



Assessment Findings and Suggestions Report

DEADWOOD, SOUTH DAKOTA



Opportunity Assessment

INTRODUCTION

In February of 2014, an Opportunity Assessment of Deadwood, South Dakota was conducted, and the findings were presented in a two-and-a-half hour workshop. The assessment provides an unbiased overview of Deadwood - how it is seen by a visitor. It includes a review of local marketing efforts, signage, attractions, critical mass, retail mix, ease of getting around, customer service, visitor amenities such as parking and public washrooms, overall appeal, and the community's ability to attract overnight visitors.

In performing the Opportunity Assessment, we looked at the area through the eyes of a first-time visitor. No prior research was facilitated, and no community representatives were contacted except to set up the project. The towns and surrounding area were "secretly shopped." Any person looking to relocate their business, industry, or residence will come to your community as a visitor first. Tourism is the front door to all your economic development efforts.

Once potential visitors find information about your area, are the marketing materials good enough to close the sale? In the Marketing Assessment, we reviewed your visitor website and print marketing materials.

A typical community has five opportunities to close the sale:

- 1) Personal contact (visitor information centers, trade shows, etc.)

- 2) Websites
- 3) Brochures and printed materials
- 4) Publicity (articles)
- 5) Word of mouth - the most effective means

We searched the internet for activities, requested and reviewed printed materials, and looked for articles and third-party information. As we prepared for travel to your community, we searched both commercial and organizational websites promoting the area, tourism websites, and read travel articles and guidebooks.

The marketing assessment determined how effective the marketing was in convincing a potential visitor that the area would be worth a special trip, a stop, or an overnight stay. The key to the marketing assessment is to see if you have a primary lure that makes you worth a special trip of a two-hour drive - or from further away. The question on most visitors' minds is: What do you have that I can't get closer to home? What makes you worth a special trip?

Where most communities falter is when they merely provide "lists" of what the community has, whether it's truly "unique" or not. Nearly every community in North America promotes the usual list of diversions: local museums, shops and restaurants, plenty of lodging, golf, outdoor recreation, historic downtowns, scenic vistas, etc. Of course, nearly every visitor can do these things closer to home. So, what makes Deadwood worth the trip?

Always promote your primary lure first - what makes you worth that special trip. THEN, promote your diversionary, or "complementary" activities.

Would you go to Anaheim, California, if Disneyland wasn't there? Do you think that Universal Studios and Knotts Berry Farm mind that Disneyland gets all the glory? Of course not. Eighty percent of all tourism spending is with those secondary activities. Disney does the heavy lifting in terms of advertising and promotion, and the diversionary activities benefit.

In a nutshell, the Marketing Effectiveness Assessment looks for what makes your community worth a special trip, or a great place to live, or to do business. We look for details, details, details. Do you give a reason for visiting, and do you provide enough information to make it easy to plan a trip? Are the marketing materials good enough to close the sale?

The second part of the assessment process is the On-site Assessment. During this part of the assessment, we spent several days in the area, looking at enticements from the highways (signs, billboards, something that would get a visitor to stop), beautification and overall curb appeal, wayfinding (ease of getting around), visitor amenities (public washrooms, visitor information, parking), activities, overall appeal, retail mix (lodging, dining, shopping), critical mass, customer service, area attractions, pedestrian friendliness, gathering spaces, evening activities, and the availability of marketing materials and their effectiveness.

The area benefits from tourism when visitors spend money, and they do that in the local gift shops, restaurants, hotels, etc. Therefore, the On-

site Assessment includes a candid look at private businesses as much as public spaces and amenities.

For every shortcoming or challenge we note during the assessment process, we provide a low-cost "suggestion," where possible, on how the challenge can be corrected or overcome. The suggestions are not termed "recommendations," as they were developed without consulting the communities first about possible restraints, future plans, or reasons why the suggestions may not be appropriate. Hopefully this assessment process will open dialogue within the communities, leading them to adopt some or all of the suggestions, taking them from suggestions to recommendations.

It's important to note that to increase the area's tourism industry, fulfilling one or two of the suggestions may have little impact, but implementing a number of them, if not all, can have a profoundly successful impact on the area's ability to tap into the tourism industry.

Implementation of these suggestions must be a region-wide effort, involving both privately owned businesses as well as local, county, and provincial agencies, where appropriate. Every local organization plays a role in tourism, downtown revitalization, or economic development efforts. A Destination Marketing Organization (DMO, CVB, Chamber, TPA, etc.) will not be successful if the tourism effort is not region-wide.

In many cases, issues may come up that you are already aware of and are already working on. In that case, the assessment validates those efforts. But more often than not, the assessment will point



out things that you are aware of but can't mention or bring up without paying a political price. Local politics can be a killer of the tourism industry.

While marketing efforts are important, product development is the most important factor of a successful tourism industry. Visitors want activities, not just things to look at. How much time can a visitor spend enjoying activities - that cater to their interests - in your area? Does your community have truly unique attractions the visitor can't get closer to home? You must be able to deliver on your marketing promises - otherwise visitors might come once, but they won't come back. It's much more cost effective to bring people back, than to always go out and entice new visitors into town. "Been there, done that" communities eventually run out of visitors and find they don't have a sustainable tourism industry, or they simply become pit stops or gateways on the way to somewhere else.

After spending several days reviewing marketing materials and assessing the community, we have looked at all of these issues, and have developed some suggestions and ideas the community can discuss and possibly implement to help increase tourism spending locally.

SUCCESSFUL TOURISM TRANSLATES TO CASH

Tourism is successful when the community imports more cash than it exports. When residents spend their hard-earned money outside the community, the community is exporting cash - often referred to as "leakage." Tourism helps fill that gap, importing cash into the local economy without the necessity of having to provide extended social and other services. Visitors come, spend

money, then go home. When you import more cash than you export, you have a positive "balance of trade." Communities with successful tourism programs easily see that the industry subsidizes the community, whereas other communities find that they subsidize visitors - providing services visitors use without them leaving enough money behind to cover the cost of those services.

The primary goal of the tourism industry is to bring more cash into the local economy. This doesn't happen when visitors come into the community, get out of their cars, and take photographs. And it doesn't happen when visitors go swimming in the lake at your park all day, sunning, and eating the lunch they brought from home. And it doesn't happen when visitors hike down your trails, enjoy your interpretive centers, or stroll through your lovely arboretums. These are all great things to do, and, of course, you do want your visitors to do these - but, you also want to entice them into your shops, your cafes, espresso stands, restaurants, galleries, B&B's, and hotels, ultimately opening their wallets to make purchases. That is what helps your local economy, your small merchants, your hoteliers, and your tax coffers.

To entice visitors to spend money in your community, you need to have places for them to spend it - you need to have the right mix of shops, restaurants, entertainment, and lodging facilities, all in an attractive setting, as well as attractions that make them want to visit you in the first place.



THE THREE TYPES OF TOURISM

1. Visiting friends and family

The number one reason people travel is to visit friends and/or family. If you did nothing to promote tourism, you would still have tourism in your community. However, when friends and family come to visit, do your residents take them out to eat, shop, dine locally? Or do they head to a neighboring community? Do your locals even know what you have to offer? An effective tourism marketing effort also includes educating locals as to what you have and how to find it through effective wayfinding signage, gateways and advertising.

2. Business travel

The second most popular reason for travel is business. Included in this category is educational travel: colleges and universities, as well as conventions and meetings, corporate travel, vendor travel, etc. Like leisure travelers, this group is looking for things to do “after hours” while in the area. The most successful convention and trade show towns are the result of their secondary activities or “diversions,” not simply because of their convention and exhibition facilities. Think Disneyworld, Disneyland, San Antonio’s River Walk, Banff, to name a few.

3. Leisure travel

The third, and most lucrative of all types of visitors, is the leisure traveler. They have no personal connections to the community, but are coming purely to enjoy themselves. They stay in commercial lodging establishments, eat virtually all their meals in local restaurants, and their top diversionary

activity is shopping and dining in a pedestrian-friendly setting.

The average leisure visitor is active 14 hours a day, yet typically only spends four to six hours with the primary lure. They then spend eight to ten hours with diversionary activities - things they could do closer to home, but will do while in the area. A good example of this is Branson, Missouri, the “live music-theater capital of the world.” This town of 6,500 residents hosts 7.5 million visitors a year. The primary “lure” is the 49 music theaters. The average visitor attends two shows a day over about four hours. During the other hours of the day, the visitor will shop in local outlet malls, head to the water parks, theme parks, and other attractions, play a round of golf, hike, bike, fish, do some bird





watching, and participate in any number of other activities they could do closer to home, but will do while visiting Branson.

THE THREE STAGES OF TOURISM

1. Status quo

If you take no action to develop the tourism industry, you will still have an element of tourism, simply because some travelers will pull off local highways or freeways for gas, food, or lodging, as well as the fact that the number one reason for travel is to visit friends or family. If you have residents, you will have some tourism.

2. Getting people to stop

The first priority of developing a successful tourism industry is getting people to stop. Imagine how successful businesses in the community would be if just 50% of the vehicles traveling through pulled off the highway and spent just 30 minutes in your community – buying gas, an ice cream cone, a sandwich, a gift or souvenir?

If there's a strong pull, imagine the money spent if visitors stayed two hours in the community, which nearly always translates to additional spending.

The first goal is to get those travelers to stop.

3. Becoming the destination

To become a destination community you must have attractions and supporting amenities that convince visitors to spend the night. And those attractions must be different from what the visitor can get closer to home.

Overnight visitors spend three times that of

day visitors, and nearly ten times that of visitors using your community as a pit stop on the way to somewhere else.

THE FOUR-TIMES RULE

Visitors will make a point of stopping or staying in a community if it has enough activities that appeal specifically to them and will keep them busy four times longer than it took them to get there.

In other words, if a person has to drive 15 minutes to visit you, do you have enough for them to do to keep them busy for an hour? (4 times 15 minutes) If a visitor has to drive an hour, do you have the activities and amenities to keep them busy for four hours?

The more you have to offer, collectively, the further visitors will come, and the longer they will stay, and of course, the more they will spend. This is why it is so important for communities to market more than just their immediate geographic areas. By marketing neighboring activities and attractions, you present much more for a visitor to do, and you make the visit worth the trip.

Visitors don't care about city limits or county lines – so market the broader package and you'll be able to keep people in the area long enough to translate to another meal, some more shopping, and hopefully, an overnight stay.

SELL THE EXPERIENCE, NOT GEOGRAPHY

Nearly every destination marketing organization is charged with promoting a geographic area, yet visitors couldn't care less about those boundaries. They are looking for activities that cater to their

interests, and location is second to the experience. ALWAYS promote the primary lure first, then the location. If I want to go see Jann Arden, I don't care whether she's performing in Ontario or Alberta. People by the millions head to Disneyland, Disneyworld, Dollywood and other attractions. They are not going to Anaheim, Orlando or Pigeon Forge.

Always sell the activity - the experience - THEN the location.

LURES, DIVERSIONS AND AMBIANCE

Too often communities promote the list of diversions that nearly every community has. The primary lure is the activity that a visitor can't find closer to home.

Always promote your primary lure, then the diversions. Do not try to be all things to all people. Have you ever gone anywhere because they had "something for everyone?" Of course not - you go there because they have something specific for you. Find your niche and promote it like crazy.

Historic downtowns provide ambiance - they are not attractions, diversions, nor are they a primary lure. It's what's in the buildings that makes a downtown a destination.

