



REVENUE & SALES

Best Practice Compendium

Revenue & Sales v1.0

June 01, 2021





Helping Main Street in the Long Term After COVID-19



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Provided by SME Consultant

Levine Planning Strategies, LLC

Location

Flint, MI; Haverhill, MA; Lansing, MI; Portland, ME; Nashua, NH; and Youngstown, OH

Origin	Department of Urban Studies & Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology	
Budget		Medium Budget – varies by actions taken but may exceed \$100,000
Timeframe		Medium Timeframe – 5 to 10 years
Risk		Medium Risk – requires political and funding stability to implement
Key Performance Indicators	Sales and/or economic activity downturn; percentage of occupied storefronts; number of businesses open in 2019 still open 5-10 years later.	
Partners & Resources	Municipal government; downtown business groups; state & federal partners	

Diagnostic

Even before 2020, many downtowns businesses struggled. The shutdown of local businesses in the past year simply revealed the weaknesses in existing support systems for local economies. Some businesses survived through quick adaptation and embracing new tools such as enhanced social media and additional delivery services. Other businesses struggled to make those transitions, either because their business model did not work well remotely, or because the owners lacked the skills to make such transitions. Regardless of whether a business was able to pivot, most likely its overall revenue was down in 2020, raising the question of how to pay for its (largely vacant) physical space and employees.

Large federal and state programs helped take the edge off of these issues, but there remains a large backlog of rent and mortgage payments. At the same time, small property owners are in danger of losing their properties to lenders because their tenants cannot make rent payments.

At the same time, there were some forced innovations, such as changes to public spaces, that were popular among many customers. While the overall affect of the pandemic was negative for downtowns, it would still be wise to learn from those efforts and potentially retain the best of them.

There has been a fair amount of attention paid to what small businesses will need in the near term to recover from the pandemic. However, not as much work has been done on how COVID-19 will affect downtowns in the long term.

These case studies and survey, funded by the MIT Department of Urban Studies and Planning, were designed to explore the changes communities should consider for the next five to ten years to ensure their commercial districts can thrive. What do businesses want and need from local government to survive in the long term? What will they need if there is another significant disruption to business? What do local economic development officials think would help in their community? While this study didn't offer all the answers, it outlined areas to think more about.

Study Findings

This study was designed to understand the long-term needs of local businesses from their perspectives, as well as from the perspectives of local economic development officials. Businesses were asked about their short-term priorities, but the focus of the study was on their long-term needs. The results of the study reflected the views of a variety of local businesses. Approximately half of the responding businesses were minority-owned or woman-owned, and almost half had five or fewer employees prior to COVID-19.

While there was a wide range of views from local businesses and officials, a few long-term priorities emerged:

- A top priority for local businesses was for government to provide financial incentives to help them remain competitive as the pandemic recedes. *For example, the sign & façade improvement grant program run by the City of Gardner, offers 5 year forgivable loans for up to \$2,500 for signs, or \$15,000 for façades. This program is funded through the City's CDBG program;*
- Another high priority for local businesses was the provision of rent or mortgage relief so they could remain in their locations. *For example, the Small Business Relief Program run by the Local Initiative Support Corporation has provided up to \$25,000 in funding for rent and similar expenses for small businesses over the past year. To date, that program has had 12 rounds, totaling \$215 million;*
- A third priority was for communities to develop a thoughtful and consistent program for public space based on which business owners could make long term investment. There was a concern that changing priorities, such as annual changes to open streets programs or outdoor dining rules, would add uncertainty to future business decisions. *For example, after a successful pilot project in 2015, Halifax, Nova Scotia, redesigned Argyle Street in their downtown as a permanent shared street, allowing businesses to make long term investments for outdoor dining;*

Study Findings (Continued)

Finally, local businesses were interested in changes to health, licensing and zoning codes that would allow their operations to respond quickly to business opportunities. For example, the Town of Freeport, ME, exempts conversions between most restaurants and retail trade uses from site plan review to allow for rapid changes in downtown spaces. Similarly, the City of South Burlington, VT, “flipped” its table of uses in 2016. In their City Center form based code, there is a list of prohibited uses rather than a list of permitted uses, allowing businesses to change between any use that is not explicitly prohibited.

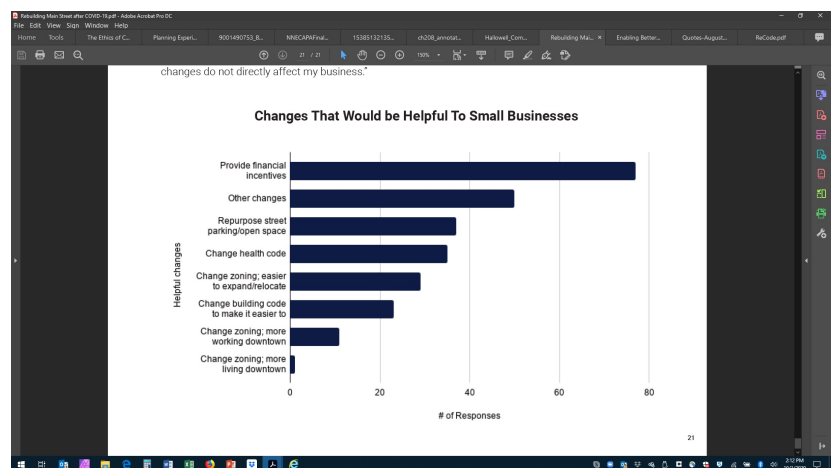
Process

The study used the following methodology:

1. An initial list of about 15 communities was developed, based on community size and built form. In order to control for weather and built form elements, only communities in New England and the Upper Midwest were part of that initial list;
2. Of those 15, six responded with an interest in participating in the study. Those six had a wide range of median household income levels and demographics;
3. Researchers compiled summary sheets about each of the communities for background information (see sample sheet for Haverhill below);
4. Study researchers interviewed local economic development officials, ranging from the Mayor of Youngstown, OH to the head of the Portland, ME, downtown improvement district;
5. With the assistance of these local officials, researchers distributed a survey to local businesses asking questions about their size and ownership; use of federal and state COVID relief programs; short-term needs; and long-term needs;
6. Researchers compiled the results into a summary report outlining business responses and interview summaries, as well as their recommendations for public actions based on those findings.



Argyle Street in downtown Halifax, NS, has been an outdoor dining spot for 25 years. In 2017, following a planning process & pilot program, the street was reconstructed as a permanent shared street, allowing local businesses to make long term investments based on the redesign (Source: Steven Lee under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International license)



In the long run, businesses were still looking for financial help, but also changes in how public realm spaces were managed; changes to health codes; and simplification of zoning requirements

Haverhill, Massachusetts

Racial demographics

- White: 73% Black: 3%
- Latina/o: 20% Other: 4%

Household median income

- \$67,579

"There is strong local leadership on diversity and inclusion because it leads to a stronger workforce, better education, and better healthcare. We need to continue to embrace and welcome Latino community."

– Dougan Sherwood,
President & CEO, Greater
Haverhill Chamber of
Commerce

HAVERHILL IS A CITY THAT IS HOME TO 64,000 PEOPLE located 35 miles north of Boston on the border of Massachusetts and New Hampshire. One of the state's oldest historic communities, Haverhill has seen several industries come and go from lumber mills and flour mills in the seventeenth century to shoe manufacturing in the nineteenth century. By the mid-twentieth century, the shoe industry had declined and the city embraced urban renewal, demolishing swaths of historic buildings downtown. In recent decades, the city has invested in major downtown revitalization including the Haverhill Riverfront Boardwalk and the conversion of abandoned factories into loft apartments and condominiums.

Organizations working to strengthen the economy of Haverhill's downtown include the Greater Haverhill Chamber of Commerce, Merrimack Valley Planning Commission, and the City of Haverhill Office of Economic Development and Planning. For this report, we interviewed Dougan Sherwood, President and CEO of the Haverhill Chamber of Commerce. We received survey responses from a total of **22 small businesses** in Haverhill.



Washington Street in downtown
Haverhill, MA. 2017.
Photo credit: Jim Davis.



Establish a Business Recovery Task Force



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Provided by SME Consultant Northern Middlesex Council of Governments

Location Lowell, MA

Origin	City of Lowell Economic Development Office, Entrepreneurship Center at CTI, Entrepreneurship for All, Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce, Lowell Plan/Lowell Development Finance Corporation
Budget	 <p>Low –The Task Force did not have a budget. Participating partners participated as part of their regular jobs or donated time. Resources provided to the businesses were allocated through existing local, state and federal grant programs.</p>
Timeframe	 <p>Short-term – The Task Force was established informally within one month from when the need was identified. It has met on a monthly basis over the past year, with membership gradually increasing over time.</p>
Risk	 <p>Low – lack of coordination between the agencies and organizations assisting businesses; diminishing interest on the part of businesses as the recovery takes hold</p>
Key Performance Indicators	Number of employees retained, annual revenues, number of customers/clients served, number of vacancies, number of visitors in the area
Partners & Resources	City of Lowell Economic Development Office, Entrepreneurship Center at CTI, Entrepreneurship for All, Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce, Lowell Plan/Lowell Development Finance Corporation, MassHire/Lowell Career Center, SBA, UMass Lowell, Greater Lowell Community Foundation, Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association, Greater Merrimack Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau, Lowell National Historical Park, Working Cities Lowell, Mill City Community Investments, Enterprise Bank, several local businesses, state legislative delegation, Congresswoman Trahan's office

Diagnostic

During the pandemic, many Lowell businesses have struggled to survive. A clear need for support, technical assistance, and enhanced communication, in multiple languages and across various platforms, was identified by the Lowell Economic Development Office and its partners. It became evident that many business owners and managers did not have the resources or capacity to track and interpret the state and federal guidelines that were issued on a continual basis. In addition, the emergency stay at home order had a detrimental impact on their revenues. Several businesses shuttered their operations, reduced hours, or went into hibernation.

A diverse cross-collaborative effort was needed to facilitate a meaningful recovery during this crisis. The Lowell Business Recovery Task Force came together to spearhead local interventions, assisting businesses with accessing working capital and personal protective equipment for employees, improving business presence on social media, and assisting restaurants in pivoting their business models to take-out and curbside service. The goal of the task force was to ensure that all businesses in Lowell had the support that they needed to survive during this unprecedented period.

Action Items

The Lowell Economic Development organized the Lowell Business Recovery Task Force to centralize resources for businesses and to provide assistance during the pandemic. The Task Force launched a web page to document their work and provide information on available assistance and programs. Language assistance in Spanish, Portuguese and Khmer was made available to ensure that the program was widely available to all City businesses.

