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Dragon Boat Festival Visitor Study: 2012

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2012 Dragon Boat Festival Visitor Study

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Case Study Report 2012-3

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Introduction

The purpose of this study was to provide the organizers of the first Montana Dragon Boat Festival with an understanding of their attendees and the total money spent by those surveyed in the area (Kalispell, Columbia Falls, Whitefish, Bigfork, and Polson). The population of interest was participants and attendees of the 2012 Montana Dragon Boat Festival. Surveys were completed on-site as well as through a web survey. The final response rate was 395 completed surveys.

Methods

Responses for the survey were gathered in two ways. First, two surveyors were stationed throughout the festival to intercept spectators for on-site completion of a paper survey. Surveys were given to festival goers by random selection so as to attempt to represent the whole population. Surveyors were stationed near parking areas, spectator seating areas, and vendor areas. People willing to fill out the survey were given a clipboard, pen, and a survey and completed the survey on site. No documentation of the number of refusals was recorded.

A second method of data collection involved sending a web survey to participants of the race. An email containing a link to the survey was sent to all email addresses of participants in the race provided to ITRR from the Kalispell Convention and Visitor's Bureau. There were approximately 150 large amount of emails "undeliverable" from the list provided resulting in many participants who could not complete the survey. In both cases, paper and web, the survey consisted of 31 questions (see Appendix C). In total, 395 surveys were completed.

Results

Of the 395 respondents, 66% (249) were from Montana and 34% (126) were from out of state or country (see Table 1). Of those who were from Montana, 56% were from Flathead County while 11% were from other Montana counties. The mean age of respondents was 48.20. The mean group size was 8.86. Of those who responded to the survey, 36% (143) reported that they spent a night or nights away from home. Of those who spent a night away from home, the average number of nights was 3.9. The average number of nights spent in Montana was 3.9 while the mean number of nights spent in the Flathead area was 3.9. Results of all other questions in this survey can be found in Appendix A.

Table 1: Out-of-state/Out-of-country Respondents

Place of Residence	# of respondents
Washington	21
Texas	10
Oregon	6
California	5
Nevada	2
Ohio	2
Alaska	1
Arizona	1
Illinois	1
Pennsylvania	1
Alberta, Canada	67
British Columbia, Canada	1
Ontario, Canada	1

Expenditures

Expenditure information was asked of all respondents. The survey asked that they report their best estimate of the total amount of money they and their family (if applicable) spent in the Flathead area in the following categories: accommodations, food, transportation, retail/services, gratuity, entertainment/recreation, and licenses/entrance fees/admissions.

Table 2 presents the expenditure data of only the respondents who reported spending money in the categories. The mean expenditure of those who spent money for each category can be found along with the percentage of people who reported that they spent money in that category. The last column provides the total dollars spent by respondents who reported spending money in each category. The total reported expenditure for respondents who spent was \$74,929.00

Table 2- Expenditure Data: Expenditures calculated using only respondents who spent

Expenditure Category	Mean expenditures of attendees <u>who reported that they spent money in these categories</u>	% of respondents who reported spending money in each category	Total dollars spent in each category <u>by respondents who spent</u>
Motel/Hotel/B&B	\$231.99	20.0%	\$18,095.00
Campground	\$59.08	3.0%	\$768.00
Restaurant/Bar	\$146.07	30%	\$16,944.00
Groceries/Snacks	\$76.36	15%	\$4,505.00
Gasoline	\$56.67	27%	\$9,880.00
Local transportation	\$188.00	1%	\$127.00
Auto rental	\$238.00	2%	\$1,900.00
Retail goods	\$212.62	20%	\$16,372.00
Gratuity	\$38.76	13%	\$1,977.00
Entertainment/Recreation	\$132.15	8%	\$4,361.00
		TOTAL	\$74,929.00

Appendix A- Results

Dragon Boat Festival Survey

Are you a resident of Montana? **80.0%** Yes **20.0%** No

Was attending or participating in the boat races your primary reason for being in the area?

84% Yes **13%** No

What other reasons were you visiting? (X all that apply)

43% Vacation/recreation/pleasure **4%** Shopping
36% Visit friends/relatives **0%** Business/convention/meeting **0%** Just passing through

During the Dragon Boat Festival, what type of accommodations did you stay in?(X all that apply)

72% Hotel/motel/bed & breakfast **3%** Resort/condominium
10% Home of friend/relative **2%** Second home/condo/cabin
9% Public land camping **1%** Rented cabin/home
3% Private campground

How did you hear about The Montana Dragon Boat Festival? (X all that apply)

48% Word of mouth **6%** Internet **4%** Magazine **1.0%** Retail outlet
32% Group or club **5%** Radio **2%** TV
18% Newspaper **4%** Posters **1%** Magazine
11% Email from event planners **4%** Flyer **<1%** Direct mail

How long ago did you make plans to attend The Montana Folk Festival?

2% Today **12%** 1-7 days ago **18%** 1-4 weeks ago **56%** 1-6 months ago **10%** over 6 months

Please rate your overall satisfaction with the 2012 Dragon Boat Festival.

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	N/A
Organization of the event	64%	28%	5%	0.3%	0.3%	0.0%
Event staff	72%	20%	2%	1%	0.3%	0.3%
Cost of the event	63%	22%	6%	1%	0.3%	4%
Location of the event	83%	12%	2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.0%
Concessions available	54%	29%	7%	4%	1%	2%
Number of people at the event	71%	21%	2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
Parking	42%	28%	16%	6%	2%	2%
Sound system	46%	27%	13%	8%	1%	1%
Variety of activities	46%	33%	14%	2%	0.3%	1%
Signage/directions	46%	32%	13%	3%	1%	0.3%
Cleanliness	66%	24%	4%	1%	1%	1%
Availability of restrooms	51%	28%	10%	6%	1%	1%

What option best describes the group with whom you attended/participated in the Dragon Boat Races?

- 2% *Self*
- 6% *Couple*
- 4% *Immediate family*
- 2% *Extended family*
- 10% *Family & friends*
- 14% *Friends*
- 29% *Business associates*
- 26% *Organized group/club*

Including you, how many people were in your group?

- 2% 1
- 10% 2
- 4% 3
- 5% 4
- 2% 5
- 1% 6
- 1% 7
- 1% 8
- 0% 9
- <1% 10
- 68% *more than 10*

Please indicate what age groups are represented in your group?

- | | | | |
|-----|--------------------|-----|--------------------|
| 3% | <i>0-5 years</i> | 58% | <i>35-44 years</i> |
| 5% | <i>6-10 years</i> | 65% | <i>45-54 years</i> |
| 6% | <i>11-17 years</i> | 56% | <i>55-64 years</i> |
| 24% | <i>18-24 years</i> | 23% | <i>65-74 years</i> |
| 49% | <i>25-34 years</i> | 2% | <i>75 and over</i> |

What best describes your annual household income in US dollars?

- 4% *Less than \$20,000*
- 12% *\$20,000 to 39,999*
- 15% *\$40,000 to 59,999*
- 14% *\$60,000 to 79,999*
- 11% *\$80,000 to 99,999*
- 12% *\$100,000 to 149,999*
- 5% *\$150,000 to 199,999*
- 4% *\$200,000 and over*

Appendix B- Open-ended Responses

Question 29: Please tell us what you liked about The Montana Dragon Boat Festival.

A wonderful event at a primo location
a wonderful event for participants and spectators, like the access to see and be a part of flathead lake lodge for locals and visitors. such a fun event for the VALLEY
Absolutely loved coming to your festival. Very well organized for the first year. You should be so proud!
Activities, food, races, people
ALL THE PEOPLE! THERE WERE SO MANY TEAMS HAVING FUN WITH THIS. IT WAS NEAT TO SEE EVERYONE DRESS UP AND HAVING FUN. THE DRAGON BOATS WERE SO FUN AND EVERYONE WORKING TOGETHER AT HAVING FUN.
almost all of it
Amazing event!
As a participant, it was one of the most fun things I have ever done. It was a great opportunity to socialize with my colleagues outside of work and my son was part of our team, as well. The venue was gorgeous. And it rocked that we did so well as a first year team!
Atmosphere and friendly spirit.
Awesome event...something different ! Great Location and spirit !
Awesome location, very friendly people. Nice clean water. Great food choices
awesome people from all walks of life. Chad and his dad were great. The competition
Awesome venue, friendly vendors, great atmosphere.
Beautiful environment..
Beautiful location and very nice weather
Beautiful location
Beautiful location and fantastic volunteers
Beautiful location friendly people nice variety of vendors I was very impressed with the organization and thoroughly enjoyed the event.
Beautiful location, and one couldn't have ordered better weather. Good variety of food and drink stalls... Retail vendors too. It seemed there was lots of parking, though I arrived very early and don't know what parking situation later arrivals encountered. Surprisingly well organized for a first time event.
beautiful location, getting to the marshaling, easy access to watch the race, very helpful staff, vendors were great, awesome food choices.
Beautiful location, great vendors, good food selection
beautiful location, setup very well
beautiful location. the marina was so perfect. wonderful people. good vibe. well organised. loved our steerers! and instructors! they were very nice/patient/ and had good experience which was needed for us who were first timers.
Beautiful Lodge site. Paddling on Lovely water. Everybody seemed to be having a good time. And I really had a good time too.
Beautiful pleasant location, fun event
Beautiful setting
Beautiful site. Great atmosphere.
Beautiful spot. Beautiful boats. Colorful participants.
Beautiful venue and tons of fun racing.

Beautiful venue, close to get to, great views of race
Beautiful venue, great organization done, great volunteers
Beautiful venue, very helpful & friendly people. The volunteers were great! Thanks for organizing a bus to come back for us after the races! Very nice to have bus shuttle out to the site (see note below about bussing after the races)
Beautiful venue.
Beautiful venue. Very friendly people. Lake is fantastic.
Boats were the best! Beautiful day.
Brought together canoers I knew over the last 50 years. Found out how awesome our family and friends were in the races. Great community participation and organization.
Camaraderie of participants- great team building atmosphere
Color, people, racing, setting was great, camaraderie
Camaraderie, well organized
Community event that did not cost \$ to view/enjoy. Broad spectrum of our population base was represented. There was a positive energy as well as it being very kid friendly. Well organized.
Considering the number of participants and observers, I feel that it was an extremely well organized event. It went very smooth. We had an absolute blast! We will be there again next year.
Crowd
Efficient staging and well organized for participants.
Enjoyed being a participant.
Enjoyed being on a team and the competition. The setting was beautiful. Good mix of teams and abilities.
Enjoyed the location, people, food.
EVERYONE Had a good time. I saw no drunk or disorderly behavior even though alcohol was being served. That was the most fun I've had for a full day in ages. Loved the enthusiasm of participants and spectators. Loved the location. Great music - good food. Very well organized. Awesome job especially for our first year.
everything
everything
everything for the most part-great venue-we need a docking area like the lodge provided-there is no other safe place like that in the valley
Everything was extremely organized and clean. Lots of excitement for both teams and spectators. The announcer was very good and you could hear every word he said.
Everything was wonderful. There was great food, fun activities, and a ton of fans to cheer everyone on. I had an amazing time and am looking forward to doing it again next year.
Everything!
everything!
Everything!
EVERYTHING! I couldn't believe how organized everything was!!! GREAT DAY and so much fun. I can't wait to do it again. If I lived in the valley, as opposed to East Glacier, I would be on a team that trained year round...or let's just say as much as the weather allows. REALLY BIG KUDOS TO PLANNERS AND ORANIZERS AND COACHES! WHAT a cool crowd!
Everything! My favorite part was the steer(er?) on our last run. Very professional & sweet!
Everything!!
everything!!!!
everything, especially the venue

