

# Special Events That Sizzle

Author Name, Presentation Date

## Special Events That Sizzle!

### Revitalizing Maine Communities 2010

Augusta, Maine

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**Kathy La Plante**  
Program Officer  
National Trust Main Street Center

### Special Events/Festivals:



- **Should** -- attract people
  - acquaint them with district
  - present a "warm fuzzy" about the district
  - result in *eventual* sales
- **Can be built around:**
  - Social activity
  - Heritage
  - Holidays
- **Should highlight assets, unusual features**

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### Special Events

- Are not focused on ringing cash registers during the event (although they sometimes have that added benefit)
- Special events often lead to future sales when attendees have a positive experience admiring window displays, browsing open shops, and chatting with friendly shopkeepers.
- Unique assets, Liver mush, fondue, Big Catsup



### Best Special Events...

- Target specific audiences but provide for all audiences
- De-emphasize the commercial nature of downtown, while not forgetting it
- Are creative, lighthearted and fun for volunteers as well as residents and visitors
- Include opportunities to admire window displays, browse open shops, and chat with friendly shopkeepers

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### How to Develop Your Own Creative Promotions for Main Street



- Give Yourself Time!
- Make It Relaxed!
- Bring New Faces!
- Stir Creative Juices
- Orchestrate the Performance!



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### Five Festival Essentials

- *Music*
- *Food*
- *Overlapping Activities*
- *Activities for All Ages*
- *Something Free*



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## Allow Local Businesses First Right of Refusal to be Highlighted at Special Events



Beaufort, SC, Shrimp Fest



Roseburg, OR Wine Walk

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## Develop Partnerships They provide:

- Assistance in Planning
- Enhancing events with activities
- Fundraising Opportunity
- Community Involvement
- Volunteer Army



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## Community Heritage and Diversity



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## Community History What are your assets worthy of promoting?



Lockport, NY



Lockport, NY

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## Celebrating Downtowns' History



## Build on Existing Events What events exist that you can tie into?



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## Weekly Events Concerts and Famer's Markets



**Lodi Valley Farmers' Market**  
Come on down to the Market for the bounty of harvest.  
Every Friday from 2 - 6 in the City Limits Parking Lot.  
**Hay You!**

How do you turn them up a notch?

## Not just ANY Framer's Market Make it Sizzle!



We are a farmers market promoting local farmers and local artisans. All produce is Georgia grown and most is organic. You can find the freshest produce, freshest seafood, plants, fresh flowers, herbs, soap, jewelry and more. All of our artists hand make their items. This year we will have cooking demonstrations, kid's activities and live music. We promote buy local, shop local. We support our downtown community and downtown merchants. Check out our great reviews on [www.localharvest.org](http://www.localharvest.org). Hours: 8:00am - Noon. Rain or Shine.  
Come out this Saturday, June 5th for our Opening Day.

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## Farmer's Market Kickoff



Open every Saturday, May through October from 8:00 am - 1:00 pm. Located at the corner of Third & Water Street, one block east of Main Street.

5 Friends Like This: Mike Thompson, Christine Hughes, Sid Songstorn.

Linda Raaschke Downtown Rochester Farmer's Market is one of the BEST things to have happened to the City of Rochester - can't wait for Opening Day - May 1st - a time to be enjoyed by all... April 22 at 11:41am - Report

## Boat & Fishing Swap Meet



- Choose events that fit your community/history
- Get many voices involved
- Allow time in planning to think of "everything"
- Think outside the box
- Have fun!

BOAT, CAMPING & FISHING SWAP MEET  
Sunday, April 21  
10:00 - 4:00  
W. Andrew W. Davidson - Organized By  
SWAP BUY SELL  
BOATS, CAMPING & FISHING EQUIPMENT

## Special Events

- Be Creative
- Sometimes events are a one-time opportunity
- Keep events exciting by changing them each year
- Document everything making it easy for the next person in charge – **WORK PLANS!**



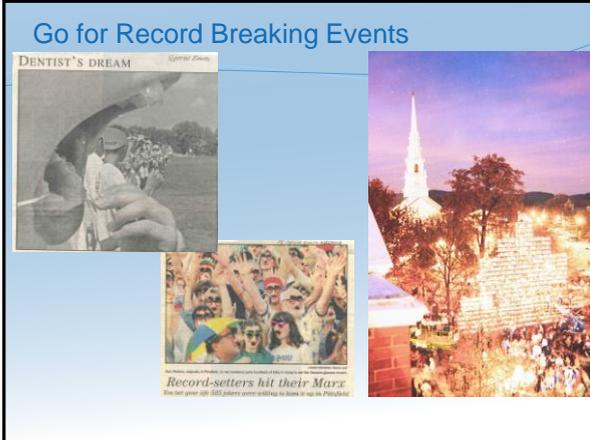
## Add some pizzazz!



