

MEMORANDUM

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Communications Plan and Marketing Plan:

As we move forward to get events, marketing and communications in an active and engaged pattern, here are the frameworks we will use moving forward.

Here is a helpful reminder of a communications plan versus a marketing plan:

Communications Plan:

- Focuses on how an organization communicates its messages, internally and externally, to various stakeholders.
- Primarily concerned with managing and delivering information, building relationships, and maintaining the organization's reputation.
- Includes channels such as media relations, public relations, internal communications, and crisis management.
- Aims to ensure consistency, clarity, and effectiveness in conveying messages to the target audience.
- Often includes elements such as key messages, target audience identification, communication channels, content strategy, and evaluation metrics.

Marketing Plan:

- Focuses on promoting a product, service, or brand to achieve specific business objectives, such as increasing sales or market share.
- Involves activities aimed at understanding customer needs, developing products or services, pricing, distribution, and promotional strategies.
- Includes market research, product positioning, branding, advertising, sales promotions, and distribution channels.
- Aims to generate demand, drive sales, and ultimately create value for the organization.
- Typically includes elements such as target market analysis, marketing objectives, marketing mix (4Ps: product, price, place, promotion), budget allocation, and performance metrics.

In summary, while a communications plan focuses on how an organization communicates its messages, a marketing plan focuses on how an organization promotes its products or services to achieve specific business goals. Both plans are interconnected and contribute to the overall success of the organization's strategic objectives.

1. Communications Plan:

a. Objectives:

- Increase awareness of Lake Orion Downtown Development Authority initiatives and events.
- Foster community engagement and participation in downtown development activities.
- Position Lake Orion as a vibrant and desirable destination for residents and visitors alike.

b. Target Audience:

- Residents of Lake Orion
- Local business owners
- Visitors and tourists
- Community stakeholders (local government (Village and Township), chamber of commerce, library, OAC, Parks & Rec., MSOC, NMS, schools)

c. Key Messages:

- Highlight the unique charm and offerings of downtown Lake Orion.
- Showcase upcoming events, promotions, and business highlights.
- Emphasize the importance of community involvement in downtown revitalization efforts.

d. Communication Channels:

- Facebook Page: Regular updates on events, promotions, and news related to downtown Lake Orion.
- LinkedIn: Professional updates, business highlights, and networking opportunities targeted at local businesses and stakeholders.
- Local Media: Press releases and media pitches to local newspapers, radio stations, local cable station, and online publications to amplify key messages and event promotions.
- Facebook Group: Create a dedicated group for community members to discuss downtown development, share ideas, and stay updated on the latest news and events.

- E-Newsletter: weekly newsletters sent via email to subscribers, featuring highlights of upcoming events, business spotlights, and community news.

e. Content Strategy:

- Use a mix of photos, videos, and graphics to make posts visually engaging.
- Share user-generated content to foster community involvement and interaction.
- Incorporate storytelling to showcase the history, personalities, and fun facts behind Lake Orion's downtown area.
- Utilize polls, surveys, and Q&A sessions to encourage feedback and dialogue with the community.

f. Timeline:

- Develop a content calendar outlining key dates for posting, promotions, and events throughout the year.
- Adjust content frequency and timing based on seasonal trends, holidays, and peak visitor times.

g. Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Monitor engagement metrics (likes, comments, shares) on social media platforms to gauge audience interest and sentiment.
- Track website traffic, newsletter open rates, and click-through rates to evaluate the effectiveness of communication efforts.
- Collect feedback from businesses and community members through surveys, focus groups, or direct outreach to assess satisfaction and identify areas for improvement.

h. Budget:

- Allocate funds for sponsored posts, boosted content, and advertising on social media platforms to reach a wider audience.
- Include printing costs for promotional materials, such as posters, banners, etc. distributed at local businesses and events.

i. Roles and Responsibilities:

- Janet Bloom, Asst. Director, has primary responsibility for content creation, scheduling, monitoring, and responding to inquiries or comments on social media platforms. Matt Gibb, Executive Director, has a secondary role to add to content, monitor, and respond.

j. Contingency Plan:

- Develop a plan for addressing negative feedback, crises, or unexpected events that may arise during communication efforts.
- Establish clear protocols for handling sensitive issues and responding promptly to inquiries or complaints. Escalate items as needed.

k. Review and Update:

- Regularly review and evaluate the communications plan to assess its effectiveness in achieving objectives.
- Update strategies and tactics as needed based on changing audience preferences, industry trends, and feedback from stakeholders.

2. Marketing Plan

1. Objectives:

Increase attendance and participation in Lake Orion Downtown Development Authority events.

Raise awareness of Downtown Lake Orion as a vibrant and exciting destination.

Drive foot traffic to local businesses and establishments.

2. Target Audience:

Residents of Lake Orion and surrounding communities

Families and individuals seeking entertainment and leisure activities

Tourists and visitors exploring the area

Local businesses and stakeholders invested in the development of downtown

3. Key Events (Based on 2024 Events Calendar): attached

4. Marketing Channels:

Website (downtownlakeorion.org): Update event listings and details on the official

website to provide comprehensive information for visitors. Provide maps, parking, and trolley information.

Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, X): Regularly post about upcoming events, share event highlights, and engage with followers to generate excitement and anticipation.

Email Marketing: Send out newsletters or email blasts to subscribers with event announcements, special promotions, and exclusive offers from Lake Orion DDA merchants.

