

North Country Outfitters

LLC



68 Baxter Lake Road, Box 21
Nelson, PA 16940

570-827-5850

Daniel Jacobs
RPTM 101
Career Report
Spring 2012

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I. Agency Description

A. Introductory Statement

North Country Outfitters is a commercial outfitting business located in Tioga, Pennsylvania. Jim Oman, the owner and the primary guide for North Country Outfitters, offers several services. These services range from upland bird hunting and dog training, to fly-casting instruction and sporting clay competitions. The company provides many other services, such as bear, turkey, whitetail deer hunting, and youth fishing, as well as daily lodging for travelers. While this agency may seem as though it represents Outdoor Recreation, a primary goal of North Country Outfitters is to make a profit while enjoying the great outdoors, and so it best represents Commercial Recreation.

B. History and Development

After coaching football for twenty-nine years, Jim Oman decided that it was time to retire, hoping that he could spend more time with his family. Seven years before his official retirement, Mr. Oman started breeding and training upland hunting dogs as a hobby. With his retirement in 2002, his “hobby” soon began consuming a large portion of his time. Since he found great joy in working outside and training dogs, he conceived the idea to turn his hobby into a small business with the hope of making a few extra dollars to secure his retirement. Later that year, he coined the name *North Country Outfitters* and his “hobby” was recognized by the tax bureau as an official business. Ten years later, with Mr. Oman’s hard work and his unrelenting spirit, North Country Outfitters has

transformed its image from a dog training and upland bird hunting business, to providing outfitting services in every type of game that northern Pennsylvania has to offer.

C. Purpose and Philosophy

While the agency does not have an official mission statement, the goal of North Country Outfitters is to replicate the hunting that made Pennsylvania famous by outdoor enthusiasts during the 1950's, while creating outstanding customer satisfaction. In the words of Mr. Oman, his mission is to simply "Have fun, and see that everyone is enjoying their time outside." He also states that it is of crucial importance to get younger generations outside, so that the rich heritage of hunting and fishing can be preserved and enjoyed for years to come.

D. Services

North Country Outfitters renders several services. On the four-hundred acres managed by the agency, several hunting services are offered. All hunting is fair-chase, and all the animals are wild, with the exception of the stocked quail, chuckars, and pheasants for upland bird hunts. For big-game hunts, customers can hunt turkeys, bears, and whitetail deer. All hunts have the option of being guided, but they do not have to be if the hunter wants an independent adventure. The hunting season starts during the first week of September and runs through the third week of April. In terms of fishing, the agency manages a multi-acre lake used to teach children fishing skills and practice fly-casting. Pine Creek, a renowned fishing waterway, is only a ten minute drive from the

outfitting lodges. The fishing season starts in April, and runs through August. As a general rule of thumb, the earlier in the season, the better the fishing. All game (birds, big-game, and fish) can be cleaned and processed for a small fee. Additionally, all equipment (guns, ammunition, poles, tackle, etc) can be rented / purchased through North Country Outfitters, or the customer can supply their personal equipment, free of charge.

North Country Outfitters primarily advertises via word of mouth. For this reason, Mr. Oman stresses the importance of providing the best experience possible for each customer. In addition to word of mouth, the agency advertises in *Black's Wing and Clay*, an online sportsman's guide reference, as well as at the *Early Bird Sports Expo* at the Bloomsburg Fairgrounds during the winter months. The official website of North Country Outfitters provides one final method of advertisement, and the website can be found at:

<http://www.northcountryoutfitters.us/home>.

E. Clientele

While mainly sportsmen patronize North Country Outfitters, the agency is willing to accommodate to the needs of any person who enjoys the outdoors. The average customer ranges in age from their late twenties to mid sixties; although, most of the customers are middle-aged men. It is not uncommon for these men to bring along their sons, who usually range in age from ten to their early twenties. Currently, there are no official accommodations in place for the physically disabled (such as wheel-chair ramps), but Mr. Oman is more than

happy to accommodate a specific trip to the limitations of an individual. For example, if an individual is too young, or perhaps lacks proper strength (the elderly) to cross a river, Mr. Oman will take them to an area that will be comfortable for them, while providing comparable action in the fishing. There are no restrictions as to the clients served, with the exception that every client must be a responsible individual due to the liability and nature of the sports.

F. Funding

North Country Outfitters is completely funded by the services it offers. To date, no individual or corporation has made donations to the agency. Also, the agency receives no grants or subsidizing funds from the municipal, state, or federal governments. Hunting trips are the primary source of profit, followed by fishing adventures. Dog training and sporting clay shoots remain a key component of the agency, but they bring in less money than hunting and fishing. Services such as lodging and game processing provide little profit, and are more or less offered for the purpose of increasing customer satisfaction through convenience. Renting equipment provides marginal profits.

Outfitting is a very expensive business. Historically, the two largest expenditures are diesel fuel and the cost of feed for the birds. Since Mr. Oman manages four hundred acres, nearly three-quarters of these acres require farming (harrowing, dragging, planting, fertilizing, applying pesticides and herbicides, etc) every year. On average, Mr. Oman purchases five to six tons of

bird feed per season, which amounts to roughly \$1000 per month. In addition, equipment such as trucks, tractors, and implements depreciate in value year. Mr. Oman drives around 40,000 miles every year solely for his business, which equates to about a \$170,000 expenditure on fuel for his truck alone.

