

Assessment #1

Using Secondary Data

Melissa Welz

EDTC8039049 – Data Analysis and Report Writing

Dr. Tracy Amerman

## USING SECONDARY DATA

At the start of my summer vacation, I wanted to visit a popular outdoor attraction that was close to my hometown. I visit indoor museums all the time and am obsessed with dinosaurs! I researched various dinosaur hotspot attractions and found the park, Field Station: Dinosaurs. This park is located right next to Overpeck Park in Leonia NJ. Field Station: Dinosaurs is a very popular tourist site in New Jersey.

Field Station: Dinosaurs lands in the top attractions to go see in New Jersey according to author Gary Phillips. Phillips (2022) states, “A plant-eater with a duck-shaped bill, Hadrosaurus is the official state dinosaur. It was discovered by William Parker Foulke in Haddonfield, NJ in 1858. The find became the globe’s first nearly complete dinosaur skeleton” (para. 2). This beautiful creature walked the lands of New Jersey. This makes New Jersey a historical site for dinosaurs.

Field Station: Dinosaurs has over thirty animatronic dinosaurs. They have many different dinosaurs that range from a ninety-foot Argentinosaurus to three T-Rexs that fulfill your ending of the outdoor attraction. I must say I was impressed with the Argentinosaurus animatronic dinosaur because this was the largest creature to ever walk the earth. The animatronic dinosaurs at this park are life-sized built. This makes the attraction spectacular because you get to see how big these beautiful creatures really were.

The dinosaur park puts on multiple live shows during the day. You can just walk up and sit down at any given time and just listen to the actors and historians speak and put on a show for you. One show teaches you the history of dinosaurs, while the other show varies from time to time in engaging hands-on learning. You can also visit the Paleontologists Laboratory tent where you can dig for fossils.

## USING SECONDARY DATA

Throughout the year, this park has different events that occur each month. For instance, they have an evening event that runs in October called, “Dinos After Dark”. This is where guests are guided through the grounds by lit lanterns, dine on roasted marshmallows, and see a Dinosaur Wrangler lead a Tyrannosaurus hunt along your path! I haven’t experienced the after-dark event. However, I will in October.

Field Station: Dinosaurs Park was first located in Secaucus, New Jersey. The company had to move their location for several reasons. The park now resides in Leonia, New Jersey. At each dinosaur platform, they have information written about the history and facts on display. Many people that I have spoken to or have read online state that the park attraction used to be better at the Secaucus location. I am not sure why people state these comments. However, in my personal opinion, there could be so many concepts and contributions of technology that embrace and enhance this dinosaur park.

Armstrong (2020) states, “The immersive multi-sensory experience of being with art can also help us find moments of pleasure and awareness” (para. 1). When making an attraction, we must incorporate the five senses. The five senses are hearing, sight, touch, smell, and taste. When I walked throughout the trail, I felt that I did not have an multi-sensory experience. The park is a wonderful experience. However, the park could visually and aesthetically be better. Written below is my suggestions infused with technology and creativity.

Every dinosaur was built with such craft to make itself look like a real-life sized dinosaur. The science of robotics played a crucial part in each dinosaur body. You, as a viewer, could see the stomach moving due to the breathing robotic mechanisms. However, these dinosaurs did not walk or move much at all. Also, when I walked through the park, a few dinosaurs were being repaired. I would see a mechanical engineer on a ladder repair the dinosaur. This took the magic

## USING SECONDARY DATA

away from the viewing. I have been to the Jurassic Park in Universal Studios. They had a few dinosaurs that walked a few meters. From my understanding, there needs to be more use of technological robotics enclosed in these dinosaur bodies at Field Station: Dinosaurs. There was enough room for the dinosaurs to move in their platform locations.

What also makes a good attraction is to have a few rides for children and their family. There could be a carousel ride where the customers could sit on their preference of dinosaurs. Of course, the given dinosaurs would have to be at a level where everyone could properly get on them. Moving mechanical rides give costumers different types of emotional experiences. I bet you will always remember your first ride on a carousel or your favorite ride at Disney World. The fact that your body is moving either on a flying or moving object makes it such a memorable experience.

