

City of Greenville, Michigan

Community Marketing Plan



Introduction

The purpose of this marketing plan is to serve as a road map for the community of Greenville, Michigan to use over the next few years to market itself. This plan seeks to provide assistance to its users in finding and implementing new ways to promote and attract people to the Greenville area. Members of the Greenville community are very aware of all that the city has to offer. It is now up to us to generate awareness of the Greenville area outside of the community in order to draw people to move to and travel to Greenville. It is important that the Greenville community begin to distinguish itself from other nearby cities of nearby size and structure (Rockford, Lowell, Sparta, Cedar Springs) in order to remain relevant and competitive. While not all recommended tactics must necessarily be implemented, it is important that those charged with implementation of this plan do so while consulting and revising with other stakeholders. This will ensure consistency in the content and delivery of all marketing messages.

A goal with this marketing plan is simply to make others aware of all the great things Greenville has to offer that we already know about. By spreading awareness and knowledge of the community, we will draw people in to visit the area and experience this small, yet self-sufficient town for themselves.

This marketing plan will address four areas of the Greenville community and how we can base our strategy on these pre-existing strengths: **Community, Self-Sufficiency, Education/Arts, Outdoors/ Natural Resources**

Community

Greenville is the epitome of the classic American small town, but with a quality that sets it apart from others of its kind: resiliency. Greenville is bouncing back from adversity that may have crumbled other cities that lack the kind of heart that the city of Greenville has. The people of Greenville thrive off of our daily personal interactions. We look out for one another. Our citizens are humble and hard-working and the city acts as a home, not just a place of residence. We also all rally together to show off our pride in our city once a year in the famous Danish Festival.

The sense of community in Greenville can be sensed immediately when one comes into contact with its friendly people and this will undoubtedly appeal to the target market families. Greenville gives off an impression of charm and safety that positions it as a great place to raise a family. It offers a sort of safe haven outside of Grand Rapids where commuters can still get to work in a reasonable time and come home to a neighborhood where they know all their neighbors and feel safe letting their kids play in the yard.

Self- Sufficiency

One thing that undoubtedly sets Greenville apart from other small towns of its size is the ability that this city has to take care of itself. We have our own grocery stores, hardware stores, restaurants, houses of worship, schools, college, and a large, award-winning health care network at our disposal. One need rarely leave the city to fulfill all of their needs and live comfortably. As a city, we are always moving forward and evolving, whether that means building a state of the art new football stadium or opening new restaurants and businesses. The people of Greenville are dedicated to the progress of Greenville and continue to put faith and trust in its environment. The

convenience of being able to get everything that one needs in a single town is an extremely valuable characteristic to the type of people that we are trying to attract.

Education/ Arts

For a town of its size, Greenville has extensive educational opportunities available. The Greenville Public Schools district alone is 133.6 square miles in size. The fact that Greenville has 4 public elementary schools, all located in different parts of town, is extremely attractive to the target audience who most likely has young children that will need to ride a bus to school if their parents are working professionals. The tight-knit educational community creates an environment that parents can trust to be dedicated to the success of their child. The value that the Greenville Public School places on preserving the fine arts provides citizens not only with consistent entertainment events, but also with the assurance that their child will be nurtured creatively in addition to intellectually. The Our3 endowment campaign also provides evidence that the arts will remain a prominent part of the community. In addition, Greenville falls in extremely close proximity to Montcalm Community College, offering the possibility for recent graduates and adults alike to seek higher education at an affordable cost.

Outdoors/ Natural Resources

For families seeking a beautiful place to settle down, or outdoor enthusiasts looking to walk, bike, hike, or fish our beautiful resources, Greenville offers an exceptional backdrop for quality time spent outdoors. The Fred Meijer Flat River Trail, awarded the Quality of Life Award by the American Society of Civil Engineers runs through the heart of town and provides 9 miles of beautiful scenery for visitors and residents alike to enjoy. Many other trails twist and turn throughout the city and surrounding area, adding an additional 50+ miles of trail. In addition, Greenville has recreation areas for boating, sledding, snowboarding, golf, and many other sports.

