



**NEEDHAM
CENTER**
EXPLORE THE UNCOMMON.

Marketing & Branding Blueprint



Prepared for
Town of Needham
Economic Development Department

Sponsored by
Massachusetts
Downtown Initiative



Prepared by
FinePoint
Associates LLC

Acknowledgements

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The results from this project are provided in the following sections.

Executive Summary



Part One

Project Overview,
Conditions Assessment &
Marketing Research



Part Two

Brand Guide



Part Three

Marketing Plan
Recommendations

Executive Summary

Project Scope and Purpose

The project included conducting research, developing branding, and providing marketing recommendations for Needham Center. FinePoint worked collaboratively with Needham's Economic Development Manager and a Project Advisory Group. We engaged the community through a survey and focus group sessions. The overarching goal is to help establish an identity for Needham Center, increase awareness of the offerings and attract more foot traffic to support small businesses.

Summary of Conditions Assessment

Business Environment - Needham Center has a strong complement of commercial and institutional uses with approximately 117 first floor business establishments. Several established business clusters offer crossover patronage and comparative shopping opportunities for consumers. Compared to many other small Downtowns, Needham Center has been able to maintain a significant concentration of comparison goods retail and has a wide variety of eating & drinking establishments. It's a destination for restaurant seekers.

Existing Branding and Marketing - Marketing efforts in Needham Center have been limited. There is currently no branding being used for Needham Center (no logo slogan, color palette) and the Center (as a place) has very little social media presence. There is no business directory/map to make potential consumers aware of offerings. This is a missed opportunity especially at the train station and the Town Common.

Target Market - Needham Center is positioned to capture sales from residents of Needham and the surrounding communities as well as visitors and employees of Beth Israel Hospital. The market population is predominantly affluent and well-educated. Median household income in Needham is 1.9 times greater than the state.

Summary of Marketing & Branding Research Findings

We received 330 respondents to the Marketing and Branding Survey. An overwhelming majority of respondents (91%) come to Needham Center for the purpose of eating and drinking, followed by shopping, professional services and personal services. Business awareness is fairly low – most people think there are much fewer businesses in Needham Center than there actually are.

Top assets include: 1) walkability/compactness, 2) variety of eateries, 3) Town Common, 4) ability to accomplish more than 1 thing, and 5) sense of community/potential to run into neighbors. When asked what makes Needham Center unique, the Town Common was, by far, the most frequent response.

Common themes used to describe Needham Center now include: quiet/outdated, friendly, restaurants, banks, and attractive. Common themes for how respondents would like to describe Needham Center in the future include; lively, variety, community, fun, restaurants and modern.

Survey results indicate: e-mail blasts, facebook, a business directory/kiosk and increasing cultural events would be effective marketing methods.

Brand Guide

Using the results of the conditions assessment and marketing research, we developed draft logos and slogans and worked with the Advisory Group to refine options. The Brand Guide includes the final Logo and Slogan, Color Palette, Typography and Brand Mock-Ups illustrating how branding could be used in collateral materials and streetscape elements (i.e., marketing campaign graphics, event fliers, train stop sign, banners, farmer's market banner, sandwich board sign, trash receptacle and directory kiosk).



Marketing Plan Recommendations

The Marketing Recommendations developed for Needham Center help define the major marketing goals and how to achieve them. A summary of the recommendations follows.

1. Design and Develop a Website Specific to Needham Center
2. Create and Maintain a Needham Center Social Media Presence
3. Deploy a Strategic Google Ads Campaign
4. Create and Distribute Collateral Material
5. Implement Streetscape Elements Using Needham Center Branding
6. Develop a Needham Center Offerings Directory, Map and Community Information Kiosk
7. Design and Implement a Coordinated Wayfinding System that Incorporates Branding.
8. Increase Cultural Events/Programming taking place at the Common and elsewhere in Needham Center. Start with Organizing a Food-related Festival/Event in the Next Year.



Marketing and Branding Blueprint

Part One

Project Overview, Conditions
Assessment & Marketing Research

Sponsored by
Massachusetts
Downtown Initiative



FinePoint
Associates LLC

Prepared for
Town of Needham
Economic Development Department

Project Overview, Conditions Assessment and Marketing Research

1. Project Overview

Scope and Purpose

The project included conducting research, developing branding, and providing marketing recommendations for Needham Center. The purpose is to help establish an identity for Needham Center, increase awareness of the offerings and attract more foot traffic to support small businesses.

Process

FinePoint worked collaboratively with Needham’s Economic Development Manager and an Advisory Group (composed of Needham Center business owners, Needham’s Public Information Officer and representatives from the Charles River Chamber of Commerce and Needham Council of Economic Advisors). We engaged community members, business owners and consumers through interviews, a marketing survey, and focus group sessions. We conducted a conditions assessment, developed and refined a brand concept, logo and marketing recommendations.



2. Conditions Assessment

Business Environment

Key Finding

Needham Center has approximately 117 first floor business establishments.

Business Inventory

Retail

2nd Hand Rose of Needham
Archtrave
Babel's (changing name to
National Lumber Home Finishes)
Black Sheep Knitting
Crosby Jewelers
CVS
Harvey's Hardware
Hearthstone Home
Home Trends
Learning Express
Mobil
Michelson's Shoes
Needham Center Fine Wines
Needham Florist
Needham Garden Center Inc
Needham Music and Dance
Proud Mary
Pura Vida
Sherwin-Williams
Simply Stated
The Closet Exchange
Three Crown Jewelry
Tin Rabbit
Walgreen's
Wayland Kitchen & Baths
Wesleaf Design
WOW
Your CBD Store

Eating & Drinking Places

A New Leaf
Abbotts Frozen Custard ...
Bagel's Best Inc.
Cappella
Comella's
COOK Needham
French Press Bakery & Café
Fresco
Fuji Steak House
Gari Japanese Fusion Bistro
Gyro and Kebab House
Needham
Hearth Pizzeria
Latina Kitchen and Bar
Little Spoon
Masala Art

Needham House of Pizza
Nicholas' Pizzeria
Pancho's Taqueria
Servente Bakery
Sweet Basil
The Farmhouse
The James Pub & Provisions
The Rice Barn
Treat Cupcake Bar

Entertainment, Recreation

(see also Education Services)
barre 3
Charles River YMCA
Club Champion
Needham Bowlaway
Pex

Banks/Financial Services

Bank of America
Bank of America Walkup ATM
Citizens Bank
Dedham Savings
Edward Jones Investments
Middlesex Savings Bank
Needham Bank
Rockland Trust
Santander Bank

Real Estate Services

Berkshire Hathaway
Coldwell Banker
Gibson Sotheby's Real Estate
Hawthorn Real Estate
Trust Realty One

Interior Design Services

2 Mix Interiors
Haven Home & Design

Education Services

Kumon
Needham Martial Arts Center
Sew Easy
Shaolin Studios Martial Arts

Healthcare (additional
healthcare in upper floors)
Boston Hearing Associates

Fanikos Salib Dental Care
Hoye Dentistry
Katie Klein Orthodontics
Newton Wellesley Medical Group
Stretch Med Studios

Repair & Maintenance

Chromasonic TV
Copley Motorcars
Doris Couture Design
(tailor/seamstress)
Fann's Tailor Shop
H.Fix Phones
Needham Service Center
Needham Shoe Repair
Needham Upholstery

Personal Care - Spa/Beauty

Anthony's Barbershop
Avante Hair Salon
Baan Thai Spa
Beauty Muse
Blue Lotus Healing Arts
Darling Hair Boutique
Depritzios Salon
Elite Medspa & Wellness
Just Be. The Beauty Room
La Moda Salon
Lovely Nails
Modern Barber Salon
Salon DiCarlo
Sculpture Hair Studio
Smudge Nail Bar
Topline Nails

Laundry/Dry Cleaning, Pet Care Services

Anton's Cleaners
Jenson's Cleaners
Lewando's Cleaners
Peaceful Pooch
The Dog House

Shipping/Delivery Services

(See also Post Office)
Fedex Office & Print
UPS Store

Other Services

Cleveland Circle Travel

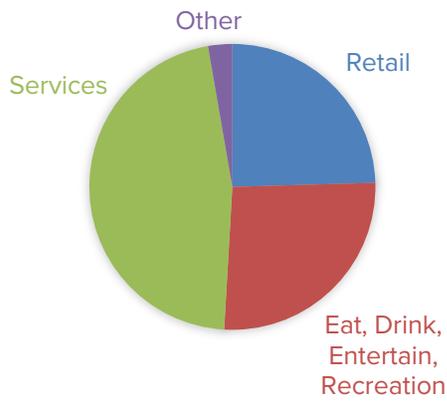
Government

Post Office
Town Hall

Key Finding

The Center has a strong complement of commercial and institutional uses. It is a “destination” for restaurant seekers.

Total # of Business Establishments
117



Key Finding

Compared to many other small Downtowns, Needham Center has been able to maintain a significant concentration of comparison goods retail and has a wide variety of eating & drinking establishments.

Compared to similar size downtowns, Needham Center has:

- Wide variety of eating & drinking places (including several sit-down restaurants that serve alcohol)
- Average to above average amount of outdoor dining
- Good representation of comparison goods retail (especially browsing retail and women's clothing & accessories)
- Strong concentration of convenience retail & services to meet every day needs (2 drugstores, banks, cleaners, salons, hardware, liquor, fitness centers)
- Several community-serving institutions (e.g., post office, town hall, YMCA)



Establishment Type by NAICS Code	
Retail	28
441 - Motor Vehicle & Parts	0
442 - Furniture & Furnishings	3
443 - Electronics & Appliances	0
444 - Building Materials & Garden Equip	5
445 - Food & Beverage Stores	1
446 - Health & Personal Care Stores	3
447 - Gasoline Stations	1
448 - Clothing and Accessories	4
451 - Sporting Goods, Hobby, Books	3
452 - General Merchandise Stores	0
453/454 - Misc. Retail (Incl. used goods & non-store)	7
Eating, Drinking, Entertainment & Lodging	29
71 - Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	5
721 - Accommodation	0
722 - Eating and Drinking Places	24
Services	55
52 - Finance & Insurance	9
53 - Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	5
54 - Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	2
61 - Educational Services	4
62 - Health Care & Social Assistance	6
811 - Repair and Maintenance (incl. auto)	7
812 - Personal Care & Laundry Services	22
813 - Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Prof. & Similar	
Other	5
11-21 - Agric., Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, Mining	0
22-42 - Util., Constr., Manufacturing, Wholesale	0
48-493 - Transportation, Postal & Warehousing	2
51 - Information	0
55-56 - Mgmt, Admin, Support & Waste Mgmt	1
92 - Public Administration	2
Total Establishments	117

Key Finding

Needham Center has several established business clusters that offer crossover patronage and comparative shopping opportunities to consumers.