The same can be said for scenery. Unless your vista is a world-class scene, such as Niagara Falls or the Grand Canyon, scenic vistas create wonderful ambiance, but don't translate to spending, and they only last a few minutes. Then what?

All too often communities promote their heritage as a primary draw. How far would you travel to visit a mining museum? A timber museum? An

agricultural center? A county historical museum? Heritage must be outstanding and pervasive throughout the community to be a primary lure, such as Plimoth Plantation or Salem, Massachusetts.

Thousands of communities are the "capital" of something. For instance, in California, Borrego Springs is the grapefruit capital of the world. Gilroy is the garlic capital. Modesto is the tomato capital. Gridley is the kiwi capital. Oxnard is the strawberry capital. Fallbrook is the avocado capital. But here's the question: Have you ever gone anywhere because it was the capital of a fruit or vegetable?

Your local heritage is important to the community and can set the ambiance, even becoming a diversionary activity. For local heritage to be a major attraction, it needs to combine activities with ambiance, and it needs to be pervasive throughout the area.

BE DIFFERENT OR THE BEST

Why should a visitor come to your community if they can enjoy the same activities closer to home? Too many communities promote "outdoor recreation" as their primary draw. Unfortunately, that is the same attraction promoted by nearly every community in North America.

If you are different, then you have a reason for travelers to choose to visit you. If you are the best, then visitors will generally flock to your doors.

If you have great hiking trails, then market their unique qualities. Be specific and paint the image of how wonderful they are in the minds of your potential visitors. If you have one fantastic





restaurant in town, let people know about it – a unique dining experience is something many people will travel far to enjoy.

Ashland, Oregon, previously a depressed timber town, began its Shakespeare Festival, which now runs nine months of the year and draws hundreds of thousands of visitors who spend an average of six nights in the community. The Shakespeare Festival made Ashland different from any other community.

Leavenworth, Washington, another dying timber town, adopted a Bavarian architectural theme and produces dozens of Bavarian events every year. Some now say the town looks more genuinely Bavarian than towns in Bavaria. It is now one of the primary tourist destinations in Washington state, hosting more than 2.5 million visitors annually. They offer a different experience, an experience that is pervasive throughout town.

Okanogan County, Washington is an outdoor recreational paradise – just like 37 of the 38 other counties in Washington. So why go to the Okanogan? Because they are the best. They researched guidebooks, newspaper and magazine articles, and pulled quotes they could use in their advertising efforts. Like, “Pinch yourself, you’re in Okanogan Country with perhaps the best cross country skiing on the continent.” This, and other quotes like it, make it worth the drive to visit Okanogan Country. The third-party endorsements show that they are the best.

Set yourself apart from everyone else, and you’ll see that in being unique, you’ll become a greater attraction.

CRITICAL MASS MEANS CASH

Although it may not be the primary reason why visitors come to your community, shopping and dining in a pedestrian setting is the number one activity of visitors. Besides lodging, it is also how visitors spend the most amount of money.

Do you have a pedestrian-friendly shopping district? If not, can you create one? Many communities have been highly successful with the development of a two or three block long pedestrian “village” including visitor-oriented retail shops, dining, visitor information, washrooms, etc., all in an attractive, landscaped setting.

The general rule of thumb in those two or three blocks (not spread out all over town) is 10+10+10: Ten destination retail shops, which includes galleries, antiques, collectibles, home accents and furnishings, artists in action, book stores, logo gear (clothing), souvenirs, outfitters, tour operators, activity shops such as kites, jewelry, wine or tobacco shops, and other specialties. The second ten is for food: ice cream, fudge and candy stores, soda fountains, sit-down dining, coffee shops, cafes, bistros, delis, etc. And the final ten are businesses open after 6:00 pm. This includes entertainment: bars, dance clubs, theaters (movies and performing arts), retail shops with activities (piano bar in a wine shop), etc.

The important point is to group these businesses together to create the “critical mass” in a pedestrian-friendly setting. This will attract visitors as well as locals, and make it worth their while to stop and shop. People are always drawn to the critical mass –



the opportunity to have multiple choices, multiple experiences, all in a convenient and attractive setting.

TOURISM IS AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

The goal of successful tourism is for people to come into the community, spend money, and go home. Tourism is nearly a \$650 billion dollar industry in the U.S., nearly \$75 billion in Canada, and supports millions of jobs. Ninety percent of tourism industry businesses are small businesses of which 90% have less than 15 employees. Tourism provides the opportunity for entrepreneurs to get started, for small family-run businesses to thrive, for artisans and craftspeople to find a market, and creates a basis for unique niche-retail environment including wineries, artists, crafts, etc. Tourism provides a diverse market within the community, expanding its potential. Enhancing the community through beautification efforts creates an attractive setting for both locals and visitors, key in revitalizing a community's downtown. And a tourism-friendly town will attract non-tourism industries faster than others – new businesses will see the community as a visitor before they make a final determination about the community. Tourism is the front door to your economic development efforts.

The benefits of a healthy tourism industry can rejuvenate a town, foster community pride, encourage economic diversity, and lead the way to a vital, successful community.



NEXT STEPS

The findings and suggestions in this report will provide many ideas, strategies, and goals to reach for. We hope that it fosters dialogue and becomes a springboard for the town in enhancing its tourism industry, leading to greater prosperity, rejuvenation, and enjoyment by all the citizens.

This report offers a first step in reaching that goal. To fully realize the benefits of this assessment, the town should take these findings and suggestions, discuss them and evaluate them, and develop a plan for implementation.

A detailed branding plan could build on the results of this assessment, adding in-depth research, evaluation, and local input to develop a unique brand and implementation program. The assessment process essentially provides a look at where you are today. RBI's branding program could help build your branding plan from the ground up - with local input, brainstorming, research, and creative planning. We work with you to guide you through the process, helping create a plan that has local champions and community buy-in.

The next step in the planning process would be to provide public outreach, and review past and current planning efforts. This would determine your goals as a region.

The third step involves research, feasibility and market analysis, and determining your brand - what you are or hope to be known for.

Then comes the "development" portion of the plan or the "how to get there" program: determining what product development initiatives need to

be undertaken to reinforce and grow the brand. This also includes defining the roles of the various local organizations. Brand-building takes a village - everyone pulling in the same direction, each with its own "to do list."

Finally, there's the detailed marketing plan: how and when you will tell the world who you are and what makes you special: the place to live, work and play.

This branding plan should be an "action plan" as opposed to a "strategic plan." You want a to do list, by organization, not just general strategies, goals and objectives.

The recommendations should provide all the necessary steps for your area to be successful in attaining its goals of a more diverse economy with an enhanced tourism industry and to become more attractive and enjoyable for both visitors and citizens.

A good plan will provide a program to get local residents and the business community pulling together to enhance the communities, building their unique images in the minds of visitors and residents alike. The result of your efforts will be a prosperous, enjoyable environment in which to live, work, and visit.



Findings & Suggestions





There are many important ways the private sector plays a role in creating a successful downtown. One of these is the second ingredient for success: downtowns need to define a strong brand and develop a retail focus.

When we first arrived in Deadwood, we expected to see a kind of “Wild West” town, with a lot to do with Wild Bill and Calamity Jane.

We found kind of a hodge-podge of history - some a little retro (top right and bottom left), some from the 1800’s, and some modern-day - but it seemed

that once casinos came into town, the “Wild West” no longer was the focus of downtown. We couldn’t find a defining focus for downtown.

So, what do you want to be? What do you want your downtown to be known for?



Deadwood has some great architecture downtown - no question. And the historical displays are very well done. In one day, I had my picture taken with Wild Bill, I read the historical displays, I visited the '76 museum and the Adams museum, I went to the cemetery, and I was done. So, what would bring me back or give me a reason to stay longer?

Casino gambling is no longer a distinctive branding attraction, since most states now allow some form of gaming. Even Las Vegas has changed their primary focus to "entertainment" rather than gambling.

Even the winery theme has become so commonplace that it's not a strong brand focus on its own.

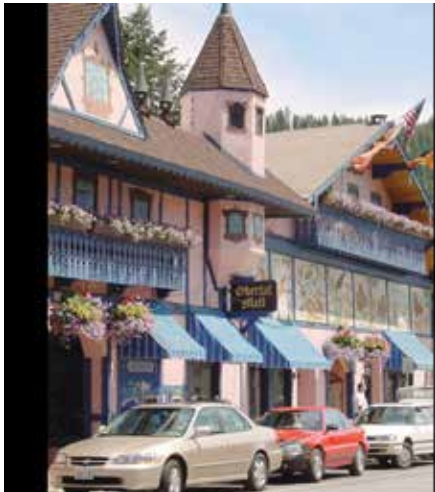
Old west themes have been declining in success. This doesn't mean you ignore your history - but it needs to be refocused. It needs to have activities - not just a few things to see - to make it a strong and successful brand.




City	Jefferson, Texas
Population	2,500
Brand	Antique Capital of Texas
Foundation	125 antique dealers
Results	Now the B&B Capital of Texas



City	Jackson, Wyoming
Population	12,000
Brand	The home of Western Living
Foundation	110 galleries & western living shops
Results	Nearly 4 million visitors a year



City	Leavenworth, Washington
Population	2,500
Brand	Washington's Bavarian Village
Foundation	Key to authenticity, artisans
Results	2.5 million visitors a year



City	Vulcan, Alberta
Population	1,700
Brand	"Live long and prosper"
Foundation	City name, murals, art
Results	Canada's official Star Trek Capital

Examples of some towns with a strong focus include Jefferson, Texas (top left), a town of 2,500 with 125 antique dealers. With so many antique shops, all in a pedestrian-friendly, beautiful downtown setting, they attract so many visitors from as far away as Dallas (a four-hour drive) that they are now the B & B capital of Texas.

Jackson, WY (top right), with 110 galleries and western living shops in its downtown attracts nearly 4 million visitors a year. It is a bigger draw than Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks.

Leavenworth, WA (bottom left), with a population of only 2,500, was a dying timber town. Its Bavarian theme was started years ago by two residents who owned a local bakery/cafe. They had a vision of the town as an authentic Bavarian village, and with lots of hard work over many years, their vision became reality. They now attract 2.5 million visitors a year.

Vulcan, AB (bottom right) is working to fully develop its theme as Canada's official Star Trek Capital. They are making great progress, and Leonard Nimoy has adopted the town as his official Star Trek home town.

3

They orchestrated recruitment of "critical mass" or "clustering."



Think antique malls - 10x the business when together



Think food courts, corner gas, lifestyle retail centers



The next ingredient of successful downtowns is "critical mass." Successful downtowns need to have a "critical mass" of like businesses. This would include a MINIMUM, in three lined blocks:

- TEN places that sell food: soda fountain, coffee shop, bistro, cafe, fine dining, family restaurant, wine store, deli, bakery, confectionary.
- TEN destination retail shops: galleries, antiques, home accents, outfitters, collectibles, books, kitchen supplies, garden.
- TEN places open after 6:00 pm: entertainment, theater, performing arts, bars

and bistros, specialty shops, dining, open air markets, etc.

Think of antique malls, food courts, gas stations. People are attracted to the choices.

Downtown shops need to develop the "Mall Mentality": Open consistent hours and days; like-businesses grouped together; open evening hours; work together to have greater success.