There should also be a pre-show short movie that you can watch when you walk into the park. Examples could be about how dinosaurs lived and how they looked on land. I know it would cost much for virtual reality goggles and a virtual reality show. Therefore, there could be 3D paper glasses that one could put on and watch a short film about the Mesozoic Era. This short film will not only teach us about this era, but get customers excited for the park and what's to come.

As soon as the video stops, guests can either rent headphones or ask to take out their own headphones and scan their phone to a QR code that will help you navigate along the path. The audio can allow choices of languages and provide narration throughout the park. There can be forest/ jungle noises and distant roaring heard in the background of narrations. I walked the path to view these dinosaurs. There was no music or sound effects. There were some growling sounds of dinosaurs. However, the sounds were very low. It was almost as if you had to put your ear

## USING SECONDARY DATA

close to the dinosaur platforms. When I looked in the bushes, there were very small speakers that were on the grounds. Perhaps bigger speakers would increase the volume for these ancient dinosaurs.

There was no food that was sold at the park. However, there was room in the middle that could have been made as a Central American Jungle where you could get bottled water, snacks, and salads. Perhaps just salads and greens because dinosaurs were herbivores.

There was an archeological base camp where you can dig for fossils. I thought this was such a great idea because you felt like you were an archeologist that was digging up for bones. Touching the bones was a great sensory moment for me because I literally felt like I was digging for research.

Towards the ending of the trail, there were three terrifying Tyrannosaurus Rexes' that were gigantic. They all moved their mouths and roared very loud. This was the show stopper of the entire park. They did a great job making this dinosaur so real looking with amazing robotics and sound effects. I just stood there and admired these creatures for roughly twenty minutes. The exit then led to an entrance of a gift shop. However, I didn't feel excited to buy anything because I felt that I wasn't entertained enough nor brought back to their world enough. The entrances and exits could use special effects such as clouds of fiber optics and fog to transport us back in time.

There are so many forms of technology that can enhance our experiences wherever we go. Allen and Gutwill (2004) spoke about how educational systems should offer experiences to support learning. They state that when you are at an exhibit or even in a classroom, one must think outside the box and figure out how we can make teaching material memorable. Stevenson (1991) stated that interactive exhibits can make visits so much more memorable and enjoyable.

## USING SECONDARY DATA

When we key into the five senses with exhibits, we make education so much more fun and memorable.

Overall, the park was a fun experience. The fee of admission was \$20.00. I felt that this was a bit much for just walking around and viewing the dinosaurs. However, the price is helping in making the park succeed at their goals to make the park bigger and better. With these technological enhancements that I wrote about to add to the park, I would then charge a fee of \$30.00. There was no mask mandate for the park because it is outdoors. The trails are also wide enough for social distancing.

As I came across Field Station: Dinosaurs website, I happened to click on the link, “Work With Us”. The president and founder’s name is Guy Gsell. He is a teacher and actor. He created this park because of his obsession of dinosaurs, history, theater, and love of family entertainment. This being said, he does not come from a big company such as Universal Studios. Universal Studios has a section called, “Jurassic Park: A Universal Orlando Theme Park Experience”. I am sure Guy has explored Universal Studio’s, “Jurassic Park” park experience. And I am sure Guy and his team want to incorporate these technological mechanisms into his park. However, funding money, building a team, and using imagination all takes time.

In case you ever want to explore this educational park, enclosed is the trail map below.



Figure 1

Field Station: Dinosaurs Trail Map (Field Station Dinosaurs, 2022)

## USING SECONDARY DATA

### References

- Allen, S., & Gutwill, J. (2004). Designing with multiple interactives: Five common pitfalls. *Curator: The Museum Journal*, 47(2), 199-212.
- Armstrong, J. (2020, September 30). *Audio for feeling, being, and coming together*. MOMA. Retrieved July 22, 2022, from <https://www.moma.org/magazine/articles/428>
- Field Station Dinosaurs. (2022). *Trail Map (QR Code)*. Field Station Dinosaurs. Retrieved July 21, 2022, from <https://jerseydinos.com/schedule/>
- Phillips, G. (2022, February 22). *Best Places to Discover Dinosaurs in New Jersey*. NJ Monthly. Retrieved July 23, 2022, from <https://njmonthly.com/articles/arts-entertainment/museums-galleries/where-to-find-dinosaurs-new-jersey/>
- Stevenson, J. 1991. The long-term impact of interactive exhibits. *International Journal of Science Education* 13(5): 521-31.