Comparative Clusters

- Eating & Drinking Places (24)
- Gifts/Home Décor Stores (6+)
- Upscale Used Women's Clothing & Accessories (2)

Crossover Clusters

- **Restaurants, Recreation/Entertainment & Browsing Retail** (e.g., eateries, bowling, fitness, gifts, etc.)
- **Women's Clothing & Accessories** (e.g., new & used clothing, shoes, jewelry & accessories at gift stores)
- **Home Improvement, Home Décor** (e.g., hardware, paint, plants, furnishings, shades, interior design)
- **Errands, Convenience Shopping, Personal Services** (e.g., banks, drugstores, post office, wine, Town Hall, salons, cleaners, repair shops, pet care, hardware)
- **Wellness, Fitness & Recreation** (e.g., drugstores, healthy food, fitness centers, YMCA, martial arts, bowling)

Market Segment Clusters

- **Children, Parents, Grandparents** (e.g., toy stores, music instruments and lessons, sew easy, martial arts, YMCA, ice cream)
- **Hospital-related Visitors** (e.g., coffee shops/cafes, gifts shops, florist/plants)
- **Health & fitness Oriented** (health food juice bar cafe/market, fitness centers)



Key Finding

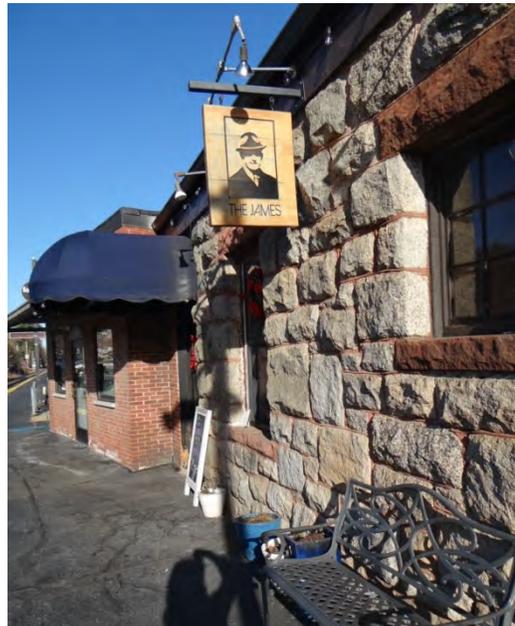
“Retailtainment” may be more important than ever as Downtowns try to bring customers back after COVID. Needham Center is fortunate to have several experience/entertainment-related establishments.

During COVID, customers have become even more comfortable with online shopping and it will take more to get them back into shopping areas than simply the ability to acquire goods.

Even before COVID, millennials had demonstrated a clear preference for experience-related spending and, “retailtainment” was a growing trend.

EXPERIENCES in Needham Center

- Dining
- Fitness/Recreation (YMCA, Martial Arts, Fitness Centers, Bowling)
- Hobby-related Specialty Classes & Activities (Knitting, Sewing, Music, Golf)
- Live Music at The James



Key Finding

The local government has been very proactive in creating policies and programs to support small businesses in Needham Center throughout the pandemic and during recovery.

Needham Supportive Business Policies

- Reduced liquor license fees
- Created public space in the Center to encourage people to patronize restaurants and enjoy take-out food outside (erected a tent over picnic tables on the Town Common)
- Adopted a temporary policy to allow consumption of to-go alcoholic beverages on The Town Common
- Allowed restaurants to use parking spaces for outdoor dining space
- Created **the Needham Small Business Recovery Grant Program** in 2022 – up to \$10,000 to mitigate negative impacts of COVID



Photo Source: Trevor Ballantyne, Wickedlocal.com, May 27, 2021

Existing Branding and Marketing

Key Finding

Marketing efforts have been limited. However, the 2021 Passport campaign was successful in increasing awareness of Needham Center. There are only a few regular events that draw people to the Center.

Previous Marketing Initiatives

- There was a Needham Holiday Passport Promotion in 2021 (as well as previous versions). In 2021, 32 businesses participated. Our initial interviews with business representatives suggest this was successful to elevate awareness and sense of place in the mind of consumers. Business representatives were unsure if it generated increased sales.
- The Charles River Chamber of Commerce tried a “Cash Mob” some years ago. According to the Director, “it did not gather much interest”.

Regular Events/Programming that bring people into Needham Center

- Blue Tree Lighting - December
- Farmer’s Market – June to Oct.
- Spring Street Fair and Harvest Fair
- 4th of July Parade (starts in NC)



Needham Holiday Passport Promotion 2021



Photo Source: Town of Needham Massachusetts facebook

Key Finding

There is currently no branding being used for Needham Center (no logo, slogan, color palette) and the Center (as a place) has very little social media presence.

Current Branding & Marketing

- **No logo/slogan** or marketing materials.
- **No Website/Landing page** for Needham Center
- **Very little social media presence** for Needham Center (individual businesses have presence)

Facebook

- No Needham Center facebook page, however there are Town and Community facebook pages
- Many individual businesses are on facebook

Instagram

- Needhamnow is the effort of an individual resident sharing about the Town she loves. Occasionally Needham Center businesses have been highlighted.
- Needhamnow is currently not very active

Existing Needham Examples



Town of Needham

Official Facebook page of the Town of Needham, Massachusetts



Needham, Massachusetts

@TownofNeedhamMassachusetts · Community

Send message



Proud Mary Gifts

@proudmariygifts · Gift Shop

Shop on Website



Pancho's Taqueria

Mexican Restaurant

Shop on Website



French Press Bakery and Cafe

@frenchpresscafeandbakery · Bakery

Send message



Key Finding

There is no business directory/map to make potential consumers aware of offerings. This is a missed opportunity, especially at train station and Town Common.

- **No Business Directory Map/Kiosk** or other mechanisms to make potential customers aware of the offerings available in Needham Center.
- The **train station area has no Needham Center signage or information.**



Examples from Other Communities



Key Finding

Needham Center has existing banner infrastructure and currently uses banners to reinforce a sense of place. The messaging could be clearer and consistent colors and styles could be used to support branding and further establish identity.

- Needham Center has infrastructure for banners and currently **uses banners**. This helps create an identifiable visually distinct area.
- The messaging could be more consistent and clearer. Various different banners are used throughout the Center. Graphics could be more distinctive



Needham Existing Banner infrastructure



Examples from Other Communities



Target Market

Key Finding

Needham Center is positioned to capture sales from residents of Needham and the surrounding communities. Visitors and employees of Beth Israel Hospital comprise a secondary potential market.

Residents of Needham and Surrounding Communities

Especially Dover, Sherborn, Wellesley, Dedham and potentially West Roxbury neighborhood of Boston.

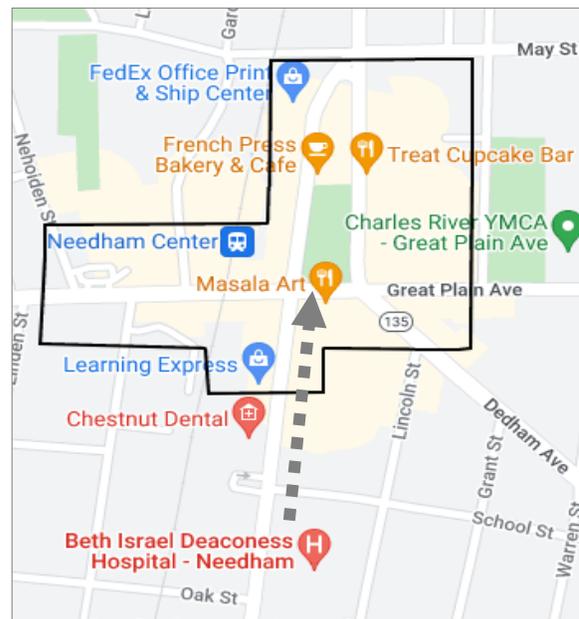


Beth Israel Hospital Visitors and Employees

The hospital is less than 1,000 ft. from

Hospital Visitors – people waiting to pick-up day-surgery patients and visiting patients (e.g., meals/coffee, gifts, flowers)

Hospital Employees (e.g., errands/convenience goods & services, meals/coffee)



Key Finding

The market population of Needham and surrounding towns is predominantly affluent and well-educated. The median household income in Needham is 1.9 times greater than the state.

	Needham	Dover	Sherborn	Wellesley	Dedham	Newton	Natick	Westwood
Population and Households								
Population (1/1/2020)	30,712	5,999	4,512	29,058	26,006	91,287	35,302	15,567
Households (1/1/2020)	11,135	2,024	1,592	9,258	10,296	33,952	14,501	5,644
Household, Average Size	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	3
Median Age (US=38.4, MA=40.0)								
	44.6	46.2	47.0	39.4	44.6	42.2	42.2	45.9
Income								
Household Income, Median	\$170,624	\$242,663	\$209,402	\$209,242	\$110,828	\$149,265	\$125,816	\$173,716
➤ Compared to MA Median	1.9	2.7	2.3	2.3	1.2	1.6	1.4	1.9
Household Income, Average	\$212,447	\$316,633	\$258,907	\$271,868	\$139,953	\$213,440	\$162,401	\$215,905
Personal Income, Per Capita	\$77,894	\$106,829	\$91,352	\$88,894	\$56,856	\$81,184	\$67,110	\$78,327
Consumer Expenditures & Characteristics								
Total annual expenditures (\$000)	1,042,141	208,761	158,071	905,533	801,613	3,016,120	1,208,734	523,451
Expenditures in Selected Categories	224,509	44,364	33,798	193,418	175,908	651,990	264,650	112,886
Food at home (\$000)	64,563	12,412	9,546	54,822	53,098	190,116	78,864	32,521
Food away from home (\$000)	58,915	11,673	8,855	51,064	45,443	172,090	69,260	29,472
Apparel and services (\$000)	33,677	6,753	5,045	29,783	25,159	100,212	39,097	16,757
Entertainment (\$000)	54,954	11,060	8,475	47,022	42,395	153,692	62,937	27,898
Personal care products & services (\$000)	12,400	2,466	1,877	10,727	9,813	35,880	14,492	6,238
Education Index (US=100, MA=177)								
	196	199	198	198	180	197	180	196
Bargain Seekers Market (US=100, MA=60)								
	34	11	15	23	65	45	49	54
Luxury Product Market (US=100, MA=181)								
	198	200	199	198	189	197	193	198

Needham Center businesses have an opportunity to draw customers from Needham and surrounding towns, particularly Dover, Sherborn, Wellesley, Dedham and potentially the West Roxbury neighborhood of Boston.