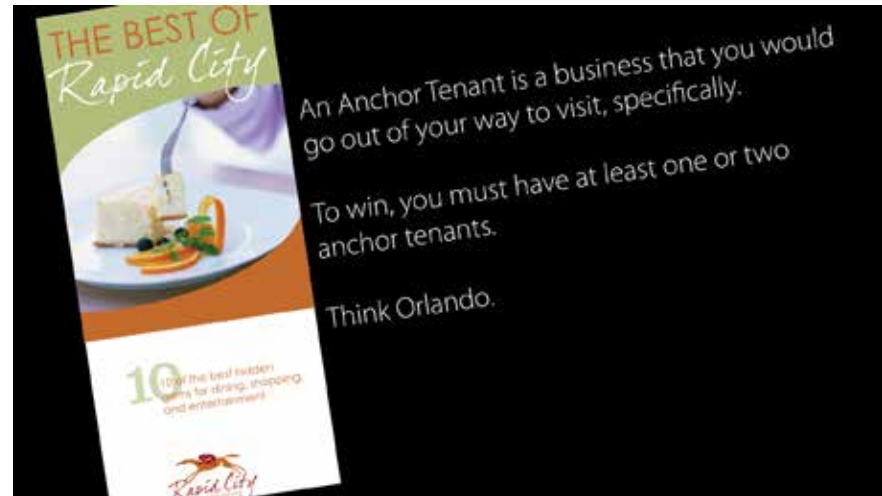


Sometimes it's necessary to "orchestrate" the effort to achieve the right business mix downtown. You start with the property owners - not the tenants. It typically takes one-third buy-in, and then the results will grow organically, because businesses see the benefits.

For example, Jackson, WY (all photos this page) was known for years as the gateway to Grand Teton National Park. The ski resort was nearby, but there was nothing to attract visitors into town, and the town was struggling to survive. We helped them to focus on becoming the home of Western living

and Western art, and helped to work with property owners and recruit new businesses into town. Now Jackson has 85 galleries downtown, is the fourth largest arts community in the U.S., and has more than four million visitors a year.

"Critical mass" works.

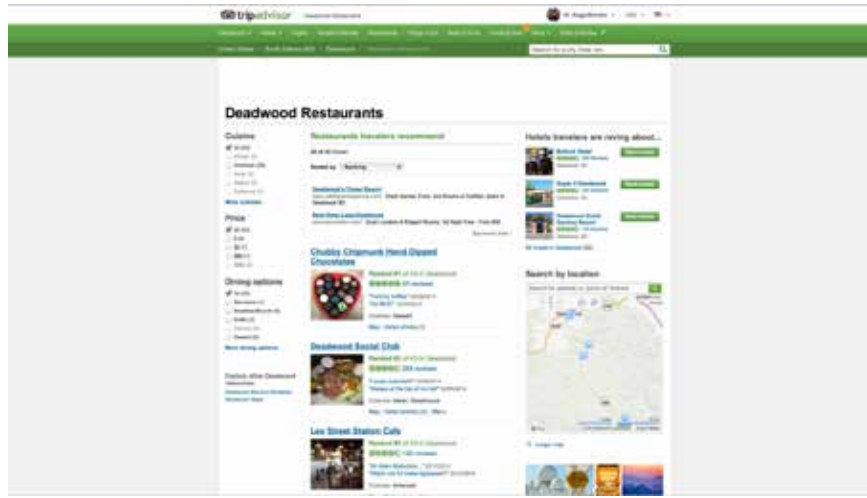



Just as a successful mall must have “anchor tenants,” downtowns need anchor tenants too. An anchor tenant is a business that people will go out of their way to visit. People come specifically for the anchor tenants, and all the other businesses benefit as well, because while they are there, people will go into the other shops, restaurants, and businesses.

Promote your anchor tenants, and everyone benefits. The small town of Alpena, MI (population 10,000) created a “Best of Alpena” brochure to specifically promote their anchor tenants - the very best shops, restaurants, and activities. They selected what businesses to include based on certain

criteria (to ensure the businesses were “the best”), and each paid \$400 for their panel. They printed 20,000, and sent one out to every home in their zip code, along with a note that said, “The number one reason people travel is to visit friends and family, so we hope that you will hold on to this brochure, and when friends and family visit you, you will be able to show them the best that Alpena has to offer. Because we believe that every dining room table should be a concierge desk.”

The brochures not only showed visitors what Alpena had, they also showed residents many businesses they hadn’t been aware of before.





Lease agreements include defined operating hours and days



Visitors need help finding your best restaurants, shops and activities. They will look on Yelp and TripAdvisor, but when you promote your anchor tenants - your “best of’s,” they are much more likely to have a good experience and recommend your town to their friends and families.

The fifth ingredient of successful towns, is that the shops are open consistent hours and days, and they’re open in the evening hours. This is best achieved when property owners define their tenants’ operating hours and days in their lease agreements. This is something retail malls insist upon, and it works for downtowns as well.

70% of all retail spending takes place after 6:00 pm. When shops close at 5:00 or 6:00, they are missing most of the shopping opportunities. But, it’s important that most of the shops in a downtown are open in the evening - one or two won’t attract as many shoppers as five or six open stores. You need the critical mass. One way to handle the need for more staff to keep the shops open longer is to start a shared-worker program. Opening later in the morning so that you can close later in the evening is also worth considering.

One issue for Deadwood is that there doesn’t seem to be anything for visitors to do after 6:00 pm besides gaming. A successful downtown needs more.

6

People living and/or staying downtown:
Hotels, condos, loft apartments



7

Pioneers with patient money
were convinced to invest.



Successful downtowns always have people living and/or staying overnight. That helps keep them vibrant and safe around the clock. Deadwood is ready, and has a great opportunity. Because Deadwood has perhaps hundreds of hotel rooms right downtown, the town is in a great situation. Now what's needed is more retail and things to do after 6:00 p.m.

Successful downtowns frequently benefit from having investors with patient money - people willing to invest in downtown to make it better - sometimes because they love their town, and sometimes because they see tremendous opportunity.



One excellent example of pioneers with patient money is El Dorado, Arkansas. Originally an oil town, El Dorado floundered when the oil business went away. But there were people in town who had made their fortunes there, and they really care about their town.

These pioneers with patient money bought several properties downtown, and they revitalized the buildings and recruited great tenants - to ensure a good mix of the right kind of businesses. They helped their tenants become successful by keeping rents low and providing the tenant improvements they

needed.

All the photos on this page show their work in El Dorado.

8

They started with just one block -
a "demonstration project"



For downtown Deadwood

From Mineral Palace/Nugget to Pine Street
Make it a showcase in terms of retail mix

THESE ARE ALL DRIVEN BY YOUR PROPERTY OWNERS

- Branding, Development & Marketing Action Plan (public project)
- Finding a strong focus (your brand)
- Orchestrating the critical mass of like businesses (clustering)
- Finding, recruiting or developing your Anchor Tenants
- Working lease agreements: common operating hours and days
- Recruit lodging or downtown residential (not street-level)
- Find or recruit pioneers with patient money
- Start with a one-block demonstration project

Start your downtown efforts small - just one block. With the focus on just a small area, you can make it a showcase - a demonstration project.

Sisters, Oregon (top right) started small by creating western-style facades and recruiting destination-retail businesses. They focused on just a one- to two-block area of their downtown main street, and it grew from there. With a population of only about 1,100, Sisters now has the highest per capita retail sales in Oregon. People make a special trip to Sisters - sometimes driving three or more hours - just to walk around the town, shop, and enjoy the ambiance.



The public sector plays a big role in the success of a downtown as well. One important part the public sector needs to resolve is the parking situation.

Visitors typically need at least four hours to complete their shopping and dining, so finding longer-term parking is essential. Be sure to let people know where they can find all day parking. 30 minute parking for retail? It doesn't work - people need much more time.

Make your parking signs clear and easy to read (top right). This sign is easy to miss - the lettering matches the background. Always use contrasting lettering.

When you make parking hard for people who want to spend money downtown, you drive them away. Parking doesn't have to be free, but it does need to be uncomplicated and allow people enough time to do everything they want - that might mean an hour and a half for a meal, plus two to three hours for shopping. Don't force your shoppers to rush away!

Suggestion: Add an arrow to the sign and remove the small price sign.



Make sure your parking signs make it easy for visitors to find where the parking is located. This sign (top left and right) was confusing. Where, exactly, is the parking? Behind the locked gate? If it's public parking, why is the gate locked? Add an arrow to the sign and remove the small price sign - you can put up the price sign inside the parking lot. Then I wondered if the public parking was actually here (bottom left).

Make it simple for visitors to find your public parking - don't make it confusing. These signs (bottom right) are confusing.



I was going to visit the Adams museum, but I only had a little change - enough for 36 minutes on the meter (top left). So I knew I had to rush through the museum - I didn't see the change machine.

The average visitor spends 20 minutes going through a local museum. They usually don't go through all the exhibits carefully, matching up numbered descriptions on lists with the items in the case - unless they have a particular interest. Be sure to tell stories about the people, and that will help bring the artifacts to life.

The museum does a nice job, and it has a lot of great books on Deadwood. The people in the museum were great.

When people are worried about getting a parking ticket because time on their meter might run out, they spend less time and spend less money in your town.



You have three choices:

- Coin operated meters
- Pay by smart phone (Passport)
- Use a kiosk and pay by cash/credit card



The city contracted with Passport.

Passport provides all the stickers and mounts them on each meter.

There is a small user fee. No cost to the city. People will pay a little more for convenience.

The app is free.

You can also call and pay via phone.



My "first time" experience:

- I scanned the QR code. Within 20 seconds I had the app.
- It uses "location services" to determine my location.
- I gave myself a user name and password.
- I put in the zone and space.
- I then input a credit card.
- I told it how long I wanted to pay (it included prices).

It told me the following:

- Not to worry, the meter won't show any time, but we know you paid for the parking.
- It will text me 15 minutes prior to running out of time.
- If the meter allows for more time, I can "recharge" it - pay for more time.

Total time: Less than three minutes



Most lots have all three choices.

If you don't have a phone and no change, you can use a credit card at the kiosk.

You want to be a visitor-friendly city, and making it easy for visitors to park is critical. Get up-to-date with your parking methods! The future in pay parking is to be able to pay by phone and reload your meter by phone. Convenience is key.

Consider doing what Wisconsin Dells has done. They updated all their parking meters, so visitors have the options of either paying with coins, paying with their smart phone, or using a kiosk and paying by cash or credit card.

The city contracted with Passport, and it didn't cost the city anything. Passport charges the visitor a small user fee in exchange for the convenience of using their smart phone.



The next time I used the meter it took about 15-seconds.

- opened the app
- Zone 110
- Space 184
- 4 hours, \$2.35

Done.



The kiosk pay station has a solar panel on top.

In new lots they use these zone/space markers (top left), saving the cost of putting in a meter. They provide the kiosks, or you can call them if you don't have a smart phone app.

The bottom line: it's easy and convenient.

Wisconsin Dells generates \$400,000 a year in parking fees. Maintenance and enforcement costs them \$150,000 a year. Their gross profit: \$250,000. This is invested back into downtown. Parking revenues shouldn't be a general fund revenue source - they should be reinvested back into the community from which they were generated.



Consider a program being done in Spokane, Washington (top left). When someone overstays their parking meter, the parking enforcer will check to see if the vehicle is a first-time offender. If so, they issue this warning ticket: "While you were enjoying incredible shopping, world-class entertainment, the region's best dining or professional services, your parking meter expired. Don't worry! This courtesy parking ticket extended your parking privileges for an extra one hour allowing you to continue to enjoy your visit to Downtown Spokane." Then they tell you where you can find all-day parking.

When a visitor gets a parking ticket, even if they were in the wrong, they tend

to write off the city. They might not come back.

I found your parking garage, and it was great. Suggestion: Front-load your parking fees, so there's more incentive to stay longer.

