

User Research with the 50 Below Club

February 12, 2003

Members attending February meeting:

Dave - 50 something year-old dentist from Pittsburgh. Takes dive trips to exotic locations 1 or 2 times per year.

Tina – 50 something year-old dental assistant from Pittsburgh. Dave’s wife. Dives but only in warm water. Usually during vacations.

Stu – 60 something year-old dive shop owner from Pittsburgh.

Bob – 50 something year-old from Pittsburgh. Does not take exotic vacations. Most of the diving he does is within a day drive of Pittsburgh. He likes to dive alone.

Glen – 60 something year-old retiree from Pittsburgh. Owns a house in Viequez, Puerto Rico. Spends half the year there diving. Has traveled the world diving.

Dave said he might lend us a video of one of his dive trips. He was reticent to do so, but it might be worth a shot. Dave Regine: dtbh@aol.com h: 412.221.6250

As another alternative, Stu, the shop owner, says he has videos at the store that we could view.

1. Anne and Bella: How do you capture your trip?

Dave: I take still and video cameras and underwater housing for them on scuba trips

2. Anne and Bella: What do you do with these images?

Dave: Edit these videos and then set them to music. I distribute them to all the people who went on the trip. The video takes about a month of sporadic attention to prepare. I use Adobe Premier. The music I choose usually goes along with the location—i.e. reggae in Jamaica. Sometimes I would use songs that were popular at the time like Pink’s “Let’s get this party started.” I’ve wanted to make a joke calendar but haven’t had the time to get one together.

3. Anne and Bella: Who do you spend most of your time with when you go on dive vacations?

Dave and Tina: Groups that dive spend days together. It's because we usually know each other beforehand and sometimes we go to places where people don't speak English.

4. Anne and Bella: Do you keep in touch with the people you go diving with?

Tina, Stu, Glen: Not really

Dave: I do for awhile afterwards, but it's hard when you communicate really infrequently and people change their email addresses.

5. Anne and Bella: What do you think about having a camera attached to your goggles?

Dave, Glen, Tina: "I think it would be confusing to the viewer." "I could see how it would be handy and not handy." Lots of times I'll set my camera down. Some of the things you want to capture on video crawl into crevices, etc. In my last video I set my camera down to see a lobster that had crawled underneath a rock.

6. Anne and Bella: What are the benefits and shortcomings of taking under water videos? Do they come out clearly?

Dave and Tina: Crystal clear. They're good because they capture your trip. But, "you have to like it, it's a pain in the ass". The equipment is a pain in the butt to take with you. If you're not going to some place known for diving, like Cabo San Lucas, the dive companies there won't invest in large dive boats. Literally you can be sitting on a boat with a couple of inches of room in between you and the next guy. There's no place to put your camera or to change the film. You can be changing your film at times and the guy next to you is dripping water into your camera.

And there are a lot of attachments. Bulbs and flashes. The more light, the better the picture. It's a lot of equipment. Taking pictures changes the nature of your dive. You are always looking for that perfect picture.

7. Anne and Bella: How big are your cameras?

Dave: The video camera with the housing is about 1.5 x1.5 ft. The still camera is about 2 x 2 ft. The still camera with the strobes and flashes can be even bigger.

8. Anne and Bella: Why do you use a still camera as opposed to a digital?

Dave: Digital cameras cost about \$5,000 more for a good quality one. Everybody says you miss stuff when you're photographing underwater, but when you do a slide show, they all say, I didn't see that, I didn't see that.

9. Anne and Bella: How do you communicate underwater?

Tina: They have tank bangers. A thing you attach to you then snap on your tank and it makes a loud noise. It doesn't scare off the marine life you may be looking at. It's hard to communicate underwater, and sometimes there is a real need to get a message across and you can't."

Glen: Yeah, but a lot of times it's hard to hear where the sound is coming from.

10. Anne and Bella: What about communication with the boat?

Tina: Usually you don't need to communicate with the boat because everything is already planned out.

Glen: Sometimes they'll have a strobe light under the boat so you can tell where it is or GPS/homing device.

11. Anne and Bella: Do you ever have trouble finding the things you're looking for while you're diving?

Glen: Yeah, you have trouble at times. With marine life and geographic stuff. Sometimes you can be looking for a certain type of marine life and never find it. But, we use topography to find things—like mountains and valleys above land—it's the same, only under water. Usually when you dive, you're less than an 1/8 of a mile away from the boat so it's not too hard finding large geographic things.

Tina: That's if the visibility is good.

Dave: Yeah, at times I've lost Tina and she was only 5 feet away from me. That was really scary because she was my diving partner.

12. Anne and Bella: How do you learn about where you will be diving?

Glen, Dave, Tina, Bob: The Discovery Channel, Internet, books, word of mouth, the dive shop, dive magazines

13. **Anne and Bella:** What are the benefits to being part of a dive club?

Glen, Dave, Tina, Bob: Club allows you to meet people and stimulates you to go diving. A lot of times people will give presentations and from their photos you can tell whether you're interested in going or not.

14. **Anne and Bella:** Does the club generally plan trips together? And how does the group grow?

Glen, Dave, Tina, Bob: The club will plan trips together, usually once a year. But not everyone makes it every year. For instance, when someone has a kid, they usually won't go on a dive trip for five or six years. But when the group grows it's usually because friends of divers want to join.

New technologies – rebreathers – take in the bubbles. Bubbles keep the animal life away, so this is

Quotes and sayings – “take pictures and leave bubbles.” They are ecologically sensitive people, for the most part, and never like to leave a footprint on the habitats.

“The party starts when we get together.”

“When we're together, we talk about diving 100% of the time.”