To assist restaurants, the Task Force developed the *Creative Restaurant Marketing during COVID-19* program. In partnership with Susu Wong of Tomo360, they hosted two free webinars on Creative Restaurant Marketing in 2020 that focused on online marketing and social media:

[4/1/2020 - Creative Restaurant Marketing - Online Marketing](#)

[4/1/2020 - Creative Restaurant Marketing - Social Media](#)

The City also created a marketing grant program available to Lowell's small, independently owned businesses that were most significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Grant awards of up to \$2,000 were available to eligible businesses.



Action Items (continued)

In addition, the City of Lowell implemented a special Restaurant Curbside Pickup Parking space allocation initiative. Restaurants can apply for a meter bag and sign indicating the space has been allocated for customer curbside pickup only.

The Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the City of Lowell's Economic Development Office, Lowell TeleMedia Center (LTC), the Lowell Plan, EforAll and the Entrepreneurship Center at CTI, launched the Lowell Shopping Network (LSN)!, airing two-minute videos created by Lowell businesses (and edited by LTC) on channels 8 and 95 and on Facebook. Members of the community were asked to become active members of the group to provide other consumers with information about the wonderful items, artwork, food, etc. that Lowell has to offer. They were also asked to give local businesses support by providing social smiles, posting photos of purchases, providing a review and sharing an idea.

Process

- Identify the needs of the business community.
- Establish the Business Recovery Task Force utilizing the partnerships and resources appropriate for meeting identified needs.
- Create a web page and communication strategy using multiple platforms and languages to effectively reach businesses in need of assistance.
- Provide training to local businesses owners and managers on social media and online marketing.
- Leverage local government and business partnerships to meet unprecedented business needs relative to outdoor dining, curbside pickup and implementation of public health measures.
- Use local cable television resources to market local businesses through videos launched on a local shopping network.
- Advertise available resources, such as local, state and federal grant programs and assistance available from area financial institutions, to struggling businesses. Assist businesses with the application process.



Source : Manchester Connects

Create a walking loop to attract customers and test ideas for long-term implementation



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Susan Silberberg, CivicMoxie

Location

Manchester, NH

Origin	An “early win” pilot project growing out of the <i>Manchester Connects</i> land use and multi-modal transportation plan for the Manchester NH Downtown and Amoskeag Millyard/Riverfront.	
Budget		Low – under \$10,000
Timeframe		Short – planning and implementation in 4 months
Risk		Low
Key Performance Indicators	Number of attendees, Number of partners working together successfully, Good press	
Partners & Resources	Manchester Connects Steering Committee, City of Manchester, University of New Hampshire, Public Art Group, other volunteers	

Diagnostic

There are thousands of high-tech workers and university students in the Amoskeag Millyard in Manchester, NH. These potential customers are separated from downtown by wide streets, a rail line, and a change in topography that necessitates stairs at some connecting streets. In addition, the Merrimack River at the Millyard is an underutilized resource that is lined with asphalt parking areas and minimal signage and amenities. These challenges presented opportunities that included:

- How can public art and space programming help reduce the perceived distance between Millyard and downtown to better connect the two?
- Would it be possible to establish a route that could be the focus of short and long-term improvements to encourage pedestrians and cyclists?
- Could a pilot project test the collaborative power of a citizen-led project steering committee and demonstrate the long-term viability of a bricks and mortar project enhancing connections?

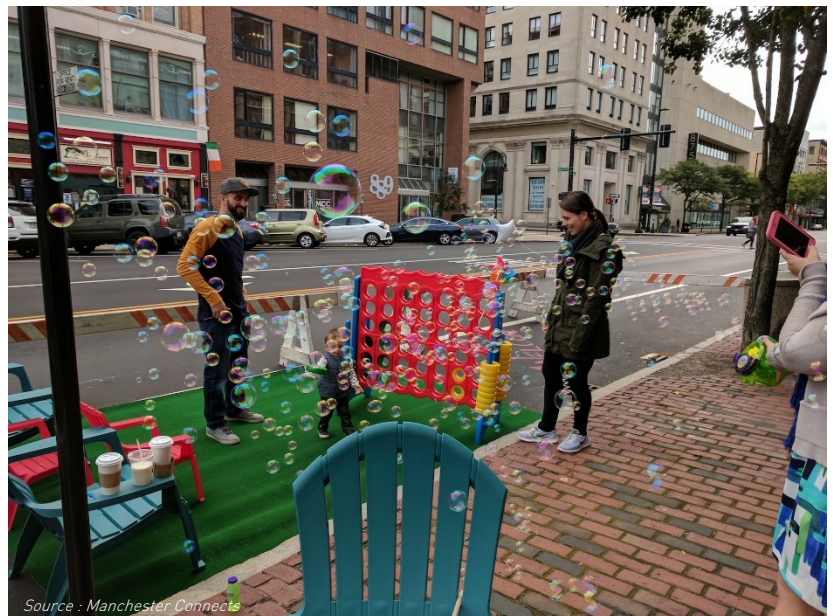
The project focused on analyzing the best route and providing technical assistance and graphics help to get the pilot up and running.



The Amoskeag Millyard is lacking in "third places" such as restaurants and cafes, places to sit outdoors, and welcoming public spaces. Because it is isolated from Elm Street in downtown by topographical changes and wide streets, downtown businesses have trouble attracting the Millyard market and an overall sense of vibrancy is missing from the entire area.

Action Item

The resulting project was called "The Loop" and was the name of the designated route as well as the event that tested the conceptual idea of creating a focused path between the Millyard and downtown. Using a map created by the consultants, the steering committee programmed a series of events, coordinated public art projects, and created seating and public space areas (all temporary) along a loop that connected downtown to the riverfront and Millyard. Businesses were involved in promotions and the Public Art Commission of the City collaborated with organizers to highlight new artists works. The downtown BID and City were also involved in helping plan and provide permitting for the event.



Source : Manchester Connects

The Loop event demonstrated the benefit of public art and programmed spaces and the impact these improvements make on the perception of space and distance between the Millyard and riverfront and the downtown

Process

The Loop event was a pilot project that grew from recommendations in the Manchester Connects plan for the Millyard and downtown. Seen as a way to demonstrate that Manchester Connects was about action, Loop Event Planning began with conceptual brainstorming with the entire project steering committee on multiple ways the committee could achieve the goal of better connectivity between downtown and the Millyard. The steps to plan and execute this type of event include:

- The consultant team identified the challenge of physical connectivity and created a suggested map of the easiest route to and from the two disconnected areas.
- A few members of the steering committee volunteered to lead the effort and began planning.
- Partners were approached, including the City of Manchester, the Public Art Commission, some local retailers, the Millyard Museum, and others.
- Local graphic designers offered their services to design promotional literature and a major social media campaign was launched, building on the thousands of followers on the Manchester Connects Facebook page.
- Collaborators planned for approximately three months, garnering good press and many attendees the day of the event.



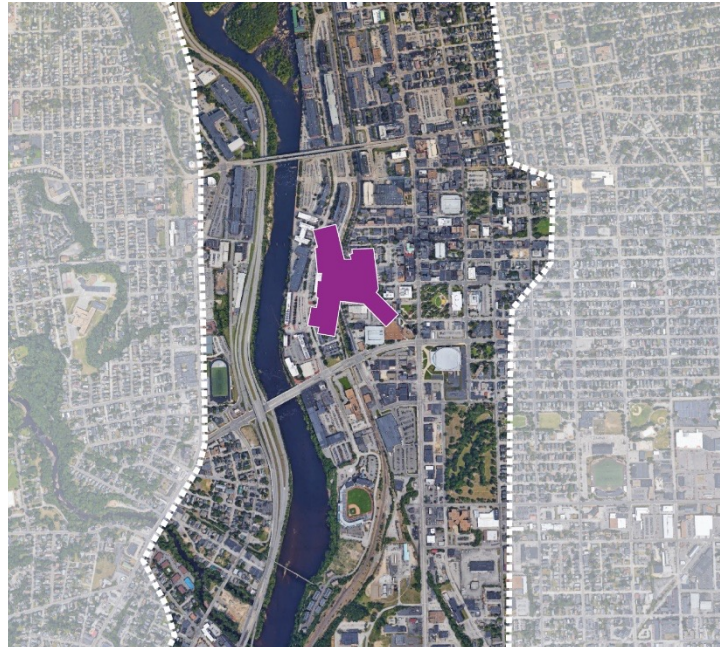
The Loop was identified and carefully programmed by the consultants after a brainstorming session with the client steering committee prioritized physical connections as a good pilot project to begin implementation of the plan.



Support for the public art component of the event came from the City's Public Art Commission.

Strategic Decisions

Careful consideration should be given to the physical environment when planning an event. The top image shows an overlay of the Mall of New Hampshire, to scale, on the core of the focus area for the Loop, demonstrating some of the challenges of connecting the Millyard to the downtown. The Loop event was a way of testing the validity of the concept that an interesting and pedestrian friendly route, filled with public art, pleasant public spaces, and eventually, active ground floor uses, would encourage connectivity between the two areas and would support downtown businesses and provide amenities and activities for Millyard employees.



The Mall of New Hampshire building footprint at scale was overlaid on the core area of focus to give a sense of scale to the area and inform design and programming decisions.



Distances were mapped to better understand the barriers to pedestrian activity and to help inform public space design and programming decisions.





Source: Hanover Theatre

Host a block party to support ground floor activation efforts downtown




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Provided by SME Consultant

Susan Silberberg, CivicMoxie

Location

Worcester, MA

Origin	MassDevelopment TDI Downtown Worcester, MA Initiative with the Downtown Theatre Alliance
Budget	 Low – under \$10,000
Timeframe	 Short – planning and implementation in 3-1/2 months
Risk	 Low
Key Performance Indicators	Number of attendees, Number of partners working together successfully, Good press
Partners & Resources	Hanover Theatre and Downtown Theatre Alliance with collaboration from City of Worcester, Worcester Business Development Corporation

Diagnostic

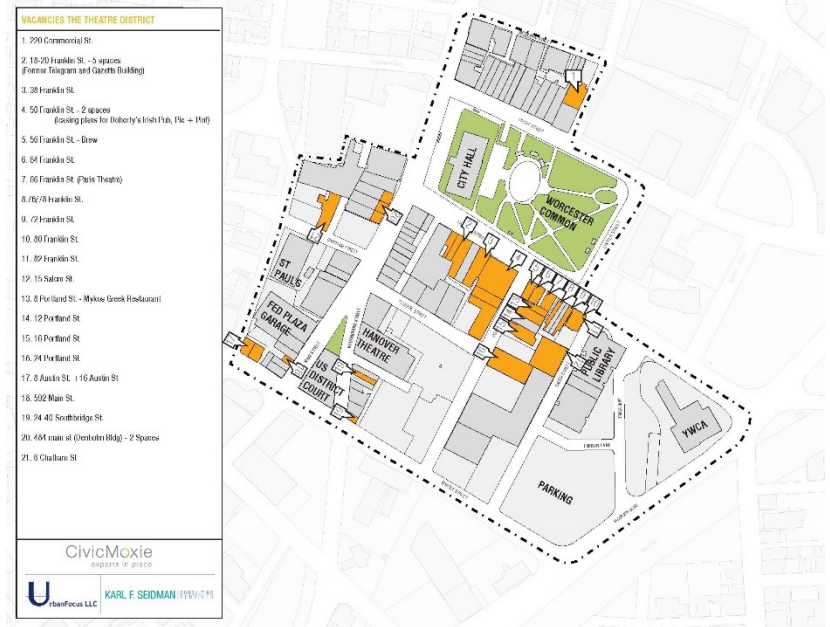
There were 21 vacant ground floor spaces and over 20 underutilized or vacant buildings available for private development in downtown Worcester, MA. *The MassDevelopment TDI Ground Floor Activation Plan for Downtown Worcester* documented vacancies and prioritized building redevelopment opportunities using criteria such as location, cost to redevelop, building footprint, suitability for feasible uses, willing owner, etc. However, key challenges were working against redevelopment and vibrant uses in storefronts:

- How to change the image of downtown and demonstrate positive trends to attract developer, business, and customer interest?
- How to support restaurants and new food entrepreneurs and grow the number of dining establishments open in the evenings?
- How to draw college students and other young adults downtown to support existing and new businesses?

