Muncie Downtown Development Partnership
Strategic Communications Plan

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

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Abstract
The Muncie Downtown Development Partnership (MDDP) is a non-profit organization in Muncie, Indiana. Its purpose is to create a lively and stable downtown environment for visitors, Muncie citizens, and business owners. The MDDP partnered with Ball State’s Cardinal Communications in 2010 for public relations, advertising, and graphic design needs. Cardinal Communications was able to conduct research and devise an integrated marketing communications plan for the MDDP. As of 2012, the MDDP was in need of a more simpler communications plan that was manageable and realistic for the small non-profit to successfully complete.

This communications plan focused on simpler goals and strategies that the employees at MDDP could implement on their own. These goals focused on the non-profits identity as well as its communication strategies to target publics. The goals are a measurable way for the business to succeed. Each goal is aimed at a specific target audience accompanied by a specific key message for the audience. The strategies are suggestions on how to best complete the goal, while the tactics are ideas to complete the strategy.

Acknowledgements
I first have to thank Professor Shoemaker for being my advisor during my honors thesis. The process was long and difficult, and he helped me every step of the way.

I would also like to thank Cardinal Communications for introducing me to the Muncie Downtown Development Partnership. The student organization also helped me develop my public relations skills that allowed me to successfully complete this project.

Lastly, I have to thank my family for supporting me throughout my college career.
Author Statement

Public Relations professionals regularly practice a variety of tasks in many different fields. The main areas of concentration include non-profit organizations, corporate public relations, and agency public relations. Professionals in all areas regularly create various types of plans for their clients, such as an advertising plan, marketing plan, and communications plan. I made the decision to complete a strategic communications plan for a non-profit organization as my honors thesis. I felt that this was a better way to accumulate all of my skills throughout college, and use them to create a project that I was not only proud of, but that I could use in my portfolio and put in my resume. I felt as though creating a plan that a real business would actually use was a better alternative than writing a research paper on a topic that would not interest me as much.

I first chose the Muncie Downtown Development Partnership (MDDP) for my client because I had already worked with them as a client through Cardinal Communications. I had also developed a relationship with the employees during my summer internship there in 2011. It was clear to me that they needed help in the form of a simple, convenient communications plan. I conducted secondary research by analyzing research Cardinal Communications had done in 2010. I also analyzed an integrated marketing communications plan by Cardinal Communications that was given to the MDDP in May of 2011. I conducted personal interviews with the employees of MDDP to gain insight and understanding of their current business situation. I researched target audiences and developed goals and key messages. Throughout many edits I brainstormed strategies and tactics that fell under each goal, and were controllable for the MDDP. I put together a timeline for completion, evaluation methods, and a budget.

After many meetings with my advisor and edits, I finally presented the plan to the Muncie Downtown Development Partnership. I gave them a copy of the plan, with high hopes of them being able to successfully implement it in order to better their business. Throughout the entire process I was able to use my public relations knowledge and skills to create a usable product for the organization that I chose.
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The Muncie Downtown Development Partnership (MDDP) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization supported by public and private partnerships. The organization is dedicated to promote, develop and maintain a secure, livable and economically viable downtown for the Muncie community. Through partnerships, events, and active involvement of its constituents, the MDDP seeks to build an active, lively, diverse and populated downtown district. The organization is made up of design, organization, promotion, and economic development teams, each with specific tasks and goals in mind.

Secondary research was conducted to analyze previous strategies the MDDP had used to improve its business. Primary research was conducted to establish what the client’s current needs were in relation to a proposed communication plan. After the research was conducted, main issues were discovered. First, while previous plans had been helpful for the MDDP, they were not realistic in the time and cost it would take for the business to implement the strategies. Second, the clients felt as though they needed a smaller, simpler plan in order to be able to succeed.

This plan contains goals that are manageable and realistic for the client. They focus on creating a recognizable brand for the MDDP, as well as improving communication to target audiences. The target audiences were identified as the Muncie community, downtown Muncie businesses, and the Ball State community. The objectives are measurable and can be done with the resources the client possesses. The strategies and tactics found in the plan support the overall goals and key messages, and are the best way to complete the strategic communications plan.

Overall this strategic communications plan aligns with the organization’s goals to improve downtown Muncie by making it more active and unified.
2010 Research  
*Cardinal Communications*  
- Cardinal Communications is an integrated strategic marketing communications student-run agency at Ball State University. A team worked directly with the Muncie Downtown Development Partnership (MDDP) to conduct qualitative and quantitative research.  
- They conducted a survey of approximately 280 downtown visitors during an outdoor festival to find how often an individual visits downtown Muncie, and their experience while there. They also conducted personal interviews with downtown business owners in various industries to gather insight into the downtown business life. Additionally, the group analyzed various downtown economic development associations similar to the MDDP.  
- The research results found that the MDDP has three distinct audiences; current downtown partners and stakeholders, Muncie citizens and students, and potential downtown partners and business owners. This research led the Cardinal Communications team to develop an integrated marketing communications plan for the MDDP.

2011 Integrated Marketing Communications Plan  
*Cardinal Communications*  
- From their research, the Cardinal Communications team found there was a disconnect between downtown businesses and the MDDP. The MDDP also expressed desire to increase overall traffic in the downtown district among their target audiences. The team came up with an overall goal to increase personal and professional investment in the downtown district as well as within the MDDP.  
- They came up with one objective, to increase participation and attendance by 20% by May, 2015, directed towards three specific audiences; current downtown partners and stakeholders, Muncie citizens and students, and potential downtown partners and business owners. Ideally, Cardinal Communications teams would then implement the plan throughout the next four years.  
- The team came up with multiple strategies and tactics under each objective to help fulfill the campaign’s goal. Some examples include engaging business owners in the beautification of downtown, diversifying downtown events to attract a larger audience, and developing a recruitment plan for potential businesses.  
- Overall the plan was well accepted by the MDDP staff and board of directors. Parts of the plan were expected to be implemented during the next school year by a Cardinal Communications team.
2012 Interviews

Britny Hinsberger

• Personal interviews were conducted with MDDP Executive Director Vicki Veach and Event Director Cheryl Crowder in February 2012. The interviews were aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of previous research and communications plans. They were also conducted to find the client’s current needs and goals. The clients wanted to express their opinions and ideas on past projects, and convey their recommendations to create a realistic communications plan they would be able to use.
• Executive Director Vicki Veach expressed her concern in the lack of communication between the MDDP and downtown businesses. She also acknowledged a disconnect in the current branding and identity of the MDDP.
• Event Director Cheryl Crowder wanted to see less emphasis on new events and more on the improvement of the existing events in downtown Muncie. She also felt the need for improving social media use and communication. She acknowledged the need for a more complete website and internet response to interested community members.
• Overall the client’s insight into the current needs and conditions of the MDDP were useful and helped shape the plan’s goals, objectives, and strategies.

Conclusion

• Analysis of previous communications plans found that the MDDP needed a strategy to communicate to its specific audiences using marketing, advertising, and public relations tools. Previous integrated marketing communications plans were beneficial to the development of downtown Muncie, but were too unrealistic.
• Primary research found that the client wanted to start with small goals and strategies in order to accomplish bigger goals in the future. The client wanted to focus on current issues and problems such as communication and branding. Research also found that building a strong foundation was the first step in creating a successful campaign.
• The primary and secondary research conducted lead to two manageable goals with realistic objectives, strategies, and tactics that the Muncie Downtown Development Partnership could successfully implement.

