**Benefit:** Kayak Pittsburgh customers can easily share experiences on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook.
2. **Feature:** Kayak Pittsburgh is the only kayak rental facility on the North Shore and in the city.  
**Benefit:** Kayak Pittsburgh offers a unique experience.
3. **Feature:** Kayaking with Kayak Pittsburgh costs under \$20 per hour.  
**Benefit:** Kayak Pittsburgh offers a fun activity that is affordable.
4. **Feature:** Kayak Pittsburgh offers group rates.  
**Benefit:** Kayaking with Kayak Pittsburgh allows college students to make friends by doing the activity.

## Creative Strategy

- **Customer oriented**
- Focused on the **lifestyle** of a college student seeking fun experiences to share on social media
- **Emotional appeals**  
*slice of life, fantasy, appeals to being social and involved*
- **Rational appeals**  
*price, affordability*

## Tone

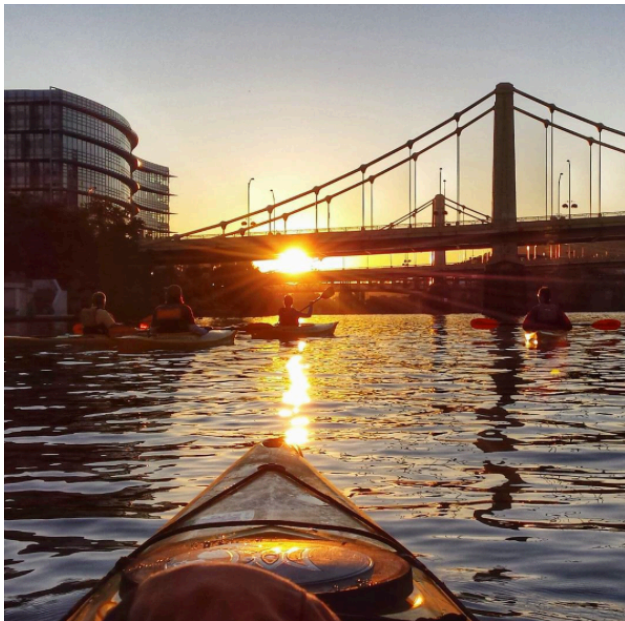
- Compelling, vibrant
- Exciting, one of the best times of your life, fulfilling
- Succinct, punchy, social media ready

## Tagline

# #GetOut



Image from Instagram



## Key Consumer Benefit

**Feature:** Kayak Pittsburgh provides an experience that is social media ready.

**Benefit:** Kayak Pittsburgh customers can easily share experiences on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook.

## Support Statements

**Feature:** Kayak Pittsburgh is the only kayak rental facility on the North Shore and in the city.

**Benefit:** Kayak Pittsburgh offers a unique experience.

**Feature:** Kayaking with Kayak Pittsburgh costs under \$20 per hour.

**Benefit:** Kayak Pittsburgh offers a fun activity that is affordable.



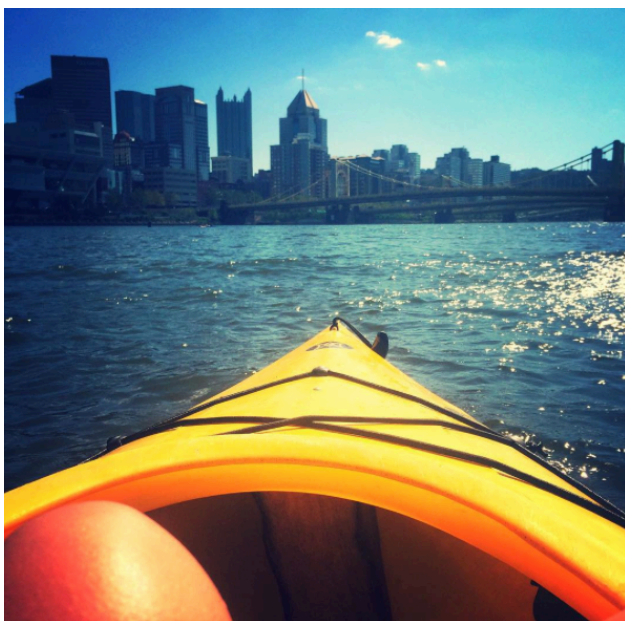
## Positioning of the Product

### Direct Competitors

offer bike rental  
and stand up  
paddleboards  
rental

### Kayak Pittsburgh

offers bike rental in  
addition to being the  
only kayak rental  
facility on the North  
Shore



Images from Instagram



# Major IMC Recommendations

We believe that the Integrated Marketing Communication campaign that we have assembled perfectly aligns with the mission of Venture Outdoors and Kayak Pittsburgh. In order for Kayak Pittsburgh to fully utilize this ad campaign and continue to fulfill its mission, we have some final IMC recommendations moving forward.

Kayak Pittsburgh would benefit greatly from a website renovation. We recommend that the following changes be made to the Kayak Pittsburgh website. First, the website should be made more visually and verbally stimulating (Blakeman, 2015, p. 255). This will require a cohesive theme that incorporates the colors used in the Kayak Pittsburgh logo: green and golden yellow. Second, the website should include more pictures. It is important to keep in mind that the website should not become too graphically-heavy in order to avoid long loading times (Blakeman, 2015, p. 255). However, the inclusion of images taken by customers, which are submitted through social media platforms, will improve the website's interactivity. Adding personal videos and pictures taken by past customers can improve the creditability of the website because it showcases real experiences at Kayak Pittsburgh. It is important to keep in mind that updating the site with new videos and pictures every month can make guests eager to have their own work featured on the site. We also suggest that the Kayak Pittsburgh website also include a widget that follows the hash tag #GetOut on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. This will keep new visitors to the website intrigued by a feed of newly posted pictures.