There was an opportunity to build on the robust audience for the Hanover Theatre, as well as the possibility for complementary uses to extend vibrancy in the downtown to post-working hours in the evening. The block party was the selected strategy to address these challenges.

Action Item

The Block Party was a means to test the “collaborative muscle” of various partners, including MassDevelopment, The City of Worcester, Worcester Business Development Corp, and the Hanover Theatre, as well as shift the perception of downtown. The partners came together to divide tasks based on skills and capacity and reached out to others in the community to provide entertainment, food, and drink. The City was a key partner in streamlining permitting and providing public safety and sanitation services the day of the event. To ensure good turnout and a diversity of participants the block party was planned in conjunction with a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Hanover Theatre Conservatory. Combining the events allowed organizers to highlight positive change and investment in the downtown. The block party included music, a beer garden, food trucks, and ribbon cutting ceremony. Interactive activities encouraged attendees to share their desires for downtown and offer ideas for improvements. Over 500 people attended the block party, meeting the goals set by the organizers.



Vacant ground floor uses were mapped and space characteristics noted.

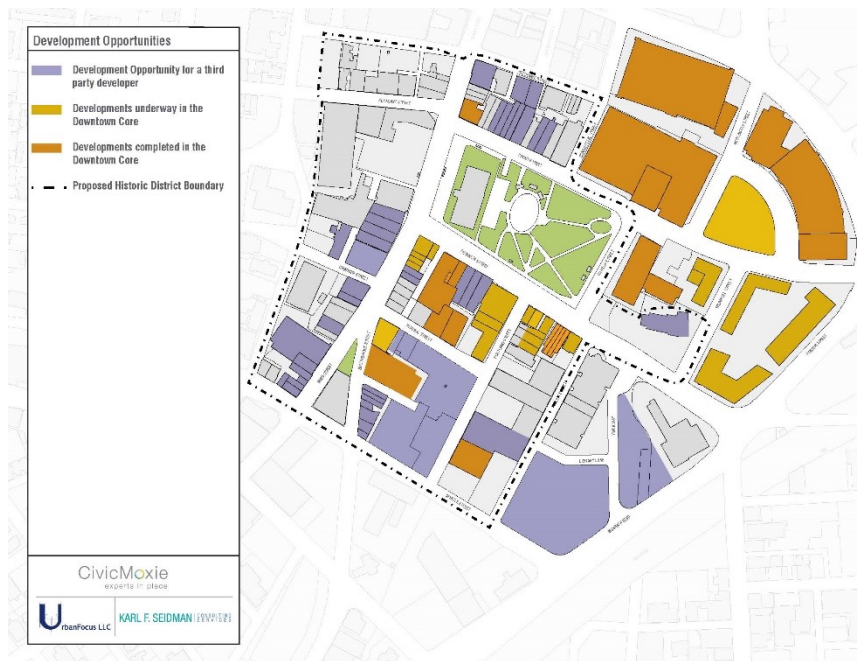


The high number of vacant storefronts contributed to lack of vibrancy downtown.

Process

The block party grew out of the desire for an early “win” in the ground floor activation planning effort. Many plans had been prepared for downtown and the Theatre District. It was imperative to show positive movement forward. The steps to plan and execute this type of event include:

- BID, Main Streets District, Chamber, Municipality decides on goals (support local businesses, bring shoppers and diners back, celebrate a larger event, etc.)
- Gather parties with similar interests, complementary resources and expertise.
- Brainstorm ways to achieve the core goals. Develop criteria to select one strategy to move forward: 1) Is there someone who has done an event before? 2) Does someone have paid staff that can lend a hand? 3) Who has graphics and marketing expertise? Can this strategy tag onto another event or a milestone in the community?
- Answer these questions: 1) Who is the audience? 2) What message to convey? 3) How does this align with municipal and business district goals? 4) What does success look like? 5) What would cause everyone to smile the day after the event? Keep the answers to these questions in mind throughout planning
- Work back from the goals to identify people, organizations, agencies available to help: chart interests, capacity, resources, contacts.
- What location best supports the goals? Create a plan of the area.
- List and draw activity areas, block party elements
- Link program activities with partners/volunteers.
- Refine event: what happens, time, day, activities



Over twenty buildings in the district were underutilized or vacant...providing opportunities for third party developers.



The block party was a near-term, easy action item in the overall implementation plan and was intended to support a good image for this area of the downtown and set up for larger and longer-term action items such as building redevelopment, wayfinding, and business recruitment for ground floor spaces.

Process

Process (Continued)

- Create a budget sheet for overall event, each activity area.
- Think carefully about branding...what to call it? How does this fit with overall branding and marketing for the downtown or commercial district?
- Create a detailed implementation plan with timeline of tasks, roles.
- Document what you do and think about how to make the effort sustainable in the long run. How can this event be a pilot project for ongoing programming?
- During the event, try to include ways to capture information the attendees (raffle that requires their zip code, ideas chalk wall that asks what people want to see in the district, etc.)
- Do a debrief immediately after the event to improve efforts for the future. Ask businesses for their input and reactions.



Source for all photos: Hanover Theatre



The block party celebrated new investment in downtown (the Hanover Theatre Conservatory, and was a step toward shaping a new image for the district.

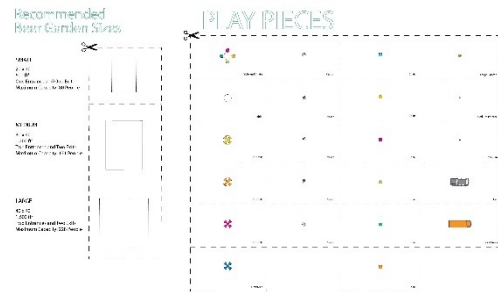
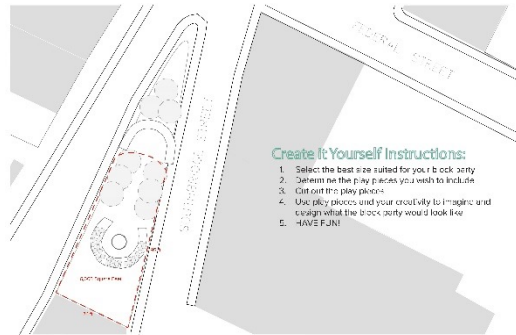
Process- Strategic Decisions

Careful consideration should be given to matching the location, type of event, and food/entertainment with the goals of the project. In the case of the Worcester block party, the location aligned with overall goals for public space activation in downtown...one target spot was the Common and the other was the street and plaza adjacent to the Hanover Theatre. These locations were high visibility and adjacent to significant vacant ground floor space and underutilized buildings. The effort was an attempt to create a new image near these activation spots and support redevelopment and reinvestment in downtown. The collaborative efforts needed to plan the event were the start of ongoing partnerships and momentum that led to the formation of a BID in 2020.

Careful consideration should be given to ensure that events such as these support the core goals of stakeholders and don't detract from sales and patronage of local retail and food establishments.



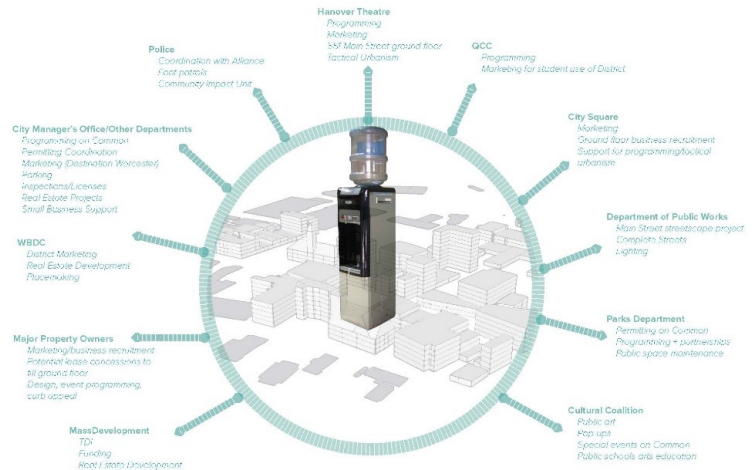
To meet overall activation goals downtown, two locations were targeted for public space events and activities.



Creating plans of the event area and to-scale elements such as beer garden layouts, seating areas, food truck sizes, etc., can help planning and ensure events go smoothly. These elements can be improved after each event and also allow business owners to participate in planning to ensure that the events support customers and visibility for stores and restaurants.



Illustrating the business district at night was a strategy to help people see that it was a safe place to come to eat dinner, attend the theatre, and perhaps one day, shop in local retail spots.



Events such as the block party can support collaborations in a kind of "civic water cooler" where many organizations and City departments work closely toward common goals. The partnerships and sharing that are needed to plan an event are an important element of overall activation of business districts.