Goal 1: To create a cohesive, recognizable brand and image for the MDDP

Goal 2: To engage target audiences in effective and consistent communication
The Muncie Downtown Development Partnership (MDDP) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization supported by public and private partnerships. The organization is dedicated to promote, develop and maintain a secure, livable and economically viable downtown for the Muncie community. Through partnerships, events, and active involvement of its constituents, the MDDP seeks to build an active, lively, diverse and populated downtown district. The organization is made up of design, organization, promotion, and economic development teams, each with specific tasks and goals in mind.

The MDDP was originally formed under the name “Heart of the City” by Mayor Dan Canan in 1998 as a task force to improve the business climate, livability, and overall aesthetic of the downtown area. In order to accomplish that mission, new businesses and professionals were recruited to the area. A common set of goals became a vehicle for collaboration among existing businesses, residents, local government officials, and other groups and organizations with an interest in the betterment of downtown.

By 2001 the task force had evolved into a full-fledged nonprofit organization. Throughout the last ten years, countless individuals and groups have been brought into the organization, resulting in the active and vibrant downtown that exists today. The MDDP’s current vision statement is to create a downtown environment that results in sustainable economic growth. Current organizational goals include increasing downtown’s residential base, improving confidence in the safety and cleanliness of the area, enhancing public spaces, and more. This strategic communication plan would fall under the MDDP’s goal of marketing Downtown Muncie through cooperative initiatives.

Currently Vicki Veach serves as the Development Director of MDDP, while Cheryl Crowder is the Event Director. The MDDP’s accomplishments over the past decade include establishing 64 new businesses, hosting 506 downtown events bringing 250,000 people into the area, and attracting $21,000,000 in private investment, among many others. These accomplishments have led to awards such as being named one of Muncie’s top assets by the Muncie Action Plan, designation as an Arts and Cultural District by the City of Muncie, and named “Community of the Year for Downtown Development” by the Indiana State Chamber of Commerce. The organization strives to continue its success to better Downtown Muncie.

The Muncie Downtown Development Partnership is located at 111 East Adams Street in Muncie, IN, 47305. Vicki Veach and Cheryl Crowder may be reached by phone at 765-282-7897, Monday through Friday from 9 am - 4 p.m.
S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS

Strengths
- The MDDP has first hand information on Downtown Muncie
- The organization plans numerous successful events that attract visitors to Muncie
- They have been consistently improving downtown for over a decade
- They have expertise in the areas of economic development, sponsorship, and events
- They have been gaining support from Muncie businesses and corporations

Weaknesses
- Downtown Muncie small businesses struggle to see the results of MDDP’s accomplishments
- Small businesses have difficulty thriving in the downtown area
- The MDDP has been struggling with a new and updated identity

Opportunities
- Use social media as an open line of communication to all target audiences
- Use new branding identity to reach out to Muncie community
- Use new partnerships to improve relationships within the downtown area

Threats
- Organizations such as the Muncie Visitors Bureau provide similar information to the Muncie community
- The slow economy has affected many businesses in the downtown area, and may continue to do so
- The downtown district has to compete with businesses located on McGalliard Road and businesses in the Muncie Mall
Problem Statement

After conducting primary and secondary research, results showed that the clients needed realistic recommendations and goals to better communicate with their target audiences.

Positioning Statement

The Muncie Downtown Development Partnership provides citizens and businesses of Muncie with sustained professional, economical and recreational benefits through cooperation, variety, and dedication to the local community.

Key Message

As an essential element to Downtown Muncie, the Muncie Downtown Development Partnership provides the Muncie community with strategic plans to improve the downtown district through specific goals.
TARGET AUDIENCES

Muncie Community

Downtown Muncie’s biggest audience is its surrounding community. Downtown is full of food and retail establishments for guests of types. The events put on by the MDDP also encourage patrons to visit the downtown area. The downtown district is conveniently located in the center of the city.

The MDDP needs to effectively and efficiently target the large population of the city. Citizens must be encouraged to support locally owned and operated businesses downtown. The downtown district holds much of the city’s rich history, and is full of unique aspects that a person cannot find anywhere else.

City of Muncie Population (approximate): 70,085 people according to 2010 Census data
Male: 44.95%
Female: 55.05%
Minorities: 16.28%

Downtown Muncie Businesses

The businesses that call downtown Muncie home come from a variety of industries such as food/restaurant, bar, jewelry, floral, banking, art, and more. There are approximately 80 businesses currently located within the downtown district.

By targeting current and potential downtown businesses, the MDDP can successfully work with these establishments to provide the services they need. In order to further develop the downtown district, the MDDP must have cooperation from businesses.

Business Categories:
Attractions
Food/Restaurant
Living
Nightlife
Organizations
Service
Shopping
Worship
Ball State University Community

Downtown Muncie is located across the river from the Ball State campus, making it the perfect place for the students to go for retail and dining options. Events in the downtown district also draw crowds from the University. There are a variety of transportation methods from the Ball State campus to downtown, such as the MITS bus. Some downtown establishments provide their own transportation from campus, which has made the downtown nightlife a popular destination among students.

By targeting the Ball State community, downtown Muncie has access to a large portion of the city’s population in a relatively small geographical location. The MDDP needs to capitalize on the ease of marketing, advertising, and promoting to the Ball State campus.

Ball State Student Population: 22,147 people (18,000 approximately on campus)
Male: 41.6%
Female: 58.4%
Minorities: 12.2%
GOAL 1
Objectives
Strategies
Tactics

GOAL 2
Objectives
Strategies
Tactics
GOAL 1: To create a cohesive, recognizable brand and image for the Muncie Downtown Development Partnership

Key Publics: Muncie community, Ball State University community, downtown businesses

Key Message: The MDDP's image is professional yet incorporates the unique, artistic, local atmosphere of downtown Muncie

Executive Summary: In order to be respected and recognized by all audiences, the MDDP must have a unified image to promote. By creating new branding materials, a solid identity can be established.

Objective 1: To create a unified branded image of MDDP by August 2012

Strategy 1: Create print materials to be more cohesive with the online image

Tactic 1: Incorporate slogan "it's good to be here" into promotional and advertising materials
Tactic 2: Replace current logo with one that incorporates the colors and style found online
Tactic 3: Replace current business cards with cards that feature new slogan and logo
Tactic 4: Create event promotional materials that feature the new slogan, logo, and style
Tactic 5: Create a new media kit that includes materials that follow the new branding found online
Tactic 6: Update the current sponsorship package to include the new logo, slogan, and style

Evaluation & Measurement: Creation of new products - Number of new materials distributed
Objective 2: To increase brand recognition by 20% by May 2013

Strategy 1: Market and promote the new MDDP brand and identity to target audiences

Tactic 1: List new web site on all materials produced by MDDP
Tactic 2: List social media sites on all materials produced by MDDP
Tactic 3: Work with partner businesses to list MDDP's web site on the individual business' web site
Tactic 4: Create and distribute news release on MDDP's new identity to surrounding media

Evaluation & Measurement: Implementation - Number of new materials distributed - Media coverage - Social media traffic
GOAL 2: To engage target audiences through effective and consistent communication

Key Message: The Muncie Downtown Development Partnership exists to improve the livelihood of downtown Muncie, while providing all community members with current, relevant information.

Executive Summary: In order to be respected and recognized by all audiences, the MDDP must have a unified image to promote. By creating new branding materials, a solid identity can be established.