Note: Dover and Sherborn have very few, retailers, restaurants and services.

3. Marketing & Branding Research

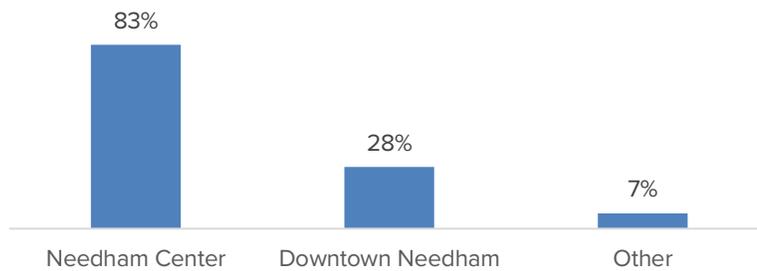
Survey Respondents

- 330 respondents
- 92% Needham residents

Survey Results

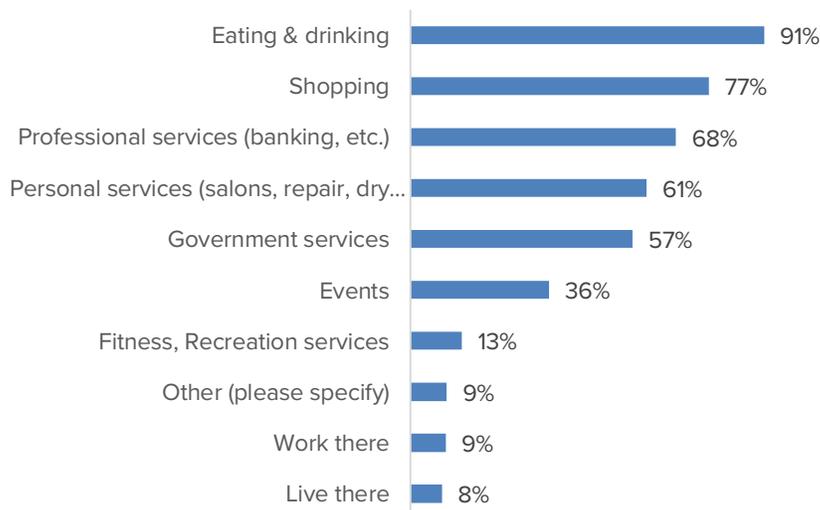
The area is most frequently identified as “Needham Center”, however, 28% of respondents also said they use the term “Downtown Needham”.

What name is typically used when referring to this area?

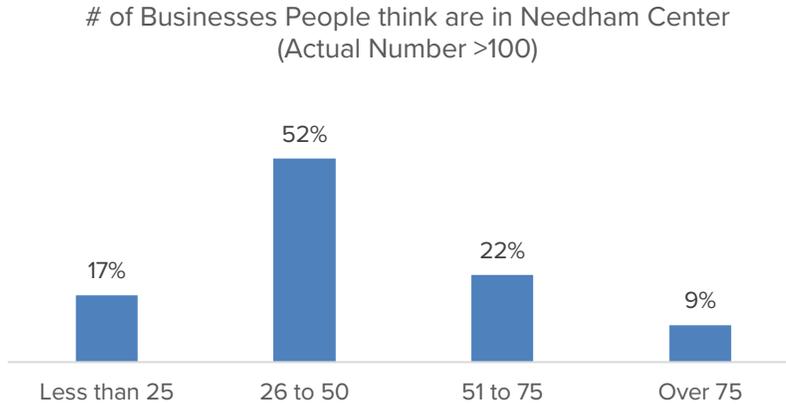


An overwhelming majority of respondents (91%) said they come to Needham Center for the purpose of eating and drinking while 77% cited shopping.

Why do they come to Needham Center?



Business Awareness – most people think there are much fewer businesses in Needham Center than there actually are. 83% of respondents think there are less than one-half the number of businesses that actually exist in Needham Center.



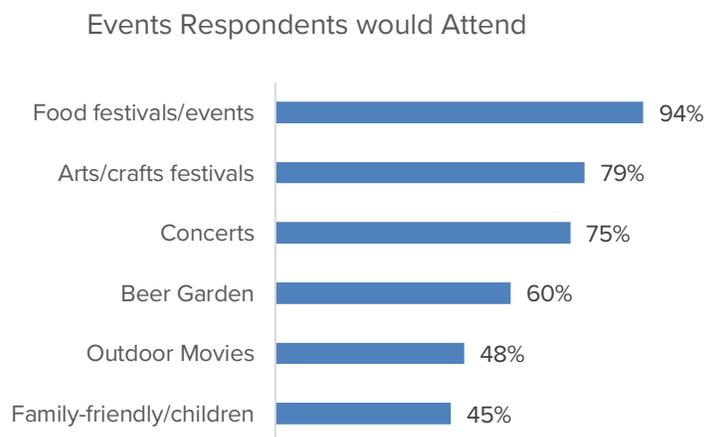
Potential Effectiveness of Marketing Strategies – Likelihood of Discovery Information

Top Three:

1. E-mail Blasts
2. Facebook
3. Business Directory, Map/Signage Kiosks in Needham Center

Events would attract people to the Center.

- Over 90% said they would attend a food festival.
- More than 60% said they would attend an art festival, concert or beer garden





Marketing and Branding Blueprint

Part Two

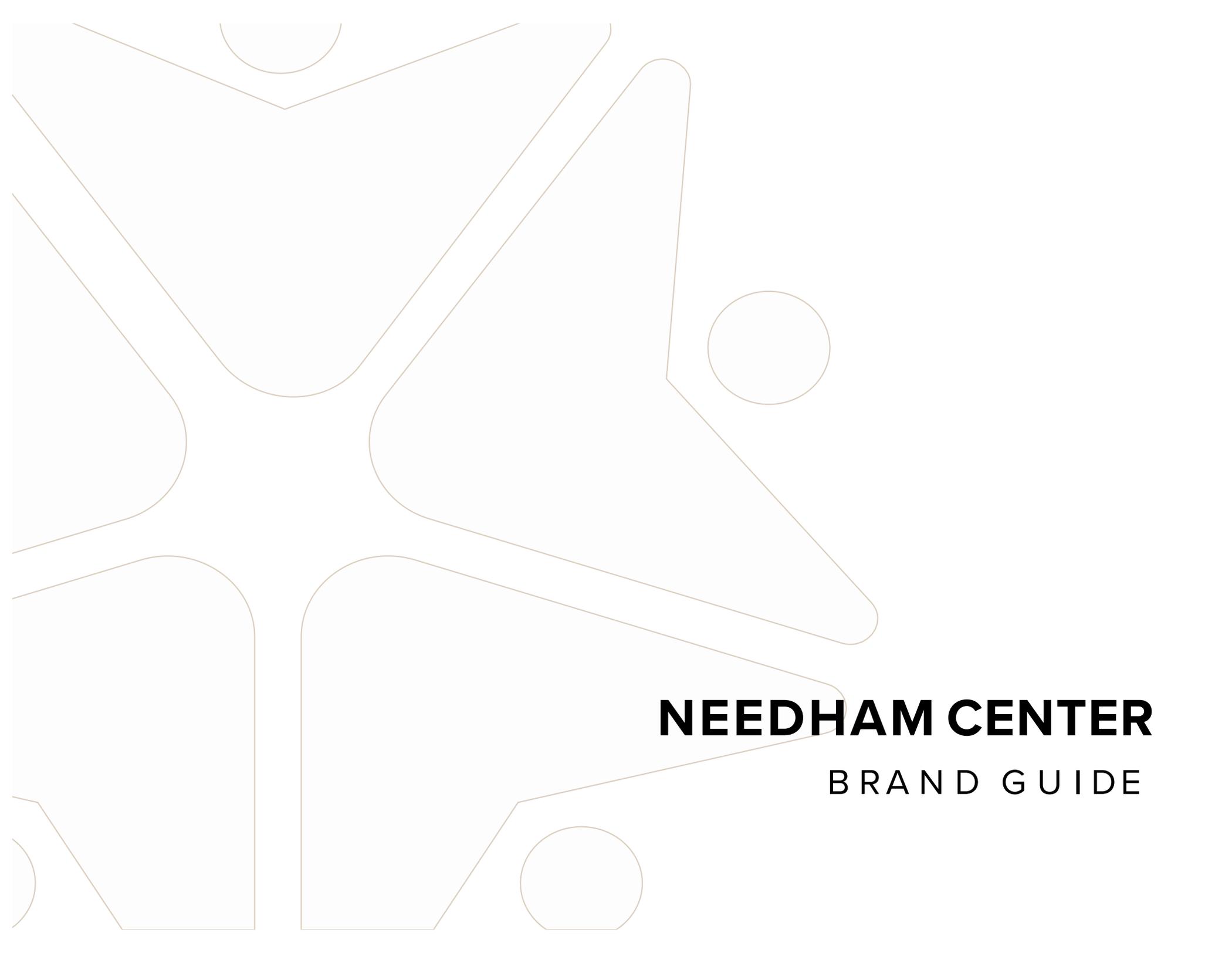
Brand Guide

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NEEDHAM CENTER

BRAND GUIDE

Bringing awareness to Needham Center's rich and diverse offerings.

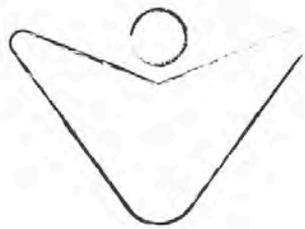
The historic, beautiful town of Needham, Massachusetts is nestled in Boston's western suburbs. The town center is loved for its walkability and hometown charm but few are aware of the full breadth of its offerings.

Compared to other downtowns of similar size, Needham Center has an impressive variety of dining options, shopping experiences, and entertainment venues. The Needham Center Marketing and Branding Project aspires to bring awareness to these offerings and further stimulate vibrant and rich downtown experience.