Pledge To Support Local





Provided by SME Consultant

Amherst Business Improvement District

Location

Amherst, MA

Origin	Amherst BID
Budget	 Under 20,000 all in.
Timeframe	 Immediate impact
Risk	Every moment of this pandemic has been immediate and high risk for downtowns and Main Streets across the globe. There was never time, money or energy to waste.
Key Performance Indicators	Success was quantifiable with entries for prizes
Partners & Resources	Greenfield Savings Bank as Media Partner
Diagnostic	<p>Holiday Shop local, support small business and "take away" were main focus of the Pledge Campaign. Pledge Cards were printed on card stock, available to download from website and placed in local paper to cut out. Local radio marketing invited people near and far to take the challenge to support local. Over 2 months eat at or take away from 10 downtown Amherst restaurants. Cafes or coffee shops, purchase from at least 5 local retail stores and enjoy 3 downtown services.</p> <p>Success was immediate with requests for pledge cards from all businesses. Hundreds of entries were mailed to us with receipts as proof. Calls, social media posts and emails to our offices expressing excitement and commitment to supporting downtown were constant through out – months later we are being asked to run a similar campaign.</p>

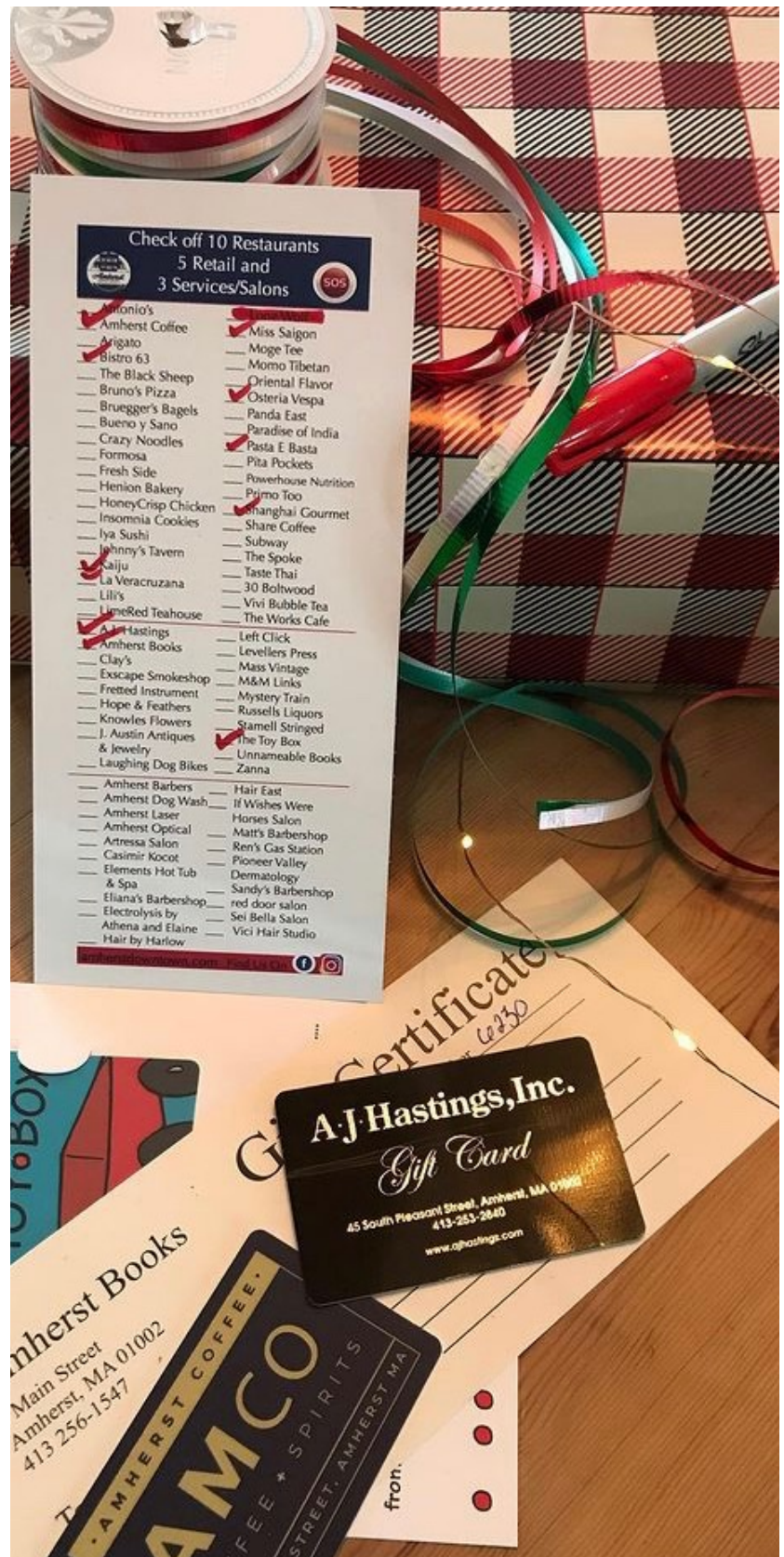
Process

- ① Concept: Incentivize people to shop local over a 2 month period in a fun and light way
- ② Treasure hunt concept boiled down to a check list
- ③ Make sure it is within reach, a bit of a stretch but nothing too daunting
 - ① 10 restaurants
 - ② 5 retail
 - ③ 3 services
 - ④ 10 weeks to complete
- ④ A Pledge to support: involved, active, challenge for the greater good
- ⑤ Create and print Pledge Cards
- ⑥ Marketing: Honest "State of the Downtown":

Businesses down 70+%, due to pandemic, you make the difference: a call to arms

Marketing Plan:

- 12-week Radio Buy
 - 4 radio stations
 - playing 15 spots daily
- 4 full page full color back page of the local paper with "cut out lines"
- 10,000 rack cards distributed to all local business to hand out and include with take away orders and shoppers bags
- Download pledge card from BID website
- Social Media promotions and push to neighboring areas



Checking off the businesses....

Success

- The Pledge to Support was a HUGE success for our downtown businesses
- Hundreds of completed pledge cards were mailed, emailed and dropped off complete with all receipts as proof
- We received countless emails and calls letting us know how fun this was, how many NEW businesses they tried
- Businesses reported sales increase and customers relating that they were there because of the Pledge and will be back to continue to support
- All winners were awarded local area gift cards – keeping the money local and in the hands of our small business owners.



Local Store owner Social Media post



Mailed in receipts with pledge card

I AM STRONG

I AM POSITIVE

I AM RESILIENT

I AM CONSIDERATE

I AM WELCOME

I AM HOPEFUL

I AM **HERST**



HELLO

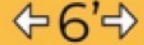
Welcome back.
We're so glad to see you. Please
be considerate of others to
keep Amherst safe and healthy.



WASH YOUR HANDS



WEAR A MASK



SOCIAL DISTANCE

WELCOME BACK

AMHERST DOWNTOWN



#IAMherst Welcome






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Amherst Business Improvement District

Location

Amherst MA

Origin	Amherst BID, Downtown Amherst Foundation, Town of Amherst, Amherst Area Chamber of Commerce	
Budget		Low Budget: Materials \$15,000/ Graphics \$1,500 Marketing \$2,500
Timeframe		Immediate impact but with a message that can and will continue long past the pandemic with simple alterations and replacements
Risk		Every moment of this pandemic has been immediate and high risk for downtowns and Main Streets across the globe. There was never time, money or energy to waste.
Key Performance Indicators	Social Media reaction. Business stability. Consumer Confidence .	
Partners & Resources	Tiger Web graphics, Downtown Amherst Foundation, the Chamber of Commerce	
Diagnostic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amherst MA was effectively “shut down” 3 weeks prior to the Shelter in Place orders on March 13. The University and College with in 48 hours closed and sent their students, faculty and staff home, effectively removing close to 40,000 residents of our community. Our downtown and surrounding areas became a ghost town overnight. We did not see the robust summer that the “summer vacation destinations” enjoyed while case numbers were relatively low. Amherst business hovered at around 20-25% of previous years and our unemployment at an all time high of 22% in the State today remains at one of the highest at 5.1%. Consumer confidence during the pandemic with our student population and spikes had to be addressed as did the “anti-student” sentiment that continued to grow with each spike. The #IAMherst campaign addressed head on our demands that in our BID area masks were to be worn, distancing was to be respected and that we took this Virus seriously. Just as important to this messaging was that ALL are WELCOME in Amherst and that we are a strong, resilient, compassionate and open community to all residents. 	
Action Item	Create a marketing campaign that can launch Amherst Wide on all available platforms addressing the immediate concerns of the pandemic while reminding all that we are welcome, safe and in this together.	

Process

- ① Identify the need for rebranding for Pandemic Life
 - ② Bring Tiger Web design team on board
 - ③ Start with key elements of 1.Mask 2. Hand washing 3. Social Distance
 - ④ Look to how to "lighten" and make less threatening
 - ⑤ Establish "emoicons"
 - ⑥ #IAMherst – borrowed from incredible ad campaign seen in Amsterdam
 - ⑦ Brainstorm of who "we are": Strong! Resilient! Etc.
 - ⑧ Maintain thread that We, YOU, I am/are WELCOME – keep in mind that we want this campaign to go past COVID-19
 - ⑨ Be able to separate with ease the COVID related parts. IE: hand wash, mask, distance
 - ⑩ Selfie Wall concept – large scale – find placement
- Distribution: 100+ Light post banners
 - Wear a Mask, Wash Your Hands, 6' Distance Posters in over 200 Amherst wide storefronts
 - Delivered with FREE PPE: masks, gloves, hand sanitizer
 - 12 Sandwich boards Amherst wide
 - 8 – 12' tall window "Selfie wall" I AM & Welcome Back facing UMASS campus
 - Continued Print and Social Media
 - 20+ Town Ambassadors promoting mask awareness, health and safety wear the "I AMherst" shirts

Continued messaging and support with and for businesses that Amherst businesses take this pandemic seriously, we take safety measures, we support you and are grateful that you support local business.

AT&T

10:57 AM

38%

AMHERSTDOWNTOWN

Posts

Amherst, Massachusetts



Liked by mindvforma and 26 others



Social media posts.

