



It's Not About **Ideas**.
It's About **Making**
Ideas Happen.

STRATEGIC PLAN

PREPARED FOR

The Downtown Bethlehem Association

Final Document - 2/22/2019

SUBMITTED BY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

How do we create a road map to lead locals and visitors back to Main Street in an era of online shopping and big box retailers? Bethlehem has the exciting opportunity to attract locals and tourists to its shopping district by capitalizing on its historical significance and reputation as "The Christmas City". The Downtown Bethlehem Association (DBA) has a successful history of creating and promoting events that draw visitors downtown. Imagevolution has created a marketing plan that works in conjunction with the DBA's mission and will serve to unite and promote downtown businesses, as well as utilize Bethlehem's foot traffic.

IT ALL STARTS WITH A PLAN

A healthy downtown is the foundation of a healthy community. This plan will create opportunities for more cooperation and education in Bethlehem, which will improve the overall economy. A district should be organized around these four points: Economic Vitality, Design, Promotion, and Organization. The DBA focuses primarily on promotion. However, it's important that the DBA communicates and forms partnerships with organizations who are involved in the other three points.

In order to increase awareness about what downtown Bethlehem has to offer, our marketing strategies for the DBA will include a comprehensive two-pronged approach for our two general audiences:

1. **The DBA current and future members.**
2. **Locals and regional visitors.**

For current and prospective DBA members, our messaging will include education about the value of membership. Additionally, we will engage opportunities to shift the public perception of downtown Bethlehem. Our goals include making downtown Bethlehem the preferred place to spend time and money, creating more partnership opportunities and community involvement, and consolidating efforts between downtown, the City of Bethlehem, and SouthSide Arts District.

Imagevolution attended the DBA meetings, reviewed a recent Economic Growth Study conducted by Lehigh University, administered a survey to the DBA board members, interviewed economic development directors, Historic Bethlehem Museums and Sites, merchants, and city residents. Our marketing plan works in conjunction with our discovery process and the mission of the DBA.

DBA MISSION STATEMENT:

The Downtown Bethlehem Association (DBA) is a council of The Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce and serves to revitalize, rehabilitate, promote and advance downtown business areas within the city of Bethlehem. It is an organization comprised of business owners who believe that unity is better than isolation and involvement is better than neutrality. The DBA organizes over 75 events a year, to drive foot traffic into Bethlehem's Historic and SouthSide Arts Districts.

PROPOSED POSITIONING STATEMENT

To position Downtown Bethlehem as the preferred place to spend time and money. An increase in shoppers and visitors will strengthen downtown Bethlehem's economy. This, in turn, will improve quality of life and sense of community for Bethlehem's residents. Ultimately, we hope to preserve the integrity of our diverse and cultural heritage.

WHERE WE ARE NOW ANALYSIS (INTERNAL)

5 board members responded to the survey (Less than 40%)

Three respondents do not agree with the boundaries of the organization

- The DBA is an event/promotional organization.
- 90+% of downtown businesses are not members of the DBA.
- Lack of business involvement.
- Few people doing most of the work.
- Too many restaurants vs. retail.
- Not enough unique retail shops.
- Lack of infrastructure.
- Events bring people downtown but lack of foot traffic into shops.
- Lack of collaboration and communication with business owners.
- Lack of volunteers.
- Lack of overall cleanliness of downtown, curbside appeal and signage.
- Parking Issues.

WHERE WE ARE NOW

ANALYSIS (EXTERNAL)

- The DBA's reputation is poor. External business owners and organizations feel that the DBA is hard to work with, exclusive, and insignificant to the bottom line. This results in stagnant or declining membership. Internally, the DBA lacks structure to encourage participation and foster collaboration between the DBA business owners and external organizations such as ArtsQuest, SouthSide Arts District, and City of Bethlehem.
- Lack of cooperation between the DBA and SouthSide Arts District.
- Downtown Bethlehem is not well educated on its historical significance and needs to prepare for the World Heritage Designation.
- Lack of night life: Clothing and specialty retail businesses are missing a large revenue opportunity by not capturing late night restaurant foot traffic to create a night life.
- Parking is inconvenient, limited, or expensive.
- There's a perception of downtown as "old fashioned" or not catering to young people/millennials.