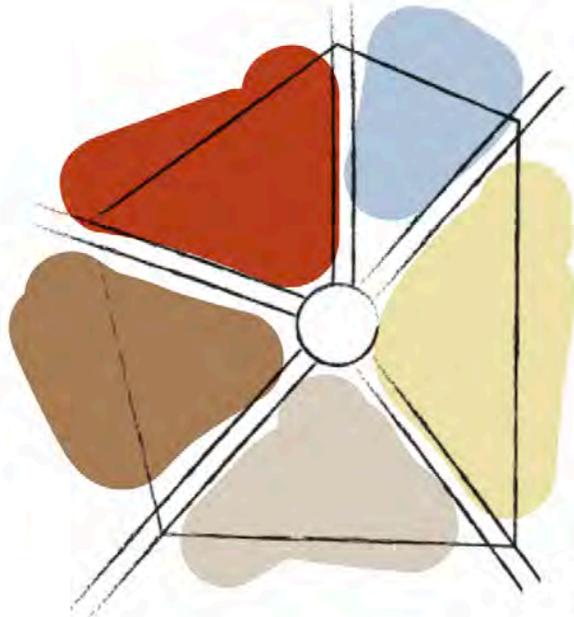




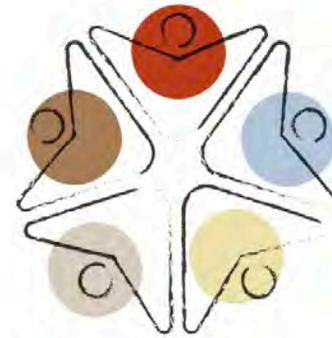
LOGO



+



=



A COLLECTION OF
UNIQUE INDIVIDUALS

CONTRIBUTING TO A
LARGER SHARED MISSION

CREATING A RICH,
VIBRANT, LOCAL COMMUNITY



EAT • SHOP • RECHARGE • EXPERIENCE • CONNECT

CONCEPTUAL CATEGORIES

The design features five elements, inspired by the abstract form of individuals, arrayed around a central point. Each element represents a loosely defined category of services or experiences offered by Needham Center. The categories include the following:

Eat: Restaurants and cafes

Shop: Shops and services

Recharge: Wellness facilities (fitness centers, spas, gyms, hair salons, etc.)

Experience: Catch-all for additional offerings

Connect: Town common and green space



NEEDHAM CENTER

EXPLORE THE UNCOMMON.



**NEEDHAM
CENTER**
EXPLORE THE **UNCOMMON.**

LOGO MARK

The logo mark consists of an arrayed graphic element in horizontal alignment with the brand name and tagline.

NOTES ON GENERAL LOGO USE

The logo may not be reconstructed or altered in any way. This prohibition includes, but is not restricted to: type, outlines, or embellishment.

The logo may not be cut or cropped in any way.

Do not substitute the type for another typeface.

Do not distort the logo or adjust its proportions.

Do not surround the logo with competing shapes.

Do not tilt the logo in any direction.

Do not apply the logo to backgrounds which reduce readability or conflict with the brand color scheme (see color guidelines for more information).

Do not add any shadows, effects, or other elements.



**NEEDHAM
CENTER**

EXPLORE THE **UNCOMMON.**

DARK LOGO MARK

An alternate logo with white text is provided for application on dark backgrounds. The mark should only be applied on grayscale colors (see color guidelines).

GRAYSCALE LOGO MARKS

The grayscale logo mark can be used when color printing is not available, or when the logo is applied to backgrounds which create readability and/or legibility challenges.



DARK

LIGHT



BRAND PALETTE

COLOR PALETTE

The Needham Center brand features five colors associated with five loosely defined categories of Needham Center offerings.



Burnt Red

CMYK: 19, 88, 100, 9
RGB: 186, 63, 29
HEX: #ba3fd



Periwinkle

CMYK: 52, 39, 13, 0
RGB: 127, 160, 192
HEX: #7fa0c0



Sunshine

CMYK: 7, 6, 39, 0
RGB: 238, 227, 171
HEX: #eee3ab



Slate Gray

CMYK: 14, 15, 22, 0
RGB: 217, 207, 193
HEX: #d9cfc1



Brown

CMYK: 32, 49, 71, 9
RGB: 167, 126, 88
HEX: #a77e58

EAT • SHOP • RECHARGE • EXPERIENCE • CONNECT

COLOR GUIDELINES & LOGO APPLICATION

To ensure the integrity and visual impact of the logo, the following guidelines for application must be maintained.

DO:

Use colors from the color palette as the main colors in a design.

Make sure the logo and text meet minimum web and digital design guidelines.

Apply the primary color logos on applications with a light background.

Apply the grayscale logos on applications with a dark or colored background.

DON'T:

Omit the primary color palette from an entire design.

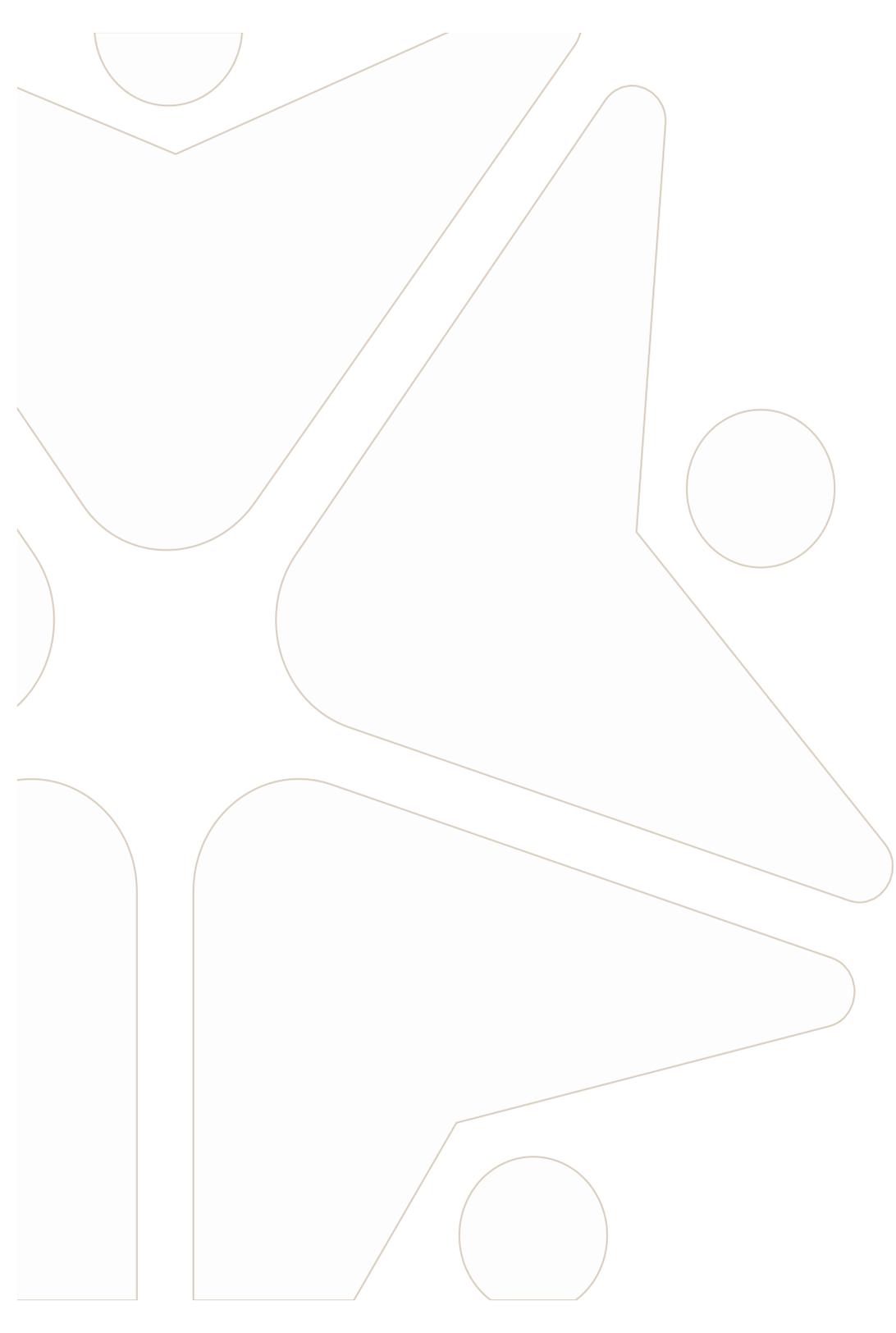
Apply the primary color logo on a colored background.

Apply the light grayscale logo to a light background.

Apply the dark grayscale logo to a dark background.

Place a logo over a heavily patterned background that reduces legibility.





TYPOGRAPHY

TYPOGRAPHY

The official brand typeface is TT Norms Pro with script accents in Marydale. The following are samples of headings, sub headings, and paragraph formatting.

Aa

TT NORMS PRO BOLD (tracking set to 0)

THIS IS A HEADLINE.

Aa

TT NORMS PRO REGULAR (tracking set to 50)

This is a sub-headline example.

Aa

TT NORMS PRO REGULAR (tracking set to 0)

This is a paragraph example with filler text. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat.

MARYDALE REGULAR (tracking set to 0)