Post Pandemic

- The #IAMherst campaign will continue post pandemic with timeless messaging that our community both visitors, residents, students and passers through are WELCOME
- The Campaign serves this community through uncertain and certain times and maintains a positive, happy and heartening message for all when in our downtown.
- The mask, hands and distance signs will outlive their relevance but the #I AM signs will continue to serve our area with bright, open messaging



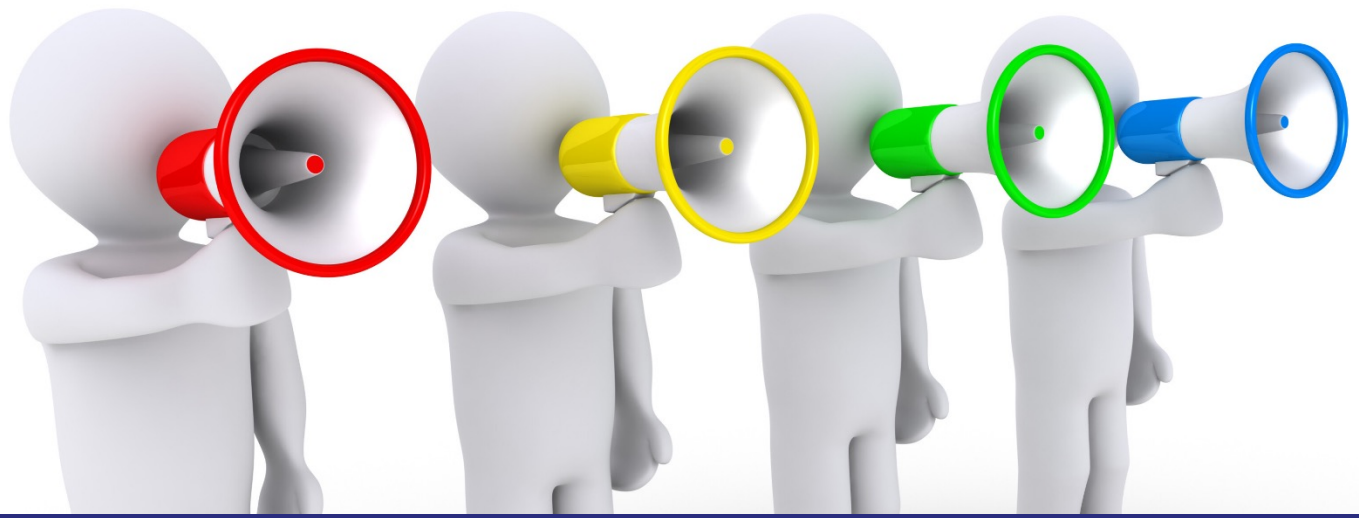
Takeout & Delivery Options Scan Image QR Code



Support Local • Eat Global
amherstdowntown.com/takeout

Fridge magnet QR code to current up to date list of dining establishments . 10,000 given out at start of fall semesters to UMASS & Amherst College students





Coordinated Social Media Marketing



REVENUES
& SALES

Provided by SME Consultant

Cepheid Solutions

Location

Online

Origin	If you JUST build it, they will NOT come! Our Marketplace project benefits from a coordinated communications campaign to increase visibility and awareness. However, these tools and strategies will benefit any community project or initiative.
Budget	 <p>The human assets are probably already in place for most communities. The new costs will involve training (and practice), a strategic guide, and the time dedicated to organize and implement an effective program.</p>
Timeframe	 <p>Training is an ongoing activity, but initial training can be completed in 30 days. Organizing and creating a strategic guide can be completed in 30 days, as well. Implementation is also an ongoing activity.</p>
Risk	 <p>There are few downside risks, except poor organization and implementation. Must be sensitive to messaging, opt-out, and privacy issues.</p>
Key Performance Indicators	Message impressions, followers (media dependent), responses, reach
Partners & Resources	<p>Community administration, Departments of Economic Development, Chambers of Commerce, Business Community, Sources of Training, the traditional media (Radio/TV/Newspapers)</p> <p>The strength of this project is not in creating a single powerful marketing group, but in leveraging the combined strength of many voices to create a unified and effective communication eco-system. So, more voices and more participation is better.</p>

<p>Diagnostic</p>	<p>In context to the Local-search eCommerce Marketplace project, the initial objective is to create awareness and engagement with the project. Going forward, the goal is to create a coordinated and integrated marketing effort that encourages shopping with the local retail community – both online and in-store.</p> <p>The three dimensions of success in this arena are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Skills competency – does each constituency understand the tools they have to work with, and is proficient in their use 2.Activity and Deployment – are each of the tools fully put to use 3.Integration and Coordination – are the different constituencies collaborating towards a common goal <p>The final measure in effectiveness will be the change in Total Local Retail Sales. An effective program will see awareness and engagement with the marketplace.</p> <p>Beyond the Marketplace project, these tools and skills</p>
<p>Action Item</p>	<p>Initial planning session (1hr – one time)</p> <p>Training (ongoing – but i2.5 hour initial self-paced training course)</p> <p>Interview Stakeholder(s) (1hr – one time)</p> <p>Setup Social Media Accounts (3 hrs one time)</p> <p>Content Development (1-10 hrs monthly)</p> <p>Operate Program (4hrs monthly - assuming weekly posts)</p> <p>Planning & Coordination (1 hr weekly)</p> <p>Program Reporting (1 hr monthly)</p>
<p>Process</p>	<p>Launching this project requires an initial planning session in which the constituency groups and their key spokesmen are identified, along with the initial timeline and objectives.</p> <p>Focus of activities for each group are identified and dates to complete initial training (ongoing training needs can be identified at 6 week point).</p> <p>Selection of a point person to coordinate.</p> <p>Establish weekly, monthly quarterly goals, and adjust accordingly.</p> <p>In the Marketplace project, two of the constituencies (The State Govt and Traditional Media) will not be actively involved. However, the coordinator can obtain editorial calendars, position papers, etc. that can be used by the other groups to coordinate with.</p>

Rapid Website Development






Provided by SME Consultant

Cambridge Retail Advisors

Location

Boston, MA

Origin	Established in 2019, the Retail and Restaurant Technology Initiative has piloted, vetted, and implemented its mission in partnership with Boston Main Streets Foundation, the City of Boston, and Citizens Bank. During the COVID-19 crisis we have quantified the significant impact of our program and are proud to promote the great diversity of participants.	
Budget		\$1,000-\$2,000 per site to design and build
Timeframe		1-2 weeks for a website to be designed and built depending on complexity
Risk		<p><u>Participant Limitations</u> – Project timelines are dependent on participant involvement. We use our screening process to make sure those chosen have the time and ability to commit.</p> <p><u>Language Barriers</u> – Language can present a challenge, but we have invested in translation services to keep our program available to businesses owners of different races and creeds.</p>
Key Performance Indicators	Development time, online ordering/eCommerce integration, website traffic	
Partners & Resources	<p><u>Cambridge Retail Advisors</u> – Website design and development</p> <p><u>Erin of Boston Photography, LLC</u> – Photography services</p>	
Diagnostic	Websites are a pivotal gateway for businesses to reach out to the world, often serving as a centralized hub of activity. As part of this process, we provide expertise that has been refined through hundreds of builds. Our Rapid Website Development is honed and proven to deliver immediate digital transformation.	
Action	Our website development program provides a fast and effective web presence for retailers or restaurants. We alleviate the major pain points of including technological hurdles and costs, and in less than 2 weeks create a platform to promote from and sell on. Websites not only serve as the face of an organization, but they also serve as a pivot point for most operations including marketing and sales. We're proud to offer this service and have many success stories from small businesses throughout Boston.	

Process

Onboarding Phase

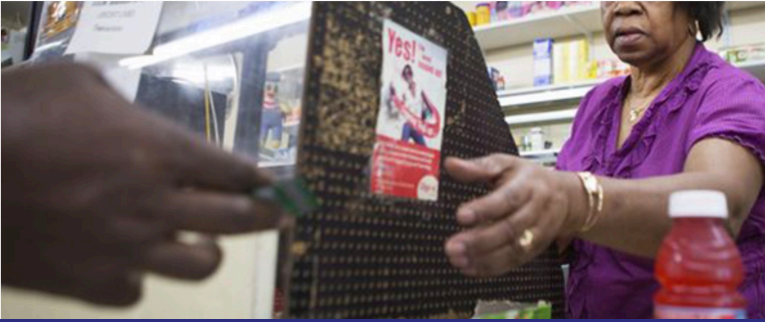
1. Explain the simple design process and benefits of the end website
2. Purchase the desired domain name
3. Set manageable goals with clear timeframes

Discovery Phase

4. Gather content and determine look/feel for the website
5. Collect media such as photos and video *(Schedule photographer if required)*
6. Link Social Media *(if applicable)*
7. Link online selling platforms *(if applicable)*

Review/Finalization Phase

8. Review website with business owner prior to publishing live
9. Publish site and encourage business owner to incorporate their new website into their marketing plan
10. Handoff website to business owner and encourage frequent edits!



Is your business or organization:

- ✓ Black-Owned,
- ✓ Black-Operated,
- ✓ Black-Oriented?

If so...

Get Listed! Its FREE!

Sponsoring Culturally-specific Portals for Digital Marketing and Promotion



**REVENUES
& SALES**

Provided by SME Consultant

Third Eye Network, LLC

Location

Rochester, New York/Finger Lakes Region

Origin	Susu Management Group, LLC (<i>d/b/a Black-owned Business Rochester</i>) Niche Market Insights Foundation, Inc. (<i>501(c)3 not-for-profit organization</i>) InfoWorks Development
Budget	 Portals: \$25k – \$75k ea (implementation); \$12k – \$15k/year ea (maintenance) APIs: \$5k ea (implementation); \$1k+/year ea (maintenance)
Timeframe	 Portals: 3 – 6 months ea (implementation and training) APIs: 1 – 3 months ea (implementation and training)
Risk	 Requires a regional organizational affiliate or sponsoring agency, socio-political will and actively engaged community collaboration; the digital divide
Key Performance Indicators	Engagement Rates (<i># of niche listings, # of user accounts, # of pageviews, # of new visitors</i>); Community Commerce (<i># of paid subscriptions, niche market sales, non-niche revenues</i>); Community Impact (<i>funds raised, # of reinvestments, grants awarded, # of businesses/jobs</i>)
Partners & Resources	Dr. Lomax R. Campbell, Matthew T. Bain, The BOB Squad SM , and NMI Foundation Board; Proprietary Database, Niche Market Portals, Directory APIs, CalendarWiz API (<i>discontinued</i>)

Diagnostic

Backgrounder

- BOB Rochester was launched in late 2014 as an anti-racist response to the untimely deaths of Trayvon Martin, Eric Garner, Michael Brown Jr., and others at the hands of police; inspired by the legacy of Victor Hugo Green who published *The Green Book* (1936 – 1966)
- By design, it is a community-driven marketing and promotion resource for area BOBs intended to empower Black enterprise, public service organizations and affinity associations; this social enterprise has organically amassed over 700 listings since its public launch

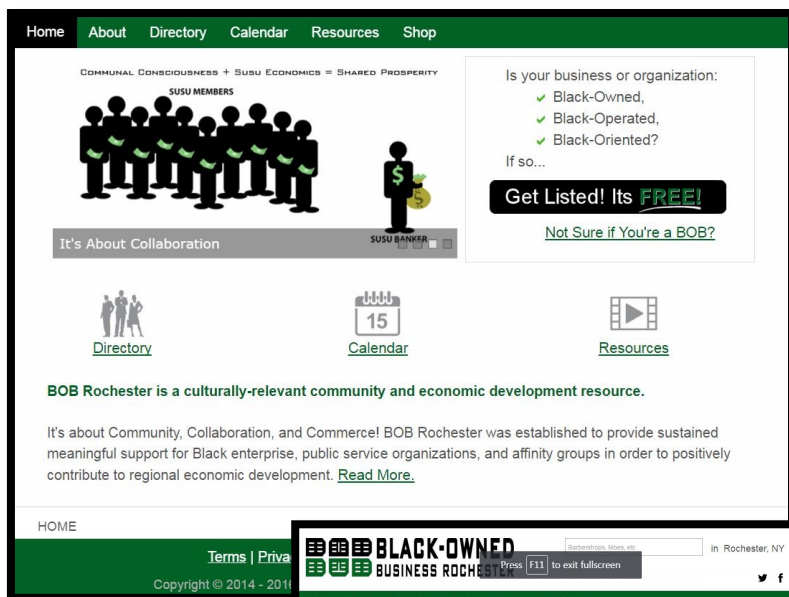
Pandemic Effects

- Site statistics demonstrate community participation runs parallel with crises (i.e., civic unrest, COVID-19 pandemic)
- Renewed interest in BOBs evidenced by 26.5k in new users (a 723.99% increase) with 36.5k sessions; average monthly pageviews have increased from 1,600 (pre-pandemic) to 6,900 (post-pandemic); pageviews spiked during the summer of 2020: 4.2k (May), 83.2k (Jun), 17.5k (Jul), 6.9k (Aug), 7.6k (Sept)
- Local community gifts surpassed \$50k

