



**How to create  
marketing  
partnerships -  
save money,  
increase sales**



## Partnerships? Relationships require more than one person

- The seven things you can do to get into the partnership game and win big

## 1. Promote private businesses

- Yes, you can use public money to promote private business
- It is critical to tourism
- The best destinations are driven by private business
- The most popular attractions are privately developed
- Private industry is what economic development is about
- Tourism is about cash – not just visitors
- Supporting businesses can make or break you

## Alpena, Michigan

- Promoting their anchor tenants – Maritime Heritage Center
- Those are always private businesses
- They are promoting their “best of”
- Almost everything promoted by Alpena is a private business

# How to create marketing partnerships | Handout

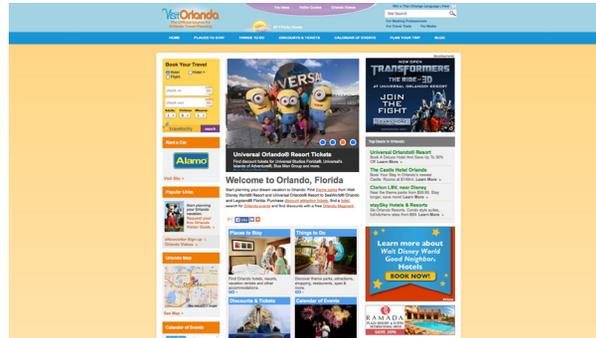
Market your top three:

- Restaurants
- Retail shops

And your top six to ten:

- Activities
- Attractions

Don't let local politics kill this effort!



## Market your top three:

- Restaurants
- Retail shops
- Market your top six:
  - Activities
  - Attractions
- Don't let local politics kill this effort!
- Review the video – Promoting Your Anchor Tenants
- Bentley University's Center for Marketing Technology: 32% of travel decisions come from brochures prior to traveling (#1 Internet, #2 Friends)
- Once people are at their destination, 81% of travel decisions come from brochures (#1)

## Examples:

- **Orlando** – imagine if they weren't able to promote private businesses. No mentioning DisneyWorld, Universal Studios, or any of the other numerous attractions in Orlando
- **Napa Valley** – promoting their best wineries and wine tasting experiences, which are private businesses
- We are in the age of getting rid of memberships, and converting to marketing partnerships
- **Nashville** – promoting live music, again private industry
- **Branson, Missouri** – a community of 6500 people hosts 7.5 million visitors per year – based on 49 music theaters, all of them privately developed
- **Asheville, North Carolina** – they do not differentiate towns, private and public attractions because visitors don't care

We are in the age of public/private partnerships

## US Travel Association

- In portal to promote the United States to foreign visitors, they created public/private partnerships
- Includes public sector and private businesses

### New Trend: arrive a visitor, leave a local

- Check out Little Havana video: [bit.ly/littlehavana](http://bit.ly/littlehavana)
- Notice Jose, the star of the video, is walking you through Little Havana and promoting private businesses
- Little Havana has become a major tourism destination, driven by the private businesses
- Check out the Andaz Hotel in Liverpool: [bit.ly/leavelocal](http://bit.ly/leavelocal)
- The hotel showcases some of the businesses right around the hotel to tell you why you should stay there
- If you want to triple your sales you MUST get past the politics of promoting specific businesses

2

Avoid the membership mentality



3

Remember the 4Times Rule

## 2. Avoid the membership mentality

- Why?
- You must promote your “best of’s” regardless of membership status
- Politics is the number one killer of community based promotional efforts
- To win you must think and promote like a travel writer

## Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin

- Visitors Bureau was a membership organization, only promoting members
- About 10 years ago, visitor guide promoted restaurants – but it included 3 McDonald’s, 6 Subways, and a couple pizza places – that was it
- It made it look like Wisconsin Dells didn’t have good restaurants
- Since then, they have started promoting all their restaurants, so you can see all the great places to eat

## 3. Remember the 4 Times Rule

- The shortest distance between two points is a good time
- Fact: people will go somewhere if you have activities – that cater to them – that will keep them busy four times the length of time to get there
- For example – if I have to drive an hour, I need four hours of activities that will cater to me
- This is why it is important to promote everything you have
- The average stay in Hawaii is six nights – it takes longer to get there (for many visitors), so they stay longer; the average stay in Orlando is four nights
- Even movie theaters – they look at the population within a 20 minute drive because four times 20 is about the length of a movie

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## Example: Olympia, Lacey, Tumwater, Washington