Objective 1: To increase efficient communication to the Muncie community by 15% by May 2013

Strategy 1: Use traditional public relations tools and media to spread MDDP's updates

Tactic 1: Use news releases aimed at local media to convey MDDP's accomplishments on a monthly basis
Tactic 2: Use news releases aimed at local media to announce MDDP events 2 weeks prior to event
Tactic 3: Create, plan, and implement a "Sponsorship Appreciation" annual event for MDDP sponsors

Evaluation & Measurement: Creation and distribution of materials - Media coverage - Event attendance - Establish 2012 communication baseline to measure growth

Strategy 2: Use online public relations tools and media to spread MDDP's updates

Tactic 1: Improve use of downtown information database
Tactic 2: Use Facebook site to promote downtown events 2 weeks prior
Tactic 3: Set up quarterly e-mail to partners to announce MDDP accomplishments
Tactic 4: Use Facebook site to announce accomplishments
Tactic 5: Use Facebook to announce new business partners
Tactic 6: Regularly link MDDP's Facebook site to partner's Facebook sites
Tactic 7: Upload monthly MDDP update meeting minutes to web site

Evaluation & Measurement: Social media posts - Social media activity - Web site traffic - Survey to gage partner opinion
Objective 2: To develop consistent communication to current downtown business owners by 15% by May 2013

Strategy 1: Establish consistent methods of communication between the MDDP and downtown businesses

Tactic 1: Create a quarterly newsletter to distribute to downtown businesses that communicates the MDDP’s current updates
Tactic 2: Update the downtown business registry to more accurately communicate with business owners
Tactic 3: Regularly distribute reminder e-mails about the “Downtown Update” meetings

Evaluation & Measurement: Meeting attendance - Survey of downtown business owners concerning communication with MDDP

Strategy 2: Create two-way communication between the MDDP and downtown businesses

Tactic 1: Develop an online system where businesses can make suggestions to the MDDP about downtown Muncie
Tactic 2: Create a “Frequently Asked Questions” page specifically for business owners regarding partnership, event participation, rules and regulations, etc
Tactic 3: Regularly invite businesses to attend monthly “Downtown Update” meetings

Evaluation & Measurement: Number of suggestions - Web site traffic - Meeting attendance - Establish 2012 communication baseline to measure growth
Objective 3: To develop consistent communication to the Ball State community by 20% by May 2013

Strategy 1: Create regular methods of communicating updates to Ball State

  Tactic 1: Create and distribute quarterly newsletter to Ball State media, students, faculty, and staff
  Tactic 2: Approach Ball State with cross promotional ideas for events
  Tactic 3: Market, advertise, and promote MDDP's web site and social media site
  Tactic 4: Get incorporated into the “Events this Week” e-mail distributed to students
  Tactic 5: Regularly send news releases to Ball State Daily News regarding events
  Tactic 6: Work with student organizations to gain publicity and event attendance

Evaluation & Measurement: Number of newsletters distributed - Web site and social media site traffic - Media coverage - Event attendance - Establish 2012 communication baseline to measure growth
## TIME LINE

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Because the Muncie Downtown Development Partnership is a non profit organization, the client has an extremely limited budget for strategic communications and public relations. Most of the strategies and tactics suggested do not have high cost to the company.

In March 2012, Muncie city officials restored funding to downtown programs. Mayor Dennis Tyler and the city board of officials have pledged $145,000 in funding to the MDDP.

The MDDP generates income by the events they host throughout the year, the biggest being Muncie Gras. Starting in the summer of 2011, the MDDP has been raising funds based on sponsorship. Development Director Vicki Veach approaches key businesses and corporations to offer them the opportunity to donate money to Downtown Muncie. In return, the partners would receive complimentary advertising spots in promotional places such as the website, event posters and fliers, sponsor banners, and more. Partnership benefits vary by level of donation. The MDDP had a successful first summer of gaining partners, and has also been applying to more grant opportunities.

The implementation of the strategies and tactics that require funds would be based on the amount raised by events, sponsorships, and grants. Most of the recommendations would require printing fees and website maintenance costs.
APPENDIX

2010 Research Results

2011 IMC Campaign

2012 Interviews
Cardinal Communications exists to provide high quality, professional communication services to its clients, while creating a unique learning environment to prepare students for their future professions.

Research Questions

- What is the perception of Muncie Downtown?
  - Individual
  - Business
- What is the perception of the Muncie Downtown Development Partnership?
Research Methods

- Survey of attendees at Downtown Muncie ArtsWalk, October 7, 2010
  - 284 respondents
- Interviews, collected October 24-30, 2010
  - 20 respondents
- Comparative city analysis

Survey

ArtsWalk Respondents - Distance Traveled

ArtsWalk Respondents - Average Rating of Typical Downtown Experience
Interviews

• 20 interviews following a set list of questions
• Interviewed owners and managers of locally-owned businesses located in the downtown district
• Restaurants, retailers, non-profit organizations, artistic organizations, nightlife, coffee shops and service providers all represented

Comparative Analysis

• Studied online campaigns and marketing of downtown associations in:
  • Bloomington
  • West Lafayette
  • Valparaiso
  • Anderson
  • Terre Haute

Research Results - #1

What is the individual perception of Muncie Downtown?

“You wouldn’t really be down here for leisure without a real good plan.”
"People aren’t aware that things are happening downtown again. They think that they basically shut down. They think that they’re going to get mugged."
- Owner, Specialty Shop

"Some people have a perception that if they’re going to a late class or if they’re going to have to take the bus here, that it might be dangerous at night."
- Manager, Attraction

"People, immediately when they think ‘let’s go to dinner,’ they think McGalliard. So, there is kind of a stigma of McGalliard, you know. Everything is McGalliard."
- Owner, Restaurant

"A lot of people still try and go McGalliard’s way. They go to the mall to go shopping; they go down McGalliard to get food. A lot of people don’t go downtown for anything."
- Manager, Restaurant

Research Results - #2

What is the business perspective of the Muncie Downtown district?

"Everybody is in the same boat, so what’s good for the downtown is going to help everybody downtown."
"It's independent, little, unique businesses: not something you can find along the highways of any other city."

- Owner, Restaurant

"This is a real neighborhood. Almost all of us businesses owners know each other and talk on a regular basis. It's really this cohesiveness, and we know we're all in this together."

- Owner, Retail Store

"The parking situation downtown is one of the most ridiculous situations I've seen."

- Manager, Restaurant

Research Results - #3

What is the business perspective of the Muncie Downtown Development Partnership?

"Actually, I haven't seen a good explanation of it yet."

- Owner, Specialty Store

"I guess my understanding of how they are involved in downtown is they organize events mostly."

- Owner, Specialty Store

"Putting on Mardi Gras, Spring Fest, and all the other downtown events. That's really what the MDOP has been functioning and doing for the last couple years as their big thing."

- Owner, Retail Store
"I do know Cheryl personally, and she coordinates any events. Parking things pass by her, and I know she had something to do with which buildings went up for Ivy Tech."
- Owner, Retail Store

"Cheryl Crowder is affiliated with Muncie Downtown Development, and she really instrumental in ArrsWalk. She does things like Mardi Gras, right, and lots of music related things downtown?"
- Manager, Specialty Store

Campaign Points of Emphasis

Reveal why downtown is unique
- Emphasize benefits of buying locally-owned

"I think if people started to realize that maybe they could help put some more money in the community instead of giving it to Tampa, Florida if you go to Outback."
- Manager, Restaurant

Reveal why downtown is unique
- Highlight Downtown's artistic attributes

"I think that downtown has done a quite a bit to build up an artistic, cultural type venue and designation. I think it's bringing a lot of people downtown that would otherwise not. I think it's the concept of building it around an arts culture, some food venues, and entertainment things are proving to be good."
- Owner, Service
"I think it's a quaint downtown and it could be more so if there was more development put into making it a place where people can gather for just any reason and not just for paying tickets."