MESSAGING

HIGH LEVEL MESSAGING

GET DOWNTOWN!

Bethlehem has a vibrant and historically significant downtown. Centrally located in the Lehigh Valley, Bethlehem is a remarkable small town offering an authentic experience with unique shops, eateries, and attractions.

GET THE HISTORY!

Take a step back in time and explore Bethlehem's 20 historic sites and 18th-century architecture. A National Historic Landmark District, Bethlehem boasts a history rich in culture and tradition.

GET THE STYLE!

In Downtown Bethlehem, you will find shops offering gourmet foods, artwork, distinctive gifts, unique clothing, antiques, crafted beverages and holiday decorations. The Moravian Book Shop, the oldest bookstore in America, is a must-see.

GET THE HOSPITALITY!

Experiencing Downtown Bethlehem will make you want to stick around a bit longer than planned, so book a room at one of the welcoming hotels or bed and breakfast inns close to the action.

GET THE TASTE!

Delight in Downtown Bethlehem's culinary choices, which range from great pizza to unforgettable steaks and everything in between. Be sure to experience the Downtown Bethlehem Association's Historic Bethlehem Restaurant Weeks, held each summer and winter and offering delicious fixed menu deals.

GET THE FESTIVALS!

Bethlehem is sometimes called the "City of Festivals" thanks to more than 10 major festivals and 150 smaller festivals or community cultural events offered each year. From Musikfest to Christmas City Village, there is a festival for everyone in Bethlehem.

GET THE ART!

Bethlehem has a great vibe for music and art. There is an abundance of culture and fun awaiting locals and guest alike at galleries, street art shows, national music act venues, theatre productions, festivals, open-mic nights, in-the-park concerts, film festivals, small playhouses and night clubs.

MESSAGING

ELEVATOR SPEECHES

DBA CURRENT AND FUTURE MEMBERS

Pitch #1: Attract new DBA members.

The DBA unites downtown merchants and community members. By becoming a member, you will help to revitalize and promote downtown businesses and we will help increase your visibility and customer base.

Keywords: Mutually beneficial, cross-promotion, community involvement, take action, value, increase sales.

LOCALS AND REGIONAL VISITORS

Pitch #2: Expand downtown Bethlehem's audience.

Get downtown and immerse yourself in the charming historic atmosphere while exploring unique local boutiques, cafés, and restaurants.

Keywords: Unique, historic, local, support your community, atmosphere, charming, shop local.

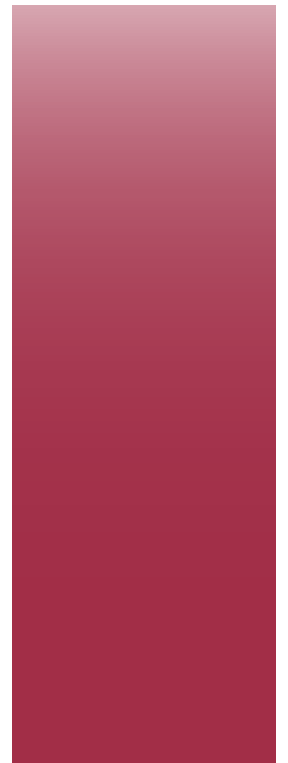


BRAND USAGE

In order for the brand to become successful, it must be viewed by as many people in as many places as possible. The more familiar people are with a brand, the more likely they are to associate it with the positive attributes of a business. For example, McDonald's arches or Nike's swoosh are almost universally recognized symbols of those brands. Through dedicated, consistent use of the logo, word will spread!

The logo is designed to be used on banners, stickers, clothing, glassware, pens, notebooks, and a variety of other printed items. It is digitally scalable for easy use in multiple web formats and social media.

Remind members to include the logo in any events or festivals which involve the DBA. Don't be discouraged if the brand isn't embraced instantly. Remain consistent in how you use the logo and ask others to make use of the logo.