Everything, it was fabulous
Everything. The videos afterwards have been awesome.
Excellent equipment, good training, beautiful setting, friendly hosts
excellent location excellent food cost was reasonable
Excellent location, great volunteers, fairly organized for the 1st year.
Excellent organization, great enthusiasm, nice boats, beautiful venue, awesome volunteers, after-party was great, loved Trevor.
Excellent venue- beautiful grounds- clean and well organized. Excellent race course location for spectators on shore and in boats. Great food/ live music was such a treat... Announcer was great!
Exposure to a new team event taking place on the water. Great instruction from volunteer steerers throughout the day; they quickly became part of the team.
Fantastic Event for us! Location was perfect! Weather was great! Event day local volunteers were terrific!
Fantastic Event... well organized, tons of fun! LOVED IT!!
Flathead lake location. Friendly volunteers.
Flathead Lake lodge was a beautiful location for this festival. I heard that from alot of out of town people who came in for the event. Who ever made those B-B-Q and coleslaw sandwiches should of won a prize! That was incredible! The noodle guy was also a big hit!
Flathead Lake Lodge was a great location
For a first time event, the event appeared to be well organized and there was public awareness as well.
For a first year event I thought it was excellent
For the most part, well organized and well attended. I thought the event planners did a very good job for their first year at this venue. We fully intend on competing again next year.
Fun atmosphere- beautiful lake.
Fun great location
Fun on the H2O, teamwork, shopping
Fun!
fun!!
Fun, beautiful setting, colorful, positive energy, paddling for a good cause, everyone wants to do it again! thanks for making this possible and bringing to the valley.
Fun, friendly, gorgeous location. I enjoyed that it was an "all-day" festival - plenty of food and drinks. Tent decorating also added a lot of fun. Great announcer and overall friendly staff.
Fun, new local activity!
Fun. Beautiful location. Atmosphere of participants/observers was joyous!
Fun. Great spirit among teams.
Fund raiser for cancer Competitive but still fun Community activity Brought our work group closer together, got to know people on a deeper level
Getting to race with and against many old friends from various paddling disciplines.
Good organization, venue, weather
Good place and organization
Good turn out.
Gorgeous day, fabulous setting, helpful staff
Great cause, most fun I've had all summer! Awesome idea, drew in a great community group!

Great community event and support to the Bigfork community
Great energy! Loved all the decorations by the club tents!
Great Event - glad pros came in to be steersmen and for training those of us who had never dragon boated before.
Great event- attracted lots of people
Great event- great location/venue
Great event to help raise money for a good cause!
Great event. Loved participating.
great experience
Great fun!
Great location, friendly ppl, great weather
Great location, ran well. Great boats!
Great new paddle sport for me!!
Great organization, Great hospitality, great vendors/food.
Great participation from many teams and of course The flathead lake. The event coordinators and all of the volunteers were very helpful. Everyone from our team enjoyed the day and will return next year.
great people great boat races great location. It was a superb day. Make it for 2 days next year.
Great time; not too crowded; good vendors and food. The free shuttle (trolley)was the BEST!
Great venue - well run - lots to see and do - the weather!
Great venue, good booths, music was terrific.
Great venue, great organization, fun, friendly atmosphere Of course the weather was great (please do that again)
Great weather, good location, camaraderie, VERY good organization for the very first year!! We all had an absolute blast and will do it again and again!!
Great weather, great area
I am an event planner, so I am always very critical about events like this and am looking for what could be done better. Whoever was in charge of this event did an extremely good job!
I can't believe how well organized it was. It was also pretty cool to see so many people from all around the country. The activities were fun - the tent decoration contest, volley ball, music, etc. Additionally, the parking was really good - close as it could have been considering all the people. On a personal note, I especially liked the location since I live only about 6 miles away and could bike home after my family left!
I enjoyed seeing all the local teams competing, and it bringing a different activity then the traditional NW MT activities to the area. Good to break everyone out of their shells!
I enjoyed the physical part of it and how really tough it is and that you need to work as a team to get the job done.
I felt that the event was very well organized and the location was beautiful. I liked the way the participants had their own spaces. I felt that the races flowed nicely. The folks who helped train us were very professional and very encouraging. It was for a very worthy cause. The music was great.
I had a great time, very team oriented. I am excited to see what the next festival brings. Thank you for the opportunity to participate.
I knew no one in my boat prior to joining it. Frankly, I knew almost no one in Montana, and was made to feel like I'd known everyone for years. I had such a great time. The "instructors" on Friday were absolutely awesome - so patient, friendly, fun and motivating.
I liked that it extends our tourist season past Labor Day. I like having this level of event here. The venue was perfect, but might be tight with more teams. The golf carts were wonderful. We had an injured paddler who was able to enjoy everything

without having to walk the long distance to parking. The paddling training was superb and I felt there were an abundance of practice sessions. Food at the Bash was very good and that seemed to flow well. Loved the beverage tasting!
I liked the fund raising potential for our non-profit, the site, and basically the whole event.
I liked the idea/concept.
I liked the spirit of the event and all the different teams involved.
I liked the time schedule for the morning.
I love competing in the festival and want to definitely participate again in years to come!!! A little concerned with how the weather will be on Flathead Lake in September in the future. This your couldn't have been better - simply beautiful!!! Loved the organized practices, area to watch the races, team tents, beautiful venue. Thank you Thank you Thank you!!!! We had an absolute blast.
I LOVE LOVE LOVE this event. New to me and new to the area. It was a huge crowd pleaser and a huge attendance
I loved all of the community support that I saw and the camaraderie between all the participants
I loved everything about it! Bringing the community together as well as bringing those from out of the area to help bring more business to the valley.
I loved how many people attended and the fact that it was actually pretty competitive and everyone was having a great time.
I loved it.I would do it again. It was a great way for are community to get together.
I loved participating in it. I used to row in a quad and an 8 in Victoria BC, and I thought the Dragon Boaters at the paddling and rowing center always looked like they were having such fun. Rowing was awesome and so was this event - I loved how quickly the dragon boat group I was with became a team - we didn't win, but we had so much fun and are planning already to do it again next year.
I loved that there was a plane flying aerial so we could see what went on via internet. Loved that it was a community event.
I loved that you had recycling centers at the garbage's. The Culligan water was wonderful - not to mention that Hammer Nutrition put their products by the water - great idea!!! The venue could not have been more perfect. I loved that you could walk by vendors - separate from the tent areas - and there were activities for the kids. Smart to have The Zone there - top notch.
I loved the fact that it was a fundraiser for a worthy cause! Absolutely enjoyed the friendly competition. The location was beautiful and perfect.
I loved the laid back vibe! Everyone was in very good humor; teams, staff, and spectators alike! The business tents were epic! The ice cream and the pepper jelly tents were my fav! The location was beautiful. I loved the music that played all day! A very enjoyable weekend!
I loved the location, the event was really well planned out.
I loved the racing. It was also nice to hang out with family and friends in between races.
I loved the variety of paddlers and spectators, activities
I loves the colors, the beautiful setting, and the caliber of people attending and competing.
I originally from Eastern Montana some 30 years ago. I took up dragon boating over 7 years ago and thought that the Festival was excellent and very glad I was able to show off my Montana to my friends. They all where very happy that we made the effort and came.
I really enjoyed the surroundings it is such beautiful country The set up was good but cab you make arrangements for more food suppliers Is there a local group that does food to raise money like burgers
I think the whole experience was wonderful and can't wait until next year!
I thought I was amazing. I am glad they have brought such a huge even to our small town.

I thought that things ran very smoothly until the finals. Races went off without much delay. The reception on Friday night was fun too.
i thought the festival was fantastic. For a first time out it was very well organized. Volunteers were super ... we had a great time!!
I was impressed with the flow of traffic to and from the venue, when I attended practice I was extremely curious how over 2000 people were going to be able to park and move about the area.
I was impressed with the scheduling of the races and how close to the scheduled times the races took place. Plus you couldn't have asked for a better day weather-wise!
I was very impressed with how well it went, especially for a first time event. GREAT JOB!!
I was very impressed with the level of organization.
Incredible, Beautiful, spectacular location. Access to the boats for teams= excellent. Volunteers were great.
It is amazing, healthy and fun event. We need more of those here in the valley! I loved the location of the festival. Festival itself was interesting, beautiful, just fabulous! I loved everything about it!!! Looking forward to it every year!!! I definitely will be attending/participating and will recommend my friends to go as well!
It was nice that there we're activities for the teams in the evening, like the dance. Te venue was amazing! I liked the lighter style dragon boat.
It was a beautiful event. Well planned and weather was perfect. People very friendly. It is a gorgeous lake to have the festival held there.
It was a fantastic opportunity to do something fun and healthy while also supporting a cause I care about. I liked the location. Just beautiful!
It was a great day of fun.
It was a great event, yet I'm not a team sports person and therefore won't participate next time. I'll just attend.
It was a great location to have the event. It was an activity that anybody could participate in. It was fun and brought us closer together as a school.
It was a great venue and plenty to do between races.
It was a great way to bring together very diverse groups of people to enjoy an event together, and to raise money for a great cause. The location was perfect, the weather was perfect, and the organization for a first time event was amazing. I know our team is already talking about next year.
It was a great way to get together with friends. The boats are a blast and 20 people paddling together is quite a challenge. Not to mention beautiful Flathead Lake, and The Lodge. A great event!
It was a lot of fun and fabulous experience!!
It was a very fun atmosphere. Very welcoming to newcomers. Family friendly.
It was a wonderful event!! For a first time event....I think it went very smoothly....sound systme was lacking towards the end.....a 2 day event would be tough looking at next year...lag time would be way to long as the 1 day was already...to have that many people organized for 2 days would be a nightmare!!!
It was amazing... way more than what I could have imagined.
It was awesome to see all the people from out of town. A great way to bring more culture to the Flathead.
It was extremely well organized! I have never been to a race that was on time throughout most of the race!! Hosts were great and people in town were incredibly friendly!
It was fun to participate in an event that brought the community together in a recreational spirit.
It was organized VERY well! Parking was a breeze, Penny was fabulous and it was oh my God fun.
It was organized very well, and an overall good time.