- Manager, Restaurant

Account Team

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MUNCIE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP
INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGN

PRESENTED ON:
APRIL 20, 2011

CARDINAL COMMUNICATIONS
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The Muncie Downtown Development Partnership is an economic development group bringing together public and private enterprises to ensure the mutual betterment, development and promotion of the entire downtown district. Through partnerships, events and active involvement of its constituents, the MDDP seeks to build an active, lively, diverse and populated district.

Upon speaking with the partnership staff, the two primary issues raised by the client were: (1) a disconnect between Downtown businesses and the partnership, and (2) a desire to increase overall traffic in the downtown district, specifically among Ball State and Ivy Tech students. Businesses are not familiar with the true intent of the partnership and its primary mission and benefits, and the reputation of the partnership is revolving around large events instead of economic development.

The recommendations in this plan are based on primary qualitative and quantitative research. The two questions raised by the MDDP staff were addressed through a survey of downtown constituents at a outdoor festival and by in-person interviews with business stakeholders. Additionally, secondary research supplemented this information with analysis of similar downtown economic development associations.

Cardinal Communications, upon analyzing the results of the research and the desires of the client, has organized this plan to target three audiences as different objectives: (1) current downtown partners and stakeholders, (2) Muncie citizens and students, and (3) potential downtown partners and business owners. This approach allows Cardinal Communications to accurately apply strategies and tactics that address each target audience individually in order to achieve the overarching goal.

This plan will increase personal and professional investment in both the Muncie Downtown Development Partnership and in the overall downtown district through strategies and tactics that incorporate public relations, advertising and marketing in the promotion of the partnership and the district. Cardinal Communications will be able to use this plan to accurately reach three distinct publics to both promote current benefits of the downtown district and announce newly developed benefits for both business and personal opportunities.
CAMPAIGN GOAL:
TO INCREASE PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL INVESTMENT IN THE MUNCIE DOWNTOWN DISTRICT AND THE MUNCIE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP.

CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVE 1:
TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE IN THE MUNCIE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP AMONG CURRENT PARTNERS AND BUSINESS OWNERS BY 20% BY MAY, 2015.

CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVE 2:
TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE IN THE MUNCIE DOWNTOWN DISTRICT AMONG MUNCIE CITIZENS AND COLLEGE STUDENTS BY 20% BY MAY, 2015.

CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVE 3:
TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF BUSINESSES LOCATED IN DOWNTOWN MUNCIE BY 20% BY MAY, 2015.
CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVE 1

Strategy 1: Engage current downtown stakeholders in the active beautification of the downtown district

Target: Current Downtown Businesses and Partners
- T1: Design and create a mural in downtown Muncie · p. 9
- T2: Organize and promote a Downtown Muncie Earth Hour activity · p. 10
- T3: Host a Downtown Muncie Art fair · p. 11
- T4: Organize and host a sidewalk chalk exhibition · p. 12

Strategy 2: Develop and implement cooperative strategic communication initiatives

Target: Current Downtown Businesses and Partners
- T1: Host a cookoff featuring locally owned restaurants · p. 13
- T2: Develop cooperative advertising plans to feature partners · p. 14
- T3: Organize quarterly “Business over breakfast” networking events · p. 15
- T4: Create and distribute MDDP window stickers to partners · p. 16
- T5: Incorporate Ball State Homecoming advertising into media buys · p. 17
- T6: Host event in conjunction with IHSAA State Volleyball finals · p. 18
- T7: Include Ball State Student Media advertising in media planning · p. 19

Strategy 3: Develop and promote recreational activities independent of singular businesses

Target: Current and Potential visitors of Downtown Muncie
- T1: Incorporate sponsoring of free Cardinal Greenway bikes · p. 20
- T2: Plan, organize and promote a 5K road running race · p. 21
- T3: Develop plan to incorporate and promote street performers · p. 22
CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVE 2

Strategy 1: Diversify lineup of outdoor festivals and attractions to gain a more diverse audience
- T1: Coordinate a beer garden featuring downtown partners - p. 23
- T2: Feature boats on White River for rides during summer festival - p. 24
- T3: Promote and coordinate annual Mardi Gras Parade - p. 25
- T4: Develop RiverWalk activities to drive traffic to White River area - p. 26

Strategy 2: Increase overall consumer appeal of downtown district
- T1: Research and initiate district-wide public Wi-Fi wireless access - p. 27
- T2: Offer historical tours of downtown Muncie buildings and landmarks - p. 28
- T3: Work with local taxi services to increase downtown taxi efficiency - p. 29
- T4: Develop standing outdoor music venue during summer season - p. 30

CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVE 3

Strategy 1: Develop recruitment plan for businesses and potential business partners
- T1: Utilize website to advertise available real estate opportunities - p. 31
- T2: Develop orientation program for new business owners - p. 32

Strategy 2: Create marketing incentives for increased partner involvement among new businesses
- T1: Place feature stories for MDDP and partners in local media - p. 33
- T2: Create member-to-member discount program for partners - p. 34
- T3: Develop political liaison to encourage interaction with city officials - p. 35
- T4: Recreate hyperlinked business directory - p. 36
- T5: Create online “New Business Spotlight” to highlight partners - p. 37
POSITIONING STATEMENT:

Cardinal Communications views Muncie Downtown as the one business district in Muncie, Indiana that provides the citizens and businesses of Muncie with sustained professional, economical and recreational benefits through cooperation, variety, availability and a dedication to the local community.

KEY MESSAGE 1:
CURRENT AND POTENTIAL PARTNERS
"We're better together."

- The partnership is stronger when businesses come together and work for the greater good.
- The stronger the partnership, the stronger the district.
- Muncie is better when its citizens and visitors eat, shop, live, play and stay in places that directly benefit other Muncie citizens and visitors.

KEY MESSAGE 2:
MUNCIE CITIZENS AND STUDENTS

- Downtown features a wide variety of options for people to come, visit, and participate in many activities.
- The downtown district is artistically rich and serves a diverse audience with both artistic businesses and services.
- If you want to do something, you can do it Downtown.
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DOWNTOWN ART MURAL

The MDDP will find a public location, building, park, etc. that could use an artistic essence and create a mural covering one side of a building or installation. MDDP staff, partner businesses, and involved members of the community will contribute time and resources to promote and provide for the creation of this piece. The mural will also help the appeal of certain areas of the community and add to the artistic atmosphere of the downtown district. The painting may be created with the assistance of Muncie School District art students and community children.

Location:
The decision of the MDDP.

Time:
From one day to several months. Painting the mural will take up to two days depending on available resources and assistance.

Estimated Cost:
$120/5 gallon exterior paint can. Also dependent on participation, donations, etc.

Target Audience:
Individual partners of MDDP, current MDDP business partners, potential MDDP partners, general audience.

Methods of Communication:
Website updates, social media, college campus departments.
EARTH HOUR ACTIVITY

The Muncie Downtown Development Partnership will organize and promote an Earth Hour activity. Partner businesses will be encouraged to take part in National Earth Hour - March 26, 2012 at 4:00 p.m. - and shut off the lights to their business for one hour. Participation in this event will be voluntary, but partners pledging to participate will receive mention in event promotional material.

Location:
Downtown Muncie.