MARKETING GOALS

WHERE WE WANT TO BE - GOALS, STRATEGIES, AND TACTICS

GOAL #1: DOWNTOWN BETHLEHEM IS THE PREFERRED PLACE TO SPEND TIME AND MONEY

STRATEGY 1: PROMOTE THE GET DOWNTOWN BRAND

TACTICS:

- 1: Explore social media calendar for SEO/SEM for individual merchants to follow and contribute.
- 2: Request editorial free calendars from regional publications to promote DBA events.
- 3: Develop clear links and partnerships between the websites of SouthSide Arts District, City of Bethlehem, HBMS, and ArtsQuest.
- 4: Change the perception of downtown parking issues. Promote parking through social media, free parking on Sundays, and explore a "one month free parking" offer with SEM initiatives.
- 5: Make a rack card or calendar of events for businesses to display and distribute at coffee shops, restaurants, and gathering places outside of Downtown Bethlehem.
- 6: Explore partnering with Easton or Allentown to cross-promote non competing events.
- 7: Initiate After Hours campaign.
 - Thursdays during Tunes at Twilight is a great time to bring foot traffic into local businesses.
- 8: Marketing material will be available at events to help drive foot traffic into stores.



GOAL #1: DOWNTOWN BETHLEHEM IS THE PREFERRED PLACE TO SPEND TIME AND MONEY**STRATEGY 2: WORK WITH THE MEMBERS TO GROW THEIR BUSINESSES BY USING THE MARKETING TOOLS DEVELOPED BY THE DBA****TACTICS:**

- 1: First Tuesday DBA meeting will focus on merchant round table discussions about in-store experiences and collaborations.
 - Facilitate merchants creating their own events and partnerships.
 - Educate members on SEO/SEM tactics and how to measure outcomes.
- 2: Merchants contribute and follow a social media content calendar.
- 3: Educate the DBA members on the benefits of using Get Downtown brand messaging.
- 4: Members will work collectively with the SEO/SEM tactics developed by the DBA.
- 5: Encourage members to verify listings on the website.
- 6: Encourage more collaboration between the DBA merchants.
- 7: Establish a campaign to encourage the use of gift cards and certificates not yet redeemed.
- 8: Remind Members to update their website links on the DBA website.
- 9: Remind Members to add a link to the DBA website.
- 10: Promote partnerships between retail shops and restaurants during restaurant weeks.

STRATEGY 3: TARGET LOCALS AND YOUNG FAMILIES**TACTICS:**

- 1: Merchants will work together to create events which the DBA can promote through social media and the website.

Example:

 - Elf on the Shelf event through holidays. The elf will appear in different stores throughout the season or during the Christmas in July initiative. This could be a social media campaign.
 - Where's Waldo Campaign: A reading initiative and partnership with the library.
 - Explore using downstairs Commons area to hold seasonal family activities, educational events, and entertainment sponsored by businesses.
- 2: Fitness/health class opportunities for members

Example:

 - Aardvark, Rockin' Good Health, and Crave: A fitness/health event where merchants can share their expertise, get new customers, and bring a new group of people downtown.
- 3: Join Allentown, Bethlehem, and Easton marketing initiative by participating in First Friday event.

GOAL #1: DOWNTOWN BETHLEHEM IS THE PREFERRED PLACE TO SPEND TIME AND MONEY**STRATEGY 4: PROVIDE INFORMATION TO VISITORS ON TRANSPORTATION BETWEEN PARTS OF TOWN**