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### Go for Record Breaking Events



**DENTIST'S DREAM**  
*Special Events*

**Record-setters hit their Marx**  
*The first ever 100,000 people crowd gathered to hear it was the President*

### Holidays offer opportunities for a variety of promotions



Get beyond the same old, same old

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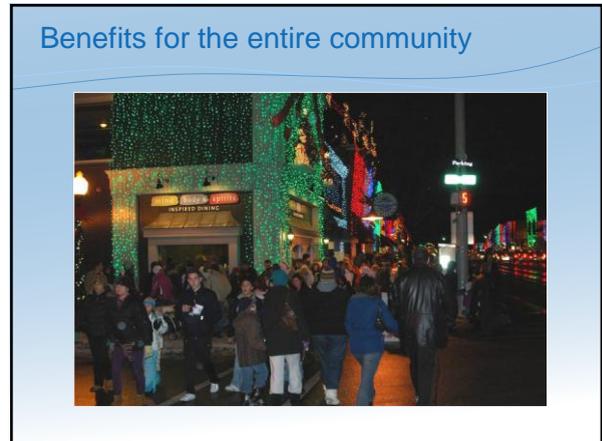
### The Big Bright Light Show Rochester, MI

Your trip begins at [michigan.org](http://michigan.org)



ShopMetroDetroit PURE MICHIGAN

### Benefits for the entire community



### Attracting over 1 Million People



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### Special Events and Funding

- Revenue Generators
- Sources of Event Funding:
  - admissions
  - activity fees
  - booth fees
  - entry fees
  - merchandise sales
  - raffles
  - sponsorships
  - donations



**Sweatin' on the Square**  
MERS State Championship Barbecue Cookoff  
7-8-2010 5:00-9:00 PM  
[www.zustainthevillage.com](http://www.zustainthevillage.com)

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## Typical Main Street Program's Budget

FUNDing Sources	Program Expenditures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public sector support</li> <li>Private sector memberships</li> <li>Sponsorships</li> <li>Product sales</li> <li>Event revenue</li> <li>Contracts, fees for services</li> <li>Taxing districts (BID, TIF, DDA, PSD)</li> <li>Grants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manager salary</li> <li>Additional staff</li> <li>Rent</li> <li>Office operations</li> <li>Equipment</li> <li>Printing</li> <li>Committee budgets</li> <li>Insurance</li> </ul>

<b>1/4</b>	<b>Public Sector</b> (government – city, County, state)	<b>1/2</b>	<b>Stakeholder Support</b> (business & property owners, residents, partners (corporations)	<b>1/4</b>	<b>Earned Income</b> (Events & Activities (festivals, etc),
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## Promotion Committee Fundraising Responsibilities

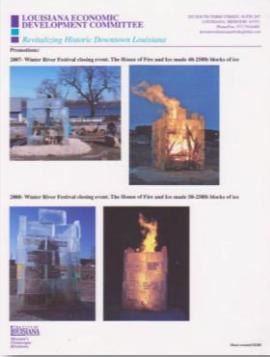
- Create revenue generating events
- Find sponsors for events
- Include administrative costs in budgets for all projects, including advertising



## Make Event Sizzle When you have a Budget

### Sponsorships

- Find a way to meet the potential sponsor's needs
- Exposure to targeted audiences
- General visibility
- Affiliation with your group
- Mending fences



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## Sponsorships



- Pulling all sponsorship opportunities in one package for the entire year.
- Coordinating with Organization Committee
- Attractive Package
- Why?

## Sponsor Pitch

### A case study from Biddeford, ME

**Become a Sponsor for the 5th Annual Chalk on the Walk!**

The Chalk on the Walk will be held on September 26, 2009 from 12-4pm throughout downtown Biddeford. The fastest growing event in our downtown welcomes families, artists of all skill levels and the entire community for a day of fun filled entertainment, food, art, music and a chance to stroll around the streets our historic downtown.



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## Sidewalk Chalk-on-the-Walk Sponsors

**You can be a sponsor!**

Each year we rely on local businesses to help sponsor this event. For \$100 you can buy a square to advertise your business and commitment to our community. As a sponsor you can be the artist, arrange for an artist you know to design your square, or we can match you with one of our volunteer artists. You and/or your artist supply the idea and talent for your chalk art and Heart of Biddeford supplies the chalk!

**Want to be a Lead Sponsor?**

We are looking for businesses to host kids activities and other exciting programming all over the city on the day of the festival. \$1000, \$2,500 or \$5,000 sponsorships are available and provide a great way to connect with the community while marketing your business.



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## Why Become a Sponsor? Biddeford Chalk-on-the-Walk Art



- Excellent publicity at a very well attended event
- Send a team of employees into the community for a fun filled day
- Give a square to a good customer
- Donate to a class for kids to use
- Support local artists
- Stimulate the creative culture downtown
- Good hearted competition among downtown enthusiasts
- Use your chalk image in promotional materials for your business
- Give the hundreds of festival attendees a chance to stop in front of your storefront and take note!