SHOP

EAT
RECHARGE
EXPERIENCE
CONNECT

LETTER CASE

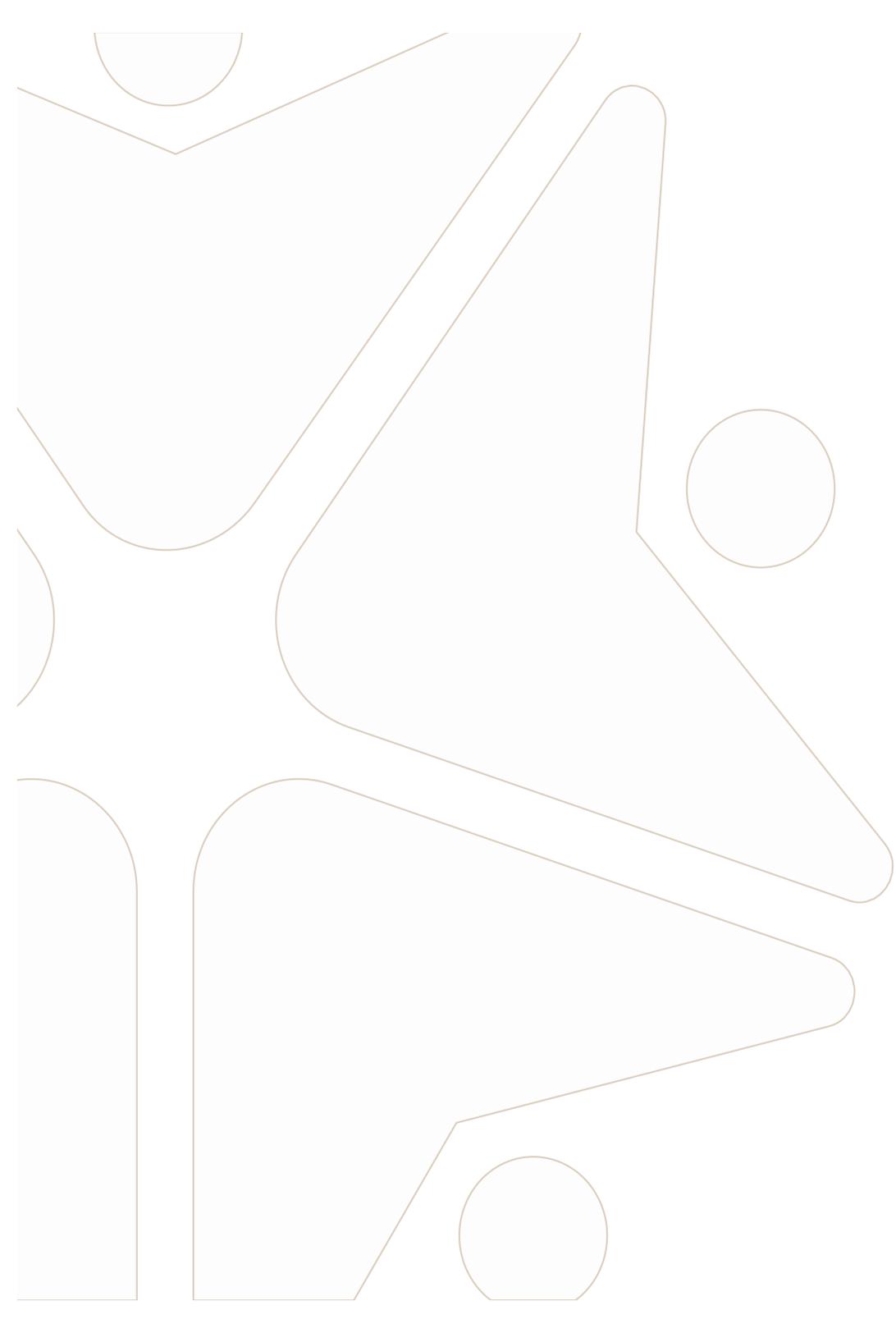
Headlines should be in all uppercase letters for messaging consistency, while paragraph text should always use sentence casing. When using the Marydale script font, uppercase letters should only be used.

TRACKING

Sub-headlines should have increased tracking to give the letter forms a lighter feel. A minimum of 50 and maximum of 150 is recommended. Paragraph copy should be set at no less than 0 and no more than 25.

LEADING

Proper line spacing and leading is essential to maintain a consistent visual style across all media. Leading should be increased in accordance to its application to achieve a legible and modern aesthetic.



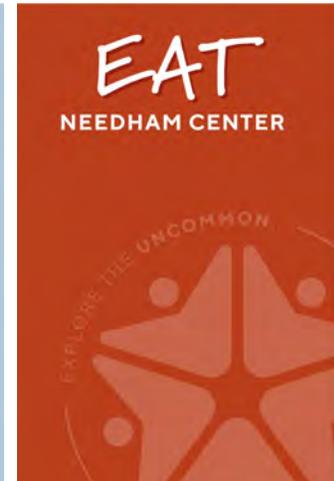
BRAND MOCK-UPS

EMBLEM

An emblem is a dynamic and recognizable symbol that has a broader application than a formal logo. Here, the logo's radiating graphic is used to frame images and create a cohesive ad campaign package.







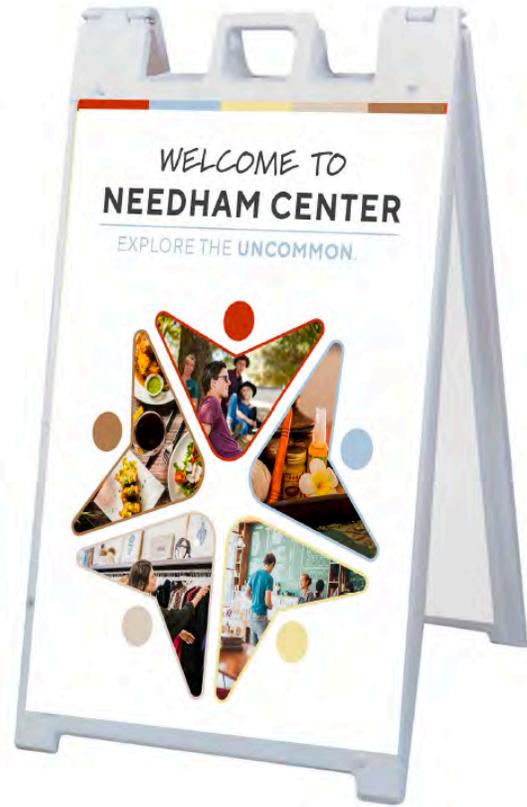


**NEEDHAM
CENTER**
EXPLORE THE UNCOMMON.



FARMER'S MARKET

SATURDAYS @ THE TOWN CENTER
9 AM - 2 PM





NEEDHAM CENTER
EXPLORE THE UNCOMMON

JOIN OUR ANNUAL
SPRING FEST!

MAY 18 | 10-2

LEARN MORE AT:
WWW.NEEDHAMCENTER.COM

WWW.NEEDHAMCENTER.COM

FALL MUSIC FEST

Feel the fall vibes and immerse yourself in good music this August

Fall Music Festival
September 25, 2025 • Needham Center
10:00 AM - 12:00 AM



NEEDHAM CENTER
EXPLORE THE UNCOMMON.

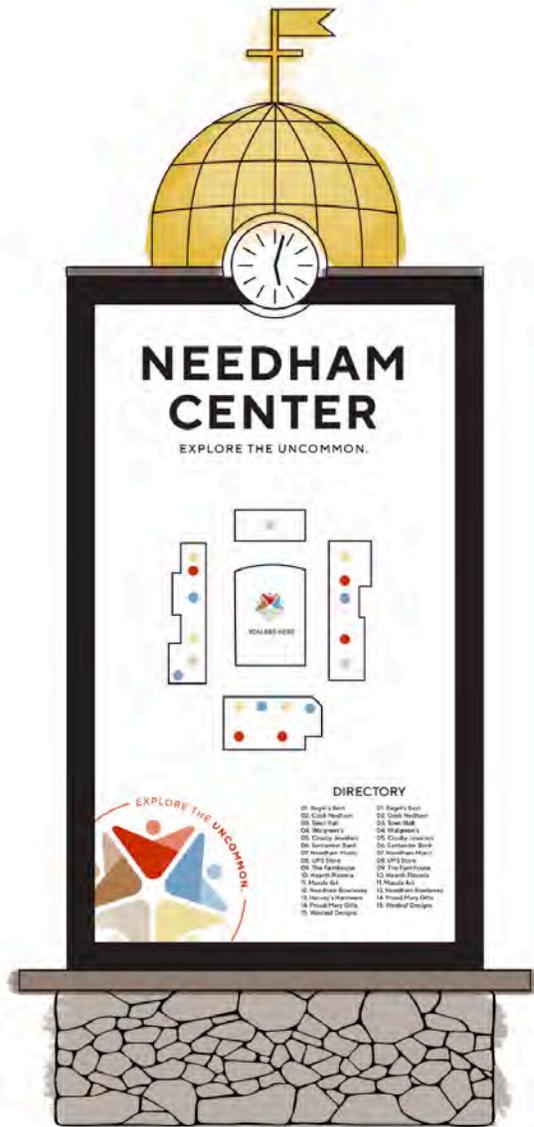
JOIN OUR 5TH ANNUAL
blue tree lighting ceremony

AT NEEDHAM CENTER

SATURDAY
NOVEMBER 20
OPEN FROM 10:00AM - 05:00PM



NEEDHAM CENTER
EXPLORE THE UNCOMMON.





Marketing and Branding Blueprint

Part Three

Marketing Plan Recommendations

Sponsored by
Massachusetts
Downtown Initiative



FinePoint
Associates LLC

Prepared for
Town of Needham
Economic Development Department

Marketing Plan Recommendations

Summary

The purpose of the Marketing Recommendations is to help define the major Marketing Goals for Needham Center and how to achieve them.

1. Design and Develop a Website Specific to Needham Center
2. Create and Maintain a Needham Center Social Media Presence
3. Deploy a Strategic Google Ads Campaign
4. Create and Distribute Collateral Material
5. Implement Streetscape Elements Using Needham Center Branding
6. Develop a Needham Center Offerings Directory, Map and Community Information Kiosk
7. Design and Implement a Coordinated Wayfinding System that Incorporates Branding.
8. Increase Cultural Events/Programming taking place at the Common and elsewhere in Needham Center. Start with Organizing a Food-related Festival/Event in the next Year.

1. Design and Develop a Website Specific to Needham Center

Proposed Action:

Create a website utilizing a minimalistic design that focuses on ease of use and contemporary elements for a seamless user experience. This website will serve as a marketing tool and resource for places to Eat, Shop, Connect, Experience and Recharge in Needham Center. The website would serve as a landing page for all marketing efforts. Having a website will help **Establish a Unified Brand Identity** and **Expand Brand Awareness**.

Usability

The website should be developed as a responsive design which will change dynamically based on the device being used. There should be a special emphasis on mobile optimization to increase practical usability while in Needham Center.

Presentation

The website should also be scalable for large format screens and have the ability to be purposed as an attractive marketing tool for residents and tourists.

Media

The website should feature media (photos and videos) shot on location to present an engaging and authentic visual representation of Needham Center. This media should also be repurposed on social media and other advertising campaigns so that there is a unified message and aesthetic.

