adventuresmith

2434 Pleasant View Dr.
Rochester Hills, MI 48306
(248) 481-2568 office
(248) 212-0070 fax
adventuresmithinc.com

MICHAEL R. SMITH

LinkedIn: linkedin.com/in/adventuresmith
Email: adventuresmith@gmail.com
Office + 1 (248) 481-2568
Mobile: + 1 (248) 321-4968
Skype: adventuresmithinc
Websites: adventuresmithinc.com, arbortrek.com, zip-lines.com

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PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Michael R. Smith is an industry leader and proven business and marketing consultant with more 20 years of experience designing and developing award-winning aerial adventure parks and 26 years of experience delivering adventure-based tours and team and leadership development programming. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Wilderness Leadership from Prescott College (1998) and Master of Training and Development from Oakland University (2004). He has worked with numerous Fortune 500 companies as a business consultant, authored and published climbing guides, worked as a Field Instructor for the Outward Bound School, and is regularly retained as a zip line and adventure park expert witness.

Since 2009, Smith has served as the President of ArborTrek Canopy Adventures, LLC, an aerial adventure park operator headquartered in Jeffersonville, Vermont. ArborTrek has been recognized with the following accolades:

- 2019 10Best Readers' Choice Award for "Best Aerial Adventure Park", *USA Today*
- 2017, 2016, 2014 listed as One of the "10 Best Zipline Courses in the USA", *USA Today*
- One of the "World's Coolest Zip Lines", *Travel + Leisure*
- 2018 Editor's Pick for Best Family Adventures, *Yankee Magazine*
- 2012 Editor's Choice for Best of New England, *Yankee Magazine*
- "One of the Coolest Places to Go Zip Lining in the World", FoxNews.com
- "One of the Best Wilderness Zip Line Tours in the U.S.", *Outside Magazine's Adventure Advisor Blog*
- "10 Thrilling Zip Lines Around the World", *The Weather Channel*
- Five-star user rating for nine consecutive years, *TripAdvisor*
- 2016 Excellence in Tourism Promotion, *Upper Cumberland Business Journal*

Smith oversees all business functions at ArborTrek Canopy Adventures which include but are not limited to the design, development, and operation of zip line canopy tours, aerial adventure parks, climbing adventures, and traditional challenge course (high and low ropes challenge courses, group initiatives and adventure-based team building / experience-based training and development).

Prior to founding ArborTrek Canopy Adventures, LLC, Smith was employed by S.T.E.P.S., Inc. (1994 – 2009) in a variety of positions ranging from challenge course facilitator to organizational development consultant to Director of Special Projects. Founded by a group of professionals in education, treatment, and organizational development who shared a common interest in the benefits of adventure education,

S.T.E.P.S., Inc. grew to be the largest provider of adventure education services in Southeastern Michigan. In 2005, S.T.E.P.S., Inc. became an early leader in the emerging zip line canopy tour market in the U.S. and Canada. During his 15 years at S.T.E.P.S., Smith trained hundreds of facilitators and guides, designed and developed more than 14 commercial adventure parks and dozens of traditional courses in the U.S. and Canada, consulted on numerous commercial and traditional projects, and oversaw the delivery of programming to more than 200,000 participants. Projects that he helped to bring to market have served more than 2 million participants.

In addition to the aforementioned roles, Smith maintains a niche consultancy, AdventureSmith, Inc., focused on marketing, business consulting, and staff development systems for the adventure market. Ranging from the publication of climbing guides to the development and maintenance of an online directory designed to track the growth of the zip line market, AdventureSmith, Inc. has been active in business development and marketing strategies and has provided support to many commercial and non-commercial challenge courses, zip lines, and aerial adventure parks in the U.S. and Canada.