It was over the top. So well planned out. The volunteers...the Flathead Lake Lodge, did such an amazing job. It will be hard to improve on. The group from Tacoma, they were so helpful and so professional. We could not have survived the races without them.
It was run incredibly well...have never been to a race that ran on time! Everyone was friendly and the lodge was very clean and esp. loved the clear water and gorgeous flowers everywhere!!:)
It was so much fun paddling the boats! The venue was great and the staff for the most part was excellent.
It was so well planned and went smooth!! There was no down time, everything kept rolling. Not to mention it was such a FUN family event. The vendors were amazing and EVERYTHING was reasonably priced. Great job!
It was something different and was just fun overall. The people were awesome and it was well planned I think.
It was very fun to experience and participate in. I was very impressed at the organization, especially for a first time deal. All the organizers should be proud of their efforts & teamwork. Special thanks to the teams from Tacoma for the help, guidance& positive attitude during some pretty trying times. The attention to safety and number of times the instructions were give to novice team members.
It was very well organized for a first time event. Everything went smoothly and everyone was catered for - children through elderly.
It was wonderful! Loved the racing, I am hooked. Having the wash stations outside the restrooms were a very nice touch.
It was wonderful. Lots of fun and liked the cross section of groups represented and ages participating. The venue was perfect. It was very well organized and the races ran in a timely manner. The weather was perfect. One of our members said, "it was the greatest Love Fest the valley has ever seen." I thought that was a good assessment. The steermen (right title?) gave much time and information to the rowers - thanks to them!!! The shuttle bus was a good idea for those who could not park close.
Location and excitement of the people. Very fun event. Loved, loved the location, the lake and how beautiful this area of Montana is. The people were so nice and great to work with. Good memories.
Location and weather were excellent. The team nature of the event was good. The boating staff (steerers and folks at the dock) were helpful and generally positive.
Location was great Very clean lots of activities great food the weather was wonderful
Location, boats, organized, everything
Location, vendors. location, vendors the night before event
Location/facilities, everything was great
Lots of fun. Great bands! Nice people.
Loved the atmosphere and the competition. Very kid friendly!
Loved the community coming out to support the fight against cancer. Beautiful grounds and weather.
Loved the concessions, location, bands, and all the friends!
Loved the location and how the races were run. Great job for the inaugural festival!
Loved the premise of the event and the camaraderie of the races. The cancer awareness part was touching.
Lovely venue, from group
Nice venue, well organized, friendly people.
Noodles, grass, drinks, BOATS!
of the day Everything was extraordinarily well planned and managed at the event site. The whole spirit was fun and light. Loved it.
Organization was good, parking went well, nice assortment of concessions
Our team had so much fun practicing together and racing!

Our team leader Lucy Smith and the camaraderie
Participation of all types of people. Very fun. Ran like it's been going on there for years. Thrilled to be at the first event for flathead valley
Perfect event for the Flathead, excellent location, beauty and positive attitude all around Enjoyed the diversity of age and citizens Great team effort, building collaborative relationships between business and non-profits. Food was tasty, and there were options.
Perfectly run, well organized, wonderful location.
Reception, beautiful venue.
Scenery, atmosphere
So organized and the venue was beautiful! A real community builder! Everything was perfect.
Something different to do and for a great cause
That it was here in Montana, and that there was a great group of event planners, volunteers, and teams from all over participating. (I was planning to go to Atlanta's and was surprised and pleased to see the front page of the Daily Interlake about the Dragon Boats coming here; hence I cancelled my plans to see the ones in Atlanta, and even better, I was able to participate in the Montana Dragon Boats!) Fantastic experience! Also loved the tent decorations and judging. The positive energy of the whole place!
The atmosphere around the tents was exciting. I loved every bit of it.
The atmosphere was amazing and the event was energizing. I loved our team spirit.
The atmosphere, location, weather, vendors -- EVERYTHING!
The attitude of all of the event organizers/volunteers. The event clearly meant a lot to the area. The amount of media the event got was definitely a nice touch.
The beautiful scenery and weather.
The beautiful setting at Flathead Lake Lodge. The fun camaraderie.
The benefit for Save a sister.
The collective purpose of the event itself was very exciting and to see the tremendous participation from our communities. The excitement of the drums and the colorful boats, the setting at Flathead Lake Lodge was all impressive and memorable.
The Dragon Boat Festival was a wonderful team building opportunity for our group. I liked how people of all demographics participated and had a really great day.
the energy,
The event and the experience, the competition.
The event was such a positive experience. Friendly staff and participants. Well-organized and seemed to run very smoothly. Great Job! Had a very fun day - met some really great people!
The event was very well thought out and organized. Flathead Lake Lodge did a fantastic job. It went so smoothly that you would never have known it was the first one in the Flathead Valley. The participants were all friendly and it was just a really fun event to spend with friends, family and co-workers.
The event was well-organized and well-run. The facility was beautiful. Everyone was excited about the event and there was a lot of positive energy.
The experience. Being part of the inaugural event. The awesome spirit and generosity of complete strangers- Tacoma team for sharing expertise, boats, crews etc. Good people doing good things!! Hanging with people I never would have met and getting back in touch with Lucy Smith and the Chamber crew. Kudos to them all!! Well planned shuttles. The racing itself- total blast and unique. The location was awesome but anywhere on the Flathead is.
the experience and much more
The festival was very well organized overall. I was very impressed with the whole event.

The festivity, novelty of this type of event in this area, and that it raised money for charity. It was a lot of fun, too!
the friendliness of the people training the novices
The friendliness of the people/
The location
The location - the Flathead lake resort was so... beautiful! Loved the town, the restaurants and close proximity of hotel, shopping, restaurants & nearby pub. The weather was awesome. I loved the time of year; there is never a guarantee of good weather - I know that the weather could have been disastrous in Sept -- may want to think about a mid-summer date??
The location is great, beautiful.
The location-- loved the lodge-- wonderful. Nomad group-- very impressive! Keep them coming!
The location was amazing
The location was beautiful, and it never felt overcrowded. The people that steered the boat were awesome, especially Chad, he was friendly and promoted team work and a winning attitude. It was a great team building event and so much fun. Can't wait to do it again next year!
The location was beautiful. Coming from a Hospitality town, this was a first class event from start to finish. Montana has to be one of the friendliest places on earth! Lots of smiles and laughter and fun!
The location! The spirit. The amount of spectators. The Tacoma crew.
The organization of the event was excellent especially with this being the 1st annual. The location was beautiful! The races ran on time and the location was perfect for the loading and unloading the boats.
The organization was excellent! Great job for a first time event. The signs were good at the location. The announcing was good! It was nice to have shuttles to the event so that after driving such a long distance from WASHINGTON, we didn't have to drive the extra miles to get to the site. I love freebies - especially, the Hammer Nutrition goodies. I also loved the goody bags that you guys gave out to the paddlers; unfortunately, a lot of us were leaving the next day, so, we couldn't make use of all those BOGO or 1/2 off or free coffee offers.
The organization, the participants, the setting, the steersman, the visitors. Basically it was close to perfect.
The overall energy of the entire group along with the friendliness of the helping staff.
The paddling was a rush! It was a different kind of event that brought together an excited crew of teammates with a lot of ambition. It was a team building activity where many of us had the opportunity to get to know fellow employees. Overall, the comments I received from the team was how much fun it was, and they can't wait to get in a boat again. Many of us want to continue practices until the lake freezes. Many of us also were very impressed with Flathead Lake Lodge. Thank you for your vision to bring something unique to the valley. We're all looking forward to next year. Please publish the dates soon!
The people, the vendors, the setting
the scenery, the people. the organization of all the boats in and out, keeping things flowing nicely throughout the day., The dance was so much fun and the band was amazing, keeping the audience entertained and we danced until they told us we had to leave. i think it was a great idea having a dinner and dance for the teams at the hotel. It was great fun getting together and relaxing.
The setting was amazing. The grounds were well maintained and beautiful. The marina was great! The water was gorgeous to paddle in. The audience was enthusiastic and cheered everyone on. A wonderful experience. Tons of organized material went out to the teams. That was appreciated. Great dinner event was planned with a very fun group to dance to. Excellent door and raffle prizes. Food was good too! This was a fabulous first DB event! Please do it again. Sorry about the complaints coming up....
The setting, the weather , the excitement of participating in something that I have never done.

The upbeat/fun personalities of everyone there! Very well organized and everything ran on schedule. The boat steerers were awesome and so much fun. You felt like your boat was the winning boat they were so encouraging. A great fund raising event for a great cause, top of my list now. I loved everything about the event.
The venue
The venue was amazing, and hospitality was wonderful. A good selection of vendors. Races were, for the most part, on time most of the day. Accommodations at the Red Lion were great. Silent auction, raffle and door prizes were great. Organizers should all be proud of such a wonderful event, especially for the first time hosting.
The venue was beautiful
The venue was perfect
The venue was spectacular and the whole event was very well run.
The venue was spectacular! More fun than we expected and would love to participate each year. Lots of helpful volunteers.
The volunteers were exemplary; festival execution was very organized; the venue was stunning.
The weather and location
The weather, the location
The whole event was incredible. Races were well organized and run on time, facilities were beautiful, great number and variety of vendors, ample parking, everything went great.
There wasn't really much not to like. It was held at a great location, ALL staff were courteous and it was a great time!
things i previously checked as "very satisfied"; group camaraderie
This event was something new and exciting and a great way to raise funds and awareness for a good cause.
This is just really cool.
This was one of the best Dragon Boat Festivals I have attended! Great job for your 1st year!
This was one of the best events I have EVER participated in! The folks from Tacoma were so will ing to share their knowledge and to encourage us to succeed. The location was perfect. God even gave us a spectacular day. I cannot say enough good things about the event!! It was well run, things went smoothly, the organization was slick. The breast cancer ceremony was the part that reminded us of why we were there and tied the day together.
training of meet teams
Unique event, organization of event, focus on fun, family friendly, brought in people from outside community.
Variety of people, variety of customers, competition
Venue
venue- liked, boats, 1 day festival, fun. excellent races
Venue was amazing, great work on rose ceremony, vendors were good, sound was great in majority of areas, I am optimistic about the paddle party- like how it is in Kalispell. Really liked the bags for participants.
Very clean, beautiful spot and the races went smooth and on time. Please keep No Dogs Allowed.
Very family oriented
Very fun
Very fun activity, good causes, draw of good people
Very good for first event. Friendly
Very impressed with event. Would love to see more vendors/ food but all in all great show.
Very organized in getting the boats out and racing and staying on time.
Very organized, friendly, supportive people.
Very well organized for a first time event
Very well organized for first festival, very impressed!

Very well organized!!
Very well organized. Beautiful setting. Great experience. Great videos after event.
Very well organized. Great vendors & music. Wonderful setting and such a fun event!
Volunteer picked us up in a golf cart! Saved my 97 year old mom from the walk
We were extremely pleased with the Dragon Boat Festival on the whole. There was an amazing sense of community on display and the event energized our organization's volunteers and supporters unlike any other fundraising event (we were able to raise almost \$6,000).
Weather and location
Well done!
Well organized and fun.
Well organized, nice site
Well run, Beautiful location, nice people, weather very nice, easy drive from Kalispell
What's not to like? Smooth organization (especially for the first time out in this venue), spectacular location, everything provided, exciting, challenging activity, great press, out-of-area visitors boosting the local economy, and a grand time had by all.
Wonderful location and weather. Well organized- smooth operation.
Wonderful location, well ran, on time, good hospitality, loved the good food choices.
Wonderful setting. Light, fun, friendly atmosphere. Vendors available, being able to purchase beer and wine was great. It was just really awesome and for a great cause.
Wonderful weather and organization!

Question 30: Please tell us what you did not like about The Montana Dragon Boat Festival.

