

The Essentials for Successful Small City Branding

Upper Midwest Tourism Conference

September 2017

Total Destination Marketing




Total Destination Marketing
Leaders in Place Branding

- Specialists in destination branding and tourism strategies
- Clients - Small communities to nations



amazon.com

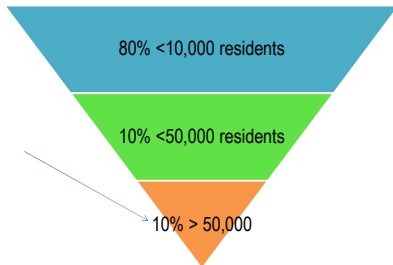
You've Got Company



- USA 20,000+ incorporated cities
- 3,400 counties
- 2,000+ Main Street®
- 12,800 National Historic Districts

**Why is your city relevant?
How do you find the spot where you can fit into the game - and win?**

The Influence of Small Cities







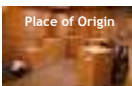




80% <10,000 residents

10% <50,000 residents

10% >50,000

Approx. 20,000 incorporated cities
US Census Bureau, "Statistical Abstract of the United States"

All Places are Competing for Relevance, Respect and Reputation

 Visitors	 Investors	 Talented People
 Students	 Place of Origin	 New Business
 Shoppers	 Move in Right Circles	 Partnerships

The World is Super Loud and Crowded

- The most over communicated society
- Swamped with 3-4 thousand marketing messages a day!
- Millions ++ more web pages every day + blogs, Facebook, tweets, etc



What is Brand Strategy? Is it Your

- Logo?
- Tagline?
- Advertising campaign theme?
- Website?
- Destination name?
- None of the above?

Branding is Very Misunderstood



- More than a logo & tagline
- You have a brand even if you think you don't
- It just might not be the one you want!
- You have to manage and guide it

What is a Brand?



How Much Would Your Kids Pay?



\$16 \$42 \$28

A Brand is The Difference Between



- A fizzy brown liquid and Pepsi (or Coke)
- A restaurant and Buffalo Wild Wings
- A cityand Oshkosh or Eagan or Fargo

A brand is an aura, an invisible layer of meaning (and value) that surrounds an entity
The anticipation is your brand.

A Destination Brand is ...



the valued promise of what we can expect when we travel to and invest time and money in a particular location.

Why Have a Brand Strategy?

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Why do Small Cities Need a Brand Strategy?

1. Focus - prioritize
2. Stand apart from the crowd
3. Connect better with audiences
4. Be more competitive
5. Prioritize
6. On the same page: Unity and leverage

If You Don't Manage Your Image and Identity the Media, Competitors and Word of Mouth Will!

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What Should You Get From a Branding Project?

1. **Brand Audit** → clarify where you fit in the world
2. **Clear Positioning** → for connection + consistency
3. **Brand Platform** → the brand's 'engine room'
4. **Messaging & Stories** → creates the ideas you want to sow
5. **Visual Identity System** → creates the look and identifiers
6. **Signature Experiences** → priorities for messages and investment
7. **Unity** → one voice, one message, one look

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A Brand Strategy Provides

Strategy

- Right vision?
- Right target audience?
- Right lead products?
- Right positioning?

Communications

- Right emotional benefits?
- Right content?
- Right messages, words and phrases?
- Right images, audio and videos?

Experiences

- Right infrastructure investments?
- Right experiences and feelings at critical touchpoints?
- Right grant investments?

Identity

- Right voice and personality?
- Right style, typeface?
- Right colors?

A Toolkit For Being More Competitive

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Connect the Brand with Audiences

Brand Elements	Families	Girlfriend Getaways	Meetings & Conference	Sports Tournaments
Positioning				
Strengths				
Products				
Story				
Brand Messages				
Benefits				
Tone of Voice				

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What Can We Learn From Lane County OR?

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Six Pitfalls That Can Derail Small City Branding

Pitfall #1: Our Tagline (or Logo) is Our Brand

- A logos, taglines and advertising campaign themes are NOT brands!
- Logos and taglines (and name) are reminders or cues to prompt our memory to recall (positive) associations
- They're the keys to a filing cabinet!!



What Have You Placed in the 'Filing Cabinet'?

Pitfall 2: Over-Promising and Under-Delivering

Brand Identity: How you want the city to be perceived

Brand Image: How the city is perceived in reality



PROMISE = ACTUAL EXPERIENCE

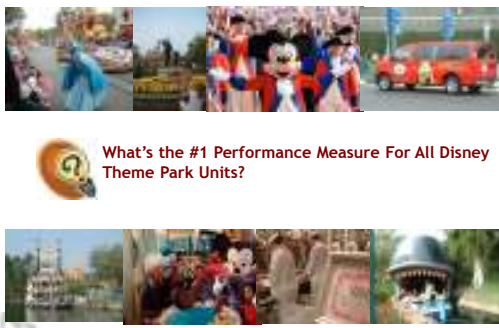
The brand can only be as good as the experiences it delivers!



Pitfall 3: Believing It Takes a Big Advertising Budget



Pitfall 3. Believing It Takes a Big Advertising Budget



What's the #1 Performance Measure For All Disney Theme Park Units?