Summary of Focus Group Findings



Summary of Focus Group Findings

Focus groups were conducted on November 14th and 17th, 2011 in order to gather insight from some of Greenville's community members and stakeholders as to what they see in Greenville and how they feel that Greenville should be marketed to the target market, as well as whom they felt this target market was. These are some of the key themes and most-interesting responses that emerged from the focus groups.

1. Define collective qualities and value of Greenville's products/services/people

Personal interaction,
Don't get lost,
We know each other
We care,
People watching out for each other
Small town atmosphere-personal service
1-to-1 service,
Friendly, unique items,
Specialized products (to some extent),
Education,
Health care,
Community,
Workforce (currently employed, the majority of unemployed people are most likely employable)
Philanthropic,
Resilient,
Education Foundation of Greenville,
GYAC education,
Collaborative,
Coordinated,
Forward-thinking,
We look out for each other,
Natural resources-lakes/trails,
Arts and culture,
Greenville is both new town and old town-both are progressive and country,
Cohesive supportive community,
Innovative,
Hometown of Meijer,
Grocery retail,
Faith-based,

Convenient,
Entrepreneurial,
Self-sufficient

2.What does Greenville specialize in; What are we known for?

Bike trail,
Nature,
Danish Festival,
Meijer/Walmart/Kmart,
Nelson's,
Klackle's,
Gus Macker,
Lakes,
Personal service,
Antiques,
Diversity,
Regional shopping,
Major companies,
Attractions and events,
Recreation,
Nice people,
Where is Greenville? What are we not known for?
Assisting neighbors,
Self-reliance,
Commercial and business hub,
Safety,
Diehards,
Relentless,
Resilience,
Small town,
Education,
Community-centered,
Tourism,
Agriculture- farming community,
Electrolux,
Not going away,
Philanthropic,
Safety,
Location (only minutes away)
People who work here don't necessarily want to live here too,
Quality of life

3. Greenville's mission statement might read something like...?

- Creatively and selectively making a difference in your world.
- Our town maybe a destination spot for bike or walking trail, shopping or overnight stay.
- To offer a variety of experiences and need with the caring feel of small town service.
- To serve the regional clientele with products and services.
- To be a regional base for employment and entrepreneurs
- Taking care of our families and guests.
- Grow a place to grow.
- Evolving with the evolving world.
- A safe, sophisticated, small city with opportunities for all.
- To create a big city; opportunities while keeping a small town feel.
- The place to live, learn, work, and thrive.
- Serve our community with the best in the industry, services and recreation.
- To be the first choice (most sought after) location to live, shop, play and raise a family.
- Moving ahead for the benefit of all.
- Greenville provides a great living whether it is home life, work life, or spiritual life.
- To create a small town atmosphere while maintaining big city services.
- We strive to be the community you want, providing the services and amenities you want or need.
- To provide big town amenities while retaining small-town character; providing a quality of life to residents.
- Collaborating for continuous growth and quality of life.

4. Greenville's tagline might read something like...?

- Work, Shop, Play
- We have what you need
- Great living, shopping and playing (recreation)
- Small town feel with regional amenities
- A thriving community on the bend of beautiful Flat River
- Growing businesses that thrive and neighbors you know
- I'm home
- Little city-acting big
- The place where you want to live
- Fringe-rural meets urban

TAGLINES, Continued

- A sign of the times
- A small city with big opportunities
- A small city that acts big
- Small town that delivers big services
- Small town feel, large town services
- The small town that thinks BIG!

- Little city in a big town
- You're almost here/there
- Everything you need- and then some
- More than you expect
- Living large in a small town
- Small town living at its best
- Small town, big ideas
- Home to whatever you need or want
- Greenville: like before only better
- Visit-you'll stay!
- Small town- it's a good thing.