A bit of a hassle scheduling practices that were limited to two; actual practices had limited water time; our trainer had limited expertise, so we were a bit diasadvantaged. Could we get more boats with more practice times? I would like to see the Friday night event have a bigger room that accommodates sitting and mingling. Did not know there was a program, but thought it was a drop in venue. When I got there, it had already started and it was hard to listen to valuable information and connect with my team.
A little disappointed that the rule of having at least 8 women in the boat was not followed by all teams.
Abrupt hold hard at finish, lane markers, hard to hear sound from tent area, the captains meeting, the conclusion at mashing.
Access to the race site
Afternoon schedule (championship race heats) got bogged down and finals were seen only by a small percentage of attendees. Most people had left by the time the finals were staged. Might need to have more boats available for 5 boat heats.
All the vendors left before the event was done. The lag between the heats and the finals were alot of hurry up and wait.
arrival for 8:30 start.....traffic jam.
As mentioned above, the scheduling was great...until the final races which seemed to drag on (no pun intended) forever. Being in one of the competitive boats in the final race, our scheduled time was approximately 4:30 but it was actually about 2 hours after that before our race. I'm not sure why 5 boats are needed in the final heats -- I think 3 would have been fine.
At the end of the day, the timing was not the best. We were supposed to race in the finals between 4:00pm and 5:00pm. It was after 6:pm when we finished our final heat.
At times it was difficult to hear the people over the loud speakers.
bathrooms
Bathrooms at the end
Better signage on the highway.
can't think of a thing!
Can't think of anything - truly loved the whole experience!!
Can't think of anything I didn't like. It was an almost perfect day for it.
Can't think of anything.
Can't think of anything.
Coming from Portland, very few restaurants and bars
Compressed feel to the event, limited amount of races per team, Dragon boat bash more of a themed tourist event rather than anything tied to the competition, general first year jitters with putting on a large event.
Could not find tea!!
Couldn't hear the announcements of the races. We didn't know the availability of the different booths the were available to us as partipants.
Early am set up time. Difficuly parking close. Resistance from the organizers to work with non-profits with requests.
Early in the day the event moved quickly but then it slowed and there was too much down time.
Event lasted too long

Everything was super organized until the finals! The morning went flawlessly, but the finals took very long, and not all of the boats were being used, which added to the wait times. I also thought spectator boats were too close to the races, causing waves and disrupting races!
Final races in each category. There was a significant risk of injury due to the change from 3 to 5 boats per race. I would have preferred to have the Womens teams in their own separate division instead of combining a mixed and two Womens teams in one division.
Finding dinner was a real problem, since most of the restaurant closed at 9 pm. I would suggest that the organizers or tourist board or whoever, work out a deal with certain restaurants that they would remain open later and let the visitors know, which restaurants would be available.
For our last race, we did not have a steerer assigned to our boat... we were all loaded up waiting for a steers person... FINALLY one came but we had to race out to the start line and then race immediately. It felt unfair because everyone else had been out at the start line for at least five minutes and we had to rush out there and race immediately.
General public allowed in team tenting area. We have to leave our valuables when out on the water and they make docking are too crowded.
Had to park car far away.
Hard to find specific booths- need maps.
Having to lug my gym bag and gear from the parking area.
Having to park at the entrance to Wayfarers and walk through the woods on a poorly signed path to the lake.
house boats moving prior to races
I cam early, so parking was not an issue, but team members were late due to traffic/parking delays. this apsect could use some work, encourage shuttles, prizes for teams taking the shuttles? Might be good to put the music in another place, booth was close to music and it was too loud to hold a conversation. Put the music in the field next to where the porta pottys were? Also saw a man with a bleeding cut, walking around, information booth did not do a good job of directing. It wasn't serious, but I felt bad, and would have been upset if it was a child and as a parent I had to go to 3 different places. Didn't like that the bouy's floated, figure out how to secure them, as course changed during race.
I cannot complain about anything (except the crabby Canadian steerer on our 1st run). We had a great time!
I did not like how the final races were not planned out as well. There was not enough room for all of the boats to race with the people watched in their own boats. Also, the even was a little behind come finals. It would also be nice to have a weekend event not just one day.
I did not like that I had to pay to participate, as I ended up not being able to participate and did not receive anything for the money I paid. Was told I would at least end up with a t-shirt.
I did not like that they could not allow everyone that wanted to participate to do so. I heard that next year though it may be a two year event so I hope they plan on doing so.
I did not like the wait in the boat when we were waiting for the Rose ceremony and we could not hear the speaker
I felt that the vendors were too far away from the main group of people. It would have been nice to have vendors closer to the crowd.
I felt there were not enough vendors.
I hated and let me repeat HATED the parking arrangements. The lines and waiting was too long and when leaving it was impossible because they parked us too close to each other so it was hard to get out!
I have no negative feedback, beyond slowness of getting people parked around 8 a.m.
I liked it all!

I REALLY liked the festival. Can't wait until 2 day event...
I think next year people should know there is parking available and when they see all the cars parked along 35, that they should drive in anyway.
I thought there should have been more food options. The sound system was often hard to hear or understand. And while I realize this is a fund raiser and a "for fun" event, all the teams should have to abide by the rules. Someone should be there when the boats load up to make sure the teams are set up with the right amount of men/women ratio to keep things fair.
I wish we could have set our tent up the evening before so we were not so rushed to set up and compete simultaneously. Also, more toilets were needed or else at least someone tending them and replenishing toilet paper.
I would of liked more opportunity to practice.
I'd have to try very hard to come up with something...and I can't
If you want to get picky, it didn't happen to us, but I heard a tiny bit of grouching about inexperienced coaches/steerers who couldn't keep the boat going straight and scuttled a few team's chances. I'm guessing because of the over-flow demand with 56 teams signing up, a few steerers got drafted who didn't quite know what they were doing.
Initial wait for parking and the long delays in the finals. I think 3-4 races in the finals, spaced out like the rest of the day would be great.
It can be a rather long day.
It lasted a little too long.
it was a long time until you knew if you were in the final, which meant we sat there for approx 4-5 hrs, you didn't leave, so for out of towners, we didn't really stimulate your economy like we could of ie shopping, eating, drinking. Outhouses were getting really full, might be good to get them cleaned maybe once.
It was a really long way to haul stuff to set up the tents. The competitive and non-competitive teams in divisions like non-profit and financial were lumped together into one division at the very end. The staff maintained the distinctions until the finals and it really stunk that some teams were eliminated because competitive teams with much much lower scores were added into the division thereby kicking the other recreational teams out. Fix the registration process so that teams cannot register as recreational nonprofit vs. competitive nonprofit. Also, announce the teams in the finals sooner so that teams have time to prepare rather than having it sprung on them one moment before boats needed to be loaded. There was also confusion about the winners...Some thought the awards ceremony would be at the dinner. Others thought it would be at the event site. Clarify that.
It was a very positive experience and there was not a single thing that I did not like! =)
It was all good- maybe the dog poop in the grass LOL
It was difficult to hear the announcer in many areas. Sometimes the people using the mics didn't have them close enough to their mouths. The bigger problem was a need for more loudspeakers pointing in more directions.
It was kind of a long day.
It went to late
Lack of medals for places 1-5
Lag between trials and medal races. Motor boats on track. Short distance at finish.
Lanes not well marked caused us to crash our boat into another boat on the last race. Finish line buoys had moved so you did not know where the finish line was. Spectator boats too close in to the race area and causing big waves at times
Liked it all
Limited activities and concessions at event. 8:00AM - 4:30PM and roughly 7 minutes of actual race time. Left a ton of dead time!

Limited activities during down times. Limited food options and very expensive. Championship heats should have been on time (average times should have been calculated as races were finished and pairings should have been available almost immediately). Average times could have been posted along side of times for second heat so teams that knew they didn't qualify could leave and not be forced to stay around for an extra three hours.
Limited food choices, fairly spendy for quantity.
Loading of boats during the latter races. Had to step in one boat then to the next & finally into the third & final boat before getting seated. It was awkward & dangerous. The races were a bit behind schedule, so by the time we finished, the shuttle bus back to our hotel was finished its run. We were stranded in the Park for a short time - thanks to some smart volunteers another bus was sent to pick us up. It was no big deal, but perhaps something to take into account for next year in case the races run longer than planned. It was a long wait sitting in our boat in the lake before the Breast Cancer ceremony started, & once it did, we could not hear most of it, nor could the people on shore. PA System failure at that moment.
Loading of the boats by having to go across two other boats. Very unsafe as we saw people fall in the boats. Shuttle services were stopped before the festival was over BUT the volunteers were AWESOME in helping us get a ride back to Kalispel!! Alcohol being served at the festival site -- this is not a norm at other festival's that I have attended.
Location of leisure boars so close to the lanes- not safe
Long day since we did the 3rd heat. A two day festival would be great to include more people from our workplace so we could fill 2 boats!
louder it could be!
More scheduled practices would be very helpful.
more shuttle buses
My 84 year old Dad is in a wheelchair and there was no handicapped parking close. I know the vendors needed to be close but handicapped MUST still be provided.
My father is elderly and with Parkinsons. There weren't enough handicapped restrooms. The restrooms need to be cleaned and serviced or more of them. It would have been good to close the porta-potty once it was full. He had a very hard time with the restrooms, it was frustrating for him.
My parents are handicapped and had been looking forward to the event for months...calling the lodge as well as the chamber....there was no helpful information...after our final practice on Thursday night I saw that it was impossible for them to attend ... Our fellow was not able to park close to empty his truck with our tents,food containers and decorations and supplies...it was terribly hard for us all to pack these in....
My team had a steer person that was negative towards our team spirit. Also heard from another team about the same thing. On the other hand, our second steer person was amazing and totally encouraging!
N/A
na
Need handicap and senior parking
Need more food vendors
Need more food vendors closer to the action
Need more food vendors.
Need more porta potties that are adequately stocked.
Need more signage as to where things are located (vendors and team tents, restrooms/porta potties)
Need more steers people.

Need more steersman.
Need seat belts on carts for elderly.
Needed T.P. in bathrooms.
No map available around of layout of event. Not enough bathrooms.
No medals
No medals for 2nd and 3rd place just not right. We were clearly 2nd place on the last race, yet the website put us as 3rd place. That should have been cleared up.
No medals for the winners
No toilet paper in porta potties in afternoon. Sound system for rose ceremony could have been louder.
Not a single thing.
Not a thing....well done!
Not enough bathrooms, boats on water too close to races.
Not enough boats, too much down time between races.
Not enough food vendors. 8\$ for a hamburger was too much. I know spectators who left because of the food options. Also some spectators were not aware they could bring a chair. Shuttle could have been used more. It was unclear to some who could ride and when etc.
Not enough people to steer the boats.
Not enough restrooms, need twice as many the portable potties became full and unusable.
Not enough vendors
not nearly enough restrooms-they were trashed mid-day
not one thing, everything was fantastic
nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing - I was totally pleased. It was an incredible day and event. I had a wonderful time!
Nothing comes to mind... well... even though I wasn't affected... the parking I guess was a tough one.
NOTHING! I wish our team had trained a little harder:)
Nothing!!
Nothing. Lots of fun!!!
One of our female steerers was awful - disorganized, rude, hard to hear and unclear with instructions. Everyone else was great though. There was too much time in between the final regular race and the final rounds, when they were figuring out who moves on. We had to wait over an hour to figure out if we made it into the final round.
Organization of finals
Other than parking it was really fun!!
Our first steer(er?).
Our team had the fastest legal time of the day but first prize was given to a team who exceeded the maximum number of male rowers on the boat. Seems like it should have been an easy rule to enforce. An otherwise perfect day was tainted by this decision.