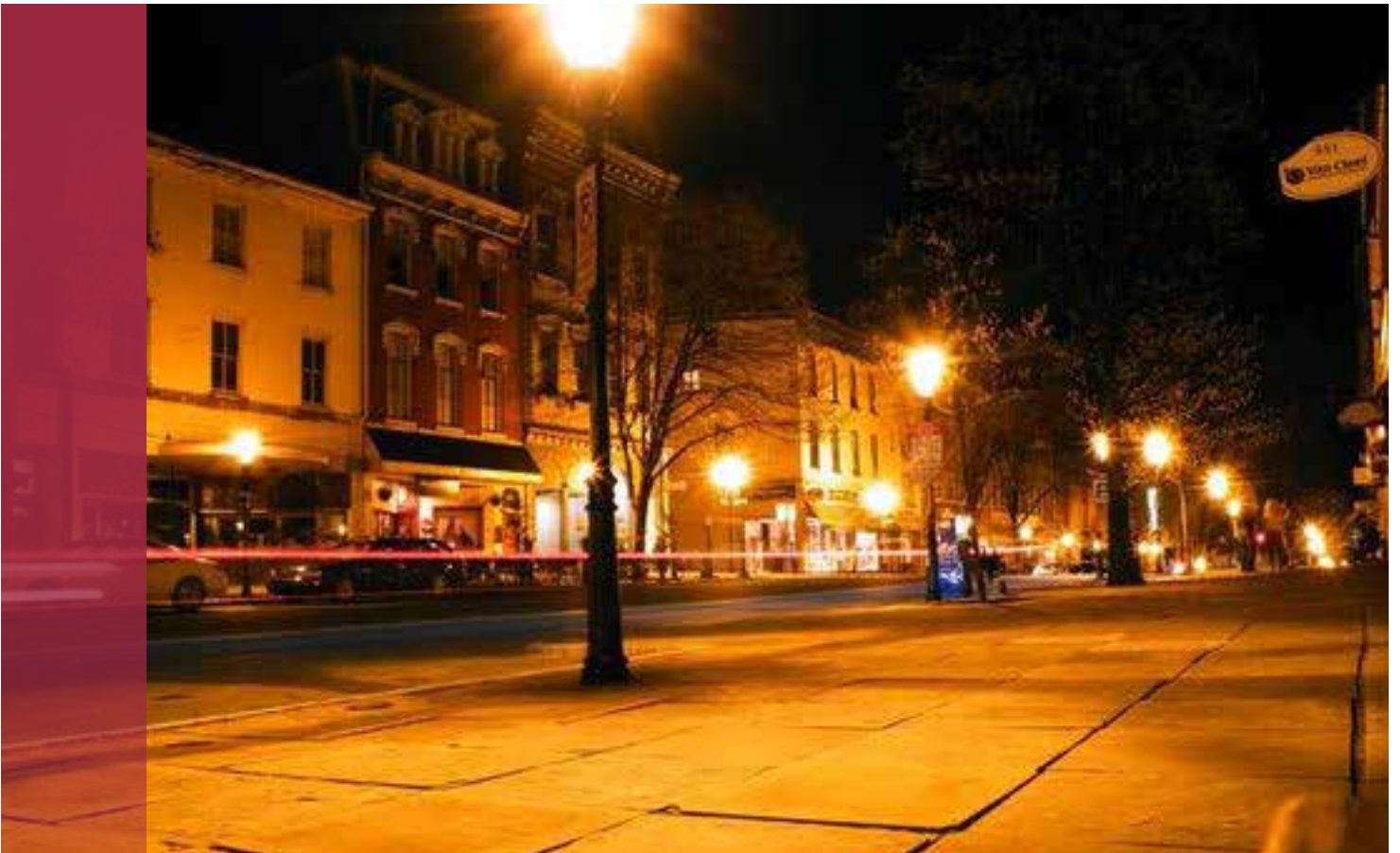
OVERVIEW: The number one question at the Visitors Center is “how do I get from the Historic Downtown Bethlehem to the SouthSide Arts District?”

TACTICS:

- 1: Collaborate with other organizations to develop a comprehensive map and guide of the Bethlehem Business District to promote businesses and educate visitors. These will be distributed on both sides of town.
- 2: Cross-promote between DBA, HBMS, ArtsQuest, SouthSide Arts District, and City of Bethlehem websites.

STRATEGY 5: DIGITAL STRATEGY TO CAPTURE LOCAL AND REGIONAL VISITORS**TACTICS:**

- 1: Continue to promote events by targeting audiences through Google, Instagram, and Facebook.
- 2: Send targeted emails by using the list gathered from past campaigns.



