Aquarium Mobile Unit

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Two Oceans Aquarium
Programmes for children

- School Groups
- Enrichment programmes Grade 6 & 10
- Parent and Child Arts and Crafts activities
- Mobile Unit Outreach
Programmes for adults

- Adults doing basic literacy courses
- Teachers training
- Waitron courses
- Tourist guide courses
We aim to change

- Thinking
- Awareness
- Behaviour
- The way aquatic ecosystems are treated
The Outcomes we desire are

- To expose people to the oceans
- To increase our influence amongst the community
- Effect thinking and understanding of the coasts
- Introduce schools to our programmes
- Increase participation in our programmes
Why reach out?

- The need is there and it is very present
- It's part of our vision and our goal
- Entice disinterested people to participate with the coast
- To expose our message to more people
- Reach groups which cannot afford entrance fees
- Market our Environmental Education Centre
- Reach sea side schools
- Improve our visitation bookings
Animal husbandry

- We cannot care for something unless we understand it.
- Overcome fear of animals in children
- Teach about handling of the animals
- Engender a respect and an appreciation for animals
- Develop a sense of wonderment of animals
- Meet the needs of enquiry.
- Display what life supports are required by these animals
Outreach options

- Water conservation
- Fresh water animals
- Marine eco-systems and animals
- Diversity of the Two Oceans
- Invertebrates
Who is the target

- Partners: Marine Educator’s Network
- Teachers
- Coastal communities
- Pre schoolers of the abalone poaching community
Target communities

- City of Cape Town schools
- Sea side schools
- Partners in Science and Technology
- Out door Camps
- Marine week participants
Content we carry

- Travelling touch pool
- A variety of animals
- Examples of different phyla
- Dry exhibits e.g. shark’s jaw
The mechanics

- Salt water sump
- 1 hp pump
- Zeolite scrubber
- Chiller
- Ring main
- Display tanks
- Air supply
What we do?

- Approach key schools/ invite bookings
- Liase with the teacher about pre and post visit activities
- Prepare admin arrangements e.g fax map
- Load animals
- Set up animals in tanks
- Arrange tables for dry exhibits
- Set up video
- Arrange for that teacher support to be in place
Approaches we have tried

- Large numbers of groups 10 at a time at 10 min intervals
- A focused pre and post lesson planning with teacher
- Transferring animals and life support to school’s laboratory
- Video in their library
- Focus sheets
- Interactive questioning methodology.
What have we tried?

- Microscope ✔✔✔
- Face Painting x
- Measuring animals to assess the legal catchable limit ✔✔
- Focus sheets ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔
- Collaborative activities with teachers ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔ ✔
What type of communication

- Lock into the student’s entry levels
- Optimal use of senses
- Enquiry based activities
- Experiential learning
- Questioning approach
- Generate appreciation for animals
Successes we have experienced

- Interactions with collaborative partners
- Interact with teachers before hand and link into their curriculum
- Afternoon workshops with teachers
- Students can be more focused than with a visit to the aquarium
- Outreach builds on our resident programmes
- Less disruptive to the teaching programme.
What works for us

- Transparent containers for passing the animals around
- Smaller groups
- Prior consultation and planning
- Building a relationship with leader teachers
- Using a questioning methodology
- Supporting pictures and posters
- Supporting video clips
Lessons learnt

- Needs in the community are enormous
- Exposure to the sea is often their first ever
- Dry specimens result in a dry presentation
- Hands on activities gives meaning
- Videos need to be linked more closely to the mobile unit
What have we learnt?

- Build relationships
- Key partner school
- Leader teachers
- Interact with the partners
**Downers**

- Rushed children through
- It is physically demanding
- Staff need to be rotated through the position
Future Projects

- Teacher training
- Target sea side communities
- Collaborative partners
- Pre- Aquarium visits
- Marketing
New topics offered

- Assortment of lessons
- I D parts of animals
- Life in the Two Oceans
- Water conservation
- Rocky or Sandy shores
- Our coasts for life
- Mariculture training
- Ecosystems including plants
Costs

- Salary
- Capital outlay
- Transport
- Maintenance
Next Steps

- Appoint new person *Outreach teacher*
- Assess enthusiasms and strengths
- Source new sponsor
- Contingency for maintenance programme
- Redesign bigger and better vehicle
- Teaching aids / pictures and videos to reinforce what we are doing.
- Set up *before* and *after* kits
Difficulties presenting to remote communities

- Costly: - salary, transport, maintenance
- Cultural bias: - fear and instinct to kill the animal
- Literacy levels are low
Multi Cultural Problems

- Language
- Cultural traditions
- Fear of touching animals
- Literacy levels
  - Marine
  - Environmental insight
  - Learning tradition
How do we measure Outcomes

- Pre and post discussions
- Survey guest teachers
- Good relations with leader teachers
- Informal interaction with partner teachers
- Marine Coastal Educators’ Network
- Follow up visits to the Aquarium at no charge
Applying these ideas in other and different areas

- Assess your strengths and play to them
- Research and interact intensively with clients
- Build strong relationships with clients
- Seek out leader teachers
- Build up programmes as a partnership with stakeholders
Let us take you beyond the limits of the coast beyond the depths of your imagination
Help!

How can your experience help us?

- What programmes have you done which are similar?
- How do you think I can learn from you?
- Now it is your turn to speak to me.
- The unit is parked outside for viewing.
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