PA System- signage
parking
Parking
Parking and direction was not good. The race day started off on time however by 12 noon it seemed to be not on time and was a long afternoon. Felt like lack of organization in the afternoon Liquor/beer at the banquet was not good need to have the basic beer wine hard liquor coolers
Parking in field with lots of horse poop, disorganized finals
Parking seemed to be a nightmare! Would have been better if there was a separate entrance for competitors and spectators. Would have been less chaotic. Also would have been nice to know they were charging for parking! I had to scrounge for change in my car as I didn't carry any cash with me that day.
parking was a hassle when I arrived although I understand that was an anomaly and it was fine the rest of the day.
Parking was rough. Shuttle was a good idea but should have served other areas than just Kalispell. More advertising. I was amazed how few people heard about it unless they were actively involved- even at places that were sponsors.
Parking was rough. The long gap between events with limited communication was a bit frustrating.
parking was terrible not for the participants but for the spectators. My son in law had his vehicle backed into. They have small children so to get back to their vehicle to leave was not such an easy task.
Parking was to crazy
Parking/ need to advertise the availability of shuttles. Not just on your website. I only found out because I saw the bus.
Poor parking dangerous loading and unloading of the boats buses left before races were finished
Poor safety with loading/ unloading, should never have to crawl across another boat to load/ unload, people fell doing this even if it slows things down for each boat it needs to be asked
Port-a-potties ran out of toilet paper
Practice times
Restroom locations.
Restrooms get demolished so quickly. Too bad they cannot be cleaned throughout the day. Food and drink vendors closed up too early. My team waited for the award ceremony and would have spent more money on food and drink had the concession booths remained.
Restrooms out of paper by early afternoon, sinks out of soap and paper towels. Staff a bit too efficient at the end, cleaned up garbage cans too quickly.
Scheduling of divisions, location, not having enough steers people available on race day.
short race distance, long lapse in between our group heats
Should have been an all-around final instead of all the divisions. No concessions at the end of the day, lots of hungry AND THIRSTY PEOPLE
Sign in Thursday
Signs to the event. Not clear information about parking and availability of shuttles to the site.
Some of the boat steer people were volunteers and it messed up us twice. Should all be professional
some race watchers would like to see the start of the race as well. Couldn't always hear the completed race times for each boat. some concerns about having 3 boat heats & then 5 boat finals - mostly because of safety issue
Spectator boats need to be moved further back. Five boats in finals not good. Too narrow.

Spectators in boats, often where in way of dragon boats, too close and not respectful of the racing lanes, created waves for racers. No clear definition of racing lanes, too many times racing boats cut off other boats, where boats had to stop (and/or reverse) in middle of race to prevent ramming together, or boats actually did ram into each other. While this is a FUN event, no one should have to come in last because another boat cut them (or two other boats) off during the race. Please define racing lanes next year and create water barrier for spectators on boats.
Speed boats causing wakes.
Team information prior to the event wasn't very thorough. Received pieces of information a little at a time, it seemed like. For people who have never done this before - would have been nice to get a packet of information when you sign up for the team - about the paddling technique and the sport itself, appropriate clothing to wear, practice availability, etc. Felt somewhat unprepared until the pre-race reception.
Team introductory meeting was far too long on Friday night. Regurgitated material that was readily available in the race entry packages. Keep it short, to the point and only relay most important information for Team Captains, and not the entire team. Races ran late and missed most of beverage sampling at the Red Lion. Racing 3 lanes all day, and then squeezing 5 boats into 3 lanes for final races. Should give out medals for the top 3 teams, not just the 1st place team.
tents could be bigger and have more security, athletes and coaches only. More bathrooms. Categories need to be re-thought, women's race needs to be included, forget the "international" category. Mixed boats and women's boat should not be racing against each other. Get ten boats if there is going to be a 5 boat final. Have 5 boat heats too, would make the regatta go faster. You are going to have lots more entries next year so you need to figure out how you can fit them all in. Put some kind of buoy system to keep the flotilla of spectators out of the way, dangerous situation with them zipping around. get brand name alcohol for the after party, that local stuff was awful, pure moonshine.
That the best two timed teams didn't have a head to head shoot out at the end.
The bathroom situation was inadequate. The port a potties ran out of toilet paper. Parking was a huge pain. And my team didn't finish until 7pm we were in the final competitive heat so it was a long day.
The bathrooms ran out of toilet paper and paper towels
The boats encroaching on the race lanes. Our team was joined into an event where we were racing against our academic competition and we did not have a drummer.
The boats in the lake were too close and not advised to move back and stay out of the track.
The concessions were very expensive. I would rather pay a little more for parking and bring the food prices down. Also, the Bash needs to start much later so the teams that are in the finals don't miss the beginning. The Bash did not live up to expectations. The acoustic country band, while good, wasn't lively enough for a "Bash". We were expecting a party, but it was more of a low-key dinner. Any one of the bands who played at the Lake would have been a better, local choice and people would have partied. More attention should have been paid to the teams present at the Bash, in particular the winners, even having them stand to be recognized. It felt like an event for the organizers from Lethbridge, rather than a continuation of the day's events and a celebration of having the Race in the area. Also, the Bash doesn't need a theme. The theme is the Race itself.
The cost of food and lack of meal concessions.
The day was a bit too long.
The event needed to be stretched out for two days. As big a hit as it was, they will probably have to have two days for this event. There were a lot of companies that wanted to race, but got turned down.
The festival was great! There's nothing I didn't like about it!

The final competition took too long. Maybe just do 3 boats per category rather than 5. Also, the categories were confusing. And, while it's great having all the Canadian folks in town, the event doesn't have to be all about them and their participation.
The final races were delayed significantly...
The finals had some problems. Not enough boats to keep things running smoothly. Too much time wasted, waiting for the finals.
The finals took longer than expected, but it was not the organizations fault, and it being their first festival they had to experience some problems.
The finals were disorganized
The finals were unbelievably behind schedule and became progressively worse as time passed.
The food concessions. Really 8.00 dollars for a burger. Only two vendors.
The gun shot sound to start the races. Our team was one of the last at the lake so the time we got back to the hotel in Kalispell, showered, changed and got to the dinner, it was 8.00 pm. Most teams were finished eating. The food had been sitting there for 2 hours. The food was very poor value. I was expecting a few more choices and a meal of higher quality. Only 1 desert choice (pie) and only 2 kinds were very unexpected. As a vegetarian, there were very few things I could eat, corn that was so overcooked that I couldn't eat, vegetarian beans were unpalatable I was lucky there was chef salad and was very lucky to find an extra one. I was very disappointed with the meal.
THE HORSE CRAP ALL OVER THE PARKING FIELD. ALSO, LOVED IT THAT YOU HAD NO DOGS ALLOWED. YOU MAY WANT TO PUT THAT OUT EARLIER SINCE NO ONE SEEMED TO KNOW. MAYBE AT THE MEET AND GREET THAT IS HELD THE NIGHT BEFORE.
The lack of experienced steersmen.
The lack of steerspersons which made the day long. Also, it would be nice for the teams to e in specific divisions (women/mixed/competitive wtc as opposed to where they are from (international) as this put teams racing against ones that not comparable. Finally, the employees of the venue appeared to not be impressed with the amount of people or the event itself.
The length of the entire day.
The only negative was the down time we had from one race to the next. I know the boats were constantly running and there were a ton of teams to get through, so that was the reason. Not sure there is a way to fix that. Had a great time regardless and will be there again next year.
The only thing I was disappointed in was not being able to hear my daughter sing the Nathonal Anthem, I was getting ready to race.
The only thing was the parking and bathrooms. Should have been more of both.
The out-houses got nasty as usual.
The parking really sucked. The tents where really cluttered together to where you couldn't walk.
The parking situation wasn't great. It took too long to get cars from the highway into the parking area. Also, the bathroom situation was not good. Porta-potties filled up too quickly, there was no toilet paper in them, and the smell got bad by the end of the day.
The personal questions on this survey.
The port-a-potties were full (i.e. not full of people) at the end of the day and many had no tp.

<p>The races were well run until the final heat - including 5 boats into the lanes appeared to be problematic. Lining up for the race start was chaotic with no assistance for those who did not know how/where to line up. As a result it took a painful 20 minutes to get everyone pointed in the right direction and in the correct lanes. Other boats drifted into our lane during the race - one boat collided with 8 of our paddles [twice!] and another boat went completely in our lane so we could not pass. When we mentioned this to the officials the response was "we didn't see that". Personally I find this alarming. I actually do not care whether another team was awarded with 1st place but what I do care about is that the judges could not see the race in it's entirety. That is a safety concern! There should be boats following the racers and the judges should be able to see every single foot of the length traveled. Finally, the participants should not have been made to step through one and two boats in order to climb into theirs for the final heats. Again a huge safety issue. There were boats [unused] tied up to the dock and yet we had to climb between boats - this should have been reversed - unused boats tied in tandem and the participants have access to a docked boat adjacent to the dock - not 3 deep.</p>
<p>The racing area on the water was not wide enough.</p>
<p>The restrooms weren't adequate... The vendors were spread too far apart. Inadequate parking.</p>
<p>The sound system at the stage was not loud enough, not the loud speaker that announced the races, that was OK. The song sang at breast cancer ceremony could not be heard out at the doc and where the cancer servivors where as they waved their roses.</p>
<p>The spectating boats got too close to the races. Not only did it feel like they were crowding near the end, but the fumes of the engines was terrible to breathe in as we were racing.</p>
<p>The spectator boats caused huge interference and directly affected the outcome of certain races.</p>
<p>The speed boats too close to race lanes.</p>
<p>The waiting time for the finals, lack of communication, slow race times and not enough announcing for teams.</p>
<p>the whole parking and finding your team tent. I likeed how you traveled to the team tents and vendor tents (they were not crowded together). I did not like showing up and not knowing which way to go.</p>
<p>There was not enough seating available to watch the races.</p>
<p>There's nothing that I can think of.</p>
<p>They didn't start the heats when they said they would, I missed the first race because it started about 30 minutes early.</p>
<p>Thursday night Kalispell festival was pretty small.</p>
<p>To Long in between races and to many divisions.</p>
<p>Too few opportunities to practice on the dragon boats available prior to the event.</p>
<p>Too long a break @ end before finals. Port-A-Potties got a little ripe and full.</p>
<p>Too long between races. We were there from 8 AM to 6 PM and raced for about 8 minutes. It became a very long day. It took way too long to find out who was in the finals.</p>
<p>Too many teams in one day. Too late getting off of the lake.</p>
<p>Too much time between heats. Too long of a day.</p>
<p>Too much waiting around.</p>
<p>TOOK AWAY BUSINESS FROM DOWNTOWN BIGFORK...HAVE BREAKFAST BURRITOS AVAILABLE LONGER....</p>
<p>took to long for finals for the day over an hour wait alot of the people watching left before we had a chance at finals</p>