5. Who is our target market? Who does Greenville attract?

People looking for instant gratification, people traveling or wanting uniqueness, grocery shoppers, shopping, overnight stay, active people using the trail, working middle and upper-middle class families with kids, tourists, bikers, regional center with shopping and services (only ½ drive), tourists/visitors, next generation business owners, young professionals,, Greenville residents, health care providers, senior living centers, green manufacturers, innovators/creators, ambitious, forward thinkers, college grads come "home", young families, sportsmen and outdoor enthusiasts, empty nesters, active adults and seniors, entrepreneurs, diversity in age and culture, West MI area residents, potential businesses, college graduates, commuter community.

6. List 10 attributes describing Greenville's personality/character

Small town feel, personal service, innovative, progressive, creative, energetic, friendly, resilient, thriving, optimistic, hard-working, safe, diligent, caring, open, friendly, welcoming, outgoing, healthy, pride, collaborative, community, unique, pedestrian-friendly, green

7. How does the Greenville's personality interact with our target audience?

Friendly caring service, speaks well to established families/seniors but not to young, single and educated; inconsistency...experience can be good and bad, which makes a huge impression, atmosphere makes a huge difference, some stores close during events, bi-polar personality, we don't interact well with the younger generation, we interact well to a family unit who wants to settle-in, it is not the warmest environment.

8. What characteristics stand out and gain attention?

Humble/ humility, nice people, natural resources, work ethic, relaxed, arrogant (Greenville is da' bomb), we don't promote ourselves, we make excuses for our positive qualities.

9. Create a profile of the Greenville brand; describe personality and character

-Greenville is a small, mid-western city with big city services and cultural attraction, which is proving that it can survive and flourish as a positive, safe, family-oriented community. There is an atmosphere of changing economic and employment challenged. Modest, but proud; open, but traditional; and experienced, but innovative.

-NOW: Community divided; old vs. new (Black Field)

FUTURE: ONE community focused on the future of its people and businesses

-Small town with lots of potential if commitment is made to invest and take risks for growth. Some good, solid foundations/ organizations but need to expand to draw in or keep in those associated with them (hospital employees)

-Celebrates our history and constantly evolves/grows; looks to bright future. We are a place where businesses thrive, people connect and you know your neighbors.

-A town that has been through tough times and persevered because of its people- a town still struggling with its image, but one that sells itself short. Many opportunities exist for enjoying a high quality of life

-I like the term bipolar; where big city and small town come together. The personality is "hometown" but with enough recreation and shopping close by to make it seem big.

-Small town with considerate people. Quiet, informal and a gateway to lots of outdoor recreation. It has access to many big city services without the drawbacks of congestion and traffic.

-Greenville is a resilient town, stupid in tradition. It is a caring community with excellent schools and a quality health care system. It is the economic and commercial hub of the county.

-Charming but gritty; small town with big town amenities and problems; mix of rural and urban; connected and cohesive.

-We're the "tween"- between small and large; between basic services and full services. Seems like we want to take the next step but there are too many options. We think we know what we want to be, but not sure how to get there. How to pay for it is always the biggest roadblock.

10. What touch points exist between Greenville and the community/public?

Nelson's SnoMotion, Klackle's Tour de Donut, bike trail, car dealerships, golf courses, Danish Festival, 4H, high school activities and sporting events, shopping, Gus Macker, Farmer's Market, Expo, Candlestone Inn, symphonies and orchestra, show choirs, fine arts, media (online), The Daily News, website, Facebook, Winter Inn, schools, lakes, recreational opportunities, hospital and health care, education, Montcalm Community College, churches, service clubs, fine arts, faith community.