Other relevant experience includes four extended summers as a mountaineering and field instructor for the Outward Bound School, swift-water and high-angle rescue training, technical rock guiding, mountaineering, and experience in designing, leading and evaluating organizational development interventions and change processes. Smith served as a Board of Director Member for the Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) from February 2014 to February 2017 and currently serves as a member of the ACCT Accreditation and Certification Committee. Smith is a participating member on ASTM F24.61 sub-committee which oversees the development and maintenance of ASTM F2959 Standard Practice for Special Requirements for Aerial Adventure Courses. Additional areas of expertise include expert witness consulting, technical inspections of challenge courses, adventure park and traditional challenge course program audits, and production of custom operation manuals and documents. He is adept at publication design and layout, graphic design, illustration, and web development.

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ACCOMPLISHMENTS

ArborTrek Canopy Adventures, LLC – U.S. & Canada – https://arbortrek.com 2010 – present
President/Owner

- Control all business operations including supervision of up to 30 seasonal employees and 6 to 9 full-time, year-round employees
- Responsible for strategic planning and brand growth through product systemization, research and development, standardization, and partner relations
- Oversee the operation and business development of ArborTrek-licensed and owned aerial adventure parks and zip line canopy tour facilities

AdventureSmith, Inc. – Rochester Hills, MI – https://adventuresmithinc.com 2000 – present
President/Owner

- Control all business operations including supervision of employees and subcontractors
- Provide business-to-business services to established and prospective aerial adventure park and canopy tour operators including business planning, site feasibility, market research, operations

management, course design and layout, curriculum and program design, operation reviews, and guide training
- Engage in expert witness and loss control consulting projects
- Moderate Zipline Nirvana (www.zip-lines.com), a community resource for zip line canopy tour and aerial adventure park enthusiasts
- Researched, authored, and published "A Climber's Guide to Prescott, AZ", a 114-page route guide providing technical information and photo topographs of adventure climbing routes in the local area

S.T.E.P.S., Inc. – Ann Arbor, MI
Director of Projects, Marketing and Installation Standards & Compliance 2000 – August 2009

- Commercialized and marketed internal management and training systems to create an external consulting business focused on the needs of challenge courses and zip line canopy tours
- Initiated and directed the transformation of the company from a local, single-site challenge course management company of limited services to a nationally-recognized provider of challenge course services ranging from adventure programming to challenge course design and installation, staff training, and business development consulting
- Co-authored "A Facilitator's Guide to Adventure Challenge Programming", a customizable ropes course facilitation manual, and "A Guide's Guide to Canopy Tour Programming", the first comprehensive manual aimed at managing canopy tour operations in the United States
- Developed the Joe Dumars' Team and Leadership Center and consulted on the development of numerous other experiential education programs and zip line canopy tours throughout the United States and Mexico, providing business consulting, program design, and staff development services
- Conducted external review of operations for dozens of experiential training and canopy tour operations, assessing risk management strategies, training systems, and program effectiveness
- Designed and implemented a web marketing strategy on a limited budget that was responsible for increasing challenge courses sales by more than 1200% in the first year

Director of Corporate Training 1998 – September 2006

- Project management and program coordination for the delivery of one-day and multi-day experiential education programs that consistently achieved repeat business and high ratings
- Negotiated long-term and short-term training contracts with local and national corporations including General Motors, DaimlerChrysler, KPMG, Ernst & Young and Kmart

Challenge Course Facilitator/Trainer 1994 – May 2008

- Instructed adventure-based team workshops for more than eight hundred professional groups, school groups, and community organizations
- Designed and delivered custom teacher education workshops focused on incorporating adventure education and experiential education into school curriculums
- Led multi-day challenge course and zip line canopy tour training programs focused on risk management, technical skill development, group dynamics, industry standards and accepted practices

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Outward Bound – Redmond, OR – https://nwobs.org Summer 1999 – 2004
Field Instructor/Chief Instructor

- Responsible for the design and delivery of 14- to 30-day whitewater rafting, mountaineering, and backpacking trips in Oregon and Washington aimed at fostering an appreciation for the natural world, leadership and character development. Student demographics ranged from age 14 and up to adult professionals
- Managed course progress and instructor development through on-going mentoring and coaching sessions

EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS

- **Master of Training and Development (MTD), Oakland University, Rochester Hills, Michigan, 2004**
  Intense focus on human resource development and organization change initiatives using instructor-led and web-based delivery platforms, instructional design techniques, and evaluation practices; concentration in the use of experiential-based training and development in teaching lean manufacturing practices
- **Bachelor of Arts, Wilderness Leadership, Prescott College, Prescott, Arizona, 1998**
  Emphasis on risk management in multiple high-adventure environments including but not limited to vertical rope rescue, whitewater and flatwater paddling, alpine and rock mountaineering, and remote wilderness environments; breadth in socio-cultural studies
- **Graduate, National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS), Lander, Wyoming, 1997**
  Leadership development, small group dynamics, and expeditionary travel in alpine mountain, vertical rock, and desert canyon environments
- ACCT Level I and Level II Professional Inspector Certification – #5173920 exp. 3/1/2019
  ACCT Level II In-House Inspector Certification -- #5173920 exp. 3/1/2021
- NAARSO Level I Certification – #CN-4890 exp. 3/31/2021
- Ontario TSSA ADM-AR – Limited Scope – Zip Line Mechanic – #0000626 exp. 11/2020
- OSHA 10-hour in Construction Safety and Health – #30-00395073 completed 2/8/2012
- Wilderness First Responder – expired
- Red Cross Community First Aid / CPR / AED – exp. 6/2020
- Michigan Class B Commercial Driver License

TRADE ASSOCIATIONS & COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

- The Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT), Business-to-Client Member (since 2004)
  - ACCT Board Member (term: 2/2014 – 2/2017)
  - ACCT Accreditation and Certification Committee (10/2019 to present)
- Professional Ropes Course Association, Individual Member
- ASTM F24.61(Adventure Attractions) Subcommittee Participant
- National Association of Amusement Ride Safety Officials (NAARSO)
- International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA)
- Numerous local chambers and destination marketing organizations

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SELECT PUBLICATIONS

- Smith, Michael R. (2016). Challenge Courses, Zip Lines, and Aerial Adventure Parks: A historic primer and examination of current trends and statistics. Self-Published.
- Smith, Michael R. (2016). How Sound is Your Operation? Adventure Park Insider, 2 (2), pp. 28-34.
- Smith, Michael R. (2015). Preparing for Program Accreditation. Association for Challenge Course Technology: Parallel Lines, 15 (4), pp. 8-9.
- Smith, Michael R. (2015). Why I Don't Have a Zip Line in My Backyard. http://www.zip-lines.com, October 26, 2015.
- Smith, Michael R. (2015). Three Steps Operators Should Take Now to Improve Program Quality and Reduce Risk. Association for Challenge Course Technology: Parallel Lines, 15 (3), pp. 8,15.
- Petrozzi, Mark St. J. & Smith, Michael R. (2015, February). Managing Risk. Adventure Park Insider, February 2015.
- Smith, Michael R. (2004). A Facilitator's Guide to Adventure Challenge Programming. Detroit. Self-Published.
- Smith, Michael R (2000). A Climber's Guide to Prescott, AZ. Detroit: Self Published.

SELECT PRESENTATIONS

- Smith, Michael R. "Training Competency Models for Commercial Operations." Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) Conference. Denver, CO. 2019.
- Smith, Michael R. "Preparing for Program Accreditation." Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) Conference. Lost Pines, TX. 2016.
- Smith, Michael R., Azram, Bahman, & Jacobs, Keith. "Panel Discussion on Aerial Adventure Parks and Zip Lines." Ski Area Management Summer Ops Conference. Camelback Mountain Resort, PA. 2015.
- Smith, Michael R. "Consolidate This." Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) Conference. Orlando, FL. 2014.
- Smith, Michael R. & Stock, Donald. "Riding the Wave of Adventure." Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) Conference. Las Vegas, NV. 2013.
- Smith, Michael R. & Holmes, Gene. "Physics of Zip Lines." Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) Conference. Boston, MA. 2012.
- Smith, Michael R. "Current Trends and Statistics: Zip Line Canopy Tour and Aerial Adventure Parks." Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) Conference. Boston, MA. 2012.
- Smith, Michael R. "Trends and Statistics: Zip Line Canopy Tour and Aerial Adventure Parks." Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) Conference. Minneapolis, MN. 2011.
- Smith, Michael R. "Staff-based Competency Models for Challenge Course Operators." Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) Conference. Portland, OR. 2008.
- Smith, Michael R. & task force group. "Canopy Tour Task Force." Association for Challenge Course Technology (ACCT) Conference. Portland, OR. 2008.