GOAL #2: GROW MEMBERSHIP

STRATEGY 1: SHOW THAT THERE IS VALUE IN BECOMING A MEMBER BY PROMOTING A POSITIVE IMAGE OF THE DBA

TACTICS:

- 1: Create an infographic of member benefits, SEO stats, marketing opportunities, and event demographics.
- 2: Update member benefits on the DBA's website.
- 3: Send postcards to non-DBA members bi-annually to promote the organization and its benefits.
- 4: Communicate with non-DBA members about marketing opportunities, promotions, and events.
- 5: Create a statistics infographic of member benefits, SEO stats, marketing opportunities, and demographics at events.
- 6: Lunch and Learn for non-DBA members

GOAL #3: PROMOTE WHAT SETS BETHLEHEM APART

STRATEGY 1: WORLD HERITAGE DESTINATION

Overview: In 2016, Historic Moravian Bethlehem was added to the US Tentative List, which is a step towards inclusion on the World Heritage List. As of 2018, there are only 23 World Heritage Sites in the United States. The district should be prepared to market Bethlehem as a historically significant destination. Statistics indicate that culture and heritage tourism is continuing to grow rapidly and Bethlehem has a tremendous opportunity to capture this growing audience and build a stronger visitor economy.

TACTICS:

- 1: Educate merchants to act as ambassadors for the district. This can be done by inviting Historic Bethlehem Museums and Sites to give a presentations to DBA members to further educate them on the historical significance of Bethlehem.
- 2: Create a facts cheat sheet for businesses to keep at cash registers.
- 3: Collaborate with HBMS and Hotel Bethlehem on Heritage Traveler marketing.
- 4: Use digital marketing to promote Bethlehem's significant history.

STRATEGY 2: CAPITALIZE ON CHRISTMAS CITY STATUS

TACTICS:

- 1: Expand Extra Merry Hours.
- 2: Explore hiring a Santa for downtown Bethlehem through sponsorships.
- 3: Promote Christmas events and shopping on RCN spotlight.
- 4: Collaborate with Central Moravian Church and HBMS to promote tours.
- 5: Promote Christmas in July in order to get shoppers out during one of the slowest retail seasons. Merchants should be prepared with Christmas items and promotions.
- 6: Improve and expand Christmas decorations in downtown Bethlehem.

GOAL #4: PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHER CITY ORGANIZATIONS

STRATEGY 1: CROSS-PROMOTE TO GIVE VISITORS MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN ABOUT WHAT BETHLEHEM HAS TO OFFER.

TACTICS:

- 1: Educate the DBA members about cross-promotional efforts and opportunities.
- 2: Pop-up shops in stores and restaurants.
- 3: Educate members about the significance of Bethlehem's placement on US Tentative List.
- 4: Collaborate with SouthSide Arts District on new or existing events.
- 5: Join Allentown, Bethlehem, and Easton marketing initiative by participating in First Friday event.
- 6: Collaborate with SouthSide Arts District on an "Open Late" campaign. (I.e. all merchants agree to stay open late on a specific day or date.)
- 7: Collaborate with the City of Bethlehem.
 - Work with Economic Development to help compile a database of businesses, visitors, and new business prospects in order to centralize marketing efforts.
 - Include a page on the DBA's website targeted to recruit new businesses and link to City of Bethlehem Economic Development.
 - Use SEM to attract businesses to downtown Bethlehem.



GOAL #5: CAPITALIZE ON DIGITAL MARKETING ESTABLISHED BY THE DBA FOR ITS MEMBERS

STRATEGY 1: BUILD CONTENT IN COLLABORATION WITH THE DBA MEMBERS

TACTICS:

- 1: Outline Advertising opportunities in a flyer with strategies, analytics, and results (i.e. Historic Bethlehem River Tours).
- 2: Implement Geotargeting.
- 3: Promote events through a targeted email list generated from giveaways associated with past events.
- 4: Develop member giveaways and promotions to be used in re marketing campaigns throughout the year.

STRATEGY 2: CONTINUE TO UPDATE THE EXISTING WEBSITE

TACTICS:

- 1: Continue updating the website based on SEO audit results and recommendations.
- 2: Have members guest blog on the website and promote in social media campaign.
- 3: Members update their website and add link to the DBA website.
- 4: Set up Google alerts for Bethlehem and post relevant articles on the site.