Cost:

\$8,000 - \$20,000+ depending on Functions/Features

Steps to Implement:

1. Determine who will Develop and Maintain the new website
Options
 - a. Hire a Website Designer / Developer
 - b. Have a landing page linked from the Town of Needham website (whoever maintains their website would also take this on)
 - c. Create some sort of Needham Center entity (perhaps a merchant association) who would take on this task, as well as distribute postcards, host events, etc.
2. Create a simple and fluid single-page vertical scrolling design
 - a. If time and resources allow, develop specific landing pages for each area of focus (Eat, Shop, Connect, Experience, Recharge)
 - b. Configure Google Analytics / Tags for event and traffic monitoring and analysis

3. Launch the website to the public
4. Update and maintain the website regularly (keep an up-to-date events calendar, be sure restaurant/business lists are current, etc.)
5. Publish Blog Content for building organic Search Engine Optimization

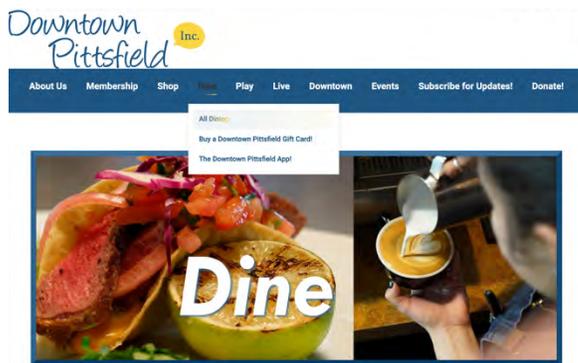
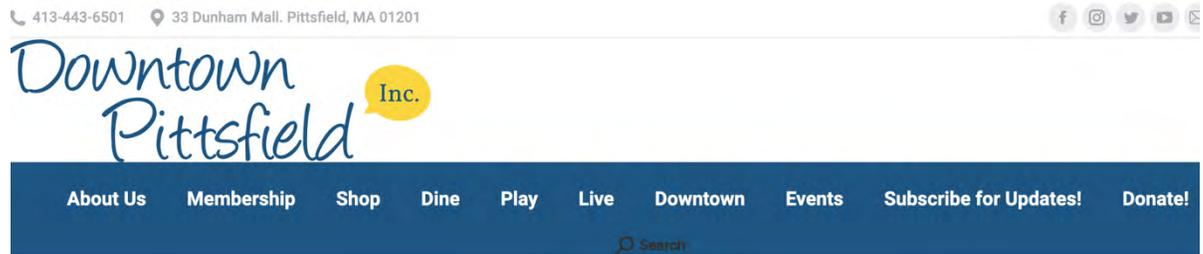
Examples:

The following examples illustrate websites featuring Downtowns that are operated by different types of entities:

- Downtown Pittsfield Inc. – a non-profit membership organization comprised of property owners, businesses, residents, cultural & entertainment venues, restaurants, and non-profit organizations
- City of Greenfield – public entity with Downtown initiatives staffed by Community and Economic Development staff
- Wellesley Square Merchants Association – private sector organization serving its business members
- Greater Amherst Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Amherst Business Improvement District– Chamber of Commerce that works in partnership with the Amherst Business Improvement District (BID)

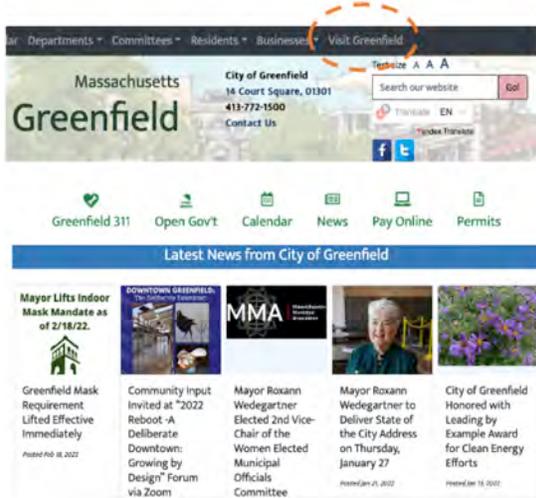
- ❖ Downtown Website with business directory, events calendar, promotions, gift card and more (Downtown Pittsfield, Inc)

source: downtownpittsfield.com



- ❖ Visit Greenfield Landing page linked from town website featuring Downtown Business Directory, Events Calendar (i.e. Greenfield, MA)

Source: greenfield-ma.gov



WELCOME TO GREENFIELD MASSACHUSETTS!

Located at the intersection of Interstate 91 and the famous Mohawk Trail, Greenfield is a hub of commerce and culture.

Discover all of Greenfield's events, shops, restaurants, and activities!

DISCOVER DOWNTOWN GREENFIELD

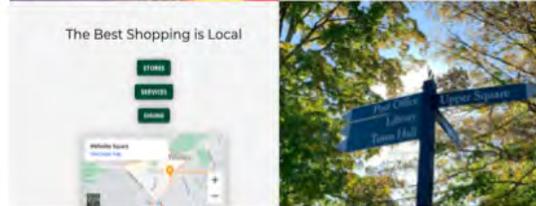


SUMMER EVENTS



- ❖ Merchant association website (i.e. Wellesley Square)

Source: dhopwellesleysquare.com



Wellesley Square Member News & Specials

Save the Date: Wheels of Wellesley will be on Central St. Sun., May 22

Back by popular demand, the antique car show "Wheels of Wellesley IX" will be on Central Street (from Juniper Restaurant to Fire Station 1) on Sunday, May 22, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Page Waterman: Practicing the Art of Framing for 105 Years

Page Waterman Gallery & Framing, one of the most respected framers in New England, has operated continuously in Wellesley Square since 1917. Learn more here: PageWaterman.com

- ❖ Greater Amherst Chamber of Commerce website with Link to Amherst Downtown Website (i.e. Amherst, MA)

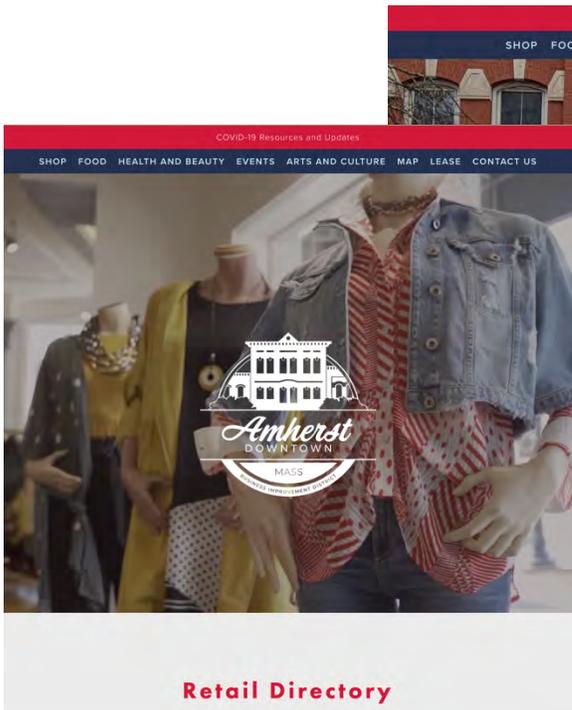
Source: greateramherst.com and amherstdowntown.com



WHAT'S NEXT? GREATER AMHERST

We're ready when you are.

As our world moves beyond the COVID-19 pandemic, **Greater Amherst** provides what's next! A place that helps you appreciate the beautiful outdoors. A setting for making meaningful, lifelong memories with friends and family. It's a place where we can live, work, and enjoy life.



2. Create and Maintain a Needham Center Social Media Presence

Proposed Action:

Create relatable, educational, informative, and entertaining content (including beautiful photography + engaging captions) to be posted on Needham Center social media pages/accounts. Having a social media presence will help establish your unified brand, communicate your offerings, engage with people (both the local community, as well as visitors), support your businesses, share events, and build social proof.

Facebook

Frequency: 4-6 posts/week

Reason: Facebook is an all-in-one social media platform that performs well with images, video, and text. It is the most popular platform and you want to be where the people are. Posts here will be relatable, educational, informative, and entertaining. The posts will be engineered to drive conversation and edify, as we've found those are the best ways to stay on top of the News Feed algorithm. The ad capabilities of Facebook are helpful in targeting the right audience, and the Reviews and Recommendations features of Facebook are very useful.

Instagram

Frequency: 3-5 posts/week

Reason: Instagram is the most visual platform, and is also a great hub for engagement and conversation. Here you can curate a beautiful feed of photographs and graphics, using captions to engage and inform while utilizing hashtags to participate in relevant conversations and get in front of the target audience. IG Stories are a great place to share events, posts from Needham Center businesses, and stories from individuals that are spending time in NC. Saving stories to "highlights" would be great for engaging through polls and questions.

Twitter

Frequency: 4-6 posts/week

Reason: Twitter is where the conversation happens and the news breaks. Words are the major player here, but the data suggests that images are still more engaging on twitter. You can post the same content as on Facebook with adjustments as needed to optimize the content. We recommend additionally posting original content almost daily, and we encourage retweeting other relevant content frequently.

LinkedIn

Frequency: 2-5 posts/week

Reason: LinkedIn is a platform for professionals with a common focus on business and career. This makes it an incredible platform for B2B businesses, for networking and showcasing your credibility. LinkedIn is a great space to develop a digital network with other businesses. It can serve as an economic development tool as well.

It is appropriate to post some of the same content that is going out on Facebook and Twitter, namely informative content about Needham Center, the businesses and services offered in Needham Center, and local events. **The most valuable aspect of being on LinkedIn will be to connect with businesses and organizations that you're partnering with.** LinkedIn is also a great secondary space to publish blogs and photo spreads of events, initiatives or projects/developments in Needham Center. We recommend tailoring the copy-writing for this to the more professional, business-focused audience.

Cost:

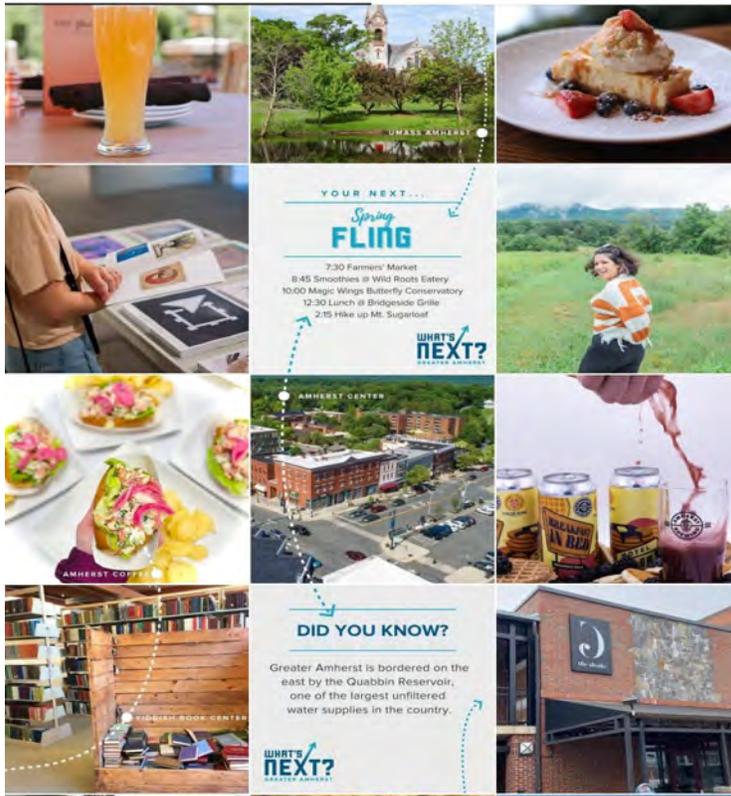
\$800 - \$4,000/Month depending on which platforms, posting frequency, etc.

