

RVBA

Growing our Businesses Together Workshop 10-9-08

What can we do to further our mission and promote business in the Rondout Valley?

Guest Moderator, Andy Lutz.

Notes:

RVBA Workshop Meeting 10-9-08

Workshop Ideas by Table

Carl's Table:

- o Website links, key words, hits, analysis.
- o Promotion of Valley as authentic experience, anti-commercialism, eco-tourism, trails, simplicity. Capitalize on conservation, nature, Buy Local trends. Direct experience. Connect with younger generation.
- o Branding and promotion of Valley through history and preservation.
- o Historic House Tour.
- o Alliances with other business groups, send reps to other chambers, associations.
- o How to get people over the mountain ?
- o Promote recreation: horses, golf, hiking, rail trail, Mohonk etc.
- o Promote manufacturing.

Tom's Table:

- o Buy Local campaign, use UCCC intern for marketing campaign.
- o RV Money & coupons.
- o More participation from membership, subcommittee involvement.
- o Website should be tourism oriented, links, first in HV search, links to towns.
- o Education/Biz seminars for members on subjects like website development, accounting, marketing, business plans.
- o Tourism; promote RV as destination.
- o Promote specific attractions e.g. Antonio's American Flag art piece, Art Fair.
- o Promote RV via categories: Art, Culinary, Agriculture, Outdoor activities, Stone Houses/History, and Music
- o An RVBA signature event.
- o Fundraising: need more than just membership income.
- o Advertise outside of Blue Stone Press.

Dan's Table:

- o Enhance communication with membership.
- o Website: links to towns.
- o Advertising: outside of region e.g. Westchester. Cooperative advertising.
- o Explore relationships with & ideas from other chambers, and form a committee to research.
- o Buy Local campaign, create coupons.
- o Organize internal RVBA committees by common interest.
- o Marketing and PR
- o American Flag event.
- o Participate in Hudson Valley Ramble (Sept).
- o Art Fairs
- o Cross promotions

Richard's Table:

- o Website: Enhance, create e-mail blasts, blog for members.
- o Business Advisory Council on new businesses, new area relocation, business expansion.
- o Signature event: Chili Festival.
- o Add In the Rondout Valley to event branding.
- o Frame RV through genuine experiences, eco-tourism, trails.
- o Buy Local campaign
- o PR need to promote the Valley.
- o Advertising: radio KZE non-profit rate ads with half biz promotion.
- o Tie in with I LOVE NY campaign.
- o Look for grants for promoting towns/tourism.
- o Hold mixers for membership (in lieu of or in addition to dinners).
- o Kiosks, electronic need for tourism info.

Events Table:

- o Enhance communication with membership. More centralized coordination of event postings.
- o Improve website, use visit vortex/virtual tours.
- o Add events to Visions calendar.
- o Enhance interconnectedness of towns.
- o Business to Business Showcase
- o In-house advertising and cross pollination between businesses.
- o PR and promotion of Valley, and money for more staff.
- o Biennial event to include friends and guests.
- o Affordable housing
- o Manufacturing more promotion

Other Ideas:

- Create a non-business associate membership category
- Use Google Analytic
- Visit Vortex, virtual tours
- Prioritize workshop results via survey or dot exercise

RVBA WORKSHOP IDEAS by category

1. WEBSITE IMPROVEMENTS

- o Links reciprocal between members & site, also links with towns and other business organizations/chambers.
- o Place tourism oriented information on website, e.g. maps.
- o Exposure: use key words so that searches (e.g. Hudson Valley) lead to RVBA website.
- o Analysis: collect information re. number and origin of hits (Google Analytic)
- o Create a members blog.
- o Make website more exciting.
- o Add Vortex, virtual tours of businesses.

2. ENHANCED COMMUNICATION

Use website and member e-mails to promote member events and interconnect member businesses. More exposure through the website, higher level of functionality as communication hub between member businesses and communities, towns.

3. BUY LOCAL CAMPAIGN

- o Create a Buy Local campaign.
- o Solicit marketing intern from UCCC to design campaign.
- o Create RV money, coupons.

4. PR and PROMOTION OF RV
 - o Promote RV by category: Art, Culinary, History/Stone Houses, Agriculture, Outdoor Activities, Home Furnishings.
 - o Press releases and outreach.
 - o Promote RV via concept of real experience vs. commercialism, eco-tourism and simplicity.
 - o Tie in with I LOVE NY campaign.
 - o Add In the Valley to PR/Branding.
5. TOURIST INFORMATION
 - Information Kiosks, electronic.
6. ADVERTISING
 - o Cooperative advertising.
 - o Advertise outside of BSP.
 - o WKZE Radio ads at non-profit rates sponsored in part by member businesses.
7. EVENTS
 - o Create a signature event.
 - o Participate in area events such as Hudson Valley Ramble.
 - o Promote art events, such as American Flag installation project.
 - o RVBA Chili Festival.
 - o Hold a local business showcase event.
8. OTHER BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS/CHAMBERS
 - o Build relationships on-line.
 - o Send RVBA reps to chamber events, meetings.
9. COMMUNITY
 - o Encourage local participation in events (not just visitors).
 - o Enhance communication/relationships with towns.
 - o Affordable Housing
10. MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
 - o More membership participation, create subcommittees.
 - o Hold mixers hosted by member businesses in lieu of dinners.
 - o Hold educational seminars for member businesses on topics like accounting, marketing, website development, business planning.
11. FUNDRAISING
 - More fundraising to generate income for promotional/marketing projects, staff.
12. MANUFACTURING
 - Develop ways to promote manufacturing in RV.