

Aggieland Market 2008  
Offices of the Dean of Student Life  
Adult, Graduate, and Off Campus Student Services (AGOSS)  
Fall 2008

### Background

The fourth annual Aggieland Market took place August 22, 2008, to “foster a better relationship between Texas A&M University and the Bryan/College Station community through businesses and community agencies that serve the students, faculty, and staff members of Texas A&M.” The audience consisted of local businesses, non-profit agencies, and university departments who provided information and/or materials to faculty, staff, and students. Adult, Graduate, and Off Campus Student Services (AGOSS) developed five outcomes to guide the program:

- Students will be able to identify resources available in the community.
- Aggieland Market will share community resources with faculty, students, and staff.
- Students will be able to utilize businesses specializing in their particular area of need.
- New students will formulate active relationships with local businesses and agencies within the Bryan/College Station community.
- Current students, faculty, and/or staff will appreciate the community they live in and the services and resources available through active participation in community efforts in local businesses.

In order to evaluate the fourth year of the program, AGOSS developed two evaluations: one for the people who attended the program and one for the vendors who staffed the booths.

### Method and Sample

The participant survey was developed using Teleform<sup>®</sup>, survey design software that creates scannable forms and databases. The vendor survey was created in Vovici<sup>®</sup>, a web-based survey program. The data was analyzed using SPSS<sup>®</sup>, a statistical software package, and Microsoft Excel<sup>®</sup>. The participant survey was 13 questions in length and the vendor survey also had 13 questions, both using predominately quantitative questions.

Over 3,000 participants attended the event, and 253 of them completed a paper evaluation. Of the 82 vendor surveys distributed through e-mail directing vendors to an on-line survey, 26 were completed, yielding a 32% response rate.

### Results

Results will be reported as means, standard deviations (sd), and frequency percentages for the number of people (n) who responded to the question. For ease of reading, frequency percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent, so totals may not add up to exactly 100%. Qualitative themes are reported here; the entire list can be found in a separate document.

## Participant Evaluation

The first question, to evaluate the marketing campaign, asked attendees to indicate all of the ways they heard about Aggieland Market, based on a check-all-that-applied list provided. Table 1 (in 2008 descending order) indicates that Gig ‘Em Week and word of mouth continue to be significant methods, while off campus housing properties, flyers at local businesses, and radio announcements were less effective. The 2008 responses are similar to the 2005, 2006, and 2007 responses.

<b>How did you hear about Aggieland Market?</b>	<b>2005 Percent (n=364)</b>	<b>2006 Percent (n=575)</b>	<b>2007 Percent (n=518)</b>	<b>2008 Percent (n=253)</b>
<b>Word of Mouth</b>	41%	42%	48%	41%
<b>Gig ‘Em Week information</b>	51%	50%	41%	40%
<b>Flyers on campus</b>	30%	26%	22%	26%
<b>New Student Conference</b>	5%	9%	10%	6%
<b>RA or residence hall on campus</b>	13%	8%	9%	6%
<b>Student organization announcement</b>	2%	4%	5%	4%
<b>Student Life website</b>	5%	4%	5%	3%
<b>Flyers at local businesses</b>	3%	2%	2%	1%
<b>Radio</b>	8%	2%	1%	1%
<b>Off campus housing property</b>	1%	<1%	<1%	1%

Table 1—How Participants Heard of Aggieland Market

The next section of questions asked students to rate items based on their experience specifically at Aggieland Market. The scale was 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neutral, 2=Disagree, and 1=Strongly Disagree. The “not applicable” responses were removed from analysis. Table 2, in 2008 descending mean order, indicates that participants are in favor of the event continuing, but they could use a little more knowledge about the resources in the community. The responses seem to be fairly consistent for all years.

