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Marketing the Farmers’ Market
What do we need?

Full shopping bags!
Empty Trucks!

- Customers
- Vendors
- Identity
- Pull
Market Planning Adds Value

- Define the target customer
- Understand customer needs/interests
- Identify vendor opportunity
- Position the Farmers Market and the vendor businesses within it
- Make the Farmers Market/Customer Connection
Marketing...

✓ **Skill:** an ability to communicate and convert the connection between customer and offering into a sale

✓ **Plan:** orchestrated activities, publicity, public relations, materials, look

✓ **Customer focused:** a way of thinking and acting
Ten tips for marketing success

✓ Teamwork
✓ Plan
✓ Connect
✓ Experience
✓ Target
✓ Brag
✓ Creativity
✓ Service
✓ Focus
✓ Communicate
Marketing Basics

- Product
- Place
- Price
- Promotion
The Marketing Plan Outlines:

✓ Marketing goals
✓ Strategy
✓ Implementation
✓ Roles and responsibilities
Market Planning: Make a 'product' 'market' match

- Who is our target market (customer)?
- What are we marketing?
- How do our services & products match the needs of our customer?
- How will our customer know we have what they need, what they want?
Target Market

✓ Who are our customers?
✓ Where do these buyers live/work?
✓ How are they alike and different?
✓ Why do they (should they) want to shop our Farmers Market?
Why do these customers shop our Market?

- What are the reasons?
- How often do they shop the Market?
- What do they tell their friends?
- What are they looking for? Why?
- What more could we offer?
- What is important to them? Why?
- What can we do better?
Customer Research Strategies

- Published research
- Focus groups
- Interviews
- Surveys - mail, telephone and on-site
- Rapid Market Assessment
Focus Groups

- Six to nine people
- Respond to and discuss issues and concerns
- Typically last about two hours
- Run by a moderator and recorded
- Transcription and analysis
- $$$ and expertise
Advantages:

✓ Can use volunteers
✓ Build relationships
✓ Get actionable information
Brief On-site Interviews

Disadvantages:

✓ Respondents self-select
✓ Not scientific, can’t project
✓ Do not give in-depth information
In-depth Interviews

- One on One
- Individual versus group concerns
- Reveal different experiences and attitudes
- Easier than Focus Groups
- Provide detail
Surveys

- Mail
- Telephone
- In-person
- Internet
Develop Questionnaire

- Use survey goal to evaluate questions
- Format: combine closed and open questions; look ahead to data entry and analysis
- Check for and avoid leading questions
- Create a smooth flow of topics
- Start with warm-up questions
- Close with demographic queries
Pretest Questionnaire

- Clarity
- Usefulness
- Acceptability
- Time
- Adjust questions
- Evaluate ease/accuracy of collecting and entering data
- Test data entry and database
Rapid Market Assessment

- Customer Counts
- Dot Surveys/Posters
- Market Observations
Get help! Take action!

Check out
✓ Cooperative Extension
✓ Small Business Development Consultants
✓ Marketing Agencies
✓ College students/interns

Use what you’ve learned
What is our ‘product’?

✓ What benefits do we provide?

✓ What do we need to effectively offer our ‘product’ (facilities, staff, rules, etc.)?
Market Positioning: How are we perceived?

- Determine how the Farmers’ Market is perceived by the customer
- Tie together information about your product, your Market, your competition, your customer
- Think about your product from the perspective of your customer and that of your competition
What need does our Market fill?

- What benefits does our Market offer?
- What is our competition offering?
- How is our Market the same and different?
- To what needs or values are they appealing?
- To what needs and values do we appeal?
- How can we appeal to those values better than anyone else?
Check out the Competition

✓ Sells similar products/services to our target customers

Or...

✓ Could sell similar products/services to our customers
Make the Market to Customer Connection: Communication

- Determine the most effective means of communicating with your target market
- Keep your budget in mind
- Consider informal channels, i.e., Signage, online, direct mail, and posters; presentations at places frequented by your market: schools, businesses, senior citizen centers, etc.
- Stay on Message!
Make the Market to Customer Connection: Message

Connect - make sure customers do not have to work hard to understand your message and materials

Concise - deliver your message as directly as possible

Clear - deliver one core message

Consistent - make sure everyone associated with the Market delivers the same message
What will it take to sustain customer connections?

- What mix of personal selling, advertising, promotional, PR and other activities?
- How does the appearance and style of our Market reinforce our message?
- Who is responsible for doing what, when?
- What are our marketing costs?
- How will we pay those costs?
- With whom can we partner?
What did the research and analysis tell you?

✓ Market Target
✓ Product
✓ Market position
✓ Market/customer connection
✓ Marketing goals, strategy, tasks and responsibilities
Next Steps

✓ The marketing plan is a key part of your business plan

✓ And a business plan is key to financing, community support, partnerships and success
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For more information, go to www.cdi.coop