#23

COMPLETE

Collector:	Web Link 1 (Web Link)
Started:	Tuesday, September 08, 2020 3:12:50 PM
Last Modified:	Tuesday, September 08, 2020 3:30:00 PM
Time Spent:	00:17:10
IP Address:	64.180.218.136

Page 1

Q1

BIA Name:

Downtown Kamloops Business Improvement Association

Q2

Contact:

250-372-3242

Q3

Email:

admin@downtownkamloops.com

Q4

Project Title:

Sustaining & Supporting the Downtown Core

Q5

Category:

Marketing,

Partnerships & Advocacy

Q6

Project Description:

SUMMARY

During the unprecedented times when fear and panic gripped our community, KCBIA knew that COVID-19 would inevitably impact small businesses. Every action and inaction they carry out would determine their survival. Our support became the utmost priority; resiliency, community support and innovation would determine the survival of our treasured Downtown core. By steadfastly keeping our downtown safe and vibrant, we have overcome the impossible through several ongoing initiatives and maintaining lines of communication open.

NEED

Downtown Kamloops is the cultural, historical, and artistic heart of our community. The core is home to our community's cultural pillars, including Kamloops Art Gallery, Kamloops Museum and Archives and the Old Courthouse Cultural Centre. It is also the home to over 800 business licence owners, including accommodation, shopping, entertainment, dining, beauty and wellness and other service-based businesses.

Approximately 10,000 people work downtown, and they make up about 34% of downtown customers. With COVID-19 restrictions, most employees were directed to work from home, leaving the downtown empty. Due to the lack of customers and continued employer restrictions, most businesses had temporary closures during Phase 1. Ongoing sustainability through a crisis is imperative to businesses' survival, as is the necessity to change through innovation and creativity.

Some of downtown retail businesses have been in operation for over 30 years, while others are new to the downtown core. For businesses with high overhead costs and little to no revenue during Phase 1, we recognized the need to connect businesses amongst each other for mentorship and communication.

At the beginning of March, there was an overload of information and news media. While businesses were trying to decode this information, they could not find resources that were of value to their businesses. Understanding their needs and providing them with the correct information and tools helped develop a sustainable business plan.

Managing public perception is a significant element in the survival of a vibrant downtown. As the majority of businesses were closing storefronts, vulnerable populations were finding more accessible places to setup. This interaction between business owners the homeless created an unsettling time for the few storefronts that were still operational.

In response, collaboration with community leaders helped city-wide communication and provided a united front in tackling this crisis.

OBJECTIVES

1. Safety & Security: Maintain Downtown as a safe place for businesses and the public.
2. Vibrancy: The heart of downtown must be kept vibrant and inviting.
3. Sustainability: The continued steadfast resolve to attract new commercial and residential patrons to sustain our downtown.

Q7

Audience:

Audience 1: The main audience for this project is our members, both property owners and tenants. Audience 2:Customers to Downtown Kamloops (Kamloops locals). We want to secure sustainable funding to maintain a thriving downtown.

Q8

Implementation:

INITIATIVES

- SURVEY
As a Business Improvement Association, we work with various levels of governments to help small businesses mitigate the impact of COVID-19. To ensure that we were providing the right resources and tools to our local businesses, we conducted verbal surveys to gather information to respond and be proactive to the needs of our business community. Despite the pandemic closures, Downtown Kamloops had 21 new business licenses, reinforcing the idea that downtown Kamloops is a good place to do business.

