

off employees? Should he limit service to only the Thomas the Tank runs that stayed close to Durango in open areas away from the forests? If he did decide to suspend operations, how should he deal with customers who had already made reservations and planned their vacation travels around a ride on the D&SNG? Could local, state, or federal officials pre-empt his decision and order a shutdown for safety reasons?

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This case was prepared by Edwin C. Leonard, Jr. of Indiana University–Purdue Fort Wayne and Roy A. Cook of Fort Lewis College and is intended to be used as a basis for class discussion. The views represented here are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Society for Case Research. Authors' views are based on their own professional judgments. "Coping with Crisis" by Roy Cook and Edwin Leonard, Jr. (2003).

ANY CITY CAN BE A TOURIST DESTINATION

ROY A. COOK AND BARBARA H. NEMECEK

INTRODUCTION

Tourists are naturally attracted to destinations that are easy to access, are blessed with natural beauty, have well developed entertainment offerings, or offer consistently mild climates. What do you do if you are in a location that is devoid of all of these obvious attractors?

That was the question faced by decision makers in Wichita Falls, Texas. When the city leaders first embarked on their attempts to lure tourists to this secondary Texas city there was a great deal of skepticism, "... because of the area's perception as a sleepy, remote city with few amenities and scorching summers." (*City of Wichita Falls, Vision 20/20 Plan*, July 2008, p. 33) Wichita Falls was not known for its location, beauty, noteworthy attractions, dining, or recreation opportunities.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Wichita Falls is a secondary city with a population of a little over 100,000 located in the Panhandle Plains of Texas. It is the focus of commerce in the region as it serves as the county seat and home for many governmental offices for Wichita County. In addition to governmental services, the city is an agricultural trading center and home to many independent oil and gas operations and Sheppard Air Force base, the training center for NATO pilots. Aside from these traffic drivers, there is little else that serves as natural attractions as the city sits in the nondescript high Texas plains, about 130 miles