Local Media (Newspapers, Radio, TV): Issue press releases and media advisories to local media outlets to secure coverage and promote events to a wider audience. In addition, utilize Lake Orion Review, Orion Living magazine, and Message Center board.

Community Calendars: Submit event listings to online community calendars, local organizations, local magazines, and event directories to increase visibility and reach.

5. Marketing Materials:

Develop flyers, posters, and banners to promote events in high-traffic areas throughout downtown Lake Orion.

Create digital graphics and visuals for social media posts and online advertisements to grab attention and encourage engagement.

Design promotional materials, such as brochures or postcards, to distribute at local businesses and other points of information collection (Village offices, Orion Township offices, Library, OAC, Chamber of Commerce)

6. Partnerships and Collaborations:

Deepen partnerships with local businesses, sponsors, and community organizations to co-promote events and leverage their networks and resources.

Collaborate to cross-promote activities and draw visitors to Downtown Lake Orion.

7. Promotions and Incentives:

Work with businesses to offer special discounts, deals, or activities and incentives for attendees of downtown events, such as coupons for participating businesses and highlight special activities happening at participating merchants.

Host contests, giveaways, or raffles on social media platforms to encourage engagement and reward followers for spreading the word about upcoming events. Offer VIP experiences for events. Tie in sponsorship connections to maximize sponsor engagement.

8. Evaluation and Analytics:

Monitor event registration numbers, ticket sales, and onsite attendance figures to measure the success of marketing efforts.

Track engagement metrics on social media platforms, website traffic, and e-newsletter open rates to assess the effectiveness of different marketing channels.

Gather feedback from event attendees through surveys or post-event evaluations to identify areas for improvement and gather insights for future planning.

9. Budget Allocation:

Allocate funds for marketing materials, advertising, and promotional activities.

Solicit sponsorships and partnerships to offset costs and expand marketing reach.

10. Timeline:

Develop a detailed timeline outlining key milestones, deadlines, and action steps leading up to each event to ensure timely execution of marketing initiatives.

11. Review and Optimization:

Conduct post-event reviews to evaluate the success of marketing strategies and identify lessons learned for future events.

Continuously monitor market trends, audience preferences, and surrounding community and organization activities to refine marketing tactics and pivot as needed.

Identified Projects

We are capturing and prioritizing projects for our team to accomplish.

- 1) Events – workplan and budget reviews
- 2) Sponsorship Package – create sponsorship package and continue solicitations
- 3) Continue website updates
- 4) Update directories in town (qty. 4)
- 5) Engage Message Center board
- 6) MSOC Awards – deadline is April 26. We have one award identified for partnership with Oxford.
- 7) Holiday Lights – need to order replacements and get quotes on across street and roofline holiday lights.
- 8) Update newsletter email lists
- 9) Research use of LinkedIn for DDA
- 10) Create Summer Events Flyer (June-August)

11) Beautification projects - pots at intersection will be updated to Spring flowers week of April 15; Eagle Scout flower boxes – still in conversation; DDA office Spring clean up, repairs and flowers (date will be forthcoming to help with this project); Flint St. Alley – re-energize space with rotating gallery art, more seating, bulb or strand replacement, repaint lettering on signs, and plantings.

12) Storage Unit – reset shelves and organize storage unit (date will go out asking for help with this project, too).

13) Content Calendar – for events, store focus, and general Downtown Lake Orion stories, histories and people.

We will continue to add to our list as we build out our events, marketing and communications.

Social Media Stats

A social media stats report will be created for next month. In the meantime, here is a snapshot of our current social media stats. We will also look at adding LinkedIn as a business connection point for the Lake Orion DDA as an additional economic development tool.

Downtown Lake Orion Facebook (last 90 days):

9,938 Followers (will do a push to get us up and over 10K)

Gained 203 new followers

Estimated Reach: 60,344 (# of people who saw content at least once)

Engagement: 12,770 (reactions, comments, shares, or clicks on our posts)

78.8% female/21.2% male

Top post: St. Paddy's Day – 16,871 reach

Downtown Lake Orion Business Group:

Currently 123 members – need to boost

Private group

Instagram:

3,911 Followers

Twitter:

1,590 Followers

Ribbon Cuttings in Downtown

Presented by the Orion Area Chamber of Commerce, come and support our local downtown merchants.

May 2 (4:00 pm -6:00 pm) – Orion Boat House

<http://www.orionareachamber.com/events/details/chamber-mixer-and-ribbon-cutting-14678>

May 9 (4:30 pm – 5:30 pm) – Boutique Chic (formerly Simply Marcella)

<http://www.orionareachamber.com/events/details/ribbon-cutting-for-boutique-chic-14693>

Current Event

#StrongerTogether Letterboxing (April 1 – 30) – Boxes are placed around town and in participating merchant locations. Clues are on atlasquest.com for treasure hunters to use to find each letterbox. Each letterbox contains a stamp, ink pad, and the chance to find one weekly \$10 Downtown Dollar hidden inside. 2024 Participants are Green Hippo Gifts, Roses of Silverbell, Twice Blessed, Boutique Chic, Lucky's Natural Foods, Hanson's, Cookies & Cream, Ed's, Broadway Embroidery, and Heritage Spinning & Weaving. The DDA placed four additional letterboxes at Orion Art Center, Fork & Pint, by Wine Social, and in Flint St. Alley.

A big thank you goes to Theresa Rutt for hand carving eight new stamps this year.

Community Connections

We continue to expand and deepen our connections to area community groups and organizations to cross-pollinate information.

Respectfully Submitted,

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