

NBIA - Short Term Strategy Brainstorming

Values

- Neighbourly
- Innovative
- Diverse / Inclusive
- Purposeful

Market

- Just moved to Newmarket
- Long term residents
- Families
- Those who work on Main St.

Questions

1. Covid-19 has introduced many new dynamics / issues. Which are the issues facing the membership now and for the duration of the pandemic?

- Less people going to Main Street
 - Enticing clients to come to Main Street even though there are no public festivities at this time. (BK)
 - When the winter months hit and if COVID cases continue to increase, foot traffic will likely drop significantly and retail will suffer even more
 - People afraid to enter into stores
 - Non retail members (i.e. professional services, insurance, lawyers, accountants etc) staff are working remote, therefore impacting sales
 - Reduced capacity for restaurants equals less street traffic and visitors
 - Businesses have left or gone under, higher vacancy rates creates bad consumer optics
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- COVID
 - How do we ensure we have a common standard for our BIA for customer and staff safety?
 - Fear of further restrictions and closures amongst businesses

- Concerns how businesses will be able to cover expenses, pay, retain staff, pay for their rent
- Will my business survive the pandemic
- Lots of properties for sale
- Sales
 - Merchant sales have dropped
 - Lack of set up of Online presence and delivery
- Less street activations

2. What are the goals we should be focused on over the next six to twelve months?

- Providing a strong business proposition to attract people and give them a reason to come downtown. (BK)
- Identify innovative ways to activate Main Street in the winter months ahead and into next year without sacrificing safety through COVID
- How to increase member communication/dialogue/interaction
- Identify how unused BIA budget is best served through pandemic
- Create KPI's to measure goals in progress and KLI's to interpret proactively when things are not working
- Increase **Digital** footprint/awareness for the BIA amongst it's target personas
- Identify and increase BIA partners and strengthen existing relationships with partners i.e. Local Chambers, associations, local influencers
- Create virtual campaigns or interactive contests
- To position our main st as a destination with local and, provincial and national tourism
- Determine our value proposition in the tourism space "what makes our Main st a destination for out of Town
- Marketing Main St. as the "Heart of Newmarket"
- Promote Main St. as an important part of the fabric of our community "Support Downtown Business"
- Advertise Main St. as a safe shopping destination with street facing businesses
- Message Main St. short term parking enabling convenient curbside pickup
- Celebrate Main St. as the best Patio destination in York Region

3. What are specific tactics that we should consider in order to achieve the goals listed above? (Remember, this is brainstorming, so any tactic could be considered)

- Strong Loyalty card program (needs to be simple. Maybe a stamp on a card, buy 5 get one free (\$20 value or so)) (BK)
- Free gift (maybe a hot chocolate or so) just for providing an email address at every store. Expand email marketing list (BK)

- Email marketing (Constant contact or similar), to ensure constant offers for redemption on Main Street. (BK)
- Create shared system for retailers to thrive as a collective, leverage technology as a group and leverage economies of scale ie. ecommerce for the whole experience for the whole street i.e. <https://shopmytown.ca/>
- Consolidate marketing and communications efforts to achieve common BIA goals, as opposed to individual member efforts
- Form sub committees with BIA members to execute goals and tactics
- Bring on a dedicated, part time person or agency, to drive marketing goals, strategy plan forward All measurable and reported at monthly board meetings
- Create a website with purpose that serves the BIA members, core customers, and partners i.e. town, chamber etc. A website with engaging and compelling content, perhaps with an ecommerce component. Create a unique space to be managed by each individual merchant and their corresponding products and services.
- Create supporting digital marketing strategy and plan to support driving relevant traffic for increasing visibility and sales for BIA members
- Centralized shipping solution/partnership to support enhanced ecommerce
- Leverage students and the support funding
- engage FEO and other tourism agencies to position our main st as a destination in Ontario
- 2021 is the year of the Staycation, positioning ourselves with a collaborative pub crawl, access the government support for same including stickers, social media campaigns
- String lighting up the street zig zag over the street as a visual strategy to show our collaboration and culture
- Advocate to all levels of government in support of our downtown
- Supporting and listening to the needs of our membership
- Dedicating a significant portion of our budget to market businesses on Main St. in the coming months
- Allocate a portion of our budget to decorate/beautify our street for the holiday season "York Regions Christmas Village"
- Thank our town for their ongoing support of our businesses and offering a token of our gratitude to the community

Discussion

- Most businesses still rely on foot traffic, curb side pick up, take out, etc.
- People have commented that there are not enough bathrooms
- For Ken, there's been an increase in foot traffic.
- What percentage of businesses have an online presence?
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- STRATEGY: Redefine “foot traffic”
 - Focus on short, quick visits
- STRATEGY: Make Downtown beautiful
- STRATEGY: Focus on the individual businesses - stories
- STRATEGY: Partnerships between restaurants & retail
- STRATEGY: look at partnerships with Chamber, Town
- STRATEGY: Stronger together - a unified campaign - single destination

Tactical

- Create a unified website where people can shop the street.
 - Celebrate the experience
 - Small things that we can do to make the experience better
 - **Make the tree lighting virtual**
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 - Tell the personal stories - individual stories make it personal.
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 - Marketing strategy - already had discussed some of this.
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- Create an online presence that tells the story - makes things neighbourly. - Tom to own with the support of Rob Clark - to present a plan to board in two weeks.
 - Building an experience leading up to the tree lighting - Jennifer to own this. Elizabeth to investigate
 - Beautify the local businesses with decorations - a contest, use some BIA funds - Tom to own, Jane, Bob & Ken to help.
 - Promote a special offer from member businesses on the shop local site. Perhaps a logo/sticker to show participating stores - Tom to own
 - Create an online community for the membership - Allan to own
 - AGM is on Nov. 19th