

TIPS

to Take Advantage of Downtown Special Events



MENOMONEE FALLS
DOWNTOWN
wheremain&appletonmeet

PRE-EVENT TIPS

✓ Make the BID Events Part of Your Marketing Calendar



Your opportunity to make additional sales on these days is greater than on any other non-event day during the year. We've included our calendar of events in this tip sheet so you can add them to your own marketing calendar of events.

✓ "Plant the Seed"

A few weeks before the event, put some items near your cash register or in your window that fit the theme of the upcoming event. For Chilly Fest, you may want to use some plastic chili pepper beads or lights. Think about using some rubber duckies for the Sidewalk Market and Ducky Derby – get creative and have some fun.

The point is to raise awareness of the event and allow you to tell your customers about the specials you will be offering at the event.

✓ Print Flyers

Advertise some special buys in your store during the event. Beginning a few weeks before the event and put the flyers in your customers' shopping bags so they know about the event and what will be going on in your store.

✓ Use Your Website and Facebook

Post information about the event and let your customers know about special buys on your website and Facebook page.

✓ Work Your Contact List

If you have an email list of your customers, send them an email and let them know about the event, your store/restaurant hours during

the event and what you will be offering. If you have a mailing list, consider sending a flyer along with a coupon that is good only during the event.

✓ Prepare Coupons for Event Attendees

Create coupons and hand them out at the event. Here are several ideas for you to think about as you develop your coupons:

- 1 What's your "call to action"? One call to action is to make the offer date sensitive. You could give your customers a fixed amount of time to respond (depending on the product or service, this may vary from 7 days to 60 days.)
- 2 What's your offer going to be? You may want to make a fairly aggressive offer. Consider that even with an aggressive offer you'll still probably come out ahead versus having to extend an entirely new marketing campaign. Anything above 15% to 20% usually returns a good result.
- 3 Are you going to offer an upsell? For example, "Take 20% off your next purchase AND receive a buy-one get-one FREE on any of our exciting new line of xxxxxxxx."
- 4 Are you going to make your offer date sensitive? Almost any offer should have an expiration date and disclaimers pertinent to your business.
- 5 Are you going to initiate a follow-up system? This can be easily done by sending out a reminder email or a follow-up phone call to remind the customer and to try to close the deal if the bounce back coupon didn't accomplish this on its own.



Dear Business Owner,

As a business owner, you have an important stake in the success of downtown Menomonee Falls. Our BID organization is dedicated to putting "feet on the street" and one of the best ways we can do this is by holding events.

Special events bring thousands of people to downtown Menomonee Falls. With so many visitors here, the opportunity for downtown merchants to generate extra income is greatly increased. This is a day-of-event benefit.

Special events also allow visitors to see all that our downtown has to offer. While not everyone who attends an event will be shopping, they will certainly all be looking—looking at the shops, restaurants, galleries, salons and professional services that are here. If they have an enjoyable time during the event, they are much more likely to return at a later date to make purchases. This is an after-event benefit.

Special events get people thinking about downtown Menomonee Falls as a destination for shopping, dining and entertainment, rather than as a place to pass through to simply get somewhere else. This is a long-term goal.

This tip sheet will give you helpful information on how you can make money during these events and will provide you with tools you can use to attract people and bring them into your business – before, during and after the event.

I hope you enjoy and profit from the tips we have to share.

Sincerely,

Menomonee Falls Village Centre

Barb Watters

Barb Watters
BID Director



Christmas Downtown

“For the Christmas event we hand out candy canes with gallery gift tags, put the gallery Christmas card in all bags and provide festive gift wrapping for free. This year we also had a drawing for a free gift. During Chilly Fest we have a vendor demo or musician on hand and during the Sidewalk Market our bench artist sets up a display outside. We have food and beverages for our customers at all the events, offer a special event price for at least one item and all our local artists are encouraged to stop in to talk with customers. The one thing that is important to me is offering information about other businesses or even calling them to see if they have what the customer is looking for. The personal touch is something that brings people back.”

Susan Corkum, Owner
Purloin Studio

DAY-OF-EVENT TIPS

✓ Make Sure Your Business Remains Open During the Event

You can't make a sale if you aren't open. While special event attendees may not be your regular customers, they are your potential customers. Show them you are supportive of downtown Menomonee Falls and that downtown is a great place to be.

✓ Have a Sidewalk Sale Table

Attract attendees to your business. When possible, try to offer items that complement the special event. For example, you might consider selling Halloween decorations or seasonal menu items. If your business doesn't offer these items, just moving some of your regular merchandise outside brings extra attention to your store.

✓ Have a Special In-Store Sale

Have a sale or special only during hours of the event. Provide such good deals on selected food or merchandize that it's worthwhile for people to come inside. While they're inside your business, consider running an easy contest.

For Chilly Fest, maybe you have a simple "Guess the number of beans in the jar" contest for a chance to win a gift certificate to your business. Just have participants fill out a piece of paper with their guess, name, address, phone number, email and birth date (no year needed). By doing so, they've entered the contest and you've got important information that allows you to add them to your mailing list or to begin one. And by getting their birth date, you have the opportunity to send them a card on their special day – something most of your competitors don't even dream of doing.