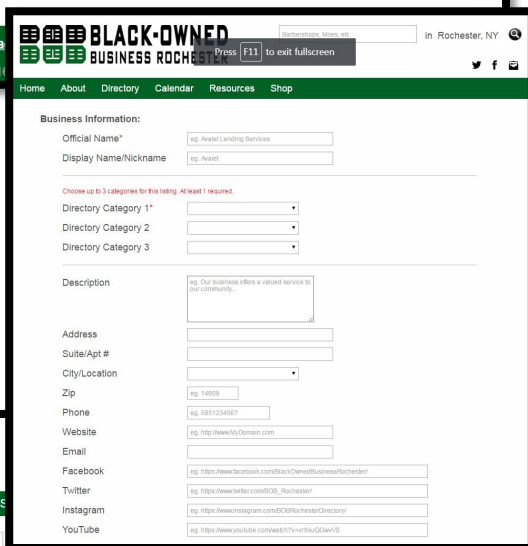
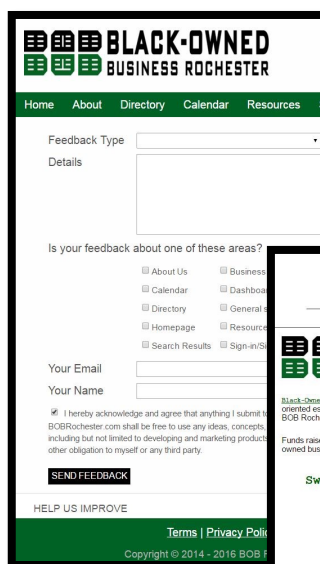
Actions – Pandemic-related Pivots

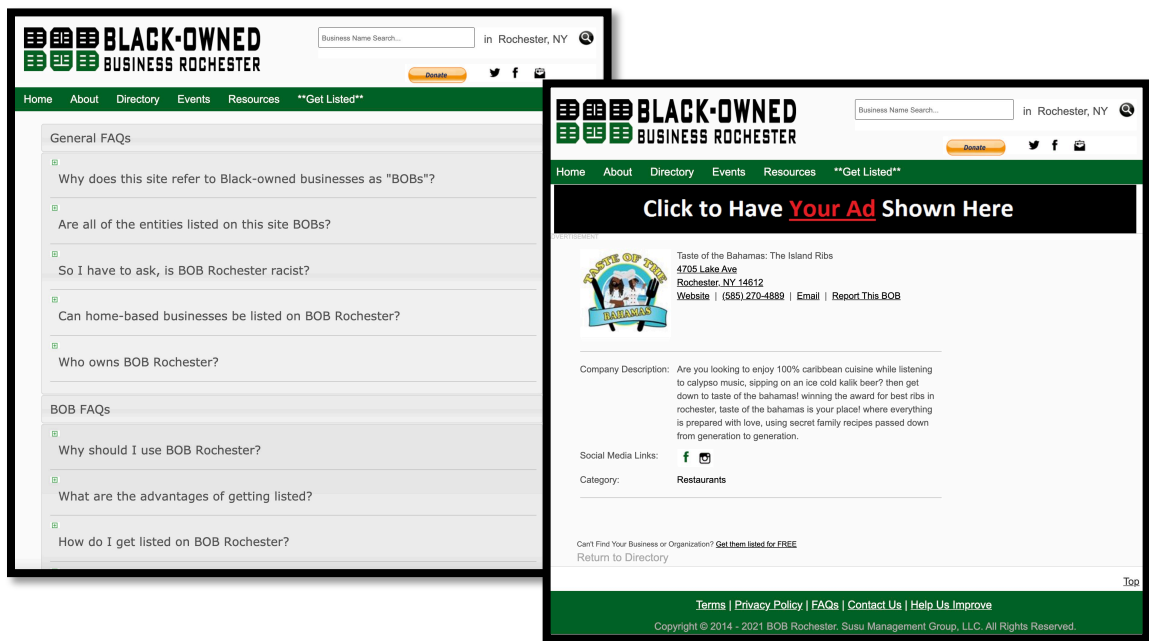
Platform Development

- Developed an API to expand network reach, BOB promotion, and the data warehouse; allot 1 – 3 months at \$5k
- New brand development is underway, LocalBOBs.com (Fall 2021), for national expansion; allot 6+ months at ≤\$75k
- Create niche-specific platforms centering Latinx-, Asian-, and Native American-owned businesses; can filter by women-, disadvantaged-, LGBT-, and veteran-owned, as well as certification statuses (including MBE, WBE, DBE, LGBTBE, SDVOB/VOSB, and Section 3 businesses); allot 4 months at \$25k – \$75k each and \$12k – \$15k for annual maintenance
- New features will include check-ins, profile administration, crowdsourcing, job boards, ratings, reviews, eCommerce, a request for responses feature, custom APIs, niche-specific reporting, free and paid subscription levels, and more
- Connect a community reinvestment fund



BOBRochester.com screenshots





Sample Pages Documentation

Ready for technical detail	Page	Description
4/23/20XX	About	Information page. A billboard of sorts to suggest the purpose of the site to the user in greater detail than the Home page.
	Add a BOB	(See Get Listed)
7/18/20XX	Calendar	A calendar display of events entered into the system. These events can be 'downloaded' to a user's device at will.
	Contact Us	A form to allow users to engage BOB Rochester administrators.
2/7/20XX	Directory	Listing of BOBs. Displayed in multiple ways to afford a comfortable user experience.
	FAQs	Frequently asked questions of users.
	Get Listed	A form interface that allows a user to request that a BOB get listed.
	Header (Search)	Used to search for BOB-records in the system by category, name, or tags. This should support partial string search. This page persists across all pages used in the site except for error-pages.
	Help Us Improve	A form to allow users to suggest ideas through the existing website.
	Home	An informational page. A billboard of sorts to suggest the purpose of the site to users, and highlight recent news and upcoming events.
	Privacy Policy	Static governing terms of privacy afforded to users of the BOB Rochester website.
	Resources	A listing of culturally-relevant books, movies, podcasts and other media focused on skill building and cultural community development.
	Shop	A listing of products for sale to support/sustain the efforts of BOB Rochester.
	Terms	Static terms of service provided by BOB Rochester to users of this website and system.
	Page (search results)	Resulting page of search or BOB Directory selection.
10/10/20XX	Profile	Static result of specific BOB listing.
	Media	Links to news articles, audio-visual files, and BOBR press kit items

Sample page documentation list for describing the purpose of each page and managing platform development

Process

Regional Integration Strategy

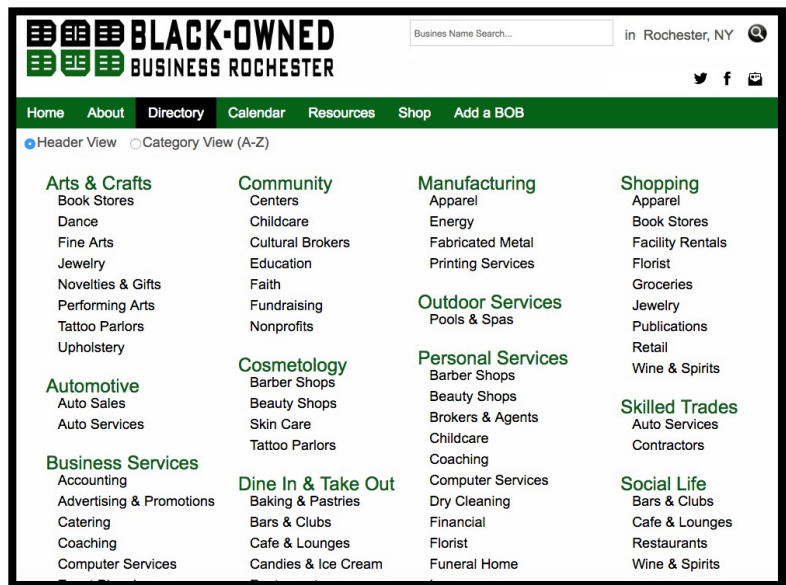
- Decide whether or not to partner with NMI Foundation, Inc. a new national non-profit (501c3) community wealth building organization to support these and related efforts within the regional context
- Identify an economic development or non-profit organization to serve as the *Organizational Affiliate* for the territory or region; they would spearhead network development and implementation with the software vendor and administer the network post-implementation, including onboarding and managing paid staff and/or volunteers (*see the next bullet*)
- Cultivate *Niche Market Ambassadors* (e.g., the BOB SquadSM) to perform outreach focused on deepening cultural community engagement through technical assistance and network navigation (budgetary considerations can include stipends, interns or co-ops, part-time, and full-time jobs)

Strategic Resource Development

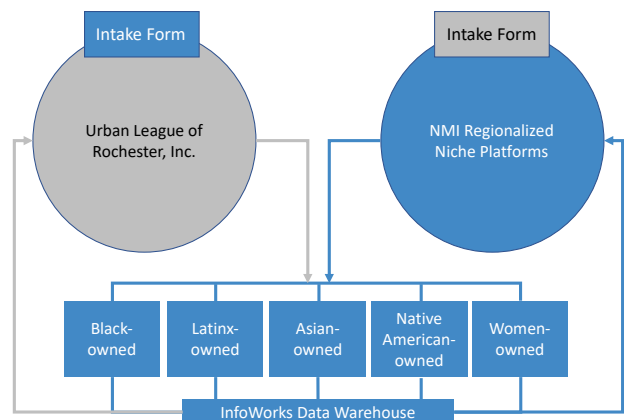
- Conduct outreach to the private sector, government, philanthropy, and the general community to garner financial support for the project; private sector incentives may include tax credits
- Establish a community fund connected to the network for garnering financial support and through which to allocate revenues for community reinvestment