I was working in Newport on the Levee (bottom left and right), and they offer even more incentive for visitors to spend money. If visitors spend \$20 or more, and show their receipt on the way out of the parking garage, their parking is free.



I went into the visitor center, and found the parking in front - time limit? 20 minutes (top left). I was really hoping to have more time to ask them plenty of questions - most visitors need more time. I asked about longer-term parking, and they told me about the parking across the street - pay the meter with coins. So I asked if they could make change, and they said no, but there was a coin machine outside. Make it easier for visitors to spend time in Deadwood - right now, everything about parking is a hassle. Downtown is not visitor friendly.

Most of the parking lots state that they are for compact cars only - of course, most cars aren't compact - where do they park?

Parking on the street in front of Hampton Inn (bottom right) states that it's for Hampton Inn guests only. What if I want to go to the restaurant? Or go to one of the shops on that street? Or just play the slots?



The number one reason passers-by stop in a town is to use the restroom facilities. They should be located in the heart of the retail area. Once visitors get out of the car, there is a four-times greater chance they will spend some money.

Some restrooms are visitor attractions themselves! (top right) Take a look at this public restroom about 1-1/2 hours east of Dallas. It's one-way glass - mirror outside, but you can see through the glass from the inside. Visitors will make a special trip from the freeway to stop by this restroom. And when they stop,

chances are good that they will have lunch, buy a snack or souvenir, or spend more time and money in the town.

Merchants should never post signs like this (bottom left). This just sends people away. Instead, they should let people know where they can find public restrooms, just as this merchant's sign (bottom right) does in Wickford, RI.



Gig Harbor, WA takes advantage of its public restrooms to provide visitor information as well (top left and right). They even include outdoor brochure distribution.

Restrooms attract more than flies. Put them where people can spend money. Relieved visitors spend more money.

Successful downtowns have “third places” - gathering places. There are three kinds of places: The first place is where we live - our homes (bottom right).



The second place is where we work (top left). And the third place is where we gather together to socialize, to “hang out.” (top right)

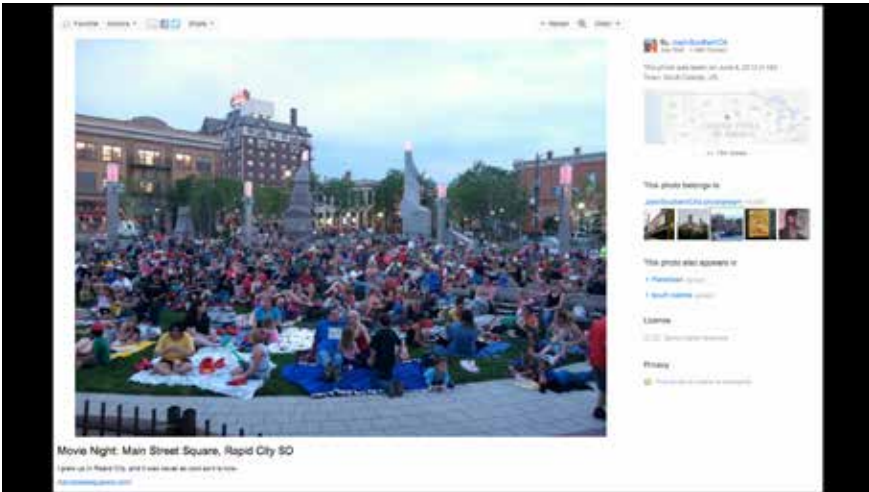
Italy is a great example of how successful “third places” or “gathering places” can be. Here in the U.S., many of our cities were built for our car culture, but more and more, people are wanting to get out of their cars, and walk and gather together in public social places, like this piazza in Sienna, Italy (bottom left).

Some important features of good gathering places:

- Focal point - stages, water features, art, amphitheater
- They can be a permanent home for an outdoor open market (public markets are excellent revitalization tools)
- Interactive water features encourage activity
- Food, dining should be available nearby
- Places to sit and to walk
- Trees and raised planters - beautification
- Entertainment at certain times
- Night lighting and walking areas



Fallbrook, CA (top right and bottom left and right) removed a dilapidated building from their downtown, and turned the space into this permanent open-air market, as part of their downtown revitalization strategy. It's only 6,000 square feet, and the city leases it out for \$1 a year, and the woman who operates it holds farmers markets, crafts markets, and different events throughout the year. It's become a wonderful gathering place for the residents, and it attracts visitors as well.



Rapid City's Main Street Square (top left and right, bottom left) has become a wonderful gathering place for the community as well as visitors. Main Street Square is now nearly as big an attraction as nearby Mt. Rushmore. One huge bonus - since the square is in the heart of downtown, the businesses are seeing greater success because of the increased pedestrian traffic.

The average age of the population is dropping, because younger people want to live there. Rapid City has become a destination for conferences, conventions, and trade shows.

More and more, some streets in downtowns are being closed to auto traffic, so they will be pedestrian-only. But, that should only take place when it's absolutely necessary. Don't close off a street until you're so busy it just makes sense.

Adding street trees (bottom right) has been shown to increase retail sales in that block by as much as 18%.

12

Creation of good first impressions:
Community gateways



Suggestion: Avoid condensed text on signs. Consider redoing the face of these.

Gateway signs provide people with a sense of arrival, and they are a visitor's first introduction to your community. Always put your gateway signs where they will make the first, best impression.

Ever wonder why developers create elaborate gateways at the entries to their high-end residential developments? (top right) They increase the perceived value of the community and create a spirit of community pride. They give a

feeling of "arrival" - that you've reached a special destination. The same rules apply to community gateways. Beautiful community gateways achieve the same results.

Deadwood's gateway signs are gorgeous monument signs, but they are hard to read. Travelers have 4 seconds to read a sign, and much of the text on these is too small to read without getting out of the car and walking up to the sign. But they are beautiful signs.



13

Design, fabrication & installation of a Wayfinding System

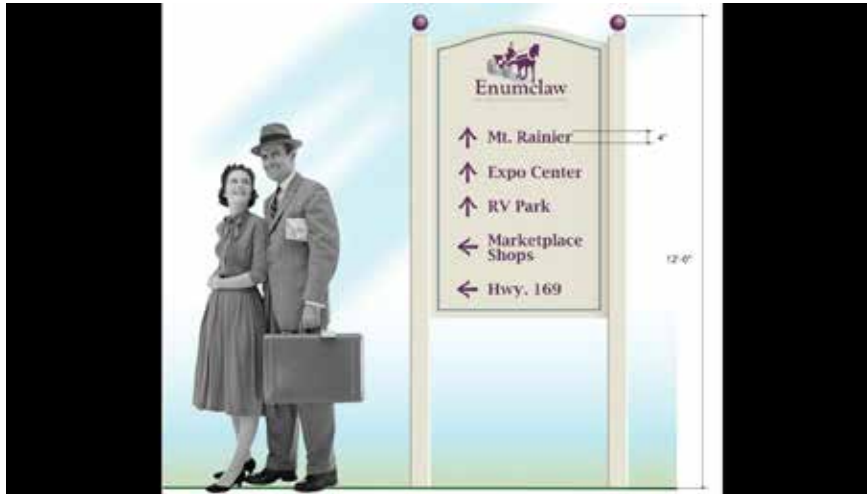


Limit the messages on your signs, and emphasize what's most important and most helpful for visitors. This gateway sign (top right) should tell visitors where to find historic Main Street, and it should have an arrow. Instead, the only thing easy to read is "Mardi."

Always put your gateway signs where you will make the first, best impression. Rarely is that at city limits. Use the opportunity to direct people to your downtown.

The 13th common ingredient for successful downtowns is that they have a good decorative wayfinding system. Wayfinding not only educates visitors about what you have and where it's located, but will also educate your front-line employees about what you have and where attractions and amenities are located. The easier you make it for visitors, the more likely they are to spend additional time in the community, and, as a result, spending will increase.

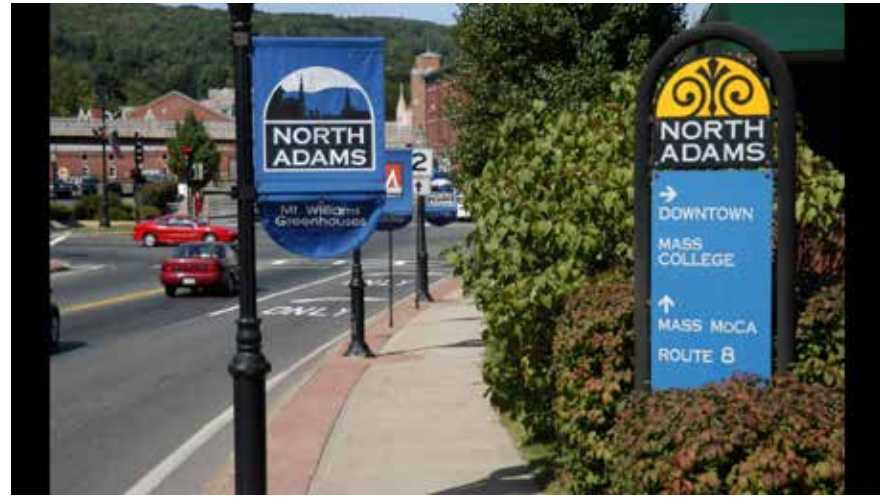
Developing a wayfinding system is an investment, not an expense, and it should be a priority. It should include:



- Vehicular wayfinding signage
- Pedestrian wayfinding
- Pole banners, by district, often by season
- Visitor and downtown information
- Gateways and entry points

Wayfinding signs should be decorative to fit the theme of the town. Some excellent examples include:

- Appleton, Wisconsin (top left)
- Oak Harbor, Washington (top right) They use two different, but complementary, sign styles: blue for community services, and gray for visitor attractions and amenities
- Enumclaw, Washington (bottom left)
- York, England (bottom right)



Some additional examples:
Covington, Kentucky (top left).

North Adams, Massachusetts (top right).

Modesto, California (bottom left).

The Woodlands, Texas (bottom right) uses wayfinding signage that portrays the community's classic, upscale but natural, ambiance.

Note how all of these wayfinding systems are decorative - conveying the ambiance of the town. The pole banners also complement the wayfinding signs, and sometimes pole banners are used as wayfinding signs themselves.

The average city that implements a wayfinding system has seen their retail sales increase by 18%.



Pedestrian wayfinding is also important. Kalamazoo, Michigan has pedestrian wayfinding (top left), showing each of their downtown districts.

You can always count on Disneyland for doing things right. This directory in Disneyland shows visitors where to find whatever they need.

Solvang, California (bottom right) provides visitor information on large monument signs at their well-marked and easy-to-find public parking, making it easy for visitors to find what they are looking for as soon as they get out of their cars.

Wayfinding is an investment, not an expense.

- Plays a role in your branding efforts
- A major component in your marketing efforts
- Reinforces a positive experience
- Increases spending locally
- Educates visitors and locals about what you have and where it's located
- Builds community pride
- Is as much a science as an art

Note: Less than 5% of visitors stop at visitor information centers - if they can find it. Wayfinding is critical for success.





Although the town of Deadwood is a National Historic Landmark, when visitors see this sign (top left), they wonder why. This doesn't look historic. Do everything you can to live up to the promise of looking like a National Historic Landmark, including your signage.