Time:
An hour at 4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m..

Estimated Cost:
Free.

Target Audience:
Business leaders, Muncie population, local media, MDDP social media followers.

Methods of Communication:
MDDP website and social media accounts for promotion of event, local newspapers and radio stations.
ART FAIR

An art fair downtown would bring together local artists in the Muncie community and also the Midwest region. Vendors would display and sell their art to Art Fair visitors. Artists would buy booth space and buy with the incentive of making a profit of their own and mingling with other artists about their craft. Customers will come from the surrounding area to experience the fair and shop for unique items. Midwest artists that sell jewelry, sculpture, illustration, etc. will be accompanied by Downtown Muncie food vendors to exemplify the other aspects of downtown. Local performers (bands, dance companies, street performers) can be featured at the event as well as activities that relate to Muncie citizens.

Location:
Downtown Muncie outside.

Time:
Art fair should last a full day or span over a weekend. Artists stay locally, which would also bring money into the community.

Estimated Cost:
Booth space would be available for purchase that would supply each artists with their own table and tent. Different types of booths could be valued differently. If determined correctly, the fair would pay for itself.

Target Audience:
Midwest artists for their participation. Muncie and regional art enthusiasts would be a target to visit the art fair.

Methods of Communication:
Website updates, flyers, social media, invitations, informational packet and sign up.

Example:
The Penrod and Broad Ripple Art Fair.
SIDEWALK CHALK EXHIBITION

The Muncie Downtown Development Partnership would organize and promote a sidewalk chalk exhibition that would be open to any willing participant. The event could take place either in downtown parking lots or on the sidewalks of Walnut, Jackson, Adams and Main Streets, based on participant and sponsoring business desires. Downtown businesses could be brought in as event sponsors to open up the potential for revenue streams. Participants would play for a space reservation and be given permission to use water-soluble paints and chalks to decorate the allotted pavement.

Location:
To be determined by the MDDP, but restricted to the main streets downtown.

Time:
Exhibition could take any time from a weekend to an entire week during.

Estimated Cost:
Permits for reserving space and security, boxes of chalk for distribution to participants.

Target Audience:
Ball State Art Department, Muncie School District students, families, local artists.

Methods of Communication:
MDDP website and social media accounts, print media in Ball State hallways, sponsor businesses and Muncie schools, radio advertisements.
COOKOFF
Muncie restaurants would be invited to participate in the event, with each restaurant paying for its own booth space. Businesses other than restaurants would also be invited to purchase booth space for advertisement and giveaways. Downtown bars would also be invited to sell merchandise and product. Vendors would stay open from the afternoon until dark. The event would ideally be held in the summer in order to get people walking around downtown. This event is targeted to restaurants of Muncie who want to increase business. It would be a great opportunity for restaurants new to the Muncie area in order for them to get their name out to the public. Businesses who are part of the MDDP would be recognized with banners throughout the event.

Location:
Outdoors or at the Horizon Center.

Time:
Roughly 3 months.

Estimated Cost:
Advertisement, facility rental, event logistics.

Target Audience:
Partners of the MDDP would be targeted to participate in the Taste of Muncie, as well as local restaurants throughout the surrounding Muncie community. The local Muncie population would be targeted to attend the event, as well as the Ball State population.

Methods of Communication:
E-mail blasts to MDDP business, website advertisement, fliers, radio announcements, Muncie Star Press advertisements, Facebook event, Twitter updates, online and print newsletters.
CO-OPERATIVE ADVERTISING

Co-op advertising allows businesses to go half on advertising on the downtown Muncie website through a rotational style cycle. In addition, this allows businesses to share their advertising ideas and the MDDP can tackle the challenges of advertising that businesses face together. Regardless of the advertising medium, this provides discounted advertising for businesses that do not have the financial budget for bigger advertising ideas as well as a platform for businesses to share ideas. Businesses that team up to advertise together will share the benefit of advertising or referring clients/customers to each other’s businesses, using creative design ideas for billboards or posters that market both businesses (both online and print) and the benefits of advertising deals with local radio, newspapers and websites.

Location:
Dependent on the advertising medium.

Time:
Flexible.

Estimated Cost:
Normal advertising runs $300 to $1,000 depending on factors like size and medium.

Target Audience:
MDDP partners and their businesses.

Methods of Communication:
E-mail, website announcement and request link, in-meeting announcement, advertising packets (both print and interactive online).

Other Requirements:
Begin to tool relationships with local advertising mediums (i.e. Muncie Star Press, BSU Daily News, etc.) and generate proposal for co-op advertising program.
BUSINESS OVER BREAKFAST

This meal-centered event provides the Muncie Downtown Development Partnership a chance to discuss business endeavors over a light breakfast. Stemming from the idea that families sit down together around the breakfast table, this meeting style allows the MDDP to build a sense of togetherness by having “Breakfast Over Business” on a quarterly basis throughout the year. At each meeting, there shall be a keynote speaker that ranges from opinion leaders, politicians or other business leaders within Muncie or Delaware County that can provide meaningful contribution to the partnership. In addition to discussing what’s important to the MDDP, partners will be afforded the opportunity to connect with these keynote speakers or guests that attend the breakfast.

Location:
Various locations within downtown Muncie to show the different venues

Time:
Four set times and dates throughout the year.

Estimated Cost:
Varied depending on speaker, venue, menu, etc.

Target Audience:
Individual partners of MDDP, current MDDP business partners, potential MDDP partners, politicians, opinion leaders, business owners in the surrounding downtown area. Attract Ivy Tech Culinary school and Concannon’s (downtown location).

Methods of Communication:
Website announcements, in-meeting announcements, formal invitations mailed out, personalized e-mails, “call-out” for agenda items/speaker topic requests.
WINDOW STICKERS

Partner businesses will be given MDDP window stickers to be displayed in their storefront door. The sticker will be small and feature the Muncie Downtown logo and state that this business is a partner. This will inform patrons about the MDDP, and provide a visible identifier of partner businesses to both potential and current participants of the partnership.

Location:
Windows of businesses that are part of the partnership.

Time:
Window stickers can be implemented at any time and continue to be distributed for an extended amount of time. New businesses can receive stickers upon joining into the MDDP.

Estimated Cost:
Average cost per sticker quoted at $2.50 to $3.00 depending on color and quantity ordered.

Target Audience:
Current businesses in the partnership will benefit in receiving a sticker, but it will attract businesses not yet in the partnership to want to be included.

Methods of Communication:
Distribute stickers at meetings.
HOME COMING BANNER ADVERTISING

During Ball State Homecoming, the partnership should create a large banner advertisement featuring the downtown Muncie district and display it on Ball State’s campus. Partner business placement will be determined by partnership level and banner cost restrictions. This display will serve as an introduction to downtown Muncie for returning students, parents and campus visitors.

Location:
Possible locations for banner display include Ball State Dining Halls and the Homecoming Parade.

Time:
Coincides with Ball State Homecoming schedule.

Estimated Cost:
Quoted at $70 per banner plus cost of display.

Target Audience:
MDDP partners and organizations.

Methods of Communication:
E-mail Homecoming Steering Committee. Advertising Banners are method of communication.
VOLLEYBALL TIE-IN

During the time of the IHSAA state volleyball championship in late October/early November, a historical volleyball display would be held at a location in the downtown community. The display would contain trophies, pictures, videos and speakers to emphasize the importance of volleyball in the Muncie community. Members of the MDDP would have booths and stands set up in the school. In order to have a booth, the business would have to sponsor the event. There would be buses to take parents, players and spectators from Worthen Arena to Muncie Central High School. Buses would also be present to take visitors to walk through the downtown area (For Ex: Walnut Street). The MDDP would work with the Shondell family, the Munciana league, and other famous volleyball alum from the Muncie/Indiana area.