Platform Implementation

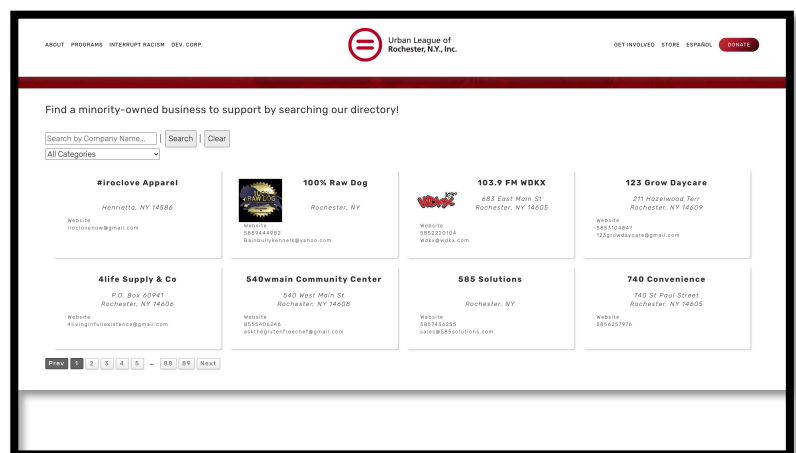
- Determine whether to sponsor one or more integrated culturally-specific portals and custom APIs in support of cultural communities of interest (*keep in mind that prices may vary by vendor, number of counties, population size, and/or features*)
- Select a vendor like InfoWorks and collaborate with the community to determine the desired scope of work
- Form a 3 – 7 person project team and maintain a weekly meeting schedule with the vendor
- Develop site content, create social media pages, pilot site developments, participate in training workshops, and identify niche directory listings with the community; celebrate wins publicly
- Prepare a rollout strategy with actions



Original BOB Rochester directory screenshot in header view



API conceptual model for NMI regionalized platforms and Urban League of Rochester (client)



New LocalBOBs.com API on client's website (www.urbanleagueroch.org)



Optional Other Search Parameters

Location:

☒ Search near me

☐ Search near

Search near me

☐ Ignore location

Search radius:

15 miles



Search

Local eCommerce Marketplace


**REVENUES
& SALES**

Provided by SME Consultant

Mondoforma

Location

Online – Ashland Marketplace is in process

Origin

The idea sprang from a frustrating day trying to locate an item I knew was available somewhere in my town. Hours of effort gave way to simply ordering the item online and waiting a week for it to arrive. The technology for local online shopping was widely available and mostly free but required planning and organization.

Budget



Many of the tools are free. Planning and organization may benefit from an educational seminar, training, and consultations, at a nominal fee. Training is also widely available online for many of the tools.

Timeframe



Individual retailers can create accounts in ~1 hour. Community efforts to coordinate should be ~6 weeks, and a community-centric marketing effort, is an ongoing activity, > 6 months.

Risk



The potential benefit, leveraging internet technologies to steer shoppers to local stores rather than distant, online-only websites, is great. The financial and structural risks are minimal.

Key Performance Indicators

Total sales (\$), total online sales (\$), total number of transactions, number of BOPIS, BOPAC, and local deliveries, # of customers, # of new customers

Partners & Resources

The core technologies – SEO, mapping, marketplaces, etc. already exist and mostly free. An effective program will also integrate with other projects, such as business websites, email campaigns (CRM), Facebook, Etsy, etc. Additional resources could include: community business directory, community outreach resources, scheduling a group discussion for the purposes of planning and organizing, and coordination with other LRRP projects and teams to incorporate the benefits of those programs into store, community, and marketplace operations.

Diagnostic

Every porch-delivery – by FedEx, UPS, Amazon, etc. – is potentially a purchase that was made online and shipped from a distant retailer. Most of these purchases are items that could be purchased from local retailers. Providing a “shop local online, buy local online” capability, mindset, and awareness can strengthen the local economy, and help local retailers.

A leading metric of this phenomenon is Decreasing Total Retail Sales. In the absence of decreasing population, this is an indicator that sales dollars are being spent outside the community.

Decreasing retail employment is generally an early indication that revenue/employee is insufficient to maintain employee headcount. Technology can be a force multiplier which can increase sales per employee, and create a need for additional employees, and increase the needs for other supporting businesses that provide training, equipment, communications, and connectivity services

Even local retailers that have their own websites from which they can sell, are at a competitive disadvantage to large eCommerce platforms that present thousands of products in dozens of product categories. A local multi-vendor eCommerce marketplace combines the communities total product selection, and creates a comparable selection of products to large eCommerce companies, making the community an eCommerce destination.

This approach should also promote the store, provides a map to their location, and strengthen the relationship between shoppers and local businesses. Retailer identification and branding reinforces the shopper-retailer relationship, and encourages repeat business.

Action Item

The recommended course of action is an initial outreach to community stores to present the benefits of a coordinated community-centric online marketplace technologies. This may require some collateral materials, and an outreach effort.

As with the “Coordinated Communications” project, the “Local eCommerce Marketplace” project is effectively a coordinated and integrated process. This means that the project results will benefit greatly from identifying a point person to coordinate the discussion and efforts.

The community of retailers may also benefit from a group presentation on the creation of a marketplace, websites, a local online business directory, local search technologies, and how integrating the various technologies and platforms can create a powerful “local online” alternative to the major eCommerce websites.

Many of the technologies and platforms are already built and no development or customization activity is required. Awareness of the technologies and how to apply and integrate them will also benefit from a community sponsored publicity effort and/or outreach campaign.

In some cases, integrating the various technologies may require some outside specialists or training, depending on the specific groups of technologies selected. Retailers can and should sign up for accounts on various platforms and establish omni-channel strategies. Communities can and should build directories. Directories and websites can and should be integrated with marketplace platforms. And, ideally, retailers should leverage cross-platform inventory management tools.

Process

The process for implementing this project begins by identifying whether this should be a consultant-led project, a DIY project, or some combination of the two. The community should identify the community point person on the project who will centralize communications, set a project schedule, and monitor the key metrics in monitoring its success. This should be someone that can speak for the community and with local retailers.

Next, we recommend scheduling a community discussion/presentation (~1 hour) to present the project, describe the implementation, and enroll participants.

Each enrollee will receive an email that provides links to information, tools, and tutorials that will help them create vendor accounts on the various platforms. Emphasis should be placed on these activities being coordinated on a community level, and integrated to create a "the community is a marketplace" result. Ideally, this should also include a community retail business directory and local-search enabled marketplace platform.

With vendors accounts created and products uploaded, the marketplace is effectively fully operational. However, it is our experience that merely creating the capability does not automatically mean that customers will begin using it.

We highly recommend that the marketplace project be implemented in conjunction with a marketing or communications project. This can take many forms, from community communications up to a fully coordinated social media marketing project. We will provide a Best Practices project sheet for a coordinated social media marketing project which is designed to work with the marketplace project, but can also be leveraged to benefit any community projects or communications.

We highly recommend integrating the directory and marketplace with other online retail initiatives, facilitating an omni-channel solution for those retailers engaged in selling via multiple online marketplaces.

The last component in the process is to collect data on the project progress and integrate it with other community communications. This will keep residents and businesses engaged and informed about the community's efforts to strengthen the local economy, and invested in a positive outcome.

To be competitive with major eCommerce websites, the community marketplace will need to provide a comparable level of product selection and convenience features. But the project can gain a competitive advantage by emphasizing those dimensions of competition which eCommerce sites cannot match, such as: Customer Service, Product Demonstrations, shopping as an experience, personal relationships, proximity, and location-based fulfillment options (BOPIS, BOPAC, Local Delivery, etc.)

ashlandmass.com/842/Shop-Local-Ashland

CORONAVIRUS INFO

Covid-19 Information for 2021
[Read On...](#)

Create an Account - Increase your productivity, customize your experience, and engage in information you care about. [Sign In](#)

Ashland Restaurant Directory

[Shop Local Ashland](#)

 Ashland Deals & Steals

Home > Doing Business > Business Directory > Shop Local Ashland

Shop Local Ashland

Shopping local was never more important than NOW! Please remember during these tough times our local shops and restaurants need us now more than ever. During the next few months when you are looking for holiday presents or are looking to enjoy a delicious dinner, think ASHLAND! There is so much right here in your own backyard!

If you shop or dine local in town let us know! Tag @TownofAshlandMA on Facebook or Instagram, share the love and spread the news that Ashland is not only a great place to live, work but is the best place to play, eat and shop!

Shopping

Click any image below to be directed directly to the businesses website.

A community business directory (community government owned) provides a listing service for interested businesses. In this example, different pages are created for different categories of businesses, including restaurants and retail.

Westborough

https://mondoforma.com

Become a seller Vendors Sale My Account

- All categories -
 Search products

Optional Other Search Parameters

Location:

