



Stevens Pass wanted to re-engage their constituency after some issues that arose post-purchase by its parent corporation. After talking to multi-year season pass holders and past-year visitors, we learned that there seemed to be a genuine love for the mountain, but communication issues and operational decisions were impeding the connection.

One of the primary rifts was a lack of perceived respect for backcountry skiers. There was a misperception internally that season pass holders and backcountry skiers were less important to the organization because they didn't spend money at the resort beyond purchasing their season pass. What wasn't present in the spreadsheets was the role of these hard-core skiers in introducing new skiers to the sport. Reducing funneling and giving seasons pass holders a 30-minute head start on the backcountry lift improved satisfaction tremendously. Another insight was that convenience and communication were essential to satisfaction - beyond even the desire for perfect snow. For example, many did not know they needed to 'opt in' to e-newsletters. A push to their entire database with an 'opt-out' option increased their communications base significantly.

A series of changes ensued once this information was absorbed that is worth noting; great kudos goes to this management team for embracing these findings and aligning operations, marketing, CRM efforts and innovations toward them. **The net result that season was that the resort made their numbers that season for the first time in 4 years. Beyond that, two years later the resort showed an increase in April traffic of 110% and expectations for annual passes were exceeded three-fold.**