<b>After attending Aggieland Market 2008...</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>2005 Mean (n=364)</b>	<b>2006 Mean (n=575)</b>	<b>2007 Mean (sd) (n=515)</b>	<b>2008 Mean (sd) (n=252)</b>
<b>I think the event should continue next year</b>	69%	29%	2%	--	--	4.65	4.63	4.67 (.51)	4.68 (.50)
<b>I will attend the event next year</b>	50%	38%	12%	<1%	<1%	4.32	4.42	4.45 (.67)	4.36 (.74)
<b>I appreciate the Bryan/College Station community resources</b>	39%	56%	5%	--	--	4.20	4.29	4.26 (.62)	4.34 (.57)
<b>I personally benefited from attending the event</b>	39%	51%	10%	<1%	--	4.13	4.26	4.22 (.64)	4.29 (.65)
<b>I know resources available in the community</b>	23%	64%	11%	--	2%	3.92	4.01	4.02 (.64)	4.06 (.72)

Table 2—Aggieland Market Outcomes

Attendees were asked how many of the businesses or agencies they planned on using. About 69% (up 9% from last year) of the respondents indicated that they would use 1-5, while another 24% (down 6% from last year) were interested in 6-10 organizations. About 4% of the respondents would use 11-15 organizations, 2% planned to use 15+ organizations, and 1% were not planning on using any.

Participants were asked what types of businesses or information were not present that they wanted to see. As with previous years, many of the answers revolved around restaurants and food. In addition, other recommendations included banking, cell phones, churches, clothing, and community and student organizations.

Students were asked what other suggestions they had to improve their experiences. Similar to last year, many of the comments surrounded the heat. Most of the other comments commended the event and also suggested getting more free items and more vendors.

The vast majority of respondents were students (99%), with 1% staff and 1% faculty. Of the students, 66% were freshmen, 10% sophomores, 8% juniors, 5% seniors, and 10% graduate students. Graduate students were up 5% from last year, and freshmen were down about 4%.

In terms of residence, 72% lived on campus, and 28% lived off campus (a few more lived on campus this year compared to last year). In addition, 10% of the respondents were international students (down 7% from last year), and 90% were not.

### Vendor Evaluation

Twenty-six of the 82 vendors completed the on-line evaluation of Aggieland Market. The vendors were asked how they heard about Aggieland Market. Table 3 (in 2008 descending percent order) indicates that the direct mailing was the most effective method. The “other” responses included Campus Ministry Association and other local organizations

<b>How did you hear about Aggieland Market?</b>	<b>2005 Percent (n=8)</b>	<b>2006 Percent (n=41)</b>	<b>2007 Percent (n=13)</b>	<b>2008 Percent (n=26)</b>
<b>Registration packet was mailed to me</b>	63%	59%	69%	69%
<b>Other</b>	13%	20%	23%	31%
<b>Phone call</b>	13%	7%	--	4%
<b>Student Life website</b>	13%	--	--	4%
<b>Radio</b>	*	5%	15%	--
<b>Referral</b>	13%	10%	8%	--

Table 3—How Vendors Heard of Aggieland Market

\*Option not available that year

Vendors were asked how to contact potential vendors in the future, and the most common responses were e-mail and mailing the registration packets. Other suggestions included the Chamber of Commerce, radio, television, and phone calls.

Vendors were asked to rate several aspects of the program. Table 4, in 2008 descending mean order on the following page, indicates that the registration material was easy to understand, although the check-in process seemed slightly less organized than in past years.

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>2005 Mean (n=8)</b>	<b>2006 Mean (n=41)</b>	<b>2007 Mean (sd) (n=11)</b>	<b>2008 Mean (sd) (n=26)</b>
Registration material was easy to understand	62%	27%	4%	--	8%	4.50	4.48	4.09 (1.30)	4.35 (1.13)
You had contact with enough people to make this worth my time	58%	23%	4%	4%	12%	3.88	4.36	4.45 (1.21)	4.12 (1.37)
Registration process was easy	50%	31%	8%	4%	8%	4.13	4.44	4.27 (1.19)	4.12 (1.21)
The location was conducive for me to distribute material/ talk to people	58%	19%	8%	4%	12%	4.00	4.00	4.36 (1.29)	4.08 (1.38)
The Check-In process was organized	44%	32%	8%	8%	8%	4.50	4.58	4.27 (1.19)	3.96 (1.27)

