

Commercial District Marketing

Marketing has multiple over-lapping roles in revitalization plans:

- helping to build a positive for the district
- expanding the customer base and increasing patronage
- strengthening the district's role as a community/social center
- recruiting new businesses
- public relations for the revitalization program

Set priorities across these goals based on local vision, conditions and strategy. Image-building and customer marketing may be deferred until crime is reduced and the business base grows. Marketing may be a priority and all these areas covered for largely developed and occupied districts.

Separate initiatives are needed for distinct marketing goals since they image building, customer marketing and business recruitment to address different challenges.

Image-Building

Requires the most comprehensive approach.

Articulate an image based on real district assets and consistent with vision. Combine physical/visual components and activity/use components.

Create consensus and buy-in for image and plan to promote it

Promote image in an integrated way with physical improvements, signs, public art, individual and collective ads, public relations, and special events

Emphasize businesses that contribute to image in advertising and recruitment

District del Sol Example

Marketing to attract customers

Core marketing program

Assumption: targeted marketing by its message, audience and medium will be more effective and a general scattershot approach
Target by market segment, my business cluster and by media

- Identify the separate customer segments to attract to the district
- Define the attractions or reasons for each segment to visit the district---a “call to action”.
- Customize the marketing information and appeal by each segment and create specific tools (ads, brochures, news articles) for major segments. Y
 - Youth versus families, students vs. daytime worker, etc.
- Find marketing media or distribution channels to reach target market segments
- Need an on-going and sustained marketing effort to generate results

Examples

- District del Sol marketing to visitors
- Stockyards City marketing of district history

Supplement Core Marketing with Promotions and Special Events

- A way to shape district image and strengthen its role as a community center by attracting people to district at special purposes
- Promotions are usually sales and shopping-oriented.
- Special events have broader entertainment, celebration, and community building goals.
- Boston Main Streets supports a city-wide holiday shopping promotions (“Boston Unwrapped”) and Mayoral visits for store opening

Type of event will reflect goals and audience

Community-oriented vs. city-wide or regional in scale

Business Recruitment

Formal versus informal approaches

Control” of real estate to recruit into

- Cooperative recruitment by landlord
- Understandings with individual landlords on uses/targets
- Formal right of refusal for assisted projects
- Develop your own property

Formal Recruitment

- Define business targets
- Identify specific recruitment targets
 - National stores, branches or local/regional stores, start-ups
- Approach targets to recruit to district
- Recruitment package with information on market, vacant spaces, revitalization vision and program, incentives
- Build relationships with commercial brokers

Informal Recruitment

- Fostering word of mouth
- Using individual contacts
- Organizational/community wide “recruitment culture”
- Attracting tenants via attracting developers
- Press coverage

Marketing Tools