Steps to Implement:

1. Determine who will create and post social media content
 - Options
 - i. Take on a volunteer from the community
 - ii. Hire a part-time social media manager
 - iii. Hire a social media marketing company
 - iv. Hire a student marketing intern from a local college
2. Create Needham Center pages/accounts for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn
3. Develop “Content Buckets” to ensure a presence that is well-rounded and varied. Ideas include spotlighting local businesses, photography of people “connecting”, holidays (official + social media), a day in Needham Center, did you know, Needham Center history, events...
4. Post content 2-6 times a week, depending on the platform
5. Share/repost relevant content from local businesses, community members, and visitors
6. Engage with users by responding to comments and messages

Examples:

- ❖ Instagram grid (Greater Amherst)



- ❖ Facebook post (Greater Amherst)

What's Next? Greater Amherst
Published by Falcon.io · May 31 at 12:23 PM · 🌐

Love to shop local? We do, too. There are endless local artisans and shops you can support in Greater Amherst.

For one, made right in Pelham, M. Sward Ceramics has something perfectly crafted for your home. Check her summer 2022 products here 🙌 www.mswardceramics.com

📷: @msward.ceramics on Instagram

3. Deploy a Strategic Google Ads Campaign

Proposed Action:

Create and deploy a strategic Google Ads campaign that can build significant awareness of and positive associations with Needham Center. This will establish brand identity and increase website traffic from relevant searches.

Google Display Network can help increase your brand awareness and establish your brand identity among your target audience by letting you connect with customers at the right time and place on thousands of websites. You can use placement targeting in Google Ads to help reach a relevant audience for Needham Center, using engaging ad formats (photos and video) and CPM bidding to control your budget and optimize your effectiveness.

Geographic Search PPC Ad Campaign (Clicks / Website Traffic)

Appearing as a highly relevant search result for customers who are looking for what Needham Center has to offer, within desired geographic parameters. Search Ad Campaigns give us the opportunity to reach customers who are looking for us while providing us the ability to develop precise campaigns for each audience.

Display Network Ad Campaign (Impressions)

Websites that feature the Display Network reach over 90% of Internet users. With the Display Network, you can use targeting to show your ads in particular contexts (like “massachusetts tourism” or “boston.com”), to particular audiences (like “young mothers” or “people supporting local businesses”), in particular locations, and more.

Cost:

\$800/Month + scales with increased ad spend

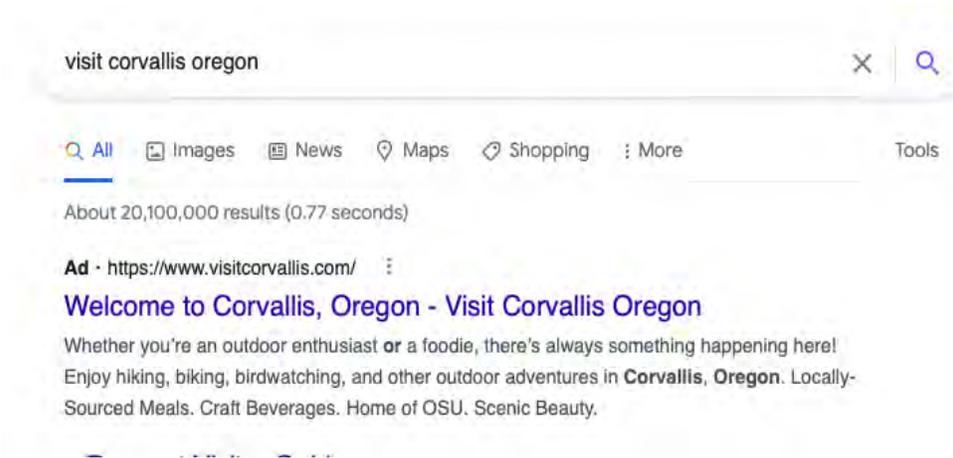
Steps to Implement:

1. Hire a marketing agency specializing in Google Ads Campaigns
2. Determine your campaign focus (i.e. Local Restaurants / Food Near Me, Local Attractions/Entertainment, Niche Shopping)
3. Research and choose key words and key phrases for Search Ad campaign
4. Design graphic assets for Display Network Ads

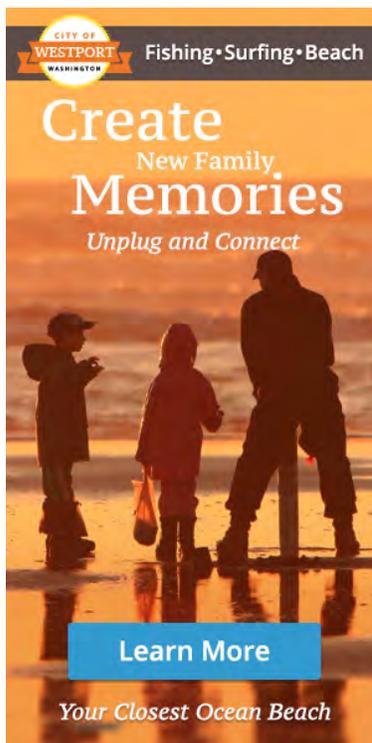
5. Launch campaign and monitor with weekly report analysis
6. Manage ad budget, refine audience targeting, adjust overall campaign as needed

Examples:

❖ Search Ad Campaign



❖ Display Ad Campaign



4. Create and Distribute Collateral Material

Proposed Action:

Create eye-catching handheld physical marketing materials that make use of the Needham Center branding campaign. Rack cards for each area of focus (Eat, Shop, Recharge, etc.) will have a list of respective businesses, and those businesses will have rack cards displayed and available to hand out to customers. Flyers will be made for events happening, using the Needham Center branding.

Cost:

Variable.

Steps to Implement:

1. Hire a graphic designer or marketing agency to design materials using the Branding Guide
2. Hire a printing company to print collateral
3. Distribute materials to businesses
4. Post event flyers in appropriate places
5. Assess usefulness of materials with surveys, trackable promotions, word of mouth, etc.

Examples:

- ❖ McMinnville, OR

34
UNIQUE RESTAURANTS

17
TASTING ROOMS & WINERIES

7
TAP ROOMS & BREWERIES

14
STROLLABLE BLOCKS

Discover downtown McMinnville, Oregon
tastemac.com

How can a town of 33,000 have so many good restaurants in such a compact area? Simple. Tourists come from around the world to explore Oregon wine country, and McMinnville is the epicenter.
(TERRY RICHARD, THE DREWMIAN)

tastemac
Sip, taste, stroll and discover McMinnville, Oregon's Favorite Main Street.

Just an hour's drive from Portland, a half hour from Salem and an hour from the Oregon Coast. Plan to linger or stay over... you'll know why when you get here.

- 34 unique restaurants
- 17 wineries and tasting rooms
- 7 breweries and tap rooms

#TASTEMAC #DINEMAC #WINEMAC #BREWMAC

17
TASTING ROOMS & WINERIES

#winemac
from a profusion of pinots to reds, whites and bubbly

7
TAP ROOMS & BREWERIES

#brewmac
microbrews, on tap and growlers

34
UNIQUE RESTAURANTS

#dinemac
from casual to fine dining, omé to french to italian to this to northwest

14
STROLLABLE BLOCKS

#strollmac
34 restaurants
17 tasting rooms/wineries
6 taprooms/breweries
in 14 blocks

❖ Illustrative examples – Needham Center

EAT
NEEDHAM CENTER

Needham Center offers international cuisine on a local scale and the elevated dining experiences of a big city.

WWW.NEEDHAMCENTER.COM
@NeedhamCenter

COOK NEEDHAM

FRENCH PRESS BAKERY & CAFE

PANCHO'S TAQUERIA

SHOP
NEEDHAM CENTER

Browse an assortment of Independently owned businesses offering clothes, shoes, gifts, home décor and more. Pick up your favorite wine, hard to find hardware or easily complete errands at the variety of service establishments.

@NeedhamCenter
WWW.NEEDHAMCENTER.COM

WISLEAF DESIGNS & DECOR

NEEDHAM CENTER

EXPERIENCE
NEEDHAM CENTER

Enjoy the variety of recreation, entertainment and unique dining and browsing experiences Needham Center has to offer.

@NeedhamCenter
WWW.NEEDHAMCENTER.COM

RE-CHARGE
NEEDHAM CENTER

With a variety of fitness centers, salons, spas, and wellness businesses, Needham Center has all you need to relax your mind and recharge your body.

WWW.NEEDHAMCENTER.COM
@NeedhamCenter

BAIN THAI SPA

BARRE 3

❖ Illustrative Examples – Needham Center (cont'd)



5. Implement Streetscape Elements Using Needham Center Branding

Proposed Action:

Create eye-catching streetscape elements that make use of the Needham Center branding campaign. Having the recognizable logo and familiar marketing copy presented in different ways and in different environments around Needham Center will work to establish your unified brand, expand brand awareness, and communicate your offerings. These materials will go on streetscape elements including, but not limited to

- ❖ Light Post Banners
- ❖ Bench Banners
- ❖ Train/Bus Station Posters
- ❖ Waste/Recycle Bin Posters
- ❖ A-Frame Signs
- ❖ Billboards

Cost:

Variable.

Steps to Implement:

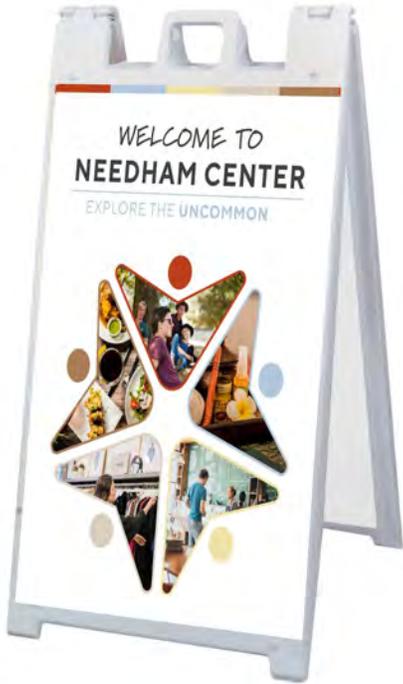
1. Hire a graphic designer or marketing agency to design materials using the Branding Guide
2. Hire a printing company to print items
3. Work with town to post/hang items in strategic and appropriate places

Examples:

❖ Illustrative Examples – Needham Center



❖ Illustrative Examples – Needham Center (cont'd)



6. Develop a Needham Center Offerings Directory, Map and Community Information Kiosk

Proposed Action:

Make potential customers more aware of the breadth of offerings in Needham Center by providing a well-organized listing of the stores, service providers, public institutions and venues. An offerings location map will help reduce barriers to finding the goods and services customers are seeking and direct traffic to local establishments.