☐ Search near me
☒ Search near Westborough, MA, USA
☐ Ignore location

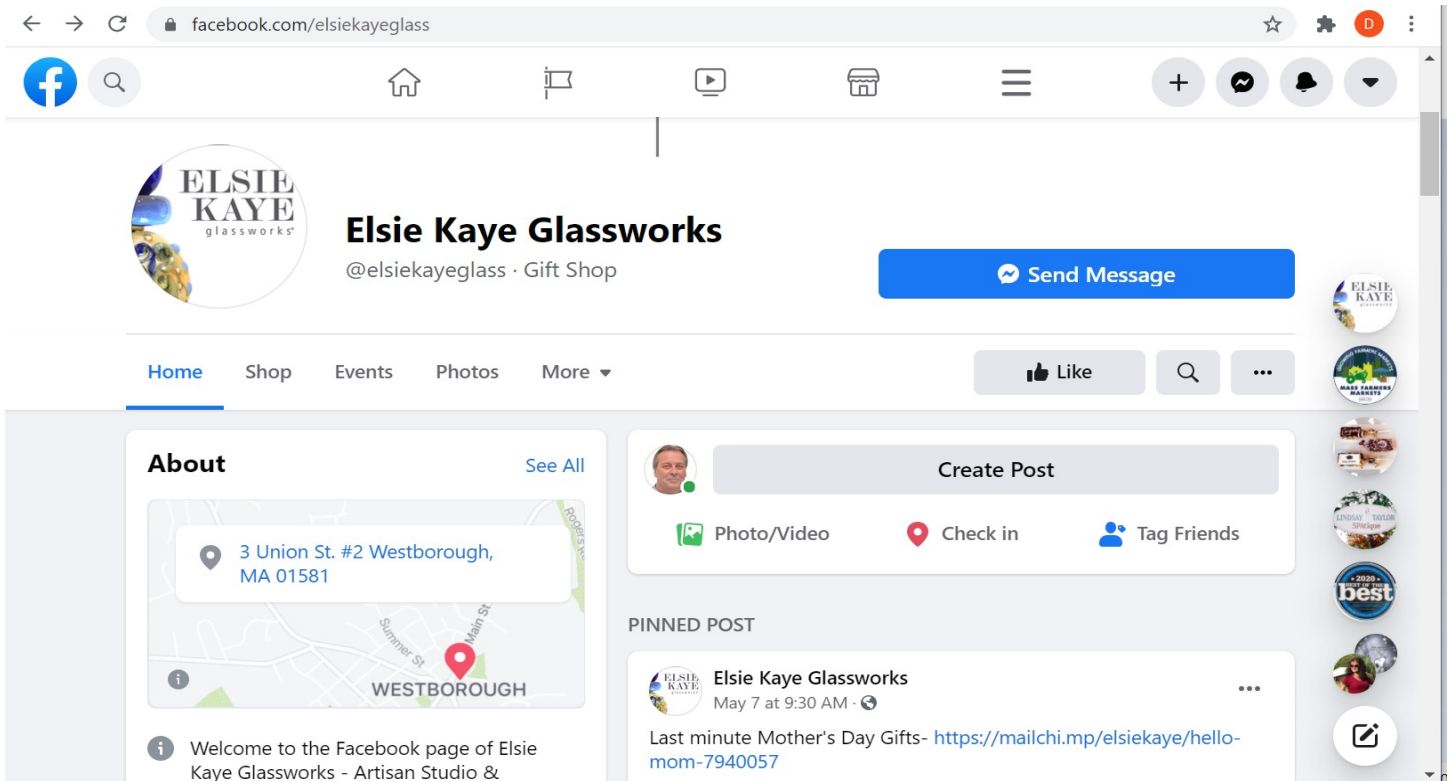
Search radius: 15 miles

Search

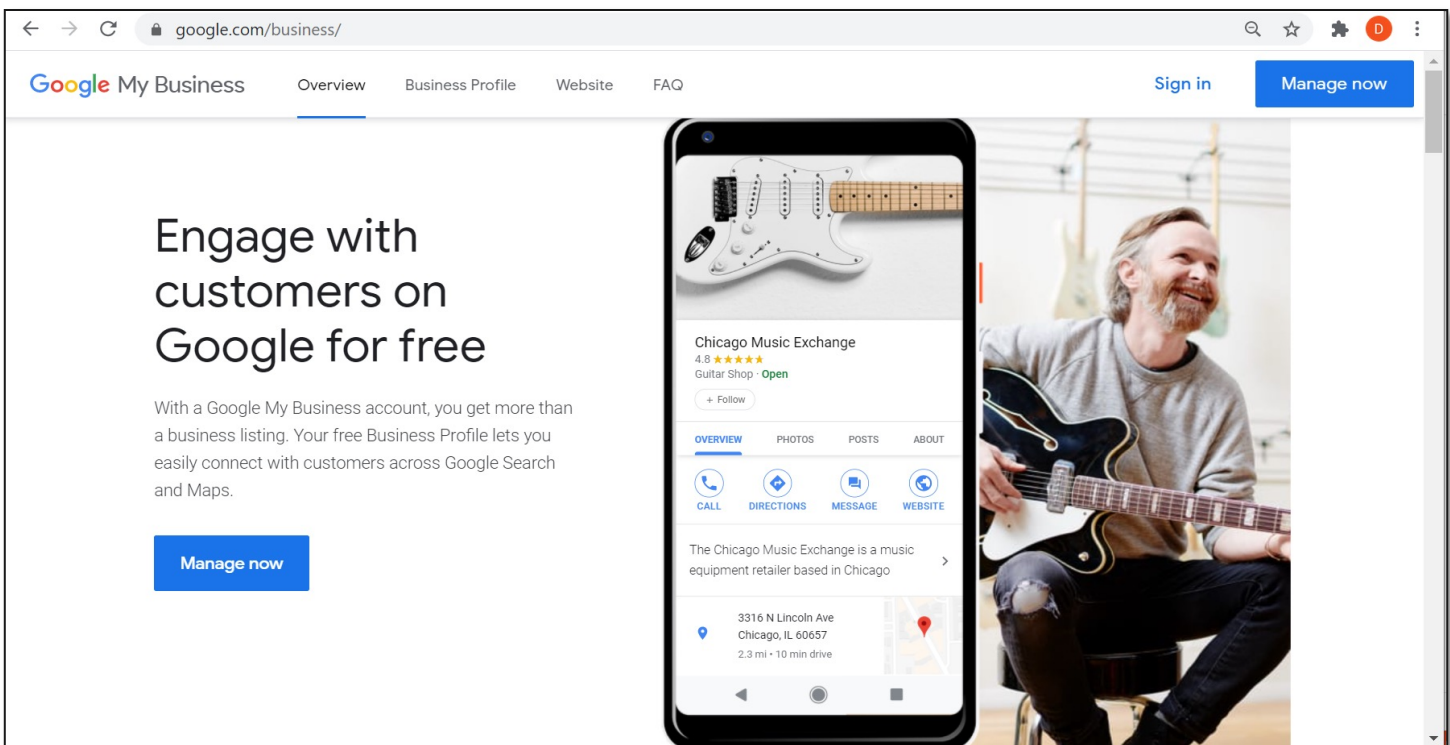
Cart is empty

Featured Vendors Near You

Mondoforma is a local-search enabled marketplace, that allows shoppers to identify their location, their radius of search, and keywords of the product that they are shopping for. The Home page also provides featured vendors that might be of interest to shoppers.




A Facebook Page connects your business with customers and offers key information about your business, products, and services. It also creates a “feed” of information that is presented to your best customers, helping to solidify the shopper-store relationship, and keeping them informed about news and upcoming events.




Credibility gained from Google is enough to sway people to be 38% more likely to visit your store, and 29% more likely to buy something. Research finds that 88% of consumers trust online reviews as much as personal recommendations.

Checkout


Deliver to



Curbside Pickup — Free
(Immediate)



USPS — \$1.00
(2 days)



Local Delivery — \$3.00
(Same day)

Want it right now? Pick it up at the store.

Customer Sign in

Customer's notes

Chat

Blue Ice - the novel by Mark Cahill	
1 x \$9.95	
1 item(s)	\$9.95
Stripe surcharge	\$0.20
Taxes	
VAT (6.25% included)	\$0.59
Order Total	\$10.15

Shoppers appreciate preferred additional delivery methods, and stores that offered BOPIC and BOPAS options saw their sales increase >17%. In addition to the traditional shipping options that eCommerce websites offer – like FedEx, UPS, and USPS – local retailers can offer options which their proximity to shoppers enables – such as Buy Online Pickup In Store (BOPIS), Buy Online Pickup At Curb (BOPAC), and Local Delivery.



Retail & Restaurant Technology Initiative







Provided by SME Consultant

Cambridge Retail Advisors

Location

Boston, MA

Origin	Established in 2019, the Retail and Restaurant Technology Initiative has piloted, vetted, and implemented its mission in partnership with Boston Main Streets Foundation, the City of Boston, and Citizens Bank. During the COVID-19 crisis we have quantified the significant impact of our program and are proud to promote the great diversity of participants.
Budget	  <p>Projects can be customized to work within a range of budgets. The typical configuration per location cost is ~\$5,200, outlined below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Equipment (iPad, cash drawer, scanner, receipt printer) ~ \$2,000• First Year POS Subscription Fees ~ \$1,200• Project Management and Implementation - \$2,000
Timeframe	 <p>4-6 weeks is the average time frame for a new retail or restaurant implementation, this would include: candidate vetting, enabling eCommerce, setup of POS hardware and software, and establishing cost savings best practices. Business coaching is conducted throughout the engagement with the entrepreneur. Surveys are completed periodically to validate that all steps were completed, and provide feedback to better the program.</p>
Risk	 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Participant Limitations</u> – Project timelines are dependent on participant involvement. We use a screening process to make sure those chosen have the time and ability to commit.• <u>Language Barriers</u> – Language can present a challenge, but this may be overcome with translation services to keep the program accessible to businesses owners of different races and creeds.• <u>Internet Access or Cell Service</u> – Internet is required to support the POS system, hence it's useful to build a partnership with a provider such as Comcast.
Key Performance Indicators	Implementation time, eCommerce, online ordering revenue, operating cost reduction, stakeholder reporting, surveys and program evaluation
Partners & Resources	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. <u>Cambridge Retail Advisors</u> – Program Management2. <u>Comcast</u> – Internet, Voice, Security3. <u>Lightspeed POS</u> – Technology Partner (retail sector)4. <u>Toast POS</u> – Technology Partner (restaurant sector)5. <u>Quantic POS</u> – Technology Partner (retail sector)6. <u>SCORE</u> – business coaching/support

Diagnostic

With the COVID-19 pandemic came an acceleration of digital commerce dependency. Unfortunately, small businesses were hardest hit, as many lacked the knowledge or capital to adapt to the changing behaviors of their consumers. Through our initiative we empowered local small entrepreneurs with industry leading technology and best practices to be able to compete in an ever-evolving economy. Through our survey research we've been able to quantify that businesses involved in our program fared better than the national average, and that they were in a far better position to thrive long-term.

Action Item

The Retail & Restaurant Technology Initiative would fund the following deliverables to the end user business:

- Payment of POS subscription fees for one-year
- POS Hardware
- Access to reduced credit card processing rates and internet
- Business coaching/mentorship

We provide expertise that has been refined through working with over 350 national retail and restaurant chains on thousands of engagements. Our Retail and Restaurant Technology Initiative leverages our proprietary tools and thought leadership developed from those engagements. The program has been honed and vetted and has proven to deliver immediate impact to your community.

Below are the key actions:

- Meet with the representatives from a given municipality to better understand their goals, and find ways in which our program meets those goals
- Solicit, interview, and select candidate businesses for the program
- Start the implementation process
 - Define individual business requirements
 - Order and deploy hardware and software
 - Establish cost savings measures (Credit Card Fees/Internet Fees)
 - Start business coaching
 - Survey participants to quantify progress

Process

Discovery Phase (1 week)

- 1.CRA schedules an individual consultation with business owner, used to understand business and technology requirements (30-60 minutes)
- 2.Following the meeting, business will be extended a Program Offer to formally participate in the program

Onboarding & Implementation Phase (4-5 weeks)

- 3.Once accepted, CRA will introduce owner to the Technology Onboarding Team to finalize POS requirements
- 4.CRA Internet Partner will evaluate if there are ISP savings available
- 5.CRA and Technology Partner will begin to gather retail inventory or restaurant menu information, set-up payment processing and complete other onboarding tasks
- 6.CRA and Technology Partner will jointly install the Point-of-Sale and eCommerce solutions
- 7.CRA and Technology Partner will test the system and train the retailer
- 8.Introduction to SCORE and/or CRA Mentor

Summary

4-6 total weeks including multiple interviews and onboarding/installation will net industry leading POS tech and multiple cost saving and training opportunities. Candidates will receive follow-up contact to validate the results, and provide feedback to better the program