STRATEGY 3: EXPAND EVENT DIGITAL MARKETING

OVERVIEW: By targeting the appropriate audiences in 2018, we saw a 30% increase in returning traffic for each event, expanded our social media calendar, refined advertising efforts, and added live streaming to our content portfolio. These successes have led to an 80% increased website traffic and other websites pointing their audience to the DBA site.

In 2019, our goal is to increase website growth and DBA member involvement in order to increase foot traffic and tourism in Bethlehem. We will expand on the 2018 marketing plan and implement mobile device geotargeting that will notify visitors about events and other promotions as they drive through Bethlehem. Additionally, we will work directly with DBA members to coordinate focused marketing efforts. This will involve creating video and other visual content to be used on multiple digital channels.



WINTER RESTAURANT WEEK

Winter Restaurant Week 2017 yielded 17,146 website views. In 2018, website traffic grew to 23,176, 75% of the increase was a result of paid advertising and 25% was due to organic targeting. To promote restaurant week, 13 participating restaurants donated two \$50 gift cards which we used to create two giveaways. Each giveaway contained 13 \$50 gift cards which we used to promote the 13 restaurants as well as the restaurant week offerings. Placed targeted Google and Facebook ads showed that 1,666 people had a strong interest in coming to Bethlehem to dine. Thirteen participating restaurants donated two \$50 gift cards to create two giveaways which we used to promote the individual restaurants and restaurant week offerings. In addition to the sign ups, our web traffic increased by over 30%.

Considering the 2018 website growth and the success of our ads, we want to continue to grow Winter Restaurant Week. Our Summer Restaurant Week growth shows that our targeting is accurate. Throughout 2019, we will continue to target our audience through Google and Facebook while promoting Restaurant Week and the two giveaways. We will introduce targeted emails in our 2019 campaign using the list of past Restaurant Week attendees. We will create targeted posting schedules to promote the participating venues and the giveaway options. We also plan to incorporate device geotargeting. We can target (using multiple digital distribution channels) those driving through Bethlehem with offers on various places to stop. This will serve mainly to bring more foot traffic to Main Street. Keeping in mind our 33% increase in website traffic from 2017 to 2018, our plan for this year is to continue to grow website traffic, foot traffic, and total sign-ups.

General: OR 33% & Click rate of 32%

Free Parking: OR 18% click rate 5%

Winter Restaurant Week					
	Page Views	Time On Site	Exit Rate	Sign Ups	
Website 2018	23,176	1:21	54.06%	1,666	
Website 2017	17,146				
	Impressions	Reach	Clicks	Cost	Sign Ups
Google Ads	395,547		1,549	\$458.36	579
Facebook Ads	81,245	38,988	3,125	\$635.35	1,087

TACTICS:

- Targeting audience on Google and Facebook.
- Targeted emails.
- Spotlight posts on Facebook and Instagram.
- Incorporating device geotargeting.
- Retail stores stay open later.
- Listings of specials at the retail stores.
- Cross-marketing with restaurants and stores.

SUMMER RESTAURANT WEEK

We used what we learned during Winter Restaurant Week to implement more specific marketing tactics in the summer. In 2017, we had almost 17k page views (16,965). In 2018, we almost doubled that number to 30,897. This is an 82% increase.

In 2019, we want to increase site traffic and the total number of sign-ups through targeted ads on Google, Facebook, and Instagram by 10%-20%. We will encourage members to make offers that will increase shoppers, implement an email campaign to promote event and giveaways to all past attendees, and add mobile device geotargeting.

Summer Restaurant Week					
	Page Views	Time On Site	Exit Rate	Sign Ups	
Website 2018	30,897	2:18	61.55%	2,234	
Website 2017	16,965				
	Impressions	Reach	Clicks	Cost	Sign Ups
Google Ads	1,550,634		6,119	\$1,539.60	1,279
Facebook Ads	207,134	130,880	3,289	\$1,032.33	922

TACTICS:

- Targeting audience on Google and Facebook.
- Targeted emails.
- Spotlight posts on Facebook and Instagram.
- Incorporating device geotargeting.
- Retail stores stay open later.
- Listings of specials at the retail stores.
- Cross-marketing with restaurants and stores.