Location:
There would be an MDDP booth set up in Worthen Arena during the games providing spectators with brochures about the event and downtown itself. They would also provide maps to those who wanted to drive downtown.

Time:
Coincides with the state volleyball championship.

Estimated cost:
Sponsorship costs, bussing costs, collecting display items.

Target Audience:
This event would be targeted toward those who are not normally in the Muncie community. Most of the visitors to the event would be parents and players so their main interest would be the historic volleyball display. MDDP would target surrounding schools heavily involved in competitive volleyball.

Methods of Communication:
Media blasts to newspapers, radio stations, and schools. Social media campaign using Facebook, Twitter, blogs, etc.. to target the students of the high schools. The MDDP would be responsible for providing visitors with a map and informational brochure of Muncie downtown.
BALL STATE STUDENT MEDIA ADVERTISING

The downtown community and local businesses could use outlets like Ball State’s Daily News, Ball Bearings, WCRD and Newslink to enhance their promotion and publicity. This would attract a large student audience that has easy access to downtown. The promotion could be from paid advertisements placed in these publications or published stories and articles promoted from news releases supplied by Muncie Downtown. Using these media could supply promotion for events, businesses and opportunities.

Location:
Different media outlets through Ball State.

Time:
Dependent on date of publication and correlation with upcoming events.

Estimated Cost:
Varied. Promotional stories can be free if chosen. Advertisements can range anywhere from $300 to $1000 dependant on size and medium.

Target Audience:
Ball State students and faculty.

Methods of Communication:
Print advertisements, featured stories, radio, TV, newspaper, magazine, online.
SPONSORING FREE GREENWAY BIKES

As a potential promotion for activities downtown and to help develop the community, the MDDP could help create a system of donations to donate free bikes for people to ride on for the Cardinal Greenway. Different businesses could donate a supply of their fund, or put accessible donation boxes in their store for customers to donate into their community. Consult downtown bike shops for sponsorships as well as price reductions of their products for this community outreach.

Location:
Cardinal Greenway Bike Trail

Time:
Spring to fall months, weather dependent throughout the rest of the year

Estimated Cost:
Bike storage, acquiring the bikes, and cost of maintenance

Target Audience:
Individual partners of MDDP, current MDDP business partners, potential MDDP partners to get involved, Muncie population and Cardinal Greenway users to use sponsored bikes

Methods of Communication:
Website updates, social media, print media in Muncie community, local radio stations, advertising through Ball State and Ivy Tech.
**DOWNTOWN 5K ROAD RACE**

Muncie Downtown Development Partnership will select a date, 5K route, touring the Muncie Downtown area, and a time for the event. Permission will then have to be granted for the location of the 5K location including business owners and proper authorities. People should also be able to donate to MDDP even if they don't wish to run or walk in the event. This 5K will attract local sponsors and will be set up so that the MDDP partners all get involved to work together. This event will bring a wide range of participants including patrons that have not yet visited the downtown area before. The contributions charged for entry into the MDDP 5K run/walk will raise money as well as get more people involved with Muncie Downtown.

**Location:**
Dependent on the city government approval as well as the business owner’s located in the area. Proposed map will be presented at a later date.

**Time:**
The event should be held any time between March and September

**Estimated Cost:**
Price is affected by the amount of prizes, T-shirts, and sponsors, etc. (Estimated $200 first time race).
- Proposed level of entry fee: $20 on race day and $15 early registration
- Amount raised per person: $20 (not including the sponsorships)

**Target Audience:**
Individual partners of MDDP, current MDDP business partners, potential MDDP partners and participants, local Muncie community, Ball State runners club

**Methods of Communication:**
Website announcements, social media sites, local radio, newspaper, and television advertisements, print media in the downtown area and around Ball State University and Ivy Tech

**Example:**
Pink Power 5K, Columbus, Indiana.
STREET PERFORMERS

Street performers could be used to add flair downtown. Famous street performers could even become selling points to future advertising. Muncie locals could get an opportunity to show their novelty skills and also add the artistic expression of the community. This depends on cooperation with Muncie city ordinances and restriction on street performers. Performers may be contracted for short-term or season-long positions.

Location:
Various areas in Muncie Downtown

Time:
Street performers would be active during Spring to Fall months

Estimated Cost:
Costs would include wage for performers

Target Audience:
Muncie community, Ball State students, Ivy Tech students, MDDP partners

Methods of Communication:
Social media and website should be used to display photos and videos of performances to alert community. Advertising using radio, newspapers, and fliers.
COMEDY FESTIVAL

In addition to the Muncie Music Fest, the MDDP should organize and promote a Muncie Comedy Festival. The event would be similar in set-up, organization and execution to the outdoor music festival, but should be geared to stand-up, improvisational and sketch comedy. Event organizers would recruit local student and Muncie-area comedians and comedy groups to perform, as well as pursue one or two “headline” comedy acts from the Indianapolis or Chicago area. Partner businesses will be able to host comedians in their venues in a similar manner to Muncie Music Fest, as well as offer booth space on the street.

Location:
Walnut Street between Jackson and Charles Streets, various MDDP partner businesses

Time:
The festival should occur in the warmer months during spring and summer while students are still in school to attract a larger audience

Estimated Cost:
Variable based on performance fees. Event, stage, performance and additional naming and sponsorship rights would be offered to partner businesses.

Target Audience:
MDDP partners, local Muncie community members, Muncie school district students, Ball State and Ivy Tech students

Methods of Communication:
Radio, print, television and Internet advice, MDDP website and social media accounts, word of mouth and official presentations at MDDP general meeting.
BEER GARDEN

Muncie Downtown Development Partnership will acquire a license to conduct and operate an outdoor beer garden. Restaurants and bars located downtown should be consulted to host the beer garden. A liquor license, as well as a beer garden license, is needed for this event, which may be obtained by individual businesses. Approval must then be obtained from the local residents and business owners to make sure no one gets upset by the beer garden's location. A tent or fence will be required to restrict entry and contain the event. A maximum capacity will be established to restrict noise and prevent violating town code ordinances regulations.

Location:
Muncie downtown in approved position by community and board of directors.

Time:
The garden would be opened seasonally, closed during winter months.

Estimated Cost:
License cost of approximately $100 per business, cost of tents and product served.

Target Audience:
College students, MDDP potential and current partners and local residents.

Methods of Communication:
Local television, magazines and newspapers advertisements. Flyers distributed around the area. Social media and the Internet should also be utilized in the promotion of the beer garden.
WHITE RIVER BOAT RIDES

In partnership with businesses on or near the White River, the MDDP should feature boats for rental on the White River. Boat options include paddle boats, kayak, and canoe. Patrons would rent the boats for up to an hour after signing waivers. MDDP would either purchase or rent the boats for the season. The boats would be available during good weather during the summer and be promoted alongside the Cardinal Greenway and other recreational activities.

Location:
White River Greenway

Time:
During the summer months, May-September

Estimated Cost:
Dependent on boats available and decision to rent or buy, must include dock and system of renting in factoring cost.