- Population: 200,000 in the county
- Claim to fame: Washington's state capital
- Challenge: lots of little museums, lack of funding for marketing
- Individually, the museums aren't worth a special trip
- Eleven museums in the area got together and created one brochure promoting the entire experience
- City of Tumwater took the lead
- To start: city paid for the collective brochure
- Idea: each pay \$200 – enough money to print and distribute the brochure all over the area
- Outcome: attendance tripled while cutting the collective marketing budgets by two-thirds
- You could do this with:
  - Restaurants
  - Historical attractions
  - Trail guides
  - Equestrian facilities (your brand focus)
  - Meeting facilities
  - Retail shops
  - Museums

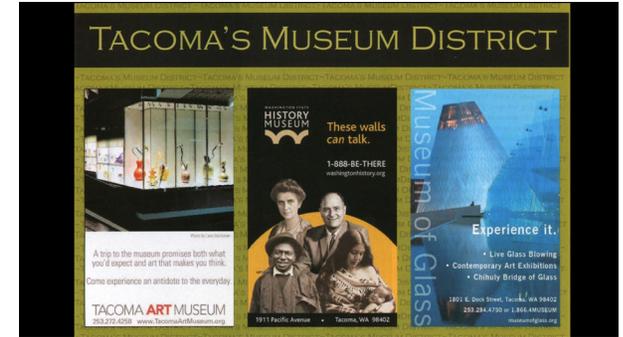
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## Walnut Creek, California

- Have a great outdoor mall, and a traditional downtown
- Call all their retail The Walnut Creek Collection
- Became a shopping and dining destination
- Grouping all their merchants together, they are able to promote it as one shopping experience
- It makes Walnut Creek an amazing shopping and dining destination
- How's it working for them?
- Downtown now does almost a billion dollars a year in retail sales and services
- People come from San Francisco and Oakland to shop there
- Walnut Creek is THE #1 upscale shopping and dining destination in Northern California
- Neiman Marcus and other top brands are now in downtown Walnut Creek
- Their market area goes into southern Oregon
- People driving as much as four hours to go shopping and dining in Walnut Creek



## Tacoma, Washington

- 30-40 minutes south of Seattle
  - Three museums bought one ad together – Tacoma Art Museum, Washington State History Museum, and Museum of Glass
  - They saved advertising dollars and together they become worth the drive from the major Seattle market
  - Their attendance went up and their marketing costs went down
- Bottom line:** you are far more effective as one loud voice than a number of small, individual voices

## 4

Orchestrate the partnerships



### 4. Orchestrate the partnerships

#### Huntsville, Texas

- Town of about 30,000, about 80,000 north of Houston
  - Home of the largest statue of an American hero anywhere in the world – visible from 6 miles away
  - In a soda fountain for lunch, the waitress not only brought menus, but also recommended we visit the Sam Houston Memorial Museum and gave a brochure with details
  - After visiting the museum, we went to an antique shop and the person working there, on finding we were visiting, asked if we'd seen the Texas Prison Museum – promoting another attraction in the area
  - These businesses were promoting one specific attraction to their visitors
  - The curator of the Sam Houston Museum created partnerships with a few local restaurants – he would promote them (their menu and brochure at the museum) if they would put a table tent and hand out brochures for the museum in their restaurant; and he'd give free admission to their employees to the museum
  - He also said when you hire a new employee, I will pay their first two hours if we can give them a tour of the museum
- Now the employees of these few restaurants are promoting the museum
  - The restaurant business went up, the museum's business went up – they are cross selling each other
  - The Prison Museum picked three retail shops to do the same thing – cross promote each other
  - Cost: Nothing!
  - Outcome: biggest increase in the state in tourism spending compared to similar communities

## 5

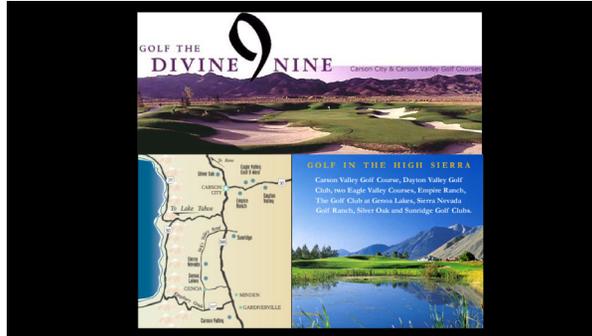
Strength in numbers = critical mass

### 5. Strength in numbers = critical mass

- The more you have of any one thing, the more worth the drive you are

#### Carson City, Nevada

- Population: 70,000 in the area
- Nevada's state capital
- Challenge: Las Vegas isn't the capital?
- The brand: Close to Reno, close to Lake Tahoe, why go there?
- Nine golf courses scattered all over
- Created The Divine Nine
- The golf courses had been fierce competitors
- One board members owned one of the courses, realized they should be working together