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## Sponsorships Federal Hill, Baltimore, MD




## Who are your possible sponsors?



- Florence's Run Like a Nut 8K
- Piggly Wiggly
- Who else might be a good sponsor for a run?
- Sponsorship exercise

## Special Events & Service Businesses

Service businesses may benefit by the positive public relations and goodwill that can come from sponsoring elements of a special event

- There needs to be a good match between the business and the element and if the sponsorship is visible.
- Businesses should demand and Main Street programs should provide clear sponsorship benefits:
  - event naming rights
  - the business name and logo in all event print ads, press releases, websites and social media
  - the business name and logo in signage at the event
  - the business name mentioned during radio ads and in announcements at the event
  - an opportunity for a representative to say a few words at the event.
  - VIP parking

## Quantifying Impressions

Inventory	Quantity	Impressions	Value*	Total
Posters	100/30	300,000	\$35 cpm	\$10,500
Flyers	10,000	10,000	\$50	\$500
Table Tnt	200/30	600,000	\$75	\$45,000
Banners	2/30	600,000	\$15	\$900
Signs	5	5X atnd.	\$100	???
Internet	100,000	100,000	\$25	\$250
Stuffers	5,000	5,000	\$5	\$250
Radio	100 spots	# of listeners	\$ rate card	???
TV	50 spots	# of viewers	\$ rate card	???

## It started out as a Pumpkin Drop

Sanford, ME





**Grown into:**  
Giant Pumpkin Races  
Pumpkin float  
Vendors (increased)  
Doubling attendance  
Media attention

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## Fall Festivals

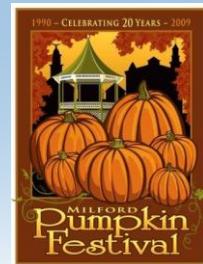


- Main Street selling food and beverages (cider, apple pie, apple crisp) + vendors
- Scarecrow making
- Pumpkin sales
- Pumpkin carving and painting
- Raffles
- Pumpkin Boutique
- Talent show (Town Hall)
- Haunted forest
- Quilt show
- Three days

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## Special Event Merchandise

Quality is of the utmost importance



## Graphics Will Make Your Event Sizzle!



## Special Event or Fundraiser?



- Heritage Celebrations
- Mill tours
  - Cemetery Tours
  - House Tours
  - Studio Tours
  - Historic Walking Tours

## Food Festivals

- Charging Vendors
- Charging Admissions
- Sponsors of parts of the event



## Special Events

- Food and Beverages
- Raffles
- Activity Fees



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## Volunteers Wanted/Needed



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## On-line volunteer sign up

## Calendar of Events

Post on-line

## Developing Your Promotion Calendar

### Steps

- Identifying current assets & position
- Identifying target markets
- Establish promotion objectives
- Establish overall strategy/calendar
- Publish or post the calendar
- Design individual events
- Implement
- Evaluate

## 14 Ways to Bring a Promotion to Life

- Start planning your promotion at least 12 months in advance
- Evaluate previous promotions
- Set and communicate clear goals, expectations
- Fill a gap in your promotional calendar, mix
- Match activities with your target audience
- Start small, build on success
- Stress quality
- Do a checklist, work plan
- Include merchants early and often
- Involve many volunteers, delegate responsibility
- Ensure funding
- Work with the media, promote the promotion
- Document the promotion (PICTURES!)
- Evaluate the promotion

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## Why Promotions Fail

- No attention to details
- No targeting
- Lack of creativity
- Lack of funding
- Successful promotion depends on good weather
- Poor Delegation
- Unrealistic expectations
- Starting to big
- Stale events
- Inadequate evaluation
- Failure to say "thank you"

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## 14 Ways to Kill a Promotion

- Begin your planning tomorrow
- Rest assured everything will fall into place
- Draw up rigid plans
- Forget the idea of a simple promotion
- Move the promotion's date from year to year
- Schedule promotions in competition
- Let someone else worry about start-up money
- Don't worry about people power
- Let a few people do everything
- Give everyone equal authority
- Demand help from local businesses/organizations
- Ignore health dept. rules
- Assume everyone knows all about the promotion
- Discard receipts, invoices & other records

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## Remember a Promotion Must:

- Drive traffic
- Drive sales
- Drive publicity
- Drive fundraising

*↳ If a promotion doesn't meet one or more of these criteria...don't do it!*

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## Event Evaluation

- Do you have a formal evaluation process for your events?
- Who does it?
- When do you do it?
- What does it encompass?



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## Evaluating Promotions

- Benefits:
  - Builds credibility
  - Refines future events
  - Helps to meet target markets
- Measure:
  - Attendance
  - Attitudes
  - Sales volume
  - Media value



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## Event Evaluation

*Gathering Opinions*



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## How do you measure the success of your promotions?

- Track attendees at events - who's coming?
  - are there more feet on the street?
- Are there more partners in events?
- What's the media value?
- What's the buzz?
- Are there smiles on the faces?
- Do businesses report return customers?
- What if it didn't sizzle???



Old Orchard Beach, ME

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## Principles of Promotion

- Comprehensive strategy
- Incremental steps
- Self-help
- Partnerships
- Unique downtown assets
- High standard of quality
- Changes in attitude and practice
- Implementation



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Share Your Successes!

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[www.preservationnation.org](http://www.preservationnation.org)