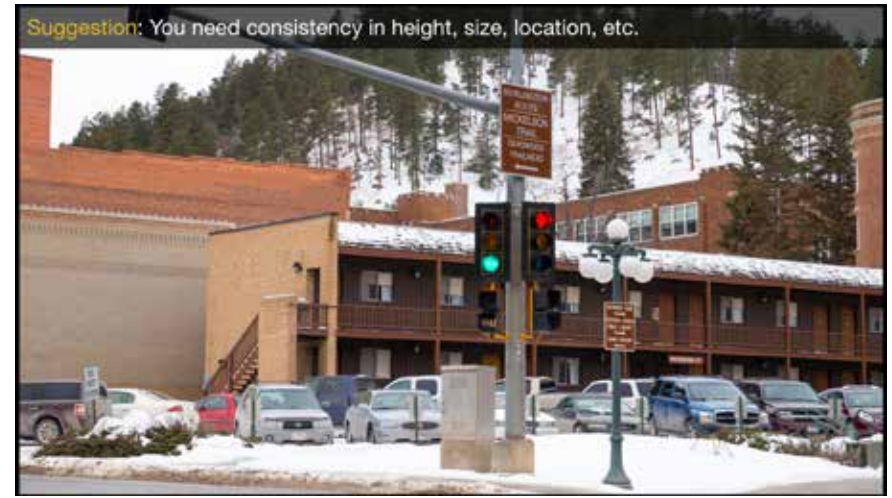
Improve your signage - instead of "Main Street Parking Ramp" (top right), have a sign stating "Historic Main Street" with an arrow. Add "Public Parking" with an arrow to the right, and "RV Parking" with an arrow to the left.

This is a good spot to introduce Historic Main Street (bottom left). Replace the "parking" sign with a "Historic Main Street" sign and arrow.

This amenities sign (bottom right) has too many items to be able to read easily while driving. Simplify. "Lodging. Dining. Shopping. Attractions." with a right arrow.



Suggestion: Avoid the city sign-shop signage. Fit your brand.



Suggestion: You need consistency in height, size, location, etc.



Your wayfinding signs should be decorative to fit your brand. That way, besides being functional, they add to the ambiance of your town.

When there are so many signs (top left), people can't read them all, and they cause sign clutter - not attractive. Reduce sign clutter. If the Deadwood History & Information Center is the same as the Visitor Information Center, be sure to be consistent with the names on your signage.

Also, be consistent in the size, shape, height, and location of your wayfinding signs (top right). That will make your signage more effective - people will know where to look.



We found the McKelson Trail parking lot, but it took a while for us to find the trail. Make it easy for visitors - be sure to include enough signage all the way to the destination.

We saw the trolley stop (bottom right), and the closed sign, and we weren't sure if it was closed permanently, or if it opened again during the summer. Instead of "closed" signs, tell visitors WHEN you will be open. Invite people back. For the trolley, post information about its operation - how often will it run? What is its route? For convenience, it's best to run a trolley at least every 20 minutes - otherwise, visitors are likely to just drive.



Take advantage of every opportunity to offer visitor information. Since visitors don't just travel during business hours, offering information around the clock is important. Include brochure distribution.

Visitor information kiosks can offer the information visitors need 24 hours a day/7 days a week. They should cross-promote activities, events, attractions and amenities. The more visitors see there is to do, the longer they will stay and the more money they will spend. Every site should cross-sell to other sites, attractions and amenities.

Outdoor weather-proof brochure holders provide easy access for visitors who stop by after business hours. The Central Bruce Peninsula has a simple brochure holder (top right) that is very effective.

Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia (bottom left) and Oxnard, California (bottom right) both use more than one outdoor brochure holder.



North Platte, Nebraska (top right and left, bottom left) has some very nice visitor brochure holders. This was built by a local craftsman for about \$350, and it's attractive and effective.

At the Washington Street Mall in Cape May, New Jersey (bottom right), locals built a visitor information kiosk through donations. It's great - the quote at the top reads, "Welcome friends, old and new, linger here a day or two." Very nice.

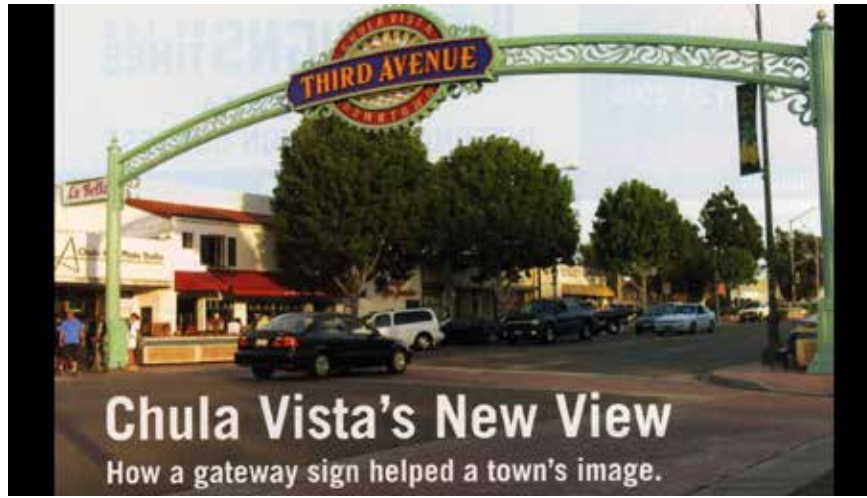


The kiosk (top left and right) provides cover for all the information and brochures, and if a business wants their brochure there, it costs about \$2 each month. That pays for restocking, upkeep, and helps provide some funding to build the next kiosk. This would be a great option to have in Deadwood.

Even with the internet, brochures are still important. Bentley University's Center for Marketing Technology found that prior to traveling, the number one way people make a decision about travel is from the internet; the number two method is from friends (word of mouth); and only 32% of travel decisions

come from brochures. But after the visitor is in the area, 81% of decisions about what to do are made as a result of brochures.

Gateways into a downtown district or an attraction provide a sense of arrival and increase the perceived value of the destination. They can turn a district into a destination in its own right. Crockett Street, in Beaumont, TX (bottom right) is only one block long, but this entertainment district attracts visitors from miles away. Its gateway marks it as special.



Chula Vista's Third Avenue gateway (top left) helped revitalize their downtown. By simply adding these gateways, they found that the merchants developed a new sense of unity, collaborating more regarding operating hours, marketing, and beautification efforts. Shoppers were drawn to the newly defined district.

The historic Gaslamp District in San Diego (top right) shows that it's a unique destination with its stunning gateway sign.

The city of Burien, Washington (bottom left) designed this gateway into their downtown core as part of their revitalization efforts.

Decorative crosswalks are an excellent way to separate the district and increase pedestrian safety at the same time. The crosswalk shown on this page (bottom right) is stamped into the asphalt - it's not paint. Created by Streetprint™, based in Vancouver, BC, these crosswalks can be done in any design and color, so they're ideal for promoting a town's brand or theme.

Consider starting with decorative crosswalks, then add posts at the gateway, and finally, finish with a decorative element that spans the street.



When I first saw your downtown (top left and right) I was amazed. It is gorgeous. What a perfect, intimate setting with terrific architecture, historic-looking lampposts, and a great ambiance. Downtown Deadwood is the most attractive downtown in the region. This spot is perfect as the gateway point.

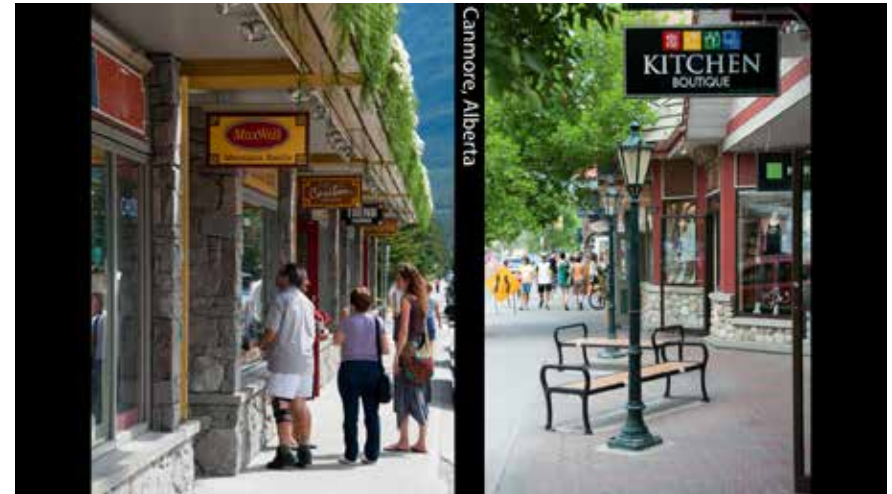
So far, we've talked about public-sector projects, including:

- Convenient, well planned public parking
- Public restrooms
- Visitor information

- Gathering places
- Community gateways with directions to downtown
- A wayfinding system
- Downtown gateways, district entrance points

Next, we'll talk about what downtown merchants should do to make downtown (and their own businesses) more successful.

First, retail signage: Use perpendicular (blade) signs like these in Leavenworth, WA (bottom right).



Signs placed perpendicular to the building allow drivers and pedestrians to read them easily, even from a distance. Note the use of blade signs in Nantucket, MA (top left).

Perpendicular signs are seen ten times more frequently than facade-mounted signs.

The most successful downtown shopping districts use blade signs. They have been shown to increase retail sales by as much as 35%. More examples include

these signs in Carmel, CA (top right); Banff, AB (bottom left); and Canmore, AB (bottom right),

They should be a consistent height and size, and they should be decorative and in keeping with the ambiance of downtown. Good blade signage eliminates the need for merchants to put out sandwich board signs.



Can you tell what shops are in most of these buildings (top left and right)? Without blade signs, visitors almost need to walk across the street to see what's in some of the shops. Blade signs make it much easier for visitors to see what you have to offer. Work at making the signs a more consistent height and size - they don't have to be the same, but there should be some consistency.

Retail signage should always promote what you sell first, then the name of the store. I couldn't tell what most of the shops were in Deadwood - their signs didn't give a clue what they had to offer, or why should venture inside to check

them out.

What is Branch House (bottom right)? I had no idea.



What is the Tin Lizzie (top left)? When visitors can't tell, they'll usually just pass on by, because there's nothing to tempt them inside.

I didn't know what the Deadwood Gulch was (top right). Convenience store? Cafe? Same with the Stockade (bottom left). Or Lee St. Station (bottom right).

Always promote what it is you're selling before the name of the store - your sales will increase when you promote your primary lure.



The Wooden Nickel (top left)? I don't know if it's gifts, collectibles, antiques, a casino, or what.

Most of the shops along this block (top right) make it very difficult to tell what they sell. Utter Place (bottom left) - I have no idea.

This beautiful building (bottom right) is being fixed up for something. Let us know what's coming! If you put a sign telling folks what's coming soon, you'll build anticipation.

Merchants need to use signs as if they are advertising - which is exactly what they are! Promote your primary lures - what's going to get people into your shops - before you even mention your store's name.



“Butch Cassidy & the Sundance Kid” sign (top left) is one of the most attractive signs in town, but I can’t tell what it is. Antiques - great. I know what that is - put that on a blade sign.

This shop (top right) seems to sell everything! Call it a general store, and promote the primary lures to get people inside. You don’t need to list everything, though.

The Mercantile sign is good (bottom left). It could be lowered, to make it easier for pedestrians to see, and to match other blade signs’ height.

The Deadwood Gift Shoppe (bottom right) has a great sign.



Make sure your signs accurately reflect when you'll be open. I came past this shop (top left) during the hours stated, but they were closed, and it looks like the sign is permanently posted there.

