

CLASS NOTES

Season 1, Episode 5: Buying into Bigfoot - Cryptid Tourism's Boost to Local Economies



Featured Guests: Alex Avelino & Rae Riiska (UF Smathers Libraries) & Dr. Christa Court (UF/IFAS Food and Resource Economics)

Key Takeaways

- Cryptid/Paranormal Tourism is a unique subset of tourism-based activities that is centered around mythical creatures where people travel to an area for the chance to sight a creature, learn more about them, or network with fellow cryptid enthusiasts.
- In addition to driving tourism activity, cryptids have also been used in many successful marketing campaigns to generate brand awareness for a product, good, or service.
- When designing a marketing campaign (around cryptids or otherwise) it is crucial to consider your target audience, intended platform, and how you want your brand to be perceived.

Discussion Questions

- Are there any regional cryptids in your area?
- How do you think local businesses could use these cryptids in marketing?
- What other odd or interesting aspects of your region might attract outside individuals to the area?
- What are key differences in marketing for a business compared to a non-profit or a government service (such as a library)?
- What types of activities do tourists engage in that bring money into a region?
- Pretend you are the marketing specialist for Visit Point Pleasant, WV. Come up with a campaign based around their famous Mothman and explain how you would plan to measure the campaign's success.

Additional Resources

- UF/IFAS Economic Impact Analysis Program Website: go.ufl.edu/EIAP
- UF George A. Smathers Libraries Website: <https://uflib.ufl.edu>
- National Geographic Article on Global Cryptid Tourism: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/article/cryptid-tourism-loch-ness-monster-yeti-lucrative-industry>

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