<p>Traffic flow was tough about 8 am on. Should have increased charges for parking for spectators but free for teams- \$ 5-10 to fund stuff. Need more activities leading up to it, even week +. Beer garden events to raise \$\$, etc..Porta potties were clean and they have staff come through at one point but then they ran out of toilet paper and they were gross by end of the day. Beer cart closed too early. Tough to have key positions in boats filled day of- drummers or weak steer people. Don't race 5 boats- too many collisions, etc. Days of mandatory practice- parking was a nightmare. No organization and a total free for all and it was a nightmare. The location was awesome but being reminded we were not paying guests was a little</p>
<p>Unsafe methods of loading participants in the dragonboats. A team had to climb over two boats to get into their boat for the race.</p>
<p>Very dangerous loading & unloading boats when you have to climb over 1 or more boats to get into your boat. Also very dangerous trying to load when the front or back of the boat is not right by the dock area. Very bad parking availability, some people had to walk more than 1 mile to get to site.(appeared to be field area that was not utilized for parking) Buses left before end of the races which left many people stranded. Should not have vendors at the same place that teams are marshalling up to be ready for the next races, makes the small area very congested. Also people involved in the races, paddlers, volunteers etc. should not be allowed to drink alcohol during the races (never allowed in Canada at a race) plenty of time for drinks afterwards if needed.</p>
<p>Very disappointed on how finals have gone. We bought tickets to banquet which we will not make by time finals over. Time it took to post final races, well over an hour behind.</p>
<p>Waiting for the participants for the finals to be announced. It seemed to take quiet a bit of time, and then the time between races really increased.</p>
<p>Waves (expected on large lake), tippy boats (most commonly used anyway)Long train trip, little sleep, will check out flying next time.</p>
<p>We crashed our boat once and nearly twice.</p>
<p>We felt that the consolidation of the nonprofit recreational division and the nonprofit competitive division into one for the finals was unfair. We felt that the choice of recreational/competitive should have trumped the nonprofit category. Competitive teams recruited to win...recreational teams like ours recruited for fun and in our case to raise money. Moving the two competitive teams into the recreational division knocked us out of the final as well as another team. It was known well in advance that only two teams signed up for competitive nonprofit - it should have been consolidated before the event or moved to another competitive division.</p>
<p>We had paid for going to the event in town...The Dragon boat Bash; but were unable to attend as the race ended so late and we had to pack up our boats...</p>
<p>We have not gotten the final results for the last races. Final results are very important.</p>
<p>We were the group which brought the boats! We were told we would be supplementing coaching and steering which we had no problem with. As it turned out, we were pretty much the ONLY coaches or steerspersons at the practices. We were under the impression that Dynamic Dragon Boating LLC was furnishing the coaching and steering and was paid to do so? With the exception of race day, where Dynamic brought in someone to run the finish line video, they were absent from the event? We have attended many festivals in 12 years and have never seen such lack of event staff at an event. Had our club not stepped forward the event would not have gone well!!!</p>
<p>Would like to have a little more practice time, however I know it would be difficult to do. The parking was a bit slow. I don't know if more room is available for that.</p>
<p>Wouldn't change a thing</p>

Question #31: What suggestions do you have for improvements to The Montana Dragon Boat Festival?

You mean you honestly can improve? Kudos to everybody in your community who made it happen! I attended a festival that was going on its 10th year 2 years ago, and they were still unorganized! We were collecting our awards after the sun went down! The races were 30-90 minutes apart!(why they took all day for the races) I liked the fact that it was close to Glacier National Park, and we got to visit it for one day. By now, you've probably heard about the porta-potties and parking ad nauseum. My only suggestion: have more shuttles and please, please ADVERTISE them. It was only by chance that I saw the shuttle while I was in the lobby that I knew about it! Of course, we took the shuttle; the driver was nice enough to wait for us! THANKS!

You may have had it, but I didn't know about the arrangements that needed thought from the crews, like naming a captain, roll of the drummer, placement in the boats based on size & weight. I think people might have been more willing to move if they were prepared. Thank you!

You had nine boats and we were running 5 boat finals? either more boats, or less per final would speed up everything

Would have liked to seen some bleachers, and maybe shuttle from top of hill for people who could not park in the pastures.

Would have been nice to have more food vendors to choose from with a bigger variety of food. Would have loved to start the final placement racing rounds sooner. It seemed like there was a lot of down time in between the heat races and the finals. Would have like more information on fundraising efforts and ideas for Breast Cancer.

Work better with non-profits from the community. Allow them to sell raffle tickets, fundraise at event. Don't limit non-profit focus just to Save A Sister (they have lots of help with fundraising around the country). Allow all tents to be set up the night before the event begins (so that we don't have to lug our equipment in at 7am).

<p>When the teams arrive with their load of equipment they should be able to drive to the site, unload, and drive back out. If you need to "tag" them then do that, but our equipment guy had a broken foot, arrived early so he could drive to the site and ended up carrying tents, coolers, tables, and decorations. Just because he didn't have an oversized logo truck he wasn't allowed to drive to the site.</p>
<p>Whatever number of boats we get next year, they should plan the finals to coincide, for example in some of the finals there were 5 teams. Since we only had nine boats, we had to wait until the previous race was finished till we could load the boats. If they had just adjusted the finals to only 4 teams, we could have been loaded in the boats at the start and got on our way. No doubt you have heard this from others. That is all that I can think of.....all in all great job done. The talk of the town. We hadn't out of state people visiting and they were over whelmed in a very positive way!</p>
<p>We would pay more for experienced helmsmen to steer our boat. Hire people out of the Seattle area with experience to do the job right.</p>
<p>We loved it!</p>
<p>We had no problem w/ parking as we got there at 7AM on race day but we sure heard about the parking mess from the MT State Park (Wayfarer) host - they were overwhelmed and had not been told about the event they claimed. The private boaters were kept from launching by Dragon Boats using the State dock on Friday due to a party at the Flathead Lake Dude Ranch.</p>
<p>We could have used more bathrooms.</p>
<p>wait time to get on to the water once you are at the staging area</p>
<p>Use both lanes for entrance for a couple hours during peak entrance. Charge \$5 a car (paddler &VIP passes?)and have signage from the corner so that people are ready to pay. Have a shorter race option.</p>
<p>Use a different sound system. It was very difficult to hear the announcements and team times.</p>
<p>Two days, keep it free</p>
<p>Two days would be good, maybe more divisions within larger categories.</p>
<p>Try to get the finals finished earlier.</p>
<p>Try not to have the 5 boat races.</p>
<p>to have a two day event</p>
<p>This event Need more people on traffic duty!!!</p>
<p>There should be a variety of food vendors to choose from.</p>
<p>There is some talk of making this a two day event. If that is the case, I would hope that half the teams compete one day and the other half the next day. I would have a difficult time fielding a team if they were required to be there both days. I would also hope that the clearly defined rules of the event be enforced.</p>
<p>The signs for the event and more food vendors and maybe some more vendors overall.</p>
<p>The registration area should have a sign on it that says it is team registration, was hard to find. Was also hard to find team tent space, but not sure what to do about that. Awesome!</p>

The parking has to be better organized. We were stopped by at least 4 different people for instructions on parking. Just have the attendants wave people in...no need to stop & talk to all of them. A better shuttle system would be great. We lived for years in Albuquerque, NM & they run an OUTSTANDING shuttle service for tens of thousands of people for the International Balloon Fiesta every year. Maybe study that model. Also, there have to be many more portable toilets. To have them fill up that early in the day & then smell all afternoon was pretty gross.
The finals - not a lot of info of what categories are competing against one another
The final races need to move along faster. Need to have Women's team division.
The Festival on Thursday could've been used to promote much more team interaction. Not sure how it was advertised, but there's no way to identify any other team, except for Pink Phurree, as we wore or team gear. Additional, it could've been away to promote the downtown business, most of which were closed by the time we arrived at the festival. If they would've done more than post the flyer, but actually stayed open later than 5 or 5 pm, I'm sure they would've made some money. Instead every place was pretty much closed, so we left very early.
Tell more people how to participate.
Take the time to load the dragonboats safely.
Super
Start more in advance for practices
Standardized call at the start
Speedier qualifying times
Speed up the finals
Speed things up.
Spectators on the lake with boats should be more cognizant. More awareness to that group. Maybe have it earlier in the year when it is a little warmer.
Spectator shuttle buses. More and more public info.
Sound system could be better in athletes area, mark athletes area, marshaling are to keep non-participants, captains meeting shorter, more organized, separate the way from welcome party, more toilets and attendants (ran out of paper in several)
Sound needs to be aimed back towards participant tents as well as forward towards the public. It was hard to hear what was happening and what was expected. Bathrooms need maintenance through-out the day, by mid-day all facilities seemed to be depleted of necessary supplies.
simplify the categories of entrants
Shuttle service to the venue. Finals spaced throughout the day, or quicker communication.
see above. I would love to see a two day festival. The posting of the results on a larger board.... maybe even a digital board. You folks did such an extremely good job on the festival. My family and I had such a great time.
See above
See above
Same as last box.
Restrooms closer to the staging area for racers and staff.

Race more boats at once and not so many divisions. A little competition is great but everyone is not there for the competition between businesses that they know nothing about.
Race and competition enhancements: -Expand the practice times available to participants throughout the summer, maybe have scrimmages. -Message board on the website for interteam communication, this will be a needed tool in creating a local following to the event. Building the community of competitors locally will increase support and funding/advertising for the event. -Make it possible for team resources and sponsor tents to be set up in advance. -Have a way of communicating race times that is more organized and faster than laser printed sheets, a light board for instance. Tourist/event enhancements: Have a separate event for the teams and the crowd, the teams will want something simple and fun and nearby to the event (everyone will be tired from the competition), the crowd will want something big, with pomp etc. That way the energy at both events will work well with their respective crowds. Theme the event with something less stereotypical than "Country". Many of the participants work at tech saavy companies and are not "Country", in fact they're trying to get beyond that stereotype. Plus, an exclusively country western themed even cuts down on the number of possible participants, a mix would broaden attendance. And really do we need one more event that touts how rural we are? Minimize delays in the program for the races to help keep the crowds attention. Have a bus handy to parking areas in Bigfork, even if it's only a field, and other places that have available lots so that nearby parking is available and people don't leave due to congestion. Shuttles only from Kalispell aren't quite enough. Small events with exhibition races throughout the summer to build interest, support and core community around the races.
Provide more t.p.
Provide individual medals for the first, second, third place in each division.
Provide accommodations to rent nearer to the venue. I did not like decorating our rented tent the morning of the races. We like to focus on the race, not building a tent. Use the venue accommodations to hold a dance . We were late for the dance cause the races slowed down at the end. Start supper later. Medals please..... A few bathrooms right at the race start. The public boats were far to close to the races, causing waves.
Prior advertising, only knew about it because I participated.
Possibly having to different race tracts going at the same time. Being more proactive in aligning the finals earlier.
Possibly have fewer divisions with more teams in them. In the academic final, competitive teams were competing against rec teams which is not necessarily what the teams signed up for. Fewer divisions would also allow you to recognize 2nd and 3rd place finishers on the same budget. I don't know if a better location is available, maybe on the west side of the lake - but I understand we received near perfect weather conditions for Big Fork in the fall. There were already enough heats that were difficult to paddle in due to conditions, what if the weather were less than perfect?
Possibly a two day event. I would have liked to visit the downtown shops but most were closed on Sunday. All in all I think you did a great job, especially for your 1st Regatta.
Possibly a two day event- would allow for more teams and not be so rushed.
Please let me know how to get on a team for next year!!
Plan for a two day event next year!
Perhaps two days would be good. I was pretty tired for the finals. In addition, it was late enough (around 5) when we finished that I missed out on the beer!
Perhaps more organization on the races so the day was not so late
Pay for and draw from a pool of qualified Dragonboat USA steersmen who have been certified - and try to have more of these certified steersmen living in the Flathead Valley.