What's Does it Mean for Small Cities?

Invest in stuff people want to talk about!!

Pitfall 4: Weak Positioning

Positioning should:

- Provides the distinctive place in the customer's mind
-differentiates you from competitors
- in ways that are meaningful and valued

Pitfall 4: Weak Positioning

Finding That "One Thing"

The secret to powerful positioning is to find the intersection of:

- Your greatest community strengths
- What competitors can't easily match
- What customers want and need

It must align with your community values and vision

Is it ...

- Desirable
- Different
- Deliverable
- Scalable?
- A rallying point?

Pitfall 5. Missing an Emotional Connection

ERROR 404:
Feelings not found

Pitfall 5. Missing an Emotional Connection

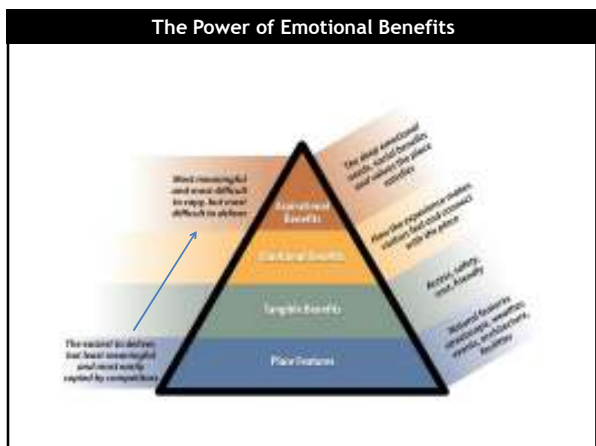
"There is only one reason why people have ever bought from you in the past, and why they will ever buy from you in the future, and that is because they want to change the way they feel. It's that simple."

Geoff Ayling
Rapid Response Advertising

Pitfall 5. Missing an Emotional Connection

NEW! From the Mercedes-Benz Dream Factory.

Have you purchased a new car recently?
Who bought the car because of the specs manual?



The Power of Emotional Benefits

Feeling of Escape and Romance

Feel like a great parent

Feel Pampered and Rewarded

Feel Freedom and Exhilaration

Pitfall 6: Missing Experiences

Enables visitors to....

- Passive to active
- Learn
- Spectator to participant
- Participate and do
- Immerse themselves

Re-positioning Janesville WI

- 'Wisconsin's Park Place'
- Focus on parks, trails, river, Botanical Gardens
- Very high community pride in the 'Park' concept
- Research validated importance of parks and outdoors

Re-positioning Janesville WI

Features

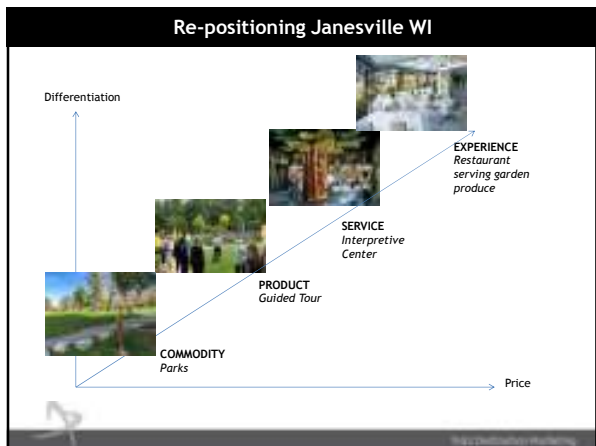
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Experiential

++ Emotional Benefits

+ Emotional Benefits + Product Development

- ### Janesville: Outside Activities
- | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Art in the park | • Garden events | • Picnicking |
| • Bag toss | • Garden tours | • Playground |
| • Baseball / softball | • Gardens | • Rock climbing |
| • Basketball | • Geo caching | • Rowing |
| • Biking | • Golf | • Running |
| • Bird watching | • Hiking | • Shuffleboard |
| • Boating | • Historic walking tours | • Skateboarding |
| • Camping | • Horse riding | • Skiing |
| • Canoeing | • Ice hockey | • Sledding |
| • Concerts | • Ice skating | • Snow shoeing |
| • Cross country skiing | • Kayaking | • Soccer |
| • Cycling | • Mountain biking | • Swimming |
| • Disk golf | • Movies under the stars | • Tennis |
| • Drawing & Painting | • Outdoor concerts | • Walking & jogging |
| • Exercise classes | • Outdoor dining | • Walking in natural settings |
| • Football | • Photography | • Waterskiing |
| • Frisbee | | • Wildlife |
| • Garden classes | | • Yoga classes |



Re-positioning Janesville WI

JANESVILLE

Reposition

- From focus on Attributes to Outside Experiences
- Product development
- Drive distinctiveness
- Capture visitor value from parks

- ### Ten Essentials for Destination Branding Success
1. Develop a Brand Strategy
 2. A consultative approach
 3. Dare to be different
 4. Make a valued Promise
 5. Exceed your Promise
 6. Constantly innovate
 7. Invest in stuff people will talk about
 8. Win hearts then minds
 9. Get the town onto the same page
 10. Be honest and realistic!
 11. Focus and Consistency

More Resources

Free Articles
www.DestinationBranding.com/Library

citybrander

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