

Shreveport Farmers' Market Advertising/Marketing Campaign

Red River Revel, Inc of Shreveport, LA received \$13,846 to implement an advertising and marketing campaign for their market. Print, billboards, and television ads were used to boost attendance and vendor participation in the Shreveport farmers market.

Final Report

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Agreement # 12-25-G-0712
Funds: \$13,846

Prior to our FMPP Grant, Shreveport Farmers' Market had to be sought out by interested parties that already knew of it. However, with the money for marketing awarded by the grant, our existence and other pertinent information became easily available, attracting new shoppers and vendors to the market.

Lamar Outdoor Advertising was a partner on the project, offering us highly visible billboards, two of which were electronic, for marketing our farmers' market at a discounted rate. Gremillion & Pou, an advertising agency, also participated in bringing our market more in focus to the public eye.

The results of our marketing efforts were phenomenal. We began the Summer Shreveport Farmers' Market on June 13, 2009 to an opening-day crowd of nearly 7,000 people, with 65 regular vendor booths rented, plus an additional 15 vendors using temporary spaces in the parking area. It was our largest attendance of any day in the history of the Shreveport Farmers' Market. Due to successful marketing, we saw massive increases compared to all previous years.

<u>Attendance Samples*</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>
Opening Day	6955	2355
July Sample Day	2156	1690
August Sample Day	1599	1255

* Saturday Markets

Regular vendors performed more enthusiastically due to the increased number of shoppers. Enthusiastic applicants were accepted from a lengthy waiting list, keeping the 65 market stalls filled almost every week.

<u>Vendor Attendance*</u>	<u>2009 booths filled</u>	<u>2008 booths filled</u>
June average	76	62
July average	68	64
August average	63	52

* Saturday Markets

Tuesday Markets were still smaller than the Saturday version, but both public interest and vendor participation rose as well.

Due to our increased popularity and marketing presence, the local media outlets (local magazines, television news reports, radio and newspaper) continued to do stories about the farmers' market all season, which continued our increased visibility.

Vendors felt the direct effects of our billboard campaign. For example, one shopper “passing through” Shreveport saw one of our billboards on Interstate 20 and called the market manager inquiring about product availability and directions. This resulted in a single vendor selling out their stock completely for the day, and receiving advance orders totaling \$1,400. Other benefits may have been less impressive than the example above, but obvious ties to the campaign were experienced across the board.

Additionally, viral marketing sources were utilized this season as well, with our email list growing from 86 recipients to 307, and our Facebook Page attracting over 800 fans in its first three months of existence. A large number of inquiries are coming to us via our organization’s profile on localharvest.org which routes them to our email address. The success of these programs speaks to our need for good website design and development so that we can more directly communicate with the interested public.

The Fall Market, which is normally extremely slow, also benefitted from our new visibility, helped in part by a story about a particular vendor featured in *The Shreveport Times*. Our aggressive marketing of the Shreveport Farmers’ Market must continue with more grants sought, funds raised, and money spent toward recognition and promotion through media and marketing.

An economic impact study of the 2009 Shreveport Farmers’ Market conducted by Louisiana State University in Shreveport scientifically supports our growth and the success of our marketing efforts.

Other people, organizations, entities, and entire communities have been helped by the success of this marketing campaign and the farmers’ market in general. Farmers have a place to meet, discuss their profession and share ideas, and sell their goods. Shoppers can buy food produced closer to home, sometimes by better means, and spend their dollars to support their own regions. Small entrepreneurial food businesses have an outlet for their goods. Older shoppers who qualify for the state’s Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program were able to find vendors with which they could spend their vouchers. Slow Food North Louisiana became more visible at our market, and worked toward cross-marketing our two groups.

Increased marketing of the Shreveport Farmers’ Market and increased management hours, both due to funding by the FMPP Grant, has had many positive results. Our popularity, both as a place to shop, and as a place to sell, has been greatly improved by our new-found visibility in the community. Increased management hours have enabled more research, outreach, and other necessary facets of presenting a market to be implemented. This year’s funding has set a precedent that can hopefully be continued in the future with more funding and the continuing opportunities such funding provides.

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