Target Audience:
MDDP partners, local Muncie population, active members in surrounding communities, Ball State University

Methods of Communication:
MDDP website and social media, Cardinal Greenway website and social media, traditional television, radio, and newspaper advertisements.
PARADE

Since Muncie Downtown already has an annual parade, better promotion would help encourage tourists to see it. Incorporating sponsorships and business to take place in the parade would bring money to the process. Incorporating Muncie community groups to join the parade will bring more people downtown. For example, Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts. Ball State groups could be featured in the parade to bring student traffic to the area. Further publicizing the event would add to the crowd that would arrive downtown.

Location:
Current parade route.

Time:
Roughly one month before parade.

Estimated Cost:
Dependent on types of promotion utilized.

Target Audience:
The Muncie community and groups and businesses who could participate.

Methods of Communication:
Website updates, flyers, social media, information sheets available at the MDDP office, invitations, meetings, college campus departments, etc.
RIVERWALK RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

There would be a diverse range of activities along the river walk. These different activities would appeal to the artistic crowd, athletic crowd and the "foodie" crowd. Some of the artistic activities would be sidewalk painting geared toward children. The different art galleries of Muncie would also have displays along the river walk. Athletic activities would include basketball courts, sand volleyball courts and tennis courts. There would be hired staff working to monitor the activities. These activities would be free of charge for all users in order to promote better health for Muncie citizens and visitors. There would be multiple tournaments held throughout the summer in order to bring visitors to Muncie. These would have an entry fee.

Location:
MDDP businesses would have the opportunity to be a part of the main plaza of the river walk. They would also be sponsors of the athletic tournaments and the sidewalk painting.

Time:
The river walk activities would only occur throughout the months of April to September. The main athletic tournaments would only be held during June, July and August. The private food vendors would all purchase their space for the summer.

Estimated Cost:
Constructing the athletic courts would be the most costly part of the river walk, but the downtown would eventually gain a profit from hosting the multiple tournaments throughout the summer. The MDDP would be the main sponsor of all athletic tournaments and sidewalk art competitions.

Target Audience:
Each MDDP business would have special advertisements; therefore, encouraging other businesses to join. The courts would be available for "purchase" by donors to the Muncie community; the courts would be named after these donors. Once instated, all of the general community can enjoy the activities.

Methods of communication:
There would be several community wide meetings held in order to gain support and donations for the river walk project, the Muncie Star Press, Indianapolis Star, the Chicago Tribune, Cincinnati Enquirer and other large area newspapers would run stories detailing the events of the river walk, area schools would receive notifications of the athletic tournaments being held, a Facebook and Twitter account created.
One of the best ways to connect Muncie Downtown to the rest of the city is to tap into the exciting experience of making the downtown district a place of open internet access. Having the downtown district go online presents an opportunity for community members to come downtown and stay downtown because they can stay for extended periods of time with their many electronic devices such as a laptop computer and enjoy the downtown atmosphere. More importantly, once the weather begins to warm up, community members can escape to downtown Muncie to enjoy the outdoors while completing personal assignments. Additionally, people can access the internet through their phones’ WI-FI access, for example, and tap into information about the downtown district (i.e. an interactive map of downtown, location of certain businesses, view events and specials, etc.). WI-FI access provides a unique experience to its community members and a major reason as to what makes people stay downtown.

Location:
The Muncie Downtown District radius

Time:
This can range depending on the detail of infrastructure.

Target Audience:
All community members

Estimated Cost:
This can range depending on the detail of infrastructure.

Methods of Communication:
The website, brochures and other publications/materials, newspaper outlets

Example:
The Cisco Mesh System is one example of a cost-effective telecommunications design (http://www.cisco.com/en/US/netsol/ns621/index.html)
CULTURAL TOURS

Muncie Downtown Development Partnership would construct a guided tour of all of the museums, historical landmarks and Muncie architecture located downtown. Maps depicting the historical tour should be placed in kiosks around the area. A tour guide will be selected to give the tours during the course of the day. Revealing historical meaning in Muncie will help generate interest in the downtown area. MDDP should promote the tour on their website and their social media websites.

Location:
Historical stops that are relevant in the downtown area.

Time:
Look into tour times around BSU tour times. Mainly weekend options.

Estimated Cost:
Minimum wage to the tour guide if opted.

Target Audience:
Muncie locals as well as potential Muncie downtown customers with an interest in history.

Methods of Communication:
Maps distributed around the area. Promoted on social media websites and the Muncie Downtown website.
TAXI SERVICES

The Muncie Downtown Development Partnership will partner with PDQ Taxi and Busnectar and use those avenues to advertise partner businesses to taxi patrons, create a shuttle service for downtown events and expose downtown Muncie to the patrons of the Muncie taxi services. The MDDP should form a partnership with Busnectar, specifically, to provide a shuttle to Ball State campus residents to events with blocked streets, such as Muncie Gras and Ribfest.

Location:
Set routes throughout Muncie Downtown and major audiences in Muncie.

Time:
Dependent on current relationship and their choices.

Estimated Cost:
Dependent on relationship with individual companies.

Target Audience:
Ball State campus residents, current patrons of PDQ and Busnectar.

Methods of Communication:
MDDP website and social media, PDQ and Busnectar advertising and online presence.
OUTDOOR MUSIC VENUE

Muncie Downtown Development Partnership must first build a host committee. The committee can do most of the organization work on the day of the event. Second MDDP will come up with a fund-raising theme that suits the particular event. Next several bands will need to be selected very carefully to insure that people are enthusiastic about the event. Stages then need to be rented for the event as well as sound and lighting equipment. Permission must then be obtained from the city and business owners for the location of the event. Also sponsors should be consulted to help with the costs and provide alternative activities during the event.

Location:
Dependent on the approval of the city and business owners.

Time:
Roughly 3 months for construction.

Estimated Cost:
Around $800 per stage and $350 for sound equipment per stage.

Target Audience:
Music lovers and college students also Muncie residents will be targeted.

Methods of Communication:
Announcements on the MDDP website as well as social media sites flyers will be distributed to surrounding areas. Local media will also be used to promote the event. Social media and website announcements.
REAL ESTATE PROMOTION

Muncie Downtown Development Partnership should display all of the available real estate in Muncie downtown. Permission should be obtained from the property owners to advertise their real estate. The real estate owners should be contacted and asked if they want to participate or pay for the advertising costs. The MDDP should place available property space on their website in a section designated for new businesses. This will conveniently display space available for businesses to start up or move to the Muncie downtown area. Social media should be used to give and provide informative announcements to business owners who would be interested in learning about using the property space. The real estate should also be listed in local media outlets like the Muncie Star Press and Indianapolis Star.

Location:
The properties will be in downtown Muncie, however the promotions will not only be targeted to residents of the Muncie community as business owners outside of Muncie should be targeted as well.

Time:
This will be an ongoing initiative upon receipt of the website.

Cost:
Labor of website maintenance as well as cost of advertising mediums (Classified ads approximately $100 for 30 days).

Target audience:
Potential and current business owners in search of real estate space in a relatively inexpensive downtown area.

Methods of communication:
Website announcements, social media announcements, local print and online media.
NEW BUSINESS ORIENTATION

The Muncie Downtown Development Partnership will create, maintain and distribute a packet of relevant and important information regarding the upkeep of a business in downtown Muncie. This information will be given through in-person meetings between new business owners and a representative of the MDDP. Additionally, this orientation material will be available for current MDDP partners through a shareholder section on the Muncie Downtown website.

Information within the packet should include: overview of MDDP services and opportunities, registration information and benefits, outline of local government agencies and contact information, latest MDDP annual financial report, outline of upcoming MDDP plans and events and contact list of other local businesses and services.