### How it works

- The Divine 9 Consortium
- Marketing partnerships with 9 courses
- To start: each paid \$1100
- Started with a website, photography
- Partnerships with local hotels
- Partnerships for photography
- Worked together to find points of differentiation – what makes each course unique
- Now one of the top golf destinations in the Western United States
- Makes the area a golf destination, worth that special trip
- Suddenly, Carson City is a major golf destination, competing with its neighbors for visitors
- Hundreds of thousands in free publicity that they never had as individual golf courses
- An oasis worthy of at least a day trip
- Lots of reasons for return visitors
- A first class destination

## 6

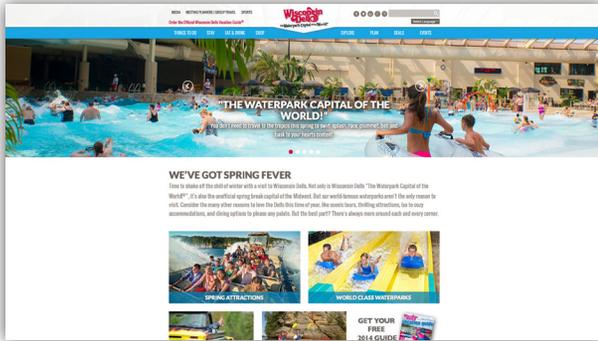
Focus on your brand

### 6. Focus on your brand

#### Jefferson, Texas

- Population: 2500
- Brand: Antique capital of Texas – 125 antique dealers
- Results: people are driving four hours from Dallas
- Because they are worth the long trip, they have also become the B&B Capital of Texas
- The power of promoting the businesses that fit your brand

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## Wisconsin Dells

- Population: 2700, Lake Delton 2400
- Claim to fame: Family summer destination
- Challenging: narrowing the focus
- The brand: the waterpark capital of the world
- They have 18 waterparks
- Became an award winning destination
- Nearly 100 attractions, but focus is on the waterparks
- How's it working for them?
- They have marketing partnerships which gives them a tourism budget of more than \$10 million
- They are one of the Midwest's biggest and most popular destinations
- They are now assisting downtown helping it become a stand-alone destination as well

**Bottom line:** Move from memberships to marketing partnerships



## Chautauqua County, New York

- Population: 135,000 in the county
- Claim to fame: Chautauqua Institution – a world class learning center
- Challenge: spreading it out to the county
- The brand: The World's Learning Center
- Leveraging an anchor tenant, the Chautauqua Institution, across the whole county
- Opportunities for individual attractions/experiences to get on board and become part of the brand
- Mix of businesses, non-profits, etc. that all play into the learning brand are being promoted – so the entire county benefits



## Coos County, New Hampshire

- Population: 33,000 in the entire county
- Claim to fame: The grand resorts
- Challenge: Outdoor recreation is the draw
- The brand: Grand Resorts. Grand Adventures.
- Promoting the uniqueness of the experience – grand adventures that are worth a special trip
- Criteria included:
- Must be different than what the major markets can get or do closer to home
- It must be first class. You have one chance to earn the brand
- Or it must be significantly better than other opportunities in the region
- The people running it must be good, enthusiastic
- It must be highly regarded by someone other than themselves
- These experiences/attractions partnered together to show how their destination is worth a special trip



## Lovelock, Nevada

- Population: 1600
- Claim to fame: the round courthouse, first restroom break heading east from Reno
- Challenge: Nothing much to offer visitors
- The brand: Nevada's love-locking capital
- With a name like Lovelock, they decided to capitalize on it
- Created "Lovers Lock"
- Decorated the grounds around the courthouse
- All the retailers sell heart shaped locks; some even engrave them
- The locks take a couple hours to get engraved – that means you have visitors spending a couple hours = spending money
- Then the lock is placed on the chain downtown
- They are finding people are buying them for gifts, etc.
- Every business can tap into this
- Now they are selling them as souvenirs
- Result: Still in the beginning steps

## 7. Create product development partnerships

## St. Albert, Alberta

- The botanic arts city
- Different kind of partnership – beautification
- City would pay up to 50% of their costs, up to \$2500, for beautification
- Thomas Coffee House, changed name and beautification
- Before
- After
- Sales went up 400%
- The city created a partnership to support the brand, and it is working
- They have won all kinds of awards for their branding



## Asheville, North Carolina

- Using lodging taxes to provide grants and low interest loans for businesses
- Promoting and supporting their great attractions, that draw in visitors

### Cities working together to keep their merchants open after 6:00pm

- Another important partnership
- To get everyone on the same page, pulling in the same direction