Never just say "Closed." That is the same thing as telling customers to go away. Instead, invite them back when you'll be open. Post your operating hours and days, and if you're closed for the season, include when you will reopen your store.

Blade signs shouldn't be all alike, but they should be fairly consistent in height,

size, and placement. Some rules about merchant signs:

- No more than eight words on a sign
- Use only one simple graphic
- Sell the experience, or your lure, before the name of the business
- You have four seconds to attract a customer reading your sign

Your signs should be professionally produced and decorative. Develop a Gateway, Signage & Wayfinding Plan that will address outdoor retail, A-boards, and retail signage. You can use a peer-review system to develop standards.

16

Outdoor cafe dining



Outdoor dining can attract more people into your downtown. You need to provide spaces for outdoor dining - wider sidewalks, bulb-outs, any extra little space outside.

This great patio dining area is in Fredericksburg, Texas (top right). In Newport on the Levee in Kentucky, there are many different options for outdoor dining (bottom left and right).

Outdoor dining makes great gathering spaces. It is a festive atmosphere, and people are drawn to the activity and liveliness in these spaces.



Of course, fair-weather locations are perfect for dining outdoors, but many colder locations also provide outdoor dining, using portable heaters and awnings, such as Nelson, BC (top right and bottom left) and Wolfville, NS (bottom right).

This dining area in Salem, Massachusetts (top left) is simply roped off and surrounded with pots of silk flowers.

Note how both Nelson and Wolfville have used parking spaces to increase the available room for outdoor dining. In Nelson, the restaurants remove the portable decks in the winter for snow removal.



In Wolfville, restaurants are allowed to use the sidewalk for dining, and they create a walkway to go around the dining area for pedestrians (top right and left). It slows traffic and attracts more people to the restaurants.

Another cooler destination, Canmore, AB (bottom left) has lots of outdoor dining options.



It doesn't require a lot of space to have outdoor dining - it can be as simple as these (top right and left, bottom left). Adding some flowers, some umbrellas, some bright splashes of color makes it even more festive and attractive.

In Barrie, ON (bottom right), they didn't have any outdoor dining. The city told me that it was allowed, but no merchants had done it. So we checked to see what the regulations and city fees would be, and it turned out that it would cost the merchant about \$15,000 and take about 10 months to even get the approval from the city. The city immediately changed their regulations, so now

it's affordable, and only takes a few days to get the permits. In the first year, 14 restaurants began outdoor dining, and the retail sales downtown increased 600%.

Make sure you don't make it impossible for your merchants and restaurants to do good things in downtown!



Some more ideas for outdoor dining spaces and barriers from the streets (top right and left). These planters look great and provide an effective barrier from traffic, creating a sense of intimacy.

The 17th ingredient of successful downtowns is beautification - this is critical. One of our favorite towns is Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia (right). A major reason it is a favorite is that it is so attractive - brightly painted buildings, flowers and landscaping everywhere, beautiful decorative signage, and a large variety of specialty shops. The merchants do their best to keep the sidewalks clean and

their storefronts inviting and beautiful. People like to spend time in beautiful places.



Beautification is an investment with an incredible return. Note the many different ways merchants make their shops and restaurants appealing. This tea shop in Mahone Bay (top left) uses bright flowers and paint.

This shop in Mahone Bay (top right) also uses lots of flowers and a wonderful decorative sign.

Mahone Bay hosts different festivals throughout the year, and one of the most fun is the scarecrow festival, which lasts through October. The merchants create all different kinds of scarecrows - including celebrities and famous

people, like Prince Charles and Duchess Camilla (bottom left).

Beautification includes more than flowers - merchants should use the outdoors as a place for "window displays" of their merchandise, attractively arranged, as these two shop owners did in Canmore, AB (bottom right).

Outdoor displays are very different from just "outdoor retail." A display should be decorative, just as a window display is decorative. When a merchant puts a rack of clothes or a card table piled with merchandise on the sidewalk, that's not a display. That makes your town look like a garage-sale town.



Fredericksburg, Texas (population 12,000) hosts nearly three million visitors annually and is the most visited small town in Texas. Visitors drive from Dallas, Houston and San Antonio - hours away - to spend weekends in this charming town (top right, bottom left and right).

The merchants have created a beautiful setting with potted shrubs, planters, annual color, window boxes, decorative signage, beautiful lighting, benches, and covered sidewalks. These photos were taken in March - and the hill country has some wild temperature swings. Most of the plantings are

evergreen.

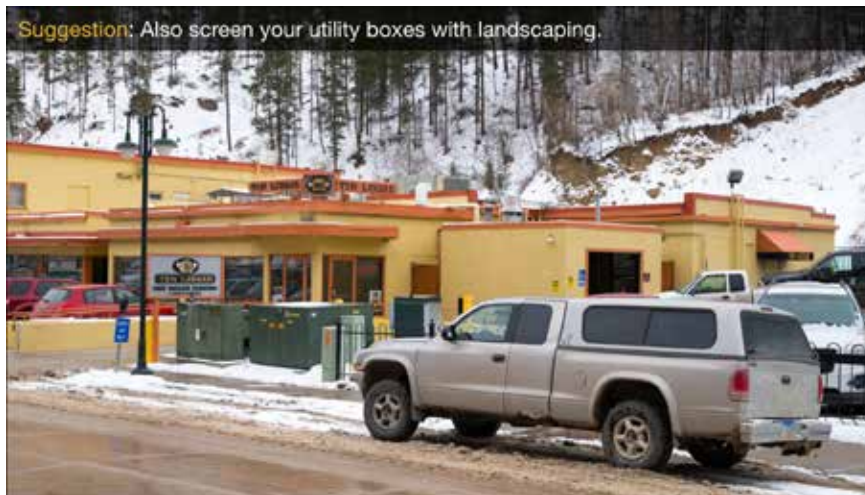
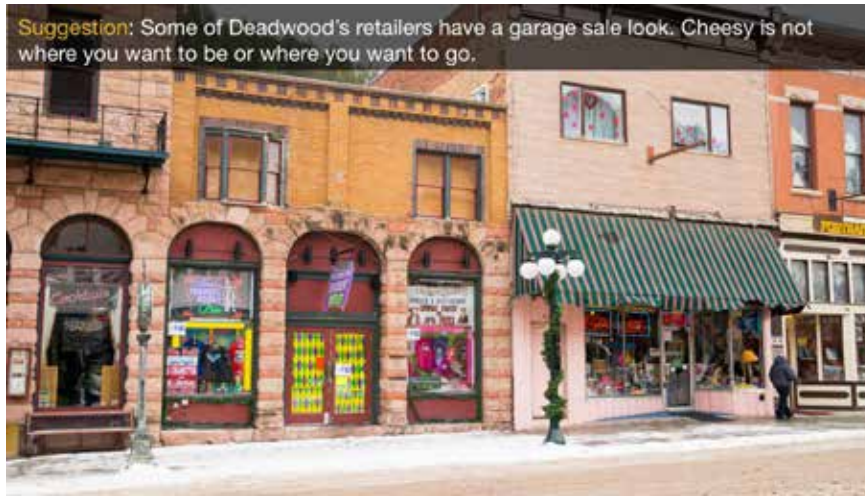
People love to spend time in beautiful surroundings. Great curb appeal accounts for 70% of first-time sales at retail shops, restaurants, and lodging facilities - beautification is an investment with great returns.



Neenah, Wisconsin did a downtown makeover. Note the streetscape in the top left photo. Although it's clean and neat, compare it to the street just one block down, after the makeover (top right). Note how the planters soften the facades and create a fresher, more inviting sidewalk. Retail sales in the block with the beautification increased by 35% over the non-beautified street.

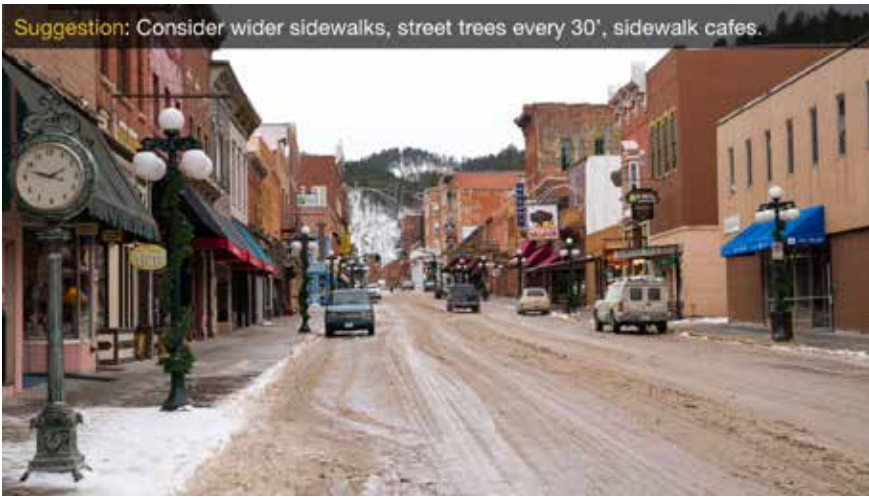
Note the banners, decorative signage and abundance of flowers outside these shops in Cambria (bottom left). Doesn't this street scene make you want to check out the shops?

Women account for 80% of all spending. When shopping with their spouses or significant others, women will be able to spend more time shopping if there are plenty of benches for the guys - or just to rest on themselves (bottom right).



With all the beautiful architecture in downtown Deadwood, merchants need to make sure their storefronts fit the ambiance. Not cheap - not cheesy. Don't look like a garage sale.

Work to screen dumpsters and utility boxes - with cedar fencing or landscaping. First impressions are lasting, and seeing a lot of dumpsters in a downtown gives a negative impression.



Suggestion: Widen your sidewalks to allow for outdoor dining (top left). Either that, or allow portable decks extending into some of the parking spots to accommodate outdoor dining.

Work on beautification. Every detail downtown combines to create the impressions visitors have of you - signage and billboards included. Consider not allowing billboards in your historic downtown. This one (top right) hasn't been well maintained, and it doesn't give a "historic" feeling at all. It detracts from the appeal of the historic town.

Add beautification all through downtown! When I was there, I didn't expect to see much because it's winter. But I looked online for photos of Deadwood in the summer (bottom left and right), and there's still no beautification! You need more than great architecture and attractive lampposts - you need beautification - pots, benches, hanging baskets, decorative blade signs, and the right business mix.

70% of first-time sales come from curb appeal.



Extend invitations - not rejections. "Closed" signs (top left) tell people one thing - go away. A "Closed" sign can mean you are closed for the hour, for the day, or for the season. Rather than rejecting customers, tell them when you will be open. Let them know when to come back. Replace your "Closed" signs with signs like the ones top right and bottom left.

You want to be welcoming, encouraging customers to come into your store. Sometimes a "loss leader" will help. When I was in Omak, Washington I walked past this shop (bottom right), and when I came back a little later, there was a

line of people going out the door waiting to get inside. There were two kids sitting in the chairs outside eating ice cream cones. I got in line too! This is a home accent and gift shop, and the lady who owns it also sells ice cream. She gives away free ice cream to the local kids as long as they sit in front of her store to eat it. This attracts throngs of people, who can't resist the temptation once they SEE the kids eating the ice cream. And when the folks come in to buy their ice cream, they almost always buy something else too. In fact, 70% of her non-ice cream sales come from people who have come in to buy ice cream.

18

Activities & entertainment



The 18th ingredient of successful downtowns is that they have frequent activities and entertainment to attract people. People want to be in vibrant surroundings - people love to be entertained. Bring downtown to life with street entertainment. Musicians, performers, mimes, magicians, are all great draws for a downtown district.