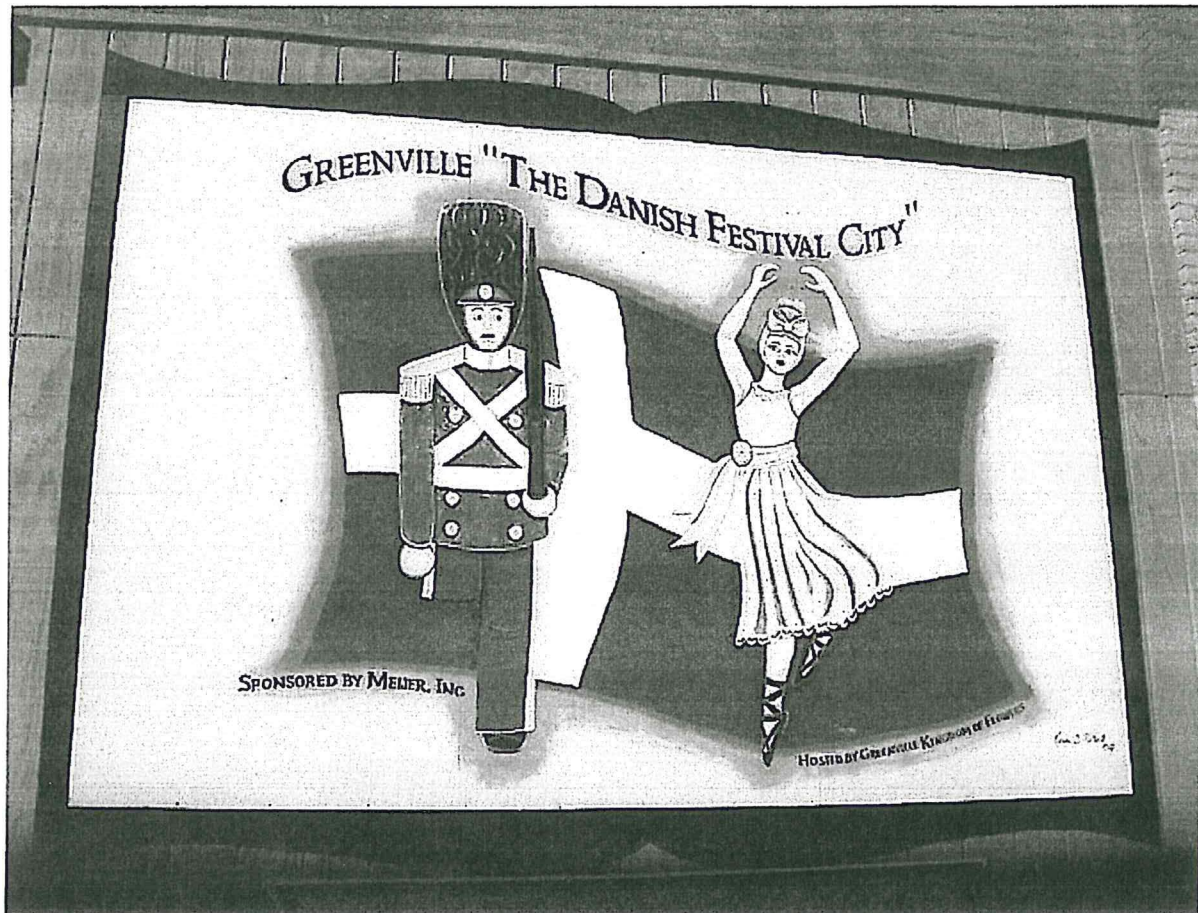
11. Can Greenville deliver?

Yes, if we can focus our strengths, Yes we can/do with health care and education. Lack of collaboration, lack of communication, not knowing what's going on, lack of information for key stakeholders, need bike racks around for trail, lack of signage for the trail, easier access from bike trail to downtown, events with businesses not open late or not open at all, no pool, no Starbucks, no 3rd place to work, difficulty defining ourselves, need a strong traditional manufacturing base, not a welcoming community, empty store fronts and lack of retail, lack of night light, lacking an aquatic center, lacking a gym/physical activity center that draws people.

12. Additional thoughts/suggestions?

- Develop a social media effort (Greenville- I "like" it) with a community calendar and retail specials
- Cross promotional opportunities
- Need to have a larger regional approach with gain for everyone; buy-in from outer areas
- Avoid focusing on what only benefits Greenville, but instead what benefits the entire area.

SWOT Analysis & Critical Issues



SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis seeks to guide users of this marketing plan as to what strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats will either help or hinder the implementation of the plan. These attributes are analyzed to describe how they relate to the goal of attracting new residents and visitors to the Greenville area.