To greater improve the interactivity of this IMC campaign, we recommend that Kayak Pittsburgh begin a contest for its customers. This contest will be featured on the website. It will encourage those who kayak to take pictures of the awesome photo opportunities that Kayak Pittsburgh provides. Participants will be able to submit their photos into the contest by posting them on social media platforms and using the hash tag #GetOut. Each week, Kayak Pittsburgh can select the best picture and award the winner with a free hour of kayak rental. This will promote the rental company in a low cost way by utilizing user-generated content (Blakeman, 2015, p. 240.)



## Photo of the Week!

Congratulations, Jenna! You have won 1  
free hour of kayak rental!  
Thanks for submitting your awesome  
shot!

Social media is integrated into the print campaign already. We suggest that Kayak Pittsburgh employees further encourage customers to use social media along with the IMC campaign's hash tag. This employment of social media will require monitoring. Kayak Pittsburgh will need to have an intern or an employee consistently update and monitor the company's social media platforms and its hash tag.



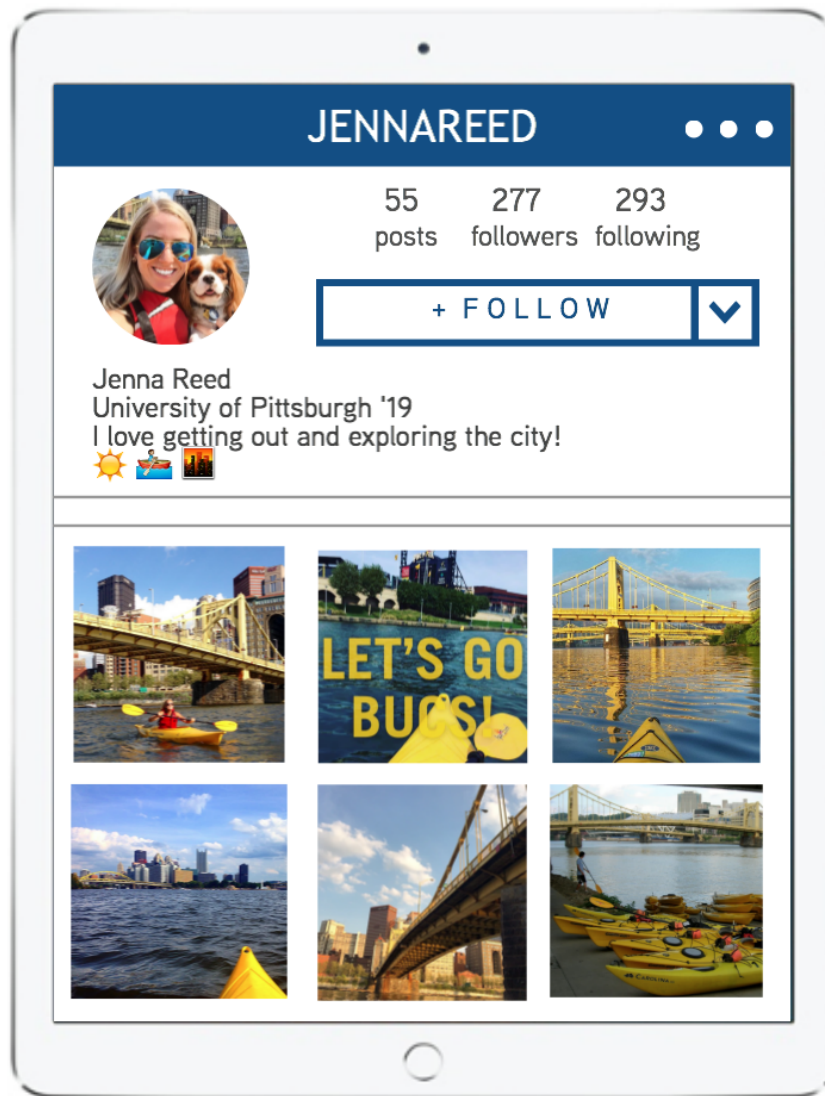
Additionally, we recommend that Kayak Pittsburgh take an alternative approach to marketing. The use of promotional stickers will provide an affordable form of advertisement (Blakeman, 2015, p. 287). College students will get the Kayak Pittsburgh stickers for free after kayaking. These stickers will act as free advertisement by being posted on students' laptops, lockers, dorm room doors and notebooks. On these surfaces, the stickers are plainly visible to other college students who will be exposed to the Kayak Pittsburgh logo and the hash tag. This will lead them to social media platforms. Anytime a student uses his or her possession with the sticker posted on it, brand awareness is created for anyone who sees it. The use of alternative media advertising is perfect for our IMC campaign because it is low cost and highly creative. Alternative media advertising is also very interactive and engaging, which coincides nicely with our social media driven IMC campaign. There are downsides to using alternative media advertisements, i.e. cause clutter and have a short duration; however, these are small deterrents.



Final Advertisement

# KAYAK PITTSBURGH

*So Instagram worthy*



## #GetOut



## Artifacts

### **The Venture Outdoors website**

<http://www.ventureoutdoors.org>

### **The Kayak Pittsburgh website**

<http://www.ventureoutdoors.org/kayak-pittsburgh/>

### **The Kayak Pittsburgh: North Shore website**

<http://www.ventureoutdoors.org/kayak-pittsburgh/kayak-pittsburgh-north-shore/>

### **The Kayak Pittsburgh Instagram**

<https://www.instagram.com/kayakpittsburgh/>

### **The Kayak Pittsburgh Twitter**

<https://twitter.com/kayakpittsburgh>

### **The Kayak Pittsburgh Facebook Page**

<https://www.facebook.com/kayakpittsburgh/>

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