This magician is performing on the sidewalk in Cannon Beach, Oregon (top right).

This street musician is performing in Nelson, BC (bottom left). It's January and it's cold outside!

Musicians in Greenville, SC (bottom right).



These musicians are performing in Asheville, NC (top left), where you can find various street musicians on nearly every corner. This musician plays the hammered dulcimer (top right), and people will ask him about it, and because they make a connection through their conversation, he makes more money in tips.

Artisans and craftpeople in action also draws crowds. This artisan in Sisters, Oregon (bottom left) is working with leaded glass. People are four times more likely to buy art when they meet the artist.

Start with Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays during the peak season. Make it a place to attract locals from throughout the county, then visitors will follow.

Some cities have budgets for street entertainers, typically paying \$35 to each group or person. They make additional funds from tips.

People are attracted to vibrant places, and one way to help make downtown more active is to recruit street performers and artisans.

19

Downtown district(s) with a name



Give downtown a name:

- Vancouver: Gastown
- Seattle: Pioneer Square
- San Diego: Gaslamp Quarter
- Portland: Pearl District
- Nelson, BC: Baker Street
- Barrie, ON: Uptown Barrie
- New Orleans: Bourbon Street, French Quarter
- Woodlands, TX: Marketplace
- San Antonio: The Riverwalk
- Hawthorne, NV: Patriot Square
- Denver, CO: Larimer Square
- Boulder, CO: Pearl Street Mall
- Reading, OH: The Bridal District

20

Experiential marketing



Sell a feeling - not a place

Many successful downtowns give special names to their districts. This helps the district become a destination - not just a place. For example, Nelson BC has Baker Street, with its own gateway sign. San Antonio TX has The Riverwalk. It's not essential for Deadwood, but it's something to consider.

The 20th ingredient for successful downtowns is to use experiential marketing. Promote activities and the feeling people can enjoy - not just the place.

How do perceptions create a brand? First, through visual cues. Then, the

people and their attitudes. Then, word of mouth - people talking about their experiences in your town. And finally, through publicity, social media, and peer reviews.

THESE ARE DRIVEN BY YOUR MERCHANTS

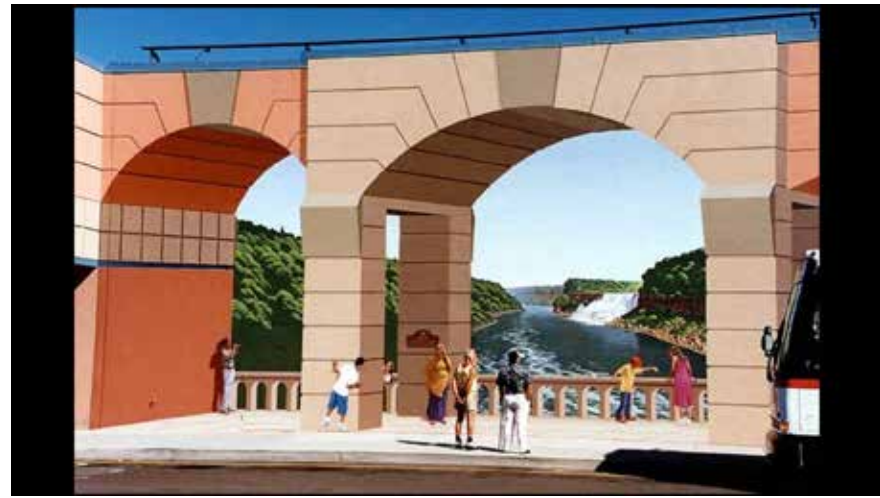
- A good retail signage program
- Outdoor dining
- Retail beautification and seating areas
- Activities and entertainment
- Names for downtown districts (or the entire downtown)
- Experiential marketing



Some buildings would be good “canvasses” for murals. Consider trompe l’oeil, (French for “fool the eye”) to disguise blank walls and buildings that detract from your ambiance with scenes and architectural details painted so they look real.

The variations of trompe l’oeil are endless. The photo bottom left shows a blank wall painted to look like the outside of an old-fashioned grocery store. The awnings, the windows and doors, even some of the shrubs, are painted.

The bottom right photo shows a work from the beginning (upper left), in process (lower left) and the completed work of art (right). Quite a difference from the bare brick wall!



More examples of trompe l'oeil art. The top left photo shows before and after the mural, and the top right photo is a close up. Even the people standing there are part of the painting, and you can walk right up to it, and it still feels real.

Trompe l'oeil is great for inside as well. This brewery (bottom left) really improved its appearance with the intricate mural here (bottom right). Sometimes people walk right up to the wall to head down the painted hallway before they realize it isn't real.



This page shows two more examples of trompe l'oeil. The top left photo shows a concrete block wall in Virginia City, Nevada. With the town's gold rush heritage and historic theme, a blank concrete wall was unsightly and out-of-place. This mural makes the building look like it belongs and it easily fits the town's brand. All the brick, the railing, the windows, and even trim are all part of the mural.

A mural in Winslow, Arizona (top right) depicts a famous Eagles song. This wall is entirely painted as well - the bricks, all the windows, even the reflections in

the windows are painted. This mural attracts nearly 1.5 million visitors a year, who also spend money in downtown Winslow.

Since it's February, I was at a loss as to why these Christmas performances were still being advertised (bottom left). They should be promoting upcoming attractions - as soon as the event is over, be sure to put up what's coming next. Invite people back!

Make it easier for visitors to find information about the trolley - how often does it run? Provide a map. The text on this sign is too much - make it bullet-points.



It's fine to know that remodeling is in progress (top left), but you'll build anticipation among customers if you tell them what is "Coming Soon!"

Be sure to make it easy for visitors to use your amenities and find your attractions. Post easy-to-see information about when the trolley is open, when it runs, and where it goes (top right).

I went into the '76 Historical Museum (beautiful building), and it was great.



The displays were very good (top left), and I particularly enjoyed the carriages (top right). Well done.

I didn't know what was in this building (bottom left), and since there were no footprints in the snow, I didn't check it out. It's a very attractive little structure!

I also didn't know what this building (bottom right) is used for, or if it's open, maybe, in the summer. It would be a great candidate for little trompe l'oeil paintings of people in the windows.

Great displays in the visitor center.



Absolutely stunning architecture



Suggestion: Very cool - plays up the mining heritage.



Suggestion: Your potential is simply amazing. You've got the bones to work with.

These historical displays in the visitor center were excellent! (top left) I really enjoyed them. Learning about how the town has dealt with fires and floods made me realize this town has a lot of grit!

This is a great building (top right). Deadwood has some of the best wild west architecture I've seen.

Deadwood has tremendous potential.



Here's to the outstanding future of Deadwood!

For daily tips, tricks & ideas,
subscribe to Rogers Rules at
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Remember that history isn't a point in time. Today is the day you can start creating new history for the Town of Deadwood!

MARKETING MATERIALS

WEBSITES

First, I looked at the city's website - cityofdeadwood.com. It starts off with quite a bit of text which lets you know the entire city is on the National Historic Register. The home page also goes into their gaming and historic preservation efforts. This text really does nothing to entice me to visit. There is a link to the VCB's website, so I went there:

Deadwood.org - Leading text: "Walk in the footsteps of our legends and come release your inner outlaw in Historic Deadwood." Not too bad. I like the phrase "release your inner outlaw." But "walk in the footsteps of our legends" doesn't tell me much. Who are these legends? How do I walk in their footsteps?

The photo on the home page is a very attractive winter shot of downtown. The website, though, takes up a very small part of the screen, so each page is little, and the photos are too small.

They have links for: Lodging, gaming, attractions & dining, meetings & conventions, events, history, vacation packages, and "about Deadwood."

They need a link for "Things to do" OR "Activities." They have information about things to do, but they should be labeled that way. As it is, I had to search through the pages to figure out what there was to do. When I'm looking at a website trying to plan a visit, the first thing I want to know is, "What is there to do?" They need to make it very easy for people to see what there is to do.

There is an intense focus on the city's history, which makes sense, but visitors still want to know what there is to do. They want to know how they can EXPERIENCE that wild west outlaw history - they want it to come alive for them.

There are also a lot of references to "famous Deadwood characters" or "notorious characters." But not everybody knows who these famous and notorious people were. They need to be specific, name them, and give a little more information about what made them famous. I didn't remember what Wild Bill Hickok did (and at first I mixed him up with Buffalo Bill - two different men), and I didn't remember what Calamity Jane did either. The names are familiar, but they don't mean a lot. Tell their stories (briefly!)

Searching through the website, it looks like Deadwood does make a good

effort at bringing the history alive for visitors.

What attracted me most was the prospect of seeing a restored wild west town in all its glory (and hopefully that's true), plus lots of performances - shootouts, live reenactments, historic walking tours. It looks like there is a lot going on that brings the history alive (at least in the summer?)

It looks like there is a lot of wild west ambiance in the many, many bars, which would be fun.

They have bus tours through the city, which is also always fun.

The website has a list of retail shops with links to other websites for more information - they need more photos (especially interior), and more information about the shops.

There is a list of restaurants - same thing - need more info and more photos.

They have trolley service to make getting around the city easy.

What they really need on the website:

- More and bigger photos - more of the town, and more of the specific attractions, shops, restaurants, bars, and gaming facilities.
- They need "Best Of's" - absolutely!
- They need itineraries - show people how they can spend their time, and showcase some of the best activities, shops, restaurants, tours.

Thoughts:

From what I've read about Deadwood, it looks like it was really struggling economically until 1989, when they legalized gambling. Then it became a real gambling destination. But now that so many other places have legalized gambling, I wonder if that source of revenue has dropped? I wonder if that's a big reason people go to Deadwood anymore? I would expect gambling isn't as big a draw as it used to be.

I think Deadwood's greatest asset is its wild west history AND the historic buildings throughout the city. It sounds authentic. I think they could monetize it even more with more ACTIVITIES that bring that history to life - they are doing a lot already (it seems from what I've read), but maybe they need more.

Just as Leavenworth attracts so many visitors for the Bavarian experience, Deadwood could be a real destination for a wild west town. They'd have to do everything they can to keep it authentic and interactive.

BROCHURES

Deadwood - Black Hills Territory "The West is Wilder in Deadwood"

This looks like the primary visitor brochure for Deadwood. The introductory text is a brief history of the town, with the slogan "Release Your Inner Outlaw." That slogan has a lot of appeal - it sounds great. The introductory text is good - short and sweet, and brings you up to date: "Today, Historic Deadwood is still the wildest town in the West."

Sounds like a fun experience. Does Deadwood live up to that expectation? I looked through the rest of the brochure to try to find out.

The rest of the brochure is comprised of several lists:

- Attractions
- Tours
- Gaming
- Lodging
- Recreation
- Restaurants
- Retail
- Services

The brochure doesn't give me specific reasons to visit, though. Although the lists have brief descriptions, they are a pain to read through to try to figure out what would be best to see or do.

The brochure started off strong, but then fell flat. People want to know why they should visit - what is fun? Why is this place special? What will I experience?

Lists don't sell visitors on what there is to see and do. Lists are just directories. Visitors need specific ideas, such as itineraries or recommendations. Plus lots of photos showing people enjoying the activities.

George S. Mickelson Trail brochure

This brochure is excellent! It has great specific information and an excellent

map. Armed with this brochure, I would have all the information I need to plan a trip along the trail. Wonderful!

Deadwood Trolley brochure

This brochure gives great information about the trolley, and tells what you need to know to use it. It could be improved by editing the text down. It's just too much. Some white space on the brochure (or space for more photos) would be good.