Strengths: Attributes that will help with achieving the goal

Self- sufficiency
Exceptional recreation facilities and natural resources
Positive reputation for school system
Small-town charm
State-of-the-art high school football stadium
Danish Festival

Weaknesses: Attributes that will hinder the achievement of the goal

Poor environment for businesses
Lack of night-life
No draw for young, professionals
Many empty storefronts
Not the warmest environment
Many people don't know where Greenville is/ haven't heard of it

Opportunities: Conditions that are helpful in achieving the goal

Proximity to Grand Rapids and Lansing
Many people who work in Grand Rapids or Lansing do not wish to live in those large cities and would rather live somewhere rural.
Fred Meijer Flat River Trail
Lots of available area for new businesses

Threats: Conditions that are not helpful in achieving the goal

Other nearby cities do not have such an unfavorable economic reputation
Greenville residents can sometimes be resistant to change
Nearby cities are often perceived as having more wealth (Rockford, Lowell)
Not a positive track record for success of new businesses

Critical Issues

Introducing the new vision and image for Greenville to its current residents before trying to advertise it externally

If we begin advertising and implementing marketing tactics outside of the city of Greenville without first introducing the new image to the people of Greenville, they will experience dissonance with the campaign from the first time they encounter it out in the West Michigan area. This could lead them to feel as if the wool has been pulled over their eyes and the city they know and love is changing around them. In order for the goal to be achieved, all the stakeholder in Greenville's future need to be aware and involved with changes as they happen.

Overcoming negative economic reputation

Greenville needs to work to establish itself as a place that businesses can grow and succeed in order to assure the target market that the town they are coming to will not turn to a ghost town overnight; that there will always be businesses and restaurants in the area, allowing Greenville to maintain its self-sufficiency.

Target Market Profile



Target Market Profiles

Primary Market

Young, working, middle to upper-middle class families with children who are looking to settle down and raise children in a quiet, safe, environment

Secondary Market

Commuters who work in bigger cities like Grand Rapids or Lansing, but want to live somewhere more low-key and relaxed

Tertiary Market

Active seniors and outdoor enthusiasts who will utilize Greenville's outdoor amenities

Key Competitor Profiles

Information on surrounding areas and the marketing-related characteristics that they have to offer.

Grand Rapids

Basic

- Second largest city in Michigan, after Detroit
- Population: 1,005,648 (2010 Census)

Strengths/Advantages

- Many entertainment options (music, sports, arts, recreation)
- Vast employment opportunities close to residential areas
- An array of different neighborhoods attracting many demographics.

Notoriety

- Voted "Beer City U.S.A." 2012 & 2013
- Grand Rapids LipDub video held world record for 2 years(Largest LipDub)
- Home of ArtPrize annual art competition
- Hometown of 38th President of United States, Gerald R. Ford
- Home to Van Andel Museum, one of oldest history museums in U.S.
- Meyer May House, a Frank Lloyd Wright designed home, in Heritage Hill

Rockford

Basic

- Slogan: "Where You Belong"
- Population: 5,719 (2010 Census)
- Short distance from Grand Rapids

Strengths/Advantages

- Rouge River trail
- Rockford Dam
- Strong downtown community culture

Notoriety

- Riverside music in summer
- Farmer's market
- Harvest Festival
- Celtic Festical

Belding

Basic

- Slogan: "Live.Grow.Naturally."
- Population: 5,757 (2010 Census)