Location:
Downtown Muncie.

Time:
This will be an ongoing process until the new business owner(s) feel comfortable and settled into their establishments.

Cost:
The approximate cost of printing all the documents can range from $200-$400 depending on printing logistics. To minimize costs some things can be placed online or e-mailed for easy access and for download.

Target Audience:
New business owners or MDDP partners.

Distribution:
To be arranged between local business owner and MDDP office – packets to be distributed at in-person meeting in addition to a networking opportunity with MDDP staff and opportunity for business owner to ask questions.

Methods of Communication:
In-person meeting, Recruitment print and online materials, in-meeting announcements.
MDDP MEDIA FEATURES

Muncie Downtown Development Partnership media features is about pitching newsworthy information to local and surrounding media outlets. Potential features pitched or written by the MDDP should be newsworthy (timeliness, proximity, prominence, impact, novelty, conflict). Based on the idea of newsworthiness, the MDDP will evaluate what needs to be highlighted regarding the partnership on a monthly basis. Forming relationships with media personnel, the MDDP will contact local newspapers and pitch their stories or events through conversation or other means (e.g. press releases, formal invitations to events, PSAs, etc.). As the MDDP begins to build these relationships, they should keep an updated contact list of media personnel and log dates and other information of what has been sent to the media for future evaluation.

Location:
The City of Muncie.

Time:
Media pitching for online/print news features will be an ongoing processes that occurs each month.

Cost:
Free.

Target Audience:
Muncie Star-Press audience, citizens of Muncie and East Central Indiana.

Methods of Communication:
New business orientation, MDDP general meetings, media outlets (print, online and radio).

Example:
The Muncie Downtown district is welcoming a new business. The MDDP will generate a press release that will detail information about the business, what it means to the Muncie Downtown and surrounding community, and other relative information. Once this press release is complete, it can be sent to the local and surrounding media contacts via e-mail. Be sure to include contact information so that media personnel will contact the MDDP first, for more information.
PARTNER-TO-PARTNER DISCOUNTS

The Partner-to-Partner discount program would be something offered to MDDP partners only. Partners of the MDDP would receive a card similar to a credit card. They would present this card at other businesses in order to receive a discount at that particular establishment. Some businesses already have a form of this set into place. The discount program would require businesses to display the discount offered to MDDP partners more visibly. The card that businesses would be issued would be required in order to receive the discount. If a business has a Partners Only discount card, then that business must offer a discount to other businesses.

Only partners of the MDDP would be allowed to apply for the Partner-to-Partner Discount Program. They would fill out an application for the card, and then the MDDP would supply a specific number of cards to the business. The business applying for a Partners Only card must already have a discount set into place for other partners of the MDDP. All businesses would be targeted in this campaign, but only partners of the MDDP can participate.

Location:
Muncie Downtown businesses.

Time:
This program would occur year round. Each year, businesses would be issued new cards. Also, each year that businesses reappointed for a new Partners Only discount card, they would have to submit their own business’ discount program for approval. Any business that is located in Muncie that is a partner of the MDDP would be eligible for the Partner-to-Partner Discount Program.

Cost:
From www.member-cards.com:
$85.00 initial set up fee
$2.98 (each) for 100 cards (credit card size)
$1.89 (each) for 200 cards
$0.74 (each) for 500 cards

The turnaround is 15-20 working days from design approval

As an incentive for businesses to join the MDDP and offer discounts to partners, the MDDP would be responsible for paying for the actual Partners Only cards. However, each business would only be allotted so many cards.

Target Audience:
Partners of MDDP

Methods of communication:
Advertisements on the website, Facebook group, Twitter updates, advertisement in print and online newsletters, Logo displayed in all participating businesses.
POLITICAL LIAISON

The Muncie Development Downtown Partnership should establish itself as the connection between its partners and government officials. Meetings with the city council, the mayor's office, state representatives and other elected officials who are visiting town should be arranged through the development office and promoted to invested stakeholders. Politicians should be recruited to speak at general meetings and at networking events to facilitate discussion and communication with partner business owners.

Location:
Within Muncie downtown.

Time:
Continuously throughout the year to keep a strong bond with the Muncie government officials. This will also be an ongoing process in the proceeding years.

Cost:
Free.

Target Audience:
MDDP partners that want to connect with government officials and build networks to influence commerce decisions and other political agendas relative to their business.

Methods of communication:
New business orientation, MDDP general meetings, e-mail, formal invitation to events, website.
HYPERLINKED BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Muncie Downtown Development Partnership should first obtain all MDDP members business URL's with their permission. Second MDDP must place all business website links under the specified business listing currently on their website. This will ensure that new customers can get a better feel for the new experience downtown they are about to embark on. This will make the directory for the businesses, as well as the Muncie Downtown website more effective and efficient when it comes to locating specified business’s or attractions downtown.

Location:
Muncie Downtown.

Time:
Upon receipt of the website (approximately one month).

Cost:
Free (however cost of labor and time of updating the website).

Target audience:
Individual partners of MDDP, potential MDDP shareholders as well as current and potential customers.

Methods of Communication:
Cold calling for business website information, searching the internet for business websites, updates to the MDDP website.
NEW BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

The new business spotlight will allow the MDDP to feature new businesses that come into the downtown district. The idea behind this tactic is that new businesses will have a great first impression to the partnership and be welcomed by the current MDDP partners. Most importantly, this also provides a means for informing current businesses in the downtown district about the new business, and the products or services that are offered. Publicizing the new businesses through a variety of mediums, like online communication, makes the community aware of what’s new downtown. In addition to highlighting new business spotlight, this can also be a place for publicizing “new” features, products or services of older downtown businesses by having a “what’s new downtown” sub-portion of the spotlight.

Location:
Downtown Muncie, MDDP website.

Time:
Finished along with all aspects of the website.

Cost:
Free (however, labor and time of updating the website).

Target Audience:
New business owners, potential new businesses.

Methods of Communication:
Website, in-meeting announcements, social media, local media (print, radio and online).
TIMELINE

2011 - 2012:
• Utilize Muncie Downtown website to advertise available real estate opportunities
• Develop new business orientation program for new business owners
• Place feature stories for MDDP and partner businesses in local print and online media
• Create member-to-member discount program for downtown partners
• Develop political liaison program for downtown partners to interact with city politicians
• Recreate hyperlinked business directory to recreate
• Create online “New Business Spotlight” to highlight new downtown partners

2012 - 2013:
• Develop cooperative advertising plans to feature partner businesses
• Create and distribute MDDP window stickers to partner storefronts
• Promote existing Mardi Gras Parade and incorporate additional participants
• Develop Freaky Tiki Friday promotional material
• Research and initiate district-wide public Wi-Fi wireless access
• Develop political liaison program for downtown partners to interact with city politicians

2013 - 2014:
• Host a Downtown Muncie Art fair
• Organize and host a sidewalk chalk exhibition on downtown Muncie property
• Incorporate Ball State Homecoming advertising into media buys
• Incorporate Ball State Student Media advertising into media buys
• Feature boats on White River for rides during summer festival
• Offer historical tours of downtown Muncie buildings and landmarks

2014 - 2015:
• Host Muncie Volleyball event in conjunction with IHSAA State Volleyball finals
• Incorporate sponsoring of free Cardinal Greenway bikes at downtown crossings
• Plan, organize and promote a 5K road running race through downtown Muncie
• Coordinate a beer garden featuring downtown bars and restaurants
• Develop RiverWalk activities to drive traffic to White River area
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