Deadwood history brochures

Several brochures go into detail about some of Deadwood's more famous characters from the past. These are well done, and enjoyable to read. They wouldn't be enough, by themselves, to entice someone to visit Deadwood, but they are great supplemental pieces.

SUGGESTION:

Consider creating a "Best of Deadwood" brochure. This would include Deadwood's very best attractions, amenities, shops and restaurants. Make sure they are experiences visitors will be able to find and enjoy. They should be something visitors would go out of their way to visit - and they've got to live up to expectations. They are your "anchor tenants."

You should use strict criteria to select your best of's.

Here's a sample criteria for developing a list:

- Highly regarded (80%+ positive peer reviews, TripAdvisor, Yelp, regional publications.
- Good curb appeal.
- Open at least May through October (to start)
- Open until at least 6:00 pm.
- Open six days a week.
- Unique to the region.

The brochure should have one panel per each "best of." It should include one or two outstanding photos, and a description that really sells the shop, restaurant, or activity. Focus on SPECIFICS.

The Art of Branding a Community - The Power of Narrowing Your Focus

Introduction to Branding

Branding is the art of setting yourself apart from everyone else, and making you the destination of choice for investment, business opportunities, and as the place to live and visit.

The entire idea behind branding is to import more cash into the community than you export when locally earned money is spent elsewhere.

All of the rules in this handout apply to business as well as to the community.

The Four Ingredients of Change

1. We are slowly climbing out of the private-sector recession, but we are just entering the public-sector recession. As the federal government and just about every state or province struggles to balance budgets, cities, towns, and counties must now act and think like a business, finding ways to import fresh cash into the community - your tax base.
2. Just about every community in North America was founded on a natural resource: timber, fishing, mining, agriculture or were founded on transportation: close to major freeways, railways, or waterways. Manufacturing uses the combination of both natural resources and transportation. But now that we're in a global economy, core industries are dying as are the cities and towns that supported those industries. In a nutshell, communities are now looking for their "second act." Everyone wants a piece of the tourism or economic development pie.

Sad fact: there are more ghost towns in the making today than ever before in North American history.

Every year hundreds of communities are working to diversify their economies.

3. The Internet has changed everything. 90% of the population now has immediate access to the web, and of that group 94% use it to determine where they will live, work or play. Yet 70% of web users are frustrated because you're marketing communities and geographic locations, and they are looking for experiences - job opportunities, best restaurants, things to see and do that cater to them. Your location is second.

If you want new business, residents or visitors, it starts in front of a computer screen.

The web should be your number one marketing priority. BUT it MUST be good enough to close the sale. Period.

4. We are exposed to 5,000 marketing messages a day. We are drowning in advertising overload.

Billions of dollars are spent marketing communities every year and 97% of that is ineffective. That's right: 97%. This includes chambers of commerce, destination marketing organizations, economic development agencies, cities, downtowns, counties, districts, regions, states and provinces.

We simply block out anything that doesn't appeal to us directly. So ask yourself this one question: What do we have that the people we are hoping to attract can't get or do closer to

home? Whatever it is, you need to hang your hat on that. We have the world at our fingertips in seconds. What sets you apart from everyone else?

Communities, like businesses, have been forced to specialize yet most are stuck in the membership-mentality of being all things to all people. Have you ever gone anywhere because they have "something for everyone"?

Welcome to the era of the brand.



Icon: The photo opportunity that shows I was really there.

And avoid marketing lists. Have you ever gone anywhere because they had a great list of things to see and do?

Words and phrases to avoid:

- Explore
- Outdoor recreation
- So much to see and do
- Historic downtown
- Best kept secret
- Experience...
- Beauty and heritage
- Gateway
- Your playground
- Purely natural
- ...and so much more!
- A slice of heaven
- Recreation unlimited
- The place for families
- Recreational paradise
- Unique
- Discover
- Unlike anywhere else
- The four season destination
- Center of it all
- We have it all
- Visit (name of town)
- Naturally fun
- Close to it all
- So much history
- The place for all ages
- Home away from home
- It's all right here!
- The perfect getaway
- Start your vacation here
- Take a look!

You MUST Jettison the Generic! Always promote your truly unique selling proposition. And remember that primary lures cannot succeed without the complementary activities.

FACT: The number one complementary activity of visitors, in the world, is shopping, dining and entertainment in a pedestrian-friendly intimate setting - your downtown. This is where 80% of all non-lodging visitor spending takes place. Why do you think Disney built Downtown Disney just outside each of its parks? To capture that 80%.



1. You must Jettison the Generic

The narrower your focus the stronger your success will be. You simply cannot be all things to all people and win. Find your niche and promote it like crazy.

Look at your taglines and marketing text. If it can fit anyone, toss it and start over.

Don't just market what you have, but what will close the sale. You must separate your primary lure from your complementary or secondary activities.

Lure: What sets you apart from everyone else.

Complementary activities: Things we can do closer to home but will do while in your community. They include shopping, dining, entertainment, historical attractions, walking tours, etc.

Amenities: Local parks, parking, visitor info, lodging, dining, shopping, medical, etc.

Ambiance: Historic downtowns, beautification, landscaping, street trees, benches, etc.

2. Logos and slogans are not brands

They are just marketing messages used to support and reinforce your brand. Its an exclamation point on your key marketing message.

The rules of slogans or tag lines:

- No more than seven words (three is best)
- It must be specific. If you have to explain it, toss it.
- It should convey a feeling or bring a picture to mind.
- It needs to be obvious what you're about.
- It must be unique in your market

Brand identities, or logos, make up 2% of a brand yet get 98% of the political attention locally. Have you ever gone anywhere because they had a great logo?

A word about logos:

- One simple graphic
- Easily recognizable
- Unique to the community
- Rarely do good logos contain a physical item (Think Nike, Toyota, Chevrolet, Reebok, Coca-Cola, Apple...)
- They need to convey a feeling



3. A brand is a perception

What people think of you when your name is mentioned. How perceptions create a brand:

- Visual cues as we pass through the community
- The people and local attitudes
- Word of mouth
- Publicity, the news, social media

This is why you build a brand using public relations. Advertising is used to maintain your ownership position. The goal is to “own” your brand in your market. Nashville “owns” the country-music brand. Napa Valley “owns” the wine brand.

Sometimes communities need a “repositioning” or “rebranding” effort. A brand is also a promise - that you will deliver on that perception when we arrive.

Check out Asheville, North Carolina, one of the best branded communities in the U.S. They do a good job conveying the feeling of a hip arts and “foodie” community and the “feeling” portrayed supports that.

4. Your name must be synonymous with your brand

Country music capital
Gambling/Adult fun
Kids & Family
Music theater
Graceland/Elvis
Winery capital
Frozen tundra

- Nashville
- Las Vegas
- Anaheim, Orlando
- Branson, MO
- Memphis
- Napa Valley, CA
- Green Bay, WI

Hershey, PA
Gettysburg, PA
Lancaster, PA
Washington, DC/Ottawa
Hollywood
Detroit
Silicon valley
Stratford, ON/Ashland, OR

- Chocolate
- Civil War
- Amish
- Government
- Movies and stars
- Cars
- High tech
- Shakespeare

Your town?

-??????

5. Successful brands are built on product

You must champion the cause for product development. Product sells itself. All successful brands are built on product, not just marketing.

Round Rock, Texas: The Sports Capital of Texas. The product: A 500-acre sports park, baseball team, sports-oriented community.

Jefferson, Texas: The Antique Capital. This town of 2,500 residents has an antique dealer for every 20 residents in the town! (125 antique dealers). Because so many people drive four hours from the Dallas area to visit Jefferson it’s now become the official B&B capital of the state.

Jackson, Wyoming: The home of Western Living. This town of 12,000 residents boast 110 galleries and western living shops in its downtown. And the town hosts nearly four million visitors a year.

Product development never ends. You can never rest on your laurels. Avoid hiring any branding company that doesn’t concentrate on product development.



6. You NEVER use focus groups

You heard that right: You NEVER use focus groups to build a brand. If it has to be explained toss it. The focus group mentality results in generic mediocre brands that are rarely successful.

You CANNOT do branding by public consent. You build your brand on feasibility, not just local sentiment.

A brand is "earned" - good or bad. After all, it's a perception - what people think of you.

The Seven Phases of a Public Project

1. Enthusiasm
2. Planning
3. Disillusionment
4. Fear & Panic
5. Search for the guilty
6. Punishment of the innocent
7. Praise and honors for the non-participants



7. You never "roll out" a brand

You never roll out a brand until you can deliver on the promise. It is earned, over time (good or bad).

Sometimes you have to create a "Bridge Brand" that will cover the gap of where you are today and where you hope to end up - your brand direction.

Remember that brands are what people think of you. Changing that perception can take time - sometimes years. And those perceptions change based on product and local attitudes. Brands always start within the community and then spread outwards.



8. Great brands always start with a plan

Branding (what it is you want to be known for)
Development (the needs to be done so you "own" it)
& Marketing (how to tell the world)
Action Plan (the to do list)

No more strategic plans! An Action Plan includes:

- Each recommendation in chronological order of when it will be implemented
- A description of the recommendation
- Who would be charged with its implementation (it takes a village to win)
- The cost of implementation
- Where the money would come from
- When it would be started and completed
- The rationale for making the recommendation

The best plans are less than 100 pages in length. You want a plan that will NOT end up on a shelf gathering dust. The days of Strategic Plans are over.



9. Branding is a team sport!

The biggest, most powerful effect of branding is getting everyone on the same page pulling in the same direction. Once again, it takes a village to win. You'll be far more powerful as a single unified voice than as a bunch of independent singular voices.

Have everyone on your team memorize this exercise, repeating after you. Say it at every meeting:

"I promise to promote only what's truly unique"
"I promise to be different"
"I promise not to repeat what other people say!"



10. Don't let politics kill your branding efforts

There are only three killers of any branding project. There is never a fourth. Ever.

- 1. Local politics** - and this is worse with membership organizations than with elected officials.
- 2. Lack of champions** - those who are willing to take some hits for narrowing the focus and who will push the brand forward.
- 3. Lack of money** (both public and private) - the best brands are built on private investment, not public:

- Napa Valley
- Anaheim, Orlando
- Nashville
- Silicon Valley
- Hollywood
- Hershey, PA
- Lancaster, PA

The bottom line: If you have the right champions on board, they will get past the politics and will find the money to make something happen.



Branding is not a top-down exercise

"A by-product of brands 'for the people' is the committee that compromises and kills a potential brand home run.

This is why you never see statues of committees in public parks. You see brave leaders."

Cities, towns, counties, states & provinces can help fund & facilitate the process, but shouldn't lead the effort. The business community should always champion and pioneer the effort.

We surveyed 400 successfully branded cities and towns and only three were top-down efforts.

Umbrella brands

Multi-community organizations often need to create an "umbrella brand" that encompasses it various communities, each with their own unique brand.

Think of Chevrolet. Its umbrella brand is "Buy American." Its slogans are "Heartbeat of America" and "An American Revolution." But they don't run ads that say "buy a Chevy."

They market the Malibu to families looking for a mid-priced sedan. They market the Corvette to, primarily, baby boomer guys. The Aveo caters to those in their early 20s looking for a high-mileage inexpensive car. The Suburban is marketed to people looking for a large SUV. And then each add is tagged with the umbrella brand "An American Revolution."

BUT you umbrella brand still must differentiate the county or region from all others in the marketplace. It's not so easy. In fact, if this process was easy everyone would be doing it!



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