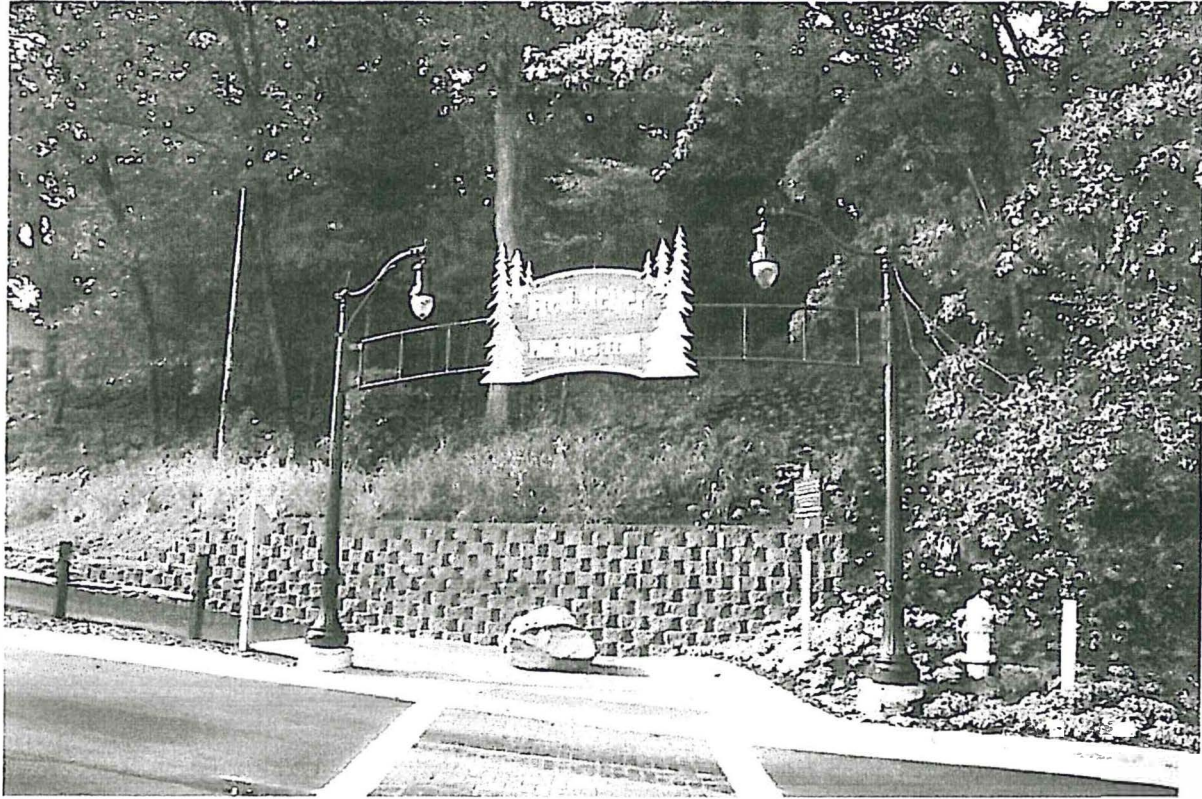
Strengths/Advantages

- Many parks
- Historical sites
- Recently modernized high school and school athletic facilities

Notoriety

- Home of Gus Macker 3 on 3 basketball tournament

Elements and Recommendations



Elements

In order for the city of Greenville to be successful in rebranding itself, an emphasis must be placed on consistency. We need to be sure that we are not selling ourselves as something we are not or allowing our biases to get in the way when analyzing effectiveness of marketing materials produced for the campaign. In addition, the strengths of Greenville that are emphasized in marketing materials must be things that are evident upon visiting the city, things such as the people, the outdoor trails and recreation, the self-sufficiency of the city, etc.

It is crucial that the new image of Greenville is communicated within the city and to its residents before moving outside. While it may seem unnecessary and wasteful to spend resources on making the people that already live in Greenville aware of all of its strength, in actuality this could not be more important. The citizens of Greenville will be instrumental to the success of the rebranding campaign because they are the people that visitors and potential residents will come in to contact with. They will offer firsthand and brutally honest accounts of what the city has to offer and where it falls short. And because they are simply people born and/or raised in this city with no motivation to butter up visitors, their credibility is great and their word is very powerful. It is because of this principle that we must start from within if we intend to get the word out about the city of Greenville.

