

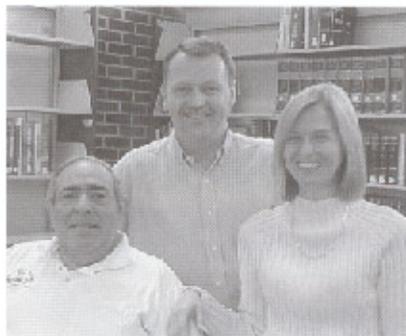
Fort Monmouth Leads

Fort Monmouth, an AMC installation located in New Jersey, has successfully implemented RDS. The DCA, CRD, and Recreation Team have done an outstanding job of showing that RDS can work. Their efforts have been extensive but their hard work has paid off with a more flexible and customer-oriented program.

In 1999 Fort Monmouth began the RDS transition. Since RDS is a process and not a program, implementation is more difficult.

Besides changing how the work of recreation is done, Fort Monmouth had to change how they viewed the recreation delivery process.

Being a test installation, Fort Monmouth did not have other RDS installations to learn from and study. As expected the Recreation Team encountered numerous challenges including limited resources and resistance. But very affectively the Recreation Team focused on the 8 Key Result Areas and within 2 years RDS has become the foundation of Fort Monmouth's recreation efforts.



The Fort Monmouth RDS Team (left to right): Salvatore Impollonia (Operations Team Leader), Neil Terjesen (Program Team Leader), and Jackie Bruno (Marketing Team Leader).

Positive Moves

The following are some of the actions taken by the Fort Monmouth Recreation Team to meet the 8 Key Result Areas.

Increased customer-driven programming.

Programming has increased at Fort Monmouth. The Recreation Team's programmers are focused on 20% new programming and they are supporting this goal by surveying and talking to their "best customers."

More effective use of facilities. The Operations Team does not limit facility use by topic. Any program can take place in any building. Interestingly at the same time they have worked hard to build up the self-directed component of their programming efforts that continue to run in the appropriate facilities (exercise machines in the Fitness Center)

Non-facility based programming. Together the Programming and Operations Teams have started to develop programs that have not normally been considered a component of the "normal" Army recreation offerings. These programs, such as dance, have been offered in facilities not normally used for recreation programs.

Integrated programming. The various Facility Managers are working with the Programming and Operations Teams to integrate their efforts. This integration comes in the form of support for each other's activities as well as running activities that combine the skills and resources from each facility. Trips that have an educational component are an example of this effort.

Active pursuit of outsourcing opportunities. Instead of developing costly programs that may not have a lifetime that will support the cost, recreation programs are outsourced to local community businesses and organizations that can provide a quality service and appreciates the opportunity to work with Fort Monmouth. An effort has been made to work in conjunction with the local Recreation Department.

the Way!

Development of internal promotion strategies. At Fort Monmouth the office of the Marketing Team is right next to the office of the Programming Team. They work very closely to ensure that recreation programs get the appropriate promotion effort. The Programming Team thinks in terms of developing programs that can be promoted to targeted groups and the Marketing Team is using RecTrac to develop in-house mailing lists.

Improved support services. The whole Recreation Team is focused on customer service but most importantly the Operations Team has centralized registration. The centralized registration staff has the answers to most questions and they are working hard to collect customer demographic information.

Establishment of program and operations teams. The teams exist and they are the main reason that the RDS process is working. The Programming Team has two people who focus on the selection of repeat programs and the development of new programs. The Operations Team contains the majority of the staff. They implement the programming, as well as ensuring the continuation of self-directed activities.

Fort Monmouth is not perfect but the staff has worked hard at making their recreation programming more customer-focused and their efforts more team oriented. Everyday brings a new challenge, but as a team, the challenges are not as overwhelming and the successes more satisfying. Now onto MWRDS!

Tell Us Your RDS Success Stories!

Help LERN help other installations making the transition. Small success stories are as important as complete installation transitions. Maybe we can write a story about you or your program. Contact Greg Marsello @ 201 Wayland Avenue, Providence, RI 02906; fax to 1-401-453-4991; or e-mail to marsello@lern.org.

Six Key RDS Priorities

As you make the transition to RDS, I suggest you keep the following 6 Key Priorities in mind.

- **Speed.** You should be able to develop and implement a new program in four weeks or less.
 - **Innovation.** 20% of your programs each year should be new. That does not mean you need 20% more programs. So cut some of the "dogs" and add new programs.
 - **Flexibility.** Listen to your customers. What do they want you to offer? When do they want it offered? How long do they want the program to last? Program around your customers' schedules and not yours.
 - **Quality.*** On a rating of 1-5 (1=Poor and 5=Excellent) your participants should rate the quality of your programs 4 or higher.
 - **Service.*** On a rating of 1-5 (1=Poor and 5=Excellent) your customers should rate the quality of your registration process and customer service 4 or higher.
- *Note: Survey 100 participants and 100 customers each quarter and ask them to rate your program quality and service.
- **Cost.** Your programs must carry their weight financially. Don't just offer a program at a price you know your customers can pay; offer a program at the price you can afford. There may be programs you cannot afford to offer.

Use these 6 Key Priorities to evaluate how you are doing. Use the practical, how-to information in this newsletter to help you improve your performance. Use LERN 24-hours a day by contacting us at www.lern.org with your questions and comments.