Table 4—Vendor Feedback

Organizations were asked how many people they interacted with during Aggieland Market. About 8% said 0-250 (down 31% from last year), 42% said 251-500 (up 15% from last year), 23% said 501-750 (up 5%), 15% said 751-1000 (down 3%), and 12% indicated 1001+ (down 15%). All of the respondents indicated the majority of people they interacted with were students. In terms of their target audiences (in a check-all-that-applied format), 92% said students, 42% said faculty, and 42% said staff.

When asked about participating next year, 92% of the vendors indicated they would be interested (down 8% from last year). When asked what option could be added to make the event more beneficial (in a check-all-that-applied format), having the event at a different time of day seemed to be the most common response. All responses are shown in Table 5. The other write in responses include a larger location and air conditioning.

<b>What other options could be added to the Aggieland Market package that you would find beneficial?</b>	<b>2005 Percent (n=8)</b>	<b>2006 Percent (n=41)</b>	<b>2007 Percent (n=13)</b>	<b>2008 Percent (n=26)</b>
<b>Hold event at a different time of day</b>	*	22%	8%	19%
<b>Increase length of the event</b>	--	12%	15%	15%
<b>Other</b>	50%	37%	38%	12%
<b>Hold event on a weekend</b>	--	10%	--	--
<b>Cooking</b>	25%	*	*	*
<b>Hold event during the day</b>	13%	*	*	*
<b>Sales</b>	13%	*	*	*

Table 5—Additional Ideas from Vendors

\*Response option not provided that year

The final question asked for direct suggestions for next year's Aggieland Market. Because it had rained several days before the event, some of the vendors had to set up in the mud or water, and it was very hot and humid that day. A couple of people suggested locating popular vendors at different locations to

not block other vendors. One person suggested access to water. Two people described that their target audience (faculty and staff) did not make the event worth their effort. Other people appreciated the event the way it was.

### Conclusions and Recommendations

As with the last several years, people who attended and responded to the evaluation, mostly students, liked having contact with community agencies and businesses and were planning on using at least some of the organizations they saw. In general, the vendors also appreciated the opportunity to get their word out to a group of people in a relatively short period of time.

Now that the event has been established for a few years, returning students are aware more of it, although several students indicated that they participated because they were walking by the Academic Plaza. It appears that vendors talked to more students this year, as well. In next year's student evaluation, an additional option for the question about how they heard about it should include "walking by the Academic Plaza."

Marketing (for both participants and vendors) seemed fairly consistent for the last couple of years. For students, word of mouth and Gig 'Em Week were particularly effective. As with last year, because faculty and staff did not attend and/or evaluate the program in large numbers, it is difficult to draw a conclusion about the marketing efforts for those groups. They may not have been interested, thought the program was for students only, did not want to stay on campus for the event, or some other reason. One suggestion may be to target new faculty (through the Dean of Faculties Office) and new staff (through Human Resources) to see if that will increase their attendance.

Looking back at the five outcomes developed to guide the program, AGOSS has continued to make efforts to meet those outcomes. Students who attended are better able to identify community resources that meet their needs (and have indicated their future needs/wants), students planned to use some of the resources, and they appreciate the Bryan/College Station area. While the survey responses to the outcomes were basically the same from last year, these outcomes should be reviewed, updated, and assessed again in the future. It may be time to ask different questions that may be relevant to the event or the different audiences. Unless the event changes drastically in 2009, it would also be reasonable to skip the evaluation process for a year or two.

Prepared for: Stephanie Zuniga, Offices of the Dean of Student Life

Prepared by: Darby Roberts, Student Life Studies

Prepared on: October 11, 2008

*Services provided by Student Life Studies are funded, in part, by Texas A&M Student Service Fees.*