



To Whom it may Concern:

Earlier this year, Washington State University's Athletic Department engaged Concession Solutions, Inc. to review its concession agreement with Marriott Corporation and advise us on future directions we might consider.

The issue was somewhat complex, involving such alternatives as continuing with Marriott via an extension of the existing contract, opening up the service to a public bid, bring the effort in-house and perform the service with University employees or a hybrid of sorts and engage Marriott in a management function for a flat fee while assuming the profit/loss risks internally. What we received from Concession Solutions, was not only a consulting review, but an in depth analysis of our entire external operations as they relate to food and beverage.

Teresa and Dean, time and again, displayed their expertise in the area of concession sales but more importantly, promotions in general. This is what proved so valuable to WSU. We, as one might expect, depend upon 'entertainment' as a source of revenue generation. We have multiple functions both prior to and after sporting events, where food and beverage are a central element. On their own initiative, Teresa and Dean expanded their review into this area, demonstrating how we could improve our operation with the concept of economy of scale. Only by getting to know us, could they have broadened their scope and included such a constructive element.

Their expertise in the area of concession is unquestioned in our minds. Having worked in the industry, they are sensitive to the human element of reviewing one's operation and the making of suggestions. Never, were any of their recommendations threatening. They made the effort of spending time with the individuals essential in this part of our operation, and to a person earned their respect. Options were offered, given the limitations peculiar to our situation. They did not attempt to fit us into some standard mold, but adjusted their approach and report to the idiosyncrasies they found at WSU. What was most gratifying to me, was the final product which demonstrated that customization. They developed alternatives that had never been considered by our administration, yet were extremely viable. By the time they completed their study, there was no question in my mind they were the experts of our operations, knowing more about our strengths and weaknesses than we did. Then, to further demonstrate their professionalism, they proceeded to educate us within their report in a positive manner. In so doing, we were made aware of alternatives for improvements heretofore unknown to us.

The fact that both Teresa and Dean have worked in the industry and have seen many different operations, nationwide, allows them to empathize with their clients while offering workable solutions. I endorse their involvement with anyone looking to maximize profits in the selling of concessions, or even the use of food and beverage in the much broader effort of marketing and promoting. If I can offer input on a specific engagement, I will be more than happy to do so upon request.

Harold C. Gibson, Jr.
Associate Athletic Director