✓ Offer "Just Looking" Coupons

Hand them out to customers who are browsing in your store and invite them to come back. Remember that people are more likely to respond to "dollars off" promotions than they are to "percentage off" promotions.

✓ Offer to Hold Customers' Purchases For Them

Some people resist making purchases during special events because they don't want to have to carry additional items. Holding packages is an easy way to help close a sale and to provide great customer service that will long be remembered.

✓ Have an Open House or In-Store Demonstration During the Event

This is a great way for service-related businesses to introduce themselves and their services to the public. Have a short sign-in form to capture the name, phone number and email address of everyone who attended so you can follow up with them after the event. Also, be sure to pass out flyers or business cards to all who attend.

✓ Pay Attention to the "Curb Appeal" of Your Business

Sweep outside, clean your windows and keep walkways free of clutter. Inside, make sure your business is clean, well-lit and inviting. Fresh flowers and balloons are great, quick fixes.

✓ Build Your Mailing List

Take every opportunity to get names and contact information from event attendees.

Building a mailing list allows you to communicate directly and inexpensively throughout the year with your customers.



Art on the Walk during the Sidewalk Market



Sidewalk Market/Art on the Walk is held the Saturday of Memorial Day Weekend. In 2013, we had 60 vendor and 25 artists participate in this event held throughout the downtown area and along the river.

“For the past two years I took advantage of the Downtown Christmas event. It falls on Small Business Saturday which is great since I am a small business and there is additional advertising available through Facebook for this event. I offered a sale price available only that day for my clients. I also offered the sale price on my website only during that time period. I put out flyers, posted it on my website and on Facebook, and sent out an email newsletter. I had great attendance both years and made lots of sales. It also brought in people who were walking through the downtown area who might not have checked out my business otherwise.”

Diane Sutrick, Owner
Peace Yoga

AFTER EVENT TIPS



✓ Follow Up

If you collected names and contact information from people who visited your business during the event, reach out to them. Even if they didn't purchase anything during the event, sometimes a follow-up is all that is needed to make a sale or close a deal.

✓ Stay in Contact

In today's world, that's easy and inexpensive. One of the simplest and most effective ways to stay fresh in the minds of your customers is to send them regular electronic newsletters. There are many programs available online, such as Constant Contact®. There you will find a wide range of easy-to-use templates for creating your own newsletters. Use them to tell your customers what is new in your business. Let them know of other upcoming downtown events. Conduct a survey to find out what your customers are looking for. The possibilities are endless. Between newsletters, maintain contact and inform customers about sales and promotions through email and Facebook posts.

✓ Be Part of Planning Other Events

Downtown special events don't happen by themselves. They take months of planning and organizing by volunteers and merchants just like you. If you are part of the planning, you have direct input on how events can be structured to better meet the needs of downtown business owners. Our Marketing Committee, which organizes downtown events, meets on the 3rd Monday of every month at 9:00 a.m. at the BID office on the corner of Appleton and Main Streets.

✓ Keep At It

Not every promotional idea will work for every business every time. Try different things. Keep what works. Get rid of what doesn't. Come up with new ideas.

If you need help, call the Village Centre BID Office at 262-251-8797 and we'll be glad to work with you.



Sidewalk Market

2014 EVENTS

Chilly Fest

2nd Weekend in February

Ice carvings, chili competition, games, food and refreshments. Held throughout the Village Centre.

State Bowling Tournament

Weekends January through May

Easter Egg Hunt

Good Friday

Held in Village Park.

Sidewalk Market

Saturday of Memorial Day Weekend

Sidewalk Market, Art Fair, Lucky Ducky Derby.

Fishing Derby

Saturday in May

At Mill Pond Park.

Wednesday Farmers' Market

May thru November

8am–3pm, on Main Street one block west of Appleton Avenue in the North Jr. High Parking lot.

Summer Concerts in the Parks

June, July, August

Thursday evenings in Village Park and Friday Noon at Mill Pond Park.

Sunday Farmers' Market

July thru October

9am–2pm, on Main Street one block west of Appleton Avenue in the Middle School Parking lot.

Community Blood Drive

3rd Wednesday in July

At St. Mary's Parish Center, 2–7pm.

Falls Fest

A Weekend in late July

Held on a weekend in mid-late July, Thursday thru Sunday, in Village Park.

Art in the Park

3rd Sunday in August

At Lime Kiln Park.

Halloween Celebration

Thursday prior to Halloween

Trick or Treat, Scavenger Hunt 4pm, Spooky Walk through Lime Kiln Park 7pm.

Christmas Downtown

Saturday & Sunday after Thanksgiving

"Shop Local", merchant open houses, horse drawn wagon, entertainment and Santa from 12–4pm. Sunday only: Tree lighting 4pm, Christmas Parade 4:30pm.

"Downtown events always drive extra sales and awareness of A.J. O'Brady's and AJ's Live especially the Christmas Parade, Halloween and the Memorial Day Parade. Chilly Fest ends up being one of our top five busiest weekends."

Bruce Russell, Partner
AJ O'Brady's/AJ's Live



Art in the Park



Trick Or Treat



Concert In The Park



Lucky Ducky Race on Sidewalk Market day.

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