G. Problem Areas

The weather is a major source of concern for the agency. Rain can saturate land, making walking nearly impossible in some of the fields that lie in valleys. Too much rain can flood streams, while too little rain can lead to less oxygen in the water and result in a “fish kill” for that year. Also, rain and sunshine are incredibly important from a farming perspective, as the proper cover needs to grow (to provide an exceptional hunting experience). In the winter, too much snow can lead to customers cancelling their hunts. Also, winter weather can be very harsh on the game birds, and especially harsh on their chicks. If the game birds get sick (i.e. contract coxsidiosis, gapeworm, or snic), medications (amproldian, sulfadimethoxine, and fenbendazole) can be very expensive. To date, the agency has not faced vandalism, legal issues, funding shortages, or job freezes; however, customer demand has increased. To combat the growing demand, Mr. Oman offers services in the morning (7am to 11pm) and services in the afternoon (3pm to 7pm). While Mr. Oman could hire additional guides, he refuses to because (a) the agency started as a hobby, not as a high-profit business, and (b) he wants the customer to have a “personal” experience.

II. Job Description

Jim Oman is the owner of North Country Outfitters, and he can be reached at 570-827-5850. Since he makes all of the financial and executive decisions, he is also the CFO and CEO of the agency. Additionally, Mr. Oman is recognized as a farmer by the government. He is responsible for every aspect of the business, so his specific job duties include farming, raising birds, managing finances and investing, hunting, fishing, guiding, instructing / mentoring, and providing appropriate accommodations for the customers. He works every day of the week (including weekends) since farming is a full-time job, but he limits scheduling hunts and fishing trips to five days a week. An average day during the hunting or fishing season is as follows:

- Wake up at 5 am
- Kennel the dogs in the truck / prepare for fishing at 6am
- Stock birds or scout hunting areas / prepare for fishing at 6:30am
- Meet customers for breakfast at 7am
- Start hunt / fishing trip by 8:30am
- Finish hunt / fishing trip by noon

- Prepare for the afternoon guiding service at 2pm
- Stock birds / prepare for fishing 2:30pm
- Start hunt / fishing trip by 3pm
- Finish hunt / fishing trip at dusk
- Clean equipment
- Finish day before midnight

This job does not require any special degree or certificate; rather, it involves an unwavering compassion for the great outdoors, as well as a great enthusiasm for the life given to you by God. In order to run a similar business, it is imperative that one has considerable hunting and fishing skills. Survival skills are definitely a plus. North

Country Outfitters would not have anywhere near the amount of success that it does if the owner was not a farmer. A background in biology would be very helpful in order to better care for the game birds and raise chicks, although it is not required. As with any business, motivation, foresight, and hard work are essential.

Although this agency is very successful, it is not very large. There are currently no opportunities for employment, so there are no application procedures, interview requirements, advancement / educational opportunities, benefits, or salary ranges for prospective employees. Mr. Oman is very willing to discuss his business, but he does not need any assistance in maintaining it.

Mr. Oman absolutely loves his career. He has no objections or aversions to any part of his work, as “everything is a variety.” While cleaning bird pens and house-breaking puppies may not seem like *fun* aspects in a career, Mr. Oman enjoys them. He says that the best part of his job is that it is never monotonous. Also, he thoroughly enjoys watching his customers have a good time, especially when they are submerged in a 1950’s hunting climate.

III. Personal Reaction

With regard to my own career goals (possible careers including a Coast Guide pilot, a law enforcement officer, an outdoor adventure programmer, or whatever I find God calling me to do), I was quite impressed with North Country Outfitters. This type of leisure service is vital in society, as more and more land becomes developed every day. This agency is ran very professionally, yet it remains a “grass-roots” style business (Mr.

Oman was born as a farmer in Pennsylvania, and he is still a farmer in Pennsylvania).

This experience definitely gave me a new view on outfitting, as I always thought an outfitting career would be more so a “fun job” than an actual job that requires legitimate work. I would not want to be an outfitter as a career, as I want a career with reliable, consistent hours.

All in all, North Country Outfitters is a very successful small business that should serve as an example and inspiration to all aspiring outfitters.

IV. List of Printed Resources

- <http://www.northcountryoutfitters.us/home>
- [http://wing-and-clay.com/clay.blacksdirectories.com/display_company.cgi?
company_id=2648&final_cat1=&final_cat2=&final_cat3=&final_cat4=
&from_index=Y](http://wing-and-clay.com/clay.blacksdirectories.com/display_company.cgi?company_id=2648&final_cat1=&final_cat2=&final_cat3=&final_cat4=&from_index=Y)
- [http://www.wingshootingusa.org/WSUSA_SearchResults.cfm?ID=A6UJ9
A002JSH](http://www.wingshootingusa.org/WSUSA_SearchResults.cfm?ID=A6UJ9A002JSH)

V. Agency Interview Confirmation Form

RPM 101

Agency Interview Confirmation Form

PLEASE PRINT

Student Name: Daniel Jacobs

Student #: 9 3122 4776

Area of Career Interest: Outdoor Recreation; Adventure Programming

Name and Address of Agency: North Country Outfitters
68 Baxter Lake Road, Box 21
Nelson, PA 16940

Agency Telephone #: 570-827-2850

Date of Interview(s): 3/11/12

Name(s) and Specific Title(s) of Personnel Interviewed:

Jim Oman, Owner of North Country Outfitters
and Hunting Club

Signature(s) of Personnel Interviewed:

James L. Oman Date: 3-18-2012

Date: _____

Student's Signature: Daniel Jacobs Date: 3/19/12

2012

VI. Thank You Note