Parking. I liked it being a one day event but know they had to cut off some that wanted to have teams so that has to be considered.
Parking
Paddles hard to locate just before race (not enough or people need to hand to organizers as exit boat)
Overall, it was a great event for a first time. These types of events are difficult to organize and the crew did a great job! Be more clear about practice times throughout the summer so workers can more easily schedule their time off. Train valley steerers so practices can be more self-sufficient within a valley-wide reservation schedule. Have a boat on Whitefish Lake for practices. Allow pets on leash at the festival. Shuttle people from Bigfork parking areas rather than, or in addition to, Kalispell so parking on site can be reserved for handicap and race participants at no charge. It would be nice to see a final race between the best teams regardless of category. Make it 2 days and plan on ending earlier so if it runs over, it's not way past dinner time and all the vendors have left. Have a better system for boat watchers and no-wake zones. Next year, that will be the place to observe, so it's better to be prepared. Have a schedule with a better map for all the activities and music. They got lost in the race hype. Either have the mandatory captains meeting at Flathead Lake Lodge the day before the event, or a couple days before the event in Kalispell so information can be better distributed to teammates.
Our steerer fell down twice and ran us into another boat without uttering a single command so maybe the steerers should have to pass a test prior to steering in a race?
Other than parking... nothing. Can't wait until next year.
Organize the finals better
only those two items as it was pretty much perfect
NOTHING...really...just the right size. Appropriate facilities for the crowd...maybe a few more food and drink vendors but really it was PERFECT!
Nothing. You have a great format. Don't change a thing.
Nothing at this time. Fabulous Job!
None!
None, besides moving onto final rounds more quickly.
None
No suggestions, as it was done very well.
No proper coach/streer meeting. More info to coaches/captains on how event will run. More bathrooms. Men's races/ women's categories, Event location maps available.
No changes required, Would love to see some Kalispell teams come to Leth festival.
New location Over 2 days Medals More steers people
Need to improve on race lanes (make them more pronounced/visible) and ensure recreation boats are kept further away from race lanes.
Need better posting of boat scheduling and updates on status of racing competition.
Need a racing schedule next time.
Names of team on boat so spectators could see. Send schedule of events/programs to all participants at least a week in advance.
N/A
N/A

My brother tried to bring his dog and had to leave her in the car because she was not allowed on the site. I agree with not allowing dogs, but it would have been helpful to have known beforehand. The final races were drawn out far too long.
Move spectator boats further away. Keep marshaling area clear.
More toilets, two days. And shuttles from a more local spot than Kalispell.
more toilet paper. :)
more team practice times ability to set up tents the day before or at least drive down to drop off materials that morning - allowed before 7:00 AM?
More steers people. Sell dragon boat stuff.
More steering people.
More signs directing to the bathrooms and other areas.
More restrooms - filled up quickly. Sound system - was hard to hear depending on where your team tent was located on the venue. Would be nice if speakers could be more distributed throughout.
More restrooms
More restroom options
More racing. Too few heats for teams. Perhaps make it a two day event?
More prominent signage, especially along the route to enter the Flathead Lake Lodge area. Maybe a few speakers facing the dock, so the ladies in the BCS ceremony can hear the MC, readings, and song a bit clearer. All in all, this was an EXCELLENT festival!
More practices. Maybe a crew to help people get gear to the team tents. For example, it was at a ranch they didn't have any ranch vehicles (like those ATV type things with a flatbed attached. I'm sure the boy scouts at the top of the hill would have gladly driven those carts around all day being helpful.
More practice times
More portable potties, more food vendors and choices.
More porta potties, more beer facilities closer to the tent
more porta potties (pee wees), athlete tents area should not be open to everyone (private village like Lethbridge)
More parking....it was a bit of a cluster but the parking attendants did an awesome job with what they had to work with.
More parking nearer to event and/or improved shuttle system from other locations that are closer to event.
More of it!
More medals for 2nd, 3rd, and 4 place.
More meal/food options and at better prices. Event was fun, but at around 430pm, it started to feel as though it was dragging on and it would have been better if it ended at 4pm and picked back up the following day. Also, we heard that if you were competing and had a wristband on and were caught drinking an alcoholic beverage that you would become disqualified. We saw many other teams and their members drinking, but none were disqualified - would be helpful to get clarification on this next year and if that statement does stand true, then it be enforced out.
More latrines, better maintenance of. I think it would be interesting to see a roster of sorts that gave information about the different groups. This would lend a sense of familiarity to those that are cheering on the teams.
More lane markings, keep spectator boats further away from races, more bathrooms.
More golf carts
More food vendors. More "Art in the Park" like booths

More food vendors
More dedicated steersmen
more concessions
More coffee vendors. Nicer staff. There was a short older man that was part of the staff. I had a class and could not get out of it and was 10 min late for practice. I asked about my group and he was all angry and said he didn't know anything about where they were. I left after 15 minutes, turns out they had not practiced yet and I could have practiced. I did not get to practice before racing because this guy and one other did not know which team was practicing and where we could find our team.
More boats??? That's all I can think of.
More boats available to local teams for more practices. More food concessions at the event. Better directional signage regarding parking; maybe labeling park lots.
More available water. The water stations were great and very appreciated, but they ran out long before the Race day ended. There need to be more clear directions about Sponsor Tents and Team Tents, what can be in each, and the use of each. I would love to see you offer Steerer certification in the months leading up to the Race. Could the website have a team forum for sharing ideas?
More and greater variety of food vendors. Less time between races - making it a shorter day. It took too long for the final race results.
More advertising to oncology offices in valley to get more support & word to more patients battling currently
More activities and concessions. Opportunity to purchase/bet on teams. Consistent designated "steer person".
Mentioned above. We had a great time & have registered already for next year. Thank you so much for all your organizing efforts; It was a huge success! Thank you to all the volunteers!!They were fantastic! THANK YOU!!
Medals
Maybe the event could go for 2 days. I have heard a lot of positive feedback from spectators, they have been talking up the event and think next year there would be twice as many spectators.
Maybe just a sign on the main road directing to where the practices are on Friday.
Maybe have it run both Sat & Sun. You all did an amazing job!
Maybe a larger area or shuttles to parking that lasted until event was totally over.
Maybe a few more vendors with different varieties of food. More activities for the children.
Mark lanes better so boats know where they are going. Ask spectator boats to keep a safe distance from the race area
Make the racing area on the water bigger & marked so other boats cannot not get near for safety reasons.
make the festival 2 days
Make the event two days.
Make sure you have medals for 2nd and 3rd place. More tillers, more help in general. Boaters need to be moved back. Lanes needs to be clearly marked. The meet and greet should have been later, those that worked as coaches were not able to attend the meet and great. They were also not able to attend the BBQ and dance due to having to get the boats loaded. The event should have had more people at the end of the day to help load the boats.
Make it a two day festival. Set out buoys to keep boats out of the race way. Three lanes was perfect. Two divisions ended up racing each other in a final. Why? Keep finals between specific divisions ONLY.
Make it a two day event? Reception on Friday night= too crowded, noisy, hot. Presentation too long- should have captains/ steers meeting in separate location on day of event. The reception was a good idea- just needs work.

Make it a two day event (not Sunday)!
Make it a 2 day fest.
Make it a 2 day event.
Make five lanes right from the start instead of increasing last minute
Longer shuttle bus times.
Longer
Load only the number of boats at one time as you have adequate dock space for, safety should always be the first and most important issue (not running the races on time). Only race 3 or 4 boats at a time, never more than that as it increases the risk for crashes. Speaker system used for the breast cancer ceremony was horrible, those of us participating in the ceremony who were on the water could not hear anything of what was being said. Would also be better to have breast cancer survivors on shore and not in the boats if possible. Port-a-potties were full by lunch time, there needs to be more bathroom facilities available and they need to be cleaned out before the event starts (not left from practice days)
Keeping the spectators in the boats back behind a no wake zone. They kept creeping into the race area which wasn't a problem until it when from (3) boats to (5) boats in the finals
Keep up the good work! Need more porta potties, need more toilet paper.
Keep the races on time.....
Keep power boat far away from the races line for safety.
Just more food vendors and even more stuff and booths to check out for spectators and for paddlers between races.
Just make it a two day festival and you will have lots of time for the races and finals. (Just a note on the \$\$ spent, these were my individual amounts not the whole group I was with.)
It would have been good to have another race instead of just two.
It would be nice to have a few more main dish food vendors.
It was very well organized - I guess I would like to have participated in more than just a couple of practice sessions - I would really like to be more involved next year.
It was great
It was awesome, location was roomy for spectators and team tents, parking was great in the big fields. More food vendors, lines were long!
It was a very long day to pack all into one... Maybe a 2 or 3 day festival? Labor day weekend?
It was a spectacular event and looking forward to next year.
It was a little hard to hear things throughout the day. I don't think it was horrible, but possibly as the event grows there will be a need for more sound all around.
It might be nice to have some activities available for teenagers between races.
Inform volunteers about all aspects of festival, too many "I don't know"
Improvements to the sound system. Control the boat traffic on the lake so there isn't so much wake in the staging area.
improve the above
Improve parking and how to handle parking, in a timely manner, especially if it grows and is a 2 day event. It was great having the ceremony by the island, and how to utilize that space. Sound was difficult. Don't know if it is possible but to have an electronic board, with results and information would have been great.

<p>Improve access to the team site to drop off tents, supplies, etc. Provide team parking and separate spectator parking further out.</p>
<p>Implicit in the complaints I made in the section above.</p>
<p>If you do the two day it will probably fix the amount of time required to organize the finals as that would be done after the days races. Maybe more coffee outlets.</p>
<p>I would like the best tent and best team spirit award to be presented during the races rather than afterwards since the teams who didn't place in the racing finals had gone home before the final presentation. The above and more toilets :)</p>
<p>I would have liked having someone with a Gator or other small device like ATV with trailer to help get our tent stuff down to the site since we weren't allowed to drive in to set up. It was also difficult to find the spot our team was to set up in. A map given to captains ahead of time is a must. Also, start times should be given to captains a week in advance. I heard there was a professional photographer taking photos of teams, however, my team did not get one taken. She was in an area that was not well-marked. Captains need this info ahead of time so they can make sure their team goes to the photo-tent for the official photos. If services like the moose-ages are available then the teams need that info along with a map to the location of the tent. Many teams did not just wander between races but rather worked to disseminate information from their tents to passers-by. The mandatory captains meeting the night before needs to be held in a location that is not filled with extra people. The information needs to be conveyed in a quiet room where questions can be asked and answered. This should be separate from the area where teams are coming to socialize. I very much enjoyed the food provided by Flathead Lake Lodge but I wish there had been more options for food vendors. I didn't even know ice cream was available until afterwards. Have ALL edible items in one area so it's easier to find. Finally, honor the contracts signed by staff for the vendors. If someone has a contract signed to be there don't go around them to invite some other vendor promising an exclusive. It was inappropriate that Cold Stone was excluded given that they signed a contract with the event staff 6 months in advance. The staff should have called Sweet Peaks and explained the situation allowing them to still come if they wanted but not with an exclusive. Contracts signed first need to be honored first regardless of the personal relationships of the staff with the owners of the businesses; especially when the first business IS and HAS BEEN a chamber member for years and years while the other vendor had to join just to be eligible for this event.</p>
<p>I would extend the event to 2 days. When people travel a long distance, they want to participate in more than 1 day. Also, you could add different race options....250 meter, 500 meter and 1,000 meter. Just a thought!</p>
<p>I think there could have been more food vendors or it might have been useful to have all of the food vendors together. I heard the port-johns were full fairly quickly, which means either they need to be emptied in the middle of the event or we need more of them. For the teams there was not an easy way to get your team tent stuff to its location - it would have been nice to have a couple of gators to run the stuff back and forth from the drop off site and/or allow teams to set up the day before. Signage for the team tents was terrible...we had to wander around forever just to find our location - a map would have been useful. Signage for the event out on the main road could have been bigger.</p>
<p>I think people would be willing to pay a small parking or entrance fee which could go toward the fundraising. I was amazed at how many vehicles they were able to park easily at the Flathead Lake Lodge. Great job all around!</p>
<p>I think making it a two day event would be great. We made it to the finals and we were the last final of the day. It was after 6pm, and that made for a really long day.</p>
<p>I suspect that there will be more spectator boats next year. I think they were a little close to the outside lane. Also, all the vendors were closed by the last race leaving us unable to eat or drink after the final race. We wanted a celebratory round!</p>