- DOWNTOWN TO GO
In phase 1, front doors might have been closed, but businesses were still available for customers through online stores, takeout and delivery services. Some retail stores offered curbside pickup to increase safety measures. Kamloops Central Business Improvement Association coordinated with City Council to create and implement temporary loading/Pickup zones in proximity to these businesses. While these establishments were adapting and pivoting their business models, they did not focus on communication and marketing. By maintaining a continuously updated list, KCBIA ensured the public was aware of open, altered hours and whether they have pickup zones available. Public awareness allowed businesses to sustain a large part of their staff. "Downtown to Go" marketing strategy enabled the use of our internal resources such as email, website, social media, as well as external relationships with local media companies in Kamloops.
https://www.radionl.com/2020/04/17/57443/
https://ykastrong.com/ykastrong-stay-connected-and-informed-3/
- WEBINAR SERIES BY COMMUNITY LEADERS
During Phase 1 and 2, there was much uncertainty within the business community. There was an overload of information with a limited understanding of what this meant for each business. We saw the need for companies to connect with experts in their respective industries or important local professionals such as the Interior Health authority. Establishments needed guidance on how to pivot their businesses to an online model, what resources were available and how best to use these. Most were struggling with developing a digital face to their traditional storefronts. With limited marketing knowledge, their progress was slow.
As a BIA, we launched a free webinar series which gave insights to these critical topics; Adapting your business model in challenging time, Adopting a Digital Strategy for your business, Workplace Health and Safety and COVID-19, Digital Strategy in the Time of COVID and Best Strategies for your Business Re-opening plan. We were privileged to have several community leaders participate in these webinars and inspired a peer-to-peer network in the downtown business community.
- OPEN WITH CARE
We were extremely excited that Downtown Kamloops was finally getting back to business. We recognized that consumers might be hesitant to go back to their previous practices, so our "Open With Care" campaign was released along with other BIAs throughout the province introduced. This initiative inspired businesses to re-open in a safe, healthy, and compliant manner, and to support continued consumer confidence.
Through this campaign, the goal was to communicate the WorkSafe BC protocols, which must be followed by all businesses to create a safe and healthy atmosphere. We encouraged support for local businesses, in line with "#ykastrong Support Local" campaign in Kamloops. The KCBIA communicated that Downtown is resilient, alive, and cares about its customers. In conjunction, we shared a consistent message across the City and Province of BC. KCBIA directed all our marketing towards preparing the public to be "good consumers"; to shop, live, play, eat, art, all with care, while providing our members with the tools to assist them to open their business with care.
- CAP TEAM PATROLS
Customer Care and Patrol Team(CAP) are downtown ambassadors that assist businesses, tourists, and citizens, focusing on promoting tourism and safety in the downtown core. During the lockdown, our CAP team realigned their focus to patrol the streets, provide a Safe Walk for downtown professionals, report unsafe conditions and vulnerable populations, partner with the city of Kamloops bylaw services with crime patrol, and assist the RCMP with crime prevention in a non-aggressive capacity. The CAP team became the forefront for increased security, safety, assistance, information and a friendly smile.
- #YKASTRONG
#ykastrong is a combined strategy from 10 Kamloops business community leaders working together to produce a streamlined

communication and engagement strategy addressing COVID-19 and the effects on business in Kamloops. It ensures Kamloops' business stakeholders receive relevant and timely information and are provided important and necessary tools to endure this crisis.
- PATIO EXTENTION
As restrictions lifted across BC. in Phase 3, we saw the need to create a vibrant but safe environment in Downtown. While businesses were re-opening, they were also restricted by WorkSafeBC protocols. Consequently, their daily business turnover depended on creating a safe space for their customers. With unanimous support from the City council, KCBIA implemented extended patios to enhance our downtown restaurants' capacity. Starting in June, this initiative allowed for physical distancing and a safe atmosphere that significantly increased restaurant volume. These patio extensions will stay open until Oct 31st and permits revisited for 2021.
- VIDEO MESSAGING & BUSINESS SPOTLIGHTS
The video messaging and Business Spotlight shared positive messages from downtown businesses and KCBIA Board highlighting community support, encouragement and inspiration. These videos gave a personal connection when social distancing kept us apart and reminded Kamloops that we are all in this together and inspired people to support their local businesses. The key message for these spotlights is those small business owners are your neighbours and remind us to support local.
- MARKETING
During COVID-19, when digital platforms are of significant importance, the KCBIA focused its efforts on simple yet impactful marketing campaigns that resulted in more than 200,000 impressions and a reach of over 150,000 on our social media posts. This campaign is ongoing and continues to gain impressions. We budgeted for paid ads on our social media accounts to promote important campaigns like 'Downtown to Go' and 'Open With Care'. We continue to use traditional media such as television and radio, as we find that it is vital in our market. We are partnering with our local media organizations to offer support to our local businesses and in turn, support our local media outlets.

Q9

Results:

This has been a challenging and difficult year for all. However, we are innovative, creative, and we have the support from our downtown businesses that allow us to continue, adapt, and thrive. We admire and respect the genuine passion of our downtown leaders; their commitment to relationships, customer service and resilience is truly incredible. We are confident that our downtown will rebound and get back on our feet and demonstrate resilience.

Q10

Cost:

Radio - CAD $1,260 TV – CAD $1,286 Social Media - $500 Face Masks - $620 Printing - $320