In beginning the marketing campaign for Greenville within the city, we are simply trying to make residents aware of characteristics of their city that they perhaps had never noticed or consciously thought about. Maybe an industrial worker in the city had never previously been aware of the award-winning arts program at Greenville High School or a medical professional within the city didn't know about Greenville's strong agricultural industry. By making all residents aware of the vast array of great things that city of Greenville has to offer, we can help assure that they will never be short on positive things to say if and when they are asked about their impressions of the city.

We also need to begin the campaign within the city to help get residents and city business owners on board with the new image. If a resident were dining out in Grand Rapids, for example and saw a Greenville, Michigan billboard with an unfamiliar logo and a slogan that they had never heard before, it would form a huge level of disconnect between the campaign for the city and the people of the city. If people feel that the city is changing around them without warning, they are far less likely to be promoters of the city, backing up what the marketing materials in the campaign have to say. It is crucial that we first introduce the people of Greenville to what we intend to do, so that they have time to adjust to this new image of the town they love. This may even, in time,

lead to residents wanting to contribute to the campaign, rather than resisting any changes that it may bring.

With the implementation of the campaign, comes the implementation of the new city slogan “Living Large in a Small Town”. This slogan does an excellent job communicating the self-sufficiency and quality of life that is characteristic of the city of Greenville. It provides a positive yet accurate depiction of life in Greenville and thus will peak curiosity in the minds of potential visitors that will encourage them to come see what the city has to offer and how it is that we “live large”. However, we do need to be careful not to use the slogan in a way that indicates that we live beyond our means here in Greenville, or that we think we are better than anyone else.

Visual

Another factor in the success of the campaign is the level of visual cohesion between all of the elements. It is important that all marketing materials, from pamphlets to billboards, follow the visual scheme used in the new city logo. This can be as simple as creating materials with the same blue, green, and orange colors incorporated throughout or as detailed as including a washed out copy of the logo in the background of any and all public documents pertaining to the campaign.

Tying all of the visual elements of the campaign together in this way will work wonders as far as building the new “brand” for the city of Greenville. As everything works together more and more within the campaign, it becomes a stronger image that is easier to understand. This will allow for people to accept the brand more easily after the initial exposure to the brand.

Recommendations

Marketing Plan Goal: Position the city of Greenville as a great place to live and visit for working families, commuters, and outdoor enthusiasts/ sportsmen.

Objectives of Campaign

Year One

Start within the city. Determine who will oversee implementation of marketing plan. Give Greenville citizens a chance to understand the campaign and get them on board. Raise awareness of Greenville in Greater Grand Rapids area. Heighten awareness of amenities, attributes, and realities of Greenville among residents, business owners, and visitors.

Year Two

Continue building on objectives of Year One. Expand exposure further into Grand Rapids and surrounding areas. Research and demonstrate increase in business inquiries, media coverage, real estate sales, school enrollment, attendance at city events such as Danish Festival, and use of recreational facilities like Flat River Trail.

Year Three

Review effectiveness of Year One and Year Two efforts. Make any necessary additions or revisions to marketing efforts. Continue to monitor increases in business inquiries, media coverage, real estate sales, school enrollment, attendance at city events, and use of recreational facilities.

Recommendations

Each recommendation is broken down by Tactic, Budget, and Timeline.

Tactic: Determine who will oversee implementation of campaign, acting as Community Marketing Director. This would most likely constitute an addition to a current employee's existing responsibilities rather than the hiring of an additional employee, due to budgetary constraints. This is crucial because if the campaign does not have someone in charge and accountable for its success, it may be poorly implemented or forgotten. Ideally, someone could be hired in to hold the Community Marketing Director position primarily, but that is simply not fiscally feasible for the city of Greenville. However, an addition in pay would certainly need to be allotted for taking on these large, additional responsibilities.

Some Responsibilities of Community Marketing Director

- Implements recommendations of Greenville Community Marketing Plan
- Organizes and convenes meetings of Greenville Community Marketing Board
- Serves as primary contact for all marketing-related calls and communications.
- Communicates with target audiences through different types of media including but not limited to: print, broadcast, and social media.