I guess my main suggestion would be to have buoys put out designating a line for the spectating boats to stop at. Also, having a few more port-a-potties might also be good. I'm really looking forward to next year's races and am really excited to have something as positive and local(-ish) as this to look forward to along with all the other great activities this area has to offer!
I can't think of any as I was impressed with it being the first year and it was more than I expected. I can't wait till next years event to compete and mingle with the people. Maybe less cost on the after party event as this was what deterred a lot of folks from going.
I am concerned about it being so late in the season, that it has the potential to be a cold day and getting wet would be no fun.
HWY seemed to be a bit a mess! Not sure how it could be fixed.
HONESTLY....CAN'T THINK OF ANY RIGHT NOW. JUST GLAD SOMETHING LIKE THIS MADE IT TO THE VALLEY.
Have the final race in the same order as the heats. Our team, non-profit had to wait a long time for our final race. Take a shorter break at noon/lunch. There seemed to be too much down time.
Have more coffee vendors. There was only the one and it took forever in line.
Have it as a two day event
Have finals start on time, finals more organized
Have fewer classes of boats. The names were confusing. Many all men's teams, women's and mixed teams and experienced and beginners.
Have a shuttle system from Kalispell.
Have a race of fastest timed boats regardless of category.
Have a few more food selections. And I would like to see this be a two day event so it didn't go so late into the evening. By the time some of the last races were over it was too late to attend the dinner that tickets had been purchased for.
Great job! Great event! Thanks to Tacoma Dragon Boat for the use of their boats and people and equipment.
Great first festival.
Good job!
go for 100 teams, 2 day event, get the same weather planner.
Get times done quickly and finals going right away. The weather was nice however if it hadn't been it would have been way too long of a day
Get the Powerboats away from the races
For myself, I will not participate next year, just paddle my own boat and join the party.
First of all we had a great time and it was a wonderful event. However, our captain was told that most "everyone" was entering in the competitive division. I feel there should be competitive, recreational and breast cancer survivor brackets -- I don't see a need for academic, financial, etc. This again made for the finals to take way too long. If the brackets were pared down, maybe there could be runoffs for six teams. Also, it would be nice if there were shuttles from Big Fork and boat docking capabilities so those on their boats could come ashore to enjoy some of the festivities. I honestly had a blast and will do it again.

Finish by 5:00-competitors and organizers and spectators lost interest into the early evening. Don't worry/mention about male to female ratio-it is not enforceable and was not enforced and makes getting a team together too/more complicated and a huge hassle-it is the single reason I would perhaps skip getting a team together-people have so much going on and a few teammates (women) had to leave to go pick up kids etc...so it was difficult to find replacement paddlers- especially female paddlers.
Financial, academic, etc - break them up so that they all can start and finish within a smaller section of time, so people can come and go instead of be there the entire day.
Figure out how to eliminate the highway traffic tie-up. Do you really need to charge a dollar to park?
Extend the event another day and try to get the suckers down in Missoula to publicize it in the Missoulian and on TV news a little better. Also would like to see more promotion in Lake County, specifically in Polson.
Expand to full weekend!
Empty/exchange/bring more port-a-potties. Maybe have someone check and "close" "full" port-a-potties also they could add more tp as necessary. Perhaps a few more food selections.
Don't include Kalispell street festival unless you add stuff and ask local restaurants to keep later hours through festival.
Do not make the event more than 1 day
Do not categorize the 'non' and the 'for' profits together!
do not allow people to use boats during the festival
Do it more often :)
Creating a 2 day event More practices
Create water barrier for spectators on boats, so that they do not come into racing area. Create definition of racing lanes so boats stay in their designated lanes and boats do not get stopped or cut off during races. Create a penalty system for going outside of assigned lane.
Couldn't hear announcements during survivor ceremony.
Could use more food vendors to increase variety. Suggest having sit-down beer gardens onsite. Move to a stand-up reception on Saturday night rather than a dance to allow paddlers to mingle. By the time the dance started, a lot of people were very tired from their long day.
Continue to use all boats for the finals. Keep spectator boats further away from the races!
Consistent number of boats in each race and/or more markers to ensure boats stayed in their lanes. I also recommend that markers be set up to prevent spectator boats from coming so close and creating wake.
Competitors need preferential arrival of some kind.
Choosing your steersman would be a nice option as made a big difference there. Be a little more prepared for boat breakage and subsequent repairs but otherwise just keep doing what your doing.
Charge \$5 a car instead of \$1
Can't think of a thing, except maybe try and solve the problem mentioned above with inexperienced steerers.
Budget for and furnish adequate coaching and steering staff for practices and race day! Going rate for this staffing is \$150 plus \$50 for food, per person per day, plus lodging and transportation! Extend event to 2 days! Have full day practices Wednesday, Thursday, Friday prior to the event! Klaus Hagel, Tacoma Dragon Boat Association (TDBA)

Better traffic flow, charge more for spectator parking. Events leading up to it for \$\$ making opportunities and get teams together. Beer gardens per the Lethbridge teams make them big \$\$ before, during and after event. Need better control of water to keep spectator boats out of racing area. Limit # of boats raing- 5 was too many. Schedule dinner later- 5 or 5:30 was too early plus races were delayed. etc. More off-site parking with shuttle service for spectators. Give gift bags with coupons that extend past the weekend so we locals can support local businesses. Don't break down the event early just because you're guests are coming back...One or the other. Find another location on the lake- Wayfarers is for the public..
Better signage for folks to get there. More parking, shuttles to the site. Provisions to have the porta-jons serviced mid event.
Better signage for athlete option.
Better parking.
Better parking system. More small carts to move less able people from parking to event.
better parking set up tents night before festival load and unload boats one at each dock area and NOT have people climbing over other boats to get into a boat
Better parking for hadicapped spectators or more shuttles for them.
better parking
Better communication with teams, opening ceremonies on their own without race running (the speaker over the PS was announcing while anthems were being sung) and an easier access for parking when coming in and leaving.
Better advance info recourse location/pkg?.. Couldn't find species of race day on your website or in advance publications.
Beer gardens to stay open until last races. They closed before I was able to have my celebratory beer! Music to cease while main ceremonies are happening.
As above
Allow teams with carpool van to park in the VIP parking to get closer to event. Allow tent set-up the night before so we get more rest. 6:45 am set-up made for a long day and some folks took off before the awards ceremony. We missed the rose ceremony/opening ceremony because we were lining up to race. would have liked to see that in person. Also, starting the races 30-45 min early, made it difficult to gather the team and be on stand-by without a guideline. We were caught off guard with our first heat and felt frazzled finding everyone who had scattered. Steerers were rather assertive and sometimes gave conflicting tips from what we had learned at previous practices. This caused some last minute confusion. Also, we were waiting for boat that was being repaired and in an attempt to get us to the starting line quickly; we paddled full out and immediately began the race. Other boats had rested for over ten minutes. We were worn out before we ever started. Overall, the positive far outweigh the negative and these are just suggestions. Thank you so much!
Allow more time to tally up the scores and either make more rooms for the finals or get the boats to put less people in the finals.
Again as I have previously stated...arrangements for handicapped....other then those small items...it was a wonderful event...and expect...way more people to be attending next year....loved the VIMEO
A SHUTTLE FOR PEOPLE TO GO INTO DOWNTOWN BIGFORK, MORE BATHROOMS,
A place to go swimming would have been really fun. Also, having the after-party in Bigfork would have made it possible to go.
A little more people to run the event.
A breakfast food person
A better sound system would have been great.

2 day festival would be great.

1. @ finals if doing heats of 5 have more boats so time b/w isn't so long. 2. Put up a log boom to cut down on wakes from spectating boats as well as to keep spectating bots out of way of race.

**See parking suggestions above, and more availability for team practices with trained people, so there's a consistency of what's going on.

Appendix C- Questionnaire

Montana Dragon Boat Festival Survey

2012 Montana Dragon Boat Festival

Are you from Montana?

- Yes No (skip to 3)

Are you from Flathead County?

- Yes No

What state/province and country are you from?

Were you a participant in the Dragon Boat races?

- Yes No

Was attending or participating in the boat races your primary reason for being in the area?

- Yes No

For what other reasons were you visiting the area? (check all that apply)

- Vacation/recreation/pleasure Just passing through Business/convention/meeting
 Visit friends/relatives Shopping

On this trip, how many total nights did you stay away from home?

- 0 3 6 9
 1 4 7 10 or more
 2 5 8

On this trip, how many total nights did your group stay in Montana?

- 0 3 6 9
 1 4 7 10 or more
 2 5 8

On this trip, how many total nights did your group stay in Kalispell, Whitefish, Columbia Falls, BigFork, or Lakeside?

- 0 3 6 9
 1 4 7 10 or more
 2 5 8

On this trip, in what type of accommodations did you stay? (check all that apply)

- Hotel/motel/bed & breakfast Private campground Second home/condo/cabin Resort/condominium
 Public land camping Home of friend/relative Rented cabin/home Guest ranch
 Vehicle in parking lot

Please enter your best estimate of the TOTAL amount of money (U.S. dollars) you (and your family/group, if applicable) spent in Kalispell, Whitefish, Columbia Falls, BigFork, and Lakeside for items in each of the following categories. If you did not spend money in a category please skip it.

ACCOMODATIONS

Motel/Hotel/B&B

Campground

FOOD

Restaurant/bar

Groceries/snacks

TRANSPORTATION

Gasoline

Local transportation

Auto rental

RETAIL/SERVICES

Retail goods

Gratuity (meals, taxi, hotel)

Entertainment /recreation

What option best describes the group with whom you attended/participated in the Dragon Boat Races?

- Self Extended family Business associates
 Couple Family & friends Organized group/club
 Immediate family Friends

Including you, how many people were in your group?

- 1 4 7 10
 2 5 8 more than 10
 3 6 9

Please indicate what age groups are represented in your group?

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0-5 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 18-24 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 45-54 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 75 and over |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 55-64 years | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11-17 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 65-74 years | |

What best describes your annual household income in US dollars?

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$20,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$60,000 to 79,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$150,000 to 199,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20,000 to 39,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$80,000 to 99,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$200,000 and over |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$40,000 to 59,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100,000 to 149,999 | |

What is your age?

What is your sex?

- Male Female

How long before the race did you make plans to participate/attend the 2012 Dragon Boat Festival?

- The day of the festival
- 1-7 days before the festival
- 1-4 weeks before the festival
- 1-6 months before the festival
- over 6 months before the festival

How did you hear about the 2012 Dragon Boat Festival?

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Word of mouth | <input type="checkbox"/> Posters | <input type="checkbox"/> Group or club |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper | <input type="checkbox"/> Magazine | <input type="checkbox"/> Retail outlet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Radio | <input type="checkbox"/> Direct mail | <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Television | <input type="checkbox"/> E-mail from event planners | <input type="checkbox"/> Internet |

Please rate your overall satisfaction with the 2012 Dragon Boat Festival.

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	N/A
Organization of the event	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Event staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cost of the event	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Location of the event	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concessions available	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Number of people at the event	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sound system	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Variety of activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Signage/directions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cleanliness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of restrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

When might you come to the Dragon Boat Festival again?

- Next year Within 5 years Never

Please tell us what you liked about the 2012 Dragon Boat Festival.

Please tell us what you did not like about the 2012 Dragon Boat Festival.

What suggestions do you have for improvements to the Dragon Boat Festival?

THANK YOU!