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- Jacobs, Keith & Smith, Michael R. "Marketing 101 for Adventure Educators." Association for Experiential Education (AEE) Heartland Regional Conference. Illinois. 2005.
- Smith, Michael R. "Low Prop / No Prop Group Initiatives and Adventure Games." Association for Experiential Education (AEE) Heartland Regional Conference. Illinois. 2005.
- Smith, Michael R. "Low Prop / No Prop Group Initiatives and Adventure Games." Association for Experiential Education (AEE) Heartland Regional Conference. Missouri. 2004.
- Smith, Michael R. "Adventure-based Consulting – An Approach to Developing Personnel during a Shift to a Lean Manufacturing Environment." Oakland University School of Business/Pauley Institute. Rochester Hills, MI April 2004.
- Smith, Michael R. "Games Trainers Play." Training and Development, Oakland University. Rochester Hills, MI 2004.
- Smith, Michael R. "Low Prop and No Prop Adventure Games for Socials Workers." Michigan Social Workers Conference (MASSW). Grand Rapids, MI. October 17, 2003

EXPERT WITNESS AND COURT/DEPOSITION TESTIMONY

- MOBLEY, Plaintiff, v. STONEY CREEK, LLC, Defendant – Alaska, 2019 – *Retained by counsel for Stoney Creek, LLC*
- TRUDGEON, Plaintiff, v. MARGARITA ADVENTURES, LLC, Defendant – California, 2019 – *Retained by counsel for Margarita Adventures, LLC*
- WHITNEY REARICK and DAVID REARICK, Plaintiffs, v. LEGACY MOUNTAIN ZIP LINE, LLC, Defendant – Tennessee, 2016 – *Retained by counsel for Legacy Mountain Zip Line, LLC*
- APRIL DODGE, Plaintiff, v. GRAFTON ZIPLINE ADVENTURES, LLC and MICHAEL QUINN, Defendant – Illinois, 2016 – *Retained by counsel for Grafton Zipline Adventures, LLC*
- JOSEPH P. LITTLEJOHN, Plaintiff, v. TIMBERQUEST PARK AT MAGIC, LLC AND CORPORATE CHALLENGE, INC. D/B/A ADVENTURE MAS, Defendants – Vermont, 2015 – *Retained by counsel for TimberQuest Park at Magic, LLC*

EXPERT CONSULTANT, ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION & REPORTING

- PAULEY CURRY, PLLC – West Virginia, 2018 – Incident Review – *Retained by counsel for the plaintiff*
- KAID, ATIYYAH, Plaintiff, v. NY Party Works, Defendant – New Jersey, 2018 – *Case Review – Retained by counsel for the plaintiff*
- JENKINS, LILAH by PNG JENKINS, DAVID, Plaintiff. v. STALVEY, et al., Defendants – New York, 2018 – *Retained by counsel for the plaintiff*
- MEGAN E. EVANS, Esq of Ross Scalise Law Group – Texas, 2017 – Accident Investigation – *Retained by counsel for the plaintiff*
- THOMAS P. AICHER, Esq. of Cleary Shahi & Aicher, P.C. – Vermont, 2017 – Accident Investigation and Case Review – *Retained by counselor for the adventure activity operator*
- LOUIS RIZZO, Esq. of Reger, Rizzo, Darnall, LLP – Delaware, 2016 – Accident Investigation and Report – *Retained by the counselor for the adventure activity operator*

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