Budget: \$5,000-8,000 annual salary addition

Timeline: Year One- As Soon As Possible

Tactic: Periodic, invitation-only events for business owners, prospective business owners, and especially, real estate agents to provide updated information about the city of Greenville in an informal setting. Present new characteristics and strengths of the city that these individuals may not have previously been aware of or been using in their business. Give real estate agents something new to report to their clients to attract them to Greenville.

Budget: Staff preparation time, refreshments

Timeline: Year One and ongoing

Tactic: Trade show participation for purpose of promoting community. All aspects of Greenville must be well represented.

Budget: Cost of booth materials and booth space rental

Timeline: Year One and beyond

Tactic: Development of a downloadable presentation, posted online on the Greenville web portal. Can be used by Community Marketing Director as well as other stakeholders in city of Greenville.

Budget: Varies depending on fee of developer

Timeline: Year One and ongoing

Tactic: Create an updated and comprehensive community video highlighting all of Greenville's best amenities and attributes. This video must focus on all aspects of the community in order to be the most versatile. This video will be featured on the Greenville website, Facebook page, and elsewhere that we choose to place it for promotional purposes. The video must not focus on anything in Greenville that lacks permanence. The last video focused heavily on the new UniSolar factory, which renders it obsolete now that the facility has closed. The video should highlight things that the city of Greenville will probably never lose, such as recreational facilities and sense of community.

Budget: Varies with videographer cost. Estimate: \$2,000-4,000

Timeline: Year One

Tactic: Social Networking. Development of a current and frequently updated Greenville, Michigan Facebook page that keeps residents as well as target audiences aware of goings on, events, announcements, and opportunities in the Greenville area. Should also feature a photo gallery of the city, so potential visitors and residents can see what life in Greenville is like.

Budget: Staff time

Timeline: Year One and ongoing

Tactic: Promotional contests on Greenville website or Facebook page to keep people coming back. Could include prize packs with donations from area businesses such as shops, restaurants, the movie theater. Encourages people to check back to the page frequently, bring people to local businesses, and attracts people to the area.

Budget: Negligible

Timeline: Year Two and ongoing

Tactic: Production of street post banners featuring the new city logo and “Living Large in a Small Town” slogan

Budget: \$500-800

Timeline: Year One

Tactic: Put members of Chamber of Commerce as well as other interested parties from City of Greenville through training to become “community ambassadors”. Teach them how to promote the city, what strengths to hone in on, give media training, etc.

Budget: Staff time, refreshments

Timeline: Year One

Tactic: Promotional items to be given away at community events such as Music in the Park, Danish Festival, and Classic Car Show. Range of items such as T-Shirts, reusable bags, and can cozies all featuring the new logo and slogan, as well as a coordinating color scheme.

Budget: Depends on items, Approx. \$1,000-3,000

Timeline: Year One and ongoing

Tactic: Promotional Billboard in Grand Rapids area, ideally close to the city so that people who work in the city are exposed to the image of a quiet, wholesome, small town to escape to. The billboard should feature images of many of Greenville's best characteristics, as well as the new community logo and "Living Large in a Small Town" slogan.

Budget: \$1,000-1,800

Timeline: Year Two, Year Three

Tactic: Message during off hours at City Hall and Chamber of Commerce directing people to the city website.

Budget: Negligible

Timeline: Year One and ongoing

Tactic: Direct mailings to realtors in Grand Rapids area, reminding them about Greenville's opportunities with the hopes that they relay this information to their clients. Address of Greenville website would be included for more information about the area.

Budget: \$1,000-2,000

Timeline: Year Two and Year Three

Approximate Cost Summaries: Year One-Three	
Year One	\$14,800
Year Two	\$11,800
Year Three	\$10,800

Evaluation criteria to measure success of campaign

- Room occupancy at area hotels
- Attendance at events
- Redemption of gift cards and promotional giveaways
- Use of parks and recreational facilities
- Home sales
- Building permits
- Hits on website
- Inquiries with Greenville Chamber of Commerce
- Inquiries with City of Greenville offices