The kiosks can be designed to accommodate rotating information about events and other community happenings which would create a touchpoint for residents. Kiosks also provide an opportunity to reinforce branding in the Center and help to create a unified sense of place. The brand logo and color palette should be included in the design.

Attractive business directory & community information kiosks could be strategically located at sites such as the Town Common, Train Stop, Library, Hospital and Post office.

An online business directory should be included in the Needham Center website. Some focus group participants also indicated they would like a hard copy version of the directory to refer to. This could be in the form of a printed brochure or a version that could be printed from the website.

Cost:

Cost will vary depending on the size, elaborateness of the design and number of kiosks. (The large multi-faceted Bennigton Kiosk pictured under "Examples" cost approximately \$5,000, not including initial design costs.)

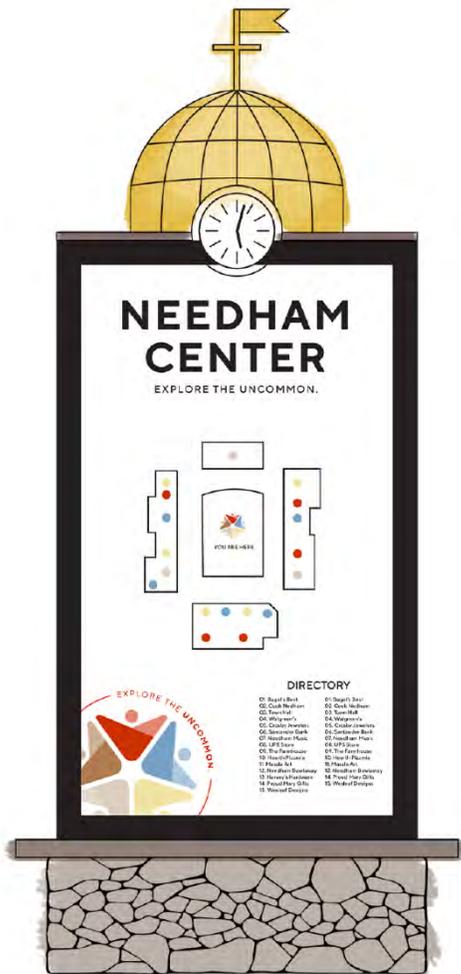
Steps to Implement:

1. Update the Needham Center Offerings Directory by providing a categorized listing of all the businesses (stores, restaurants, service providers, public institutions, etc.), venues and social gathering spaces (e.g., Common), and points of interest.
2. Update the existing or create a new map identifying the location of the offerings.
3. Determine what information the kiosks should display and the permanent, semi-permanent or rotating nature of the information. (e.g., Directory, map, place to display posters/fliers about community events, information about Needham Center's history, etc.).

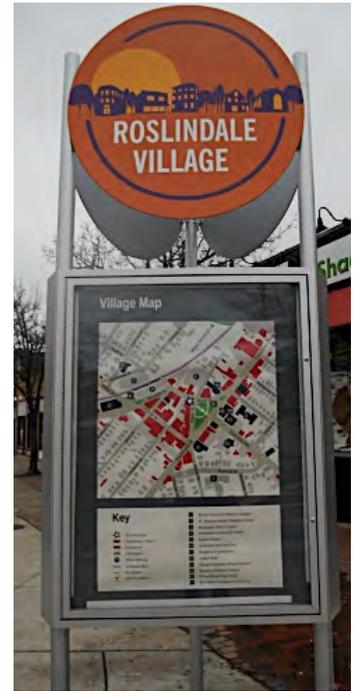
4. Retain a consultant to prepare design specifications, materials and graphics. The kiosks should be designed in a way that it is easy to replace the Directory as updates are needed as well as frequently replace event information. A larger and smaller version of the kiosk could be designed -- the larger version sited in central location(s) such as the Common and smaller versions used where a more compact form factor would be appropriate.
5. Create a Placement Plan - determine locations for the kiosks. This could include the Common, train station, post office, library, hospital, and public parking lots. A phased approach could be implemented to match the available budget.

Examples:

- ❖ Illustrative Example – Needham Center



- ❖ Various Kiosks Designs (top left to right: Bennington, Saratoga Springs, bottom left to right: Sarasota, Roslindale)



7. Design and Implement a Coordinated Wayfinding System that Incorporates Branding.

Proposed Action:

Lead potential customers into and around Needham Center by implementing wayfinding elements while reinforcing branding through unified physical elements. The coordination of style and repetition of color in the wayfinding elements will help to provide a delineation of the Center and create a shared sense of place. A sign identifying the area as “Needham Center” in a central location as well as gateway signage such as “Welcome to Needham Center” would also help to emphasize branding.

“Wayfinding” describes the various ways that people orient themselves in a physical setting and navigate from place to place. In the context of a commercial district such as Needham Center, wayfinding systems may include a variety of tools (both physical and virtual) that provide a consistent and predictable way for people to find their way around. The business directory, previously discussed, is an element of an overall wayfinding system. Wayfinding signage makes it easier for customers to access businesses and other destinations by providing information about parking and directions to and from public transportation.

Cost

Cost will vary depending on the design, materials and number of elements. Plan preparation, design, fabrication and installation could cost \$50,000+.

Steps to Implement:

1. Retain consultant to prepare a comprehensive wayfinding plan identifying locations type of wayfinding elements, messages for each element, and final graphic designs.
2. Inventory existing wayfinding elements in Needham Center to determine what needs to be added and how new elements can complement existing elements.
3. Design wayfinding elements to convey information that people can read on foot, on a bike, and in a car.
4. Install primary identification, gateway and directional wayfinding elements leading to Needham Center.
5. Install complementary wayfinding elements such as historic markers walking tour map and interpretive history boards.
6. A phased approach could be implemented to match the available budget.

Example:

❖ Wayfinding System Elements, Portsmouth

Source: Merje Design and the City of Portsmouth, NH



8. Increase Cultural Events/Programming taking place at the Common and elsewhere in Needham Center. Start with Organizing a Food-related Festival/Event in the Next Year.

Proposed Action:

Fill out the calendar of events in Needham Center. Activate the Common and other areas more frequently with cultural programming.

It's more imperative than ever to add to the "experience" factor of downtowns. COVID-19 accelerated e-commerce trends and people significantly increased their online purchasing of retail goods and food service delivery. Increasing cultural events is a way of expanding the menu of offerings and differentiating the value of downtowns. This is particularly important now as we struggle to get customers back into the habit of coming to commercial areas like Needham Center.

The following objectives should be kept in mind when developing and encouraging events to benefit businesses in the Center:

- Increase foot traffic to encourage purchasing & increase sense of vitality in the Center.
- Enhance awareness of offerings by bringing attendees within close range in order to increase potential patronage even on non-event days.
- Develop a "relationship" between residents of surrounding areas and Needham Center so they think about it as their "go to" place for events, entertainment, food, etc.

The survey & focus group research showed that Needham residents would like additional cultural events in the Center. The topic of more events came up frequently in focus group discussions; people mentioned food events, music concerts, fitness classes, and kids activities. The survey results (from over 300 respondents) also indicated a demand for more events (especially food-related).

- **Over 90%** of survey respondents said they would attend a food festival.
- More than 60% said they would attend an art festival, concert or beer garden

Cost:

Variable. Many downtown/community events are largely organized and put on by volunteers. The major costs include items such as: promotion, equipment rental (e.g., tents, chairs, tables) permits/temporary licenses (e.g., beer/wine), insurance, and fees for entertainers, set-up/clean-up, security, etc.

Steps to Implement:

One way that a public sector entity can encourage more cultural events is to create a program that helps to financially support events as well as provides assistance with permitting and licensing issues. This type of program would include the following.

1. Determine the objectives and requirements for events and create a “call for proposals”.
2. Market the “call” to potential event organizers. This might typically include nonprofit groups, arts organizations, business organization/chamber of commerce, farmers market organizations, etc. but a “call” for proposals could also include private businesses interested in developing a for-profit activity such as a beer garden.)
3. Provide small grants to help support event costs related to winning proposals (or different arrangement in the case of for-profit event proposals).
4. Develop very clear instructions, a streamlined process, and staff assistance for permitting/licensing,

For a single event sponsored by downtown businesses and property owners, and managed by volunteers, some of typical steps follow.

1. Form an event committee and select a chairperson (co-chair persons)
2. Get input from downtown businesses and property owners
3. Develop event concept
4. Determine anticipated participation level if event includes business participation
5. Flesh out the details of the event (where, when, what, how)
6. Create a budget and financing plan
7. Recruit volunteers and form sub-committees to handle the necessary tasks to implement the event (e.g., fundraising, promotion, permits/licenses, equipment, set-up/clean-up, and securing/hiring entertainment, vendors, and event staffing.)

Examples:

❖ Eat-Up Roc, Rochester, NY

A new interpretation of restaurant week, Eat Up Roc includes all food and beverage businesses in the downtown Rochester neighborhood invited to present a unique dish or drink based on a theme. Additionally, customers who purchase from these businesses will have an opportunity to enter a contest to win prizes. To qualify, customers share their receipt with Downtown Definitely, a 501c3 not-for profit organization whose mission is to drive economic vitality in Downtown Rochester.

A Needham Center interview participant suggested a similar type event for Needham Center with “burgers” as the theme.



- ❖ JP Center South Main Street Jamaica Plain, MA – Themed Scavenger Hunts

Download the StriveON app to RELAX

find the deals and discounts for a relaxing summer!

Thurs, June 6
5-8pm

JP CENTRE/SOUTH MAIN STREETS

Get ready to RELAX this summer with deals on Centre and South Street. Join us on Centre and South Streets for a **SCAVENGER HUNT** with StriveOn, JP's Mobile App. Download the app to your smartphone, and click the tile for First Thursday Scavenger Hunt.

This month's theme is RELAX! Follow the clues to find the participating businesses. You'll be rewarded with special discounts and/or treats from the six participating businesses!

- ❖ AHA! New Bedford, MA

ABOUT AHA!

Mission

To be a cooperative venture dedicated to invigorating the downtown New Bedford cultural scene using the power of the arts and cultural enterprise, creativity and collaboration to forge a new economy.

AHA! Night offers a meeting place for over 60 community partners on the **2nd Thursday** of the month, when artistic expression is everywhere and open to everyone: encouraging fun, provoking-thought and nurturing the soul. Join us and come downtown for your own AHA! moment!

For over 20 years, AHA! 2nd Thursday events have provided community partners with a time and place to shine. AHA!'s collaboration with state, municipal and private funding partners is leveraged to attract local, regional and long-distance visitors to downtown New Bedford, revitalizing the city through a growing creative economy.