VEGFEST

In 2017, there were 8,660 visits to the VegFest web pages. In 2018, we ran campaigns on Facebook and Instagram highlighting date and location changes, parking availability, and specific vendors in spotlight ads to a targeted vegan audience. VegFest web pages received 21,045 visits. This increased website traffic by almost 250%.

In 2019, we plan to decrease the budget and increase the number of vendors and attendees. We will incorporate giveaways, validate and track visitors, and implement geotargeting.

*Michigan residents were the 5th largest organic audience in 2018. This information will help fuel more targeted advertising this year and allow for the smaller budget to have a higher effective/conversion rate.

VegFest				
	Page Views	Time <u>On</u> Site	Exit Rate	Sign Ups
Website 2018	21,045	2:25	75.25%	
Website 2017	8,660			
	Impressions	Reach	Clicks	Cost
Google Ads	730,048		4,387	\$1,474.59
Facebook Ads	318,741	115,092	5,755	\$2,103.73

TACTICS:

- Continue to target our Vegan audience.
- Incorporate giveaways.
- Incorporate device geotargeting.
- Increase the number of vendors and attendees.
- Restaurants offer additional vegan options.
- Retail stores offer vegan options.
- Create vegetarian, vegan, and millennial marketing persona to present to merchants.

HARVEST FESTIVAL

In 2018, we saw a 50% growth in Harvest Festival attendees, primarily due to website changes, focused content, targeted passport advertising, and social media growth. Even with increased pricing, we saw steady purchases throughout the campaign.

To increase 2019 website traffic, we will continue to run the beer passport ads, as they’ve been successful. The cost per click is less than \$0.40 and over 10% of people who see the ad, click on it. We will add targeted emails, device geotargeting, increase vendors and giveaways, and include a social media calendar with written and visual content for vendors, sponsors, and giveaways.

Harvest Festival				
	Page Views	Time <u>On</u> Site	Exit Rate	Sign Ups
Website 2018	7,578	2:29	75.47%	
Website 2017	5,143			
	Impressions	Reach	Clicks	Cost
Google Ads				

TACTICS:

- Continuing to run the beer passport ads.
- Targeted emails
- Device geotargeting for Harvest Festival.
- Getting new and more vendors.
- Sponsorships for events for specific things and giveaways.
- Social media calendar.
- Promote more family friendly activities.

CHRISTMAS SEASON

In 2017, we implemented a Christmas ad campaign offering dinner and a carriage ride in Bethlehem during Christmas City Village plus a \$100 shopping spree. Resulting in 13k visits to our Christmas pages.

In 2018, we built up our 2017 campaign and website traffic tripled. Through Google, our CPC (cost per click) dropped to \$0.26. On Facebook, our relevancy score was 10 and our CPC dropped to \$0.27. We dramatically improved our targeting efforts in 2018, resulting in three very successful campaigns.

Extra Merry Hours: We ran Facebook ads, promoted it organically on the website, and posted about it on social media.

Santa: Offered giveaways with free tickets. We spent \$75 on Facebook ads and reached a large audience, including people who were new to the DBA.

First member campaign: We built a targeted landing page for the business, designed ads, and used Google and Facebook for targeted marketing. The total cost was only \$1,000.00. They received 50+ sign-ups and several direct purchases, making it another successful 2018 venture.

Our 2019 advertising efforts will include gaining more members. We will continue Extra Merry Hours, member advertising, targeted ads, and giveaways. Additionally, we will work with members to cultivate new ideas for cooperative marketing programs, which will increase website visits and foot traffic downtown.

Christmas					
	Page Views	Time On Site	Exit Rate	Sign Ups	
Website 2018	38,198	1:40	56.95%	5,292	
Website 2017	12,990	1:32	49.97%	4,080	
	Impressions	Reach	Clicks	Cost	Sign Ups
Google Ads	1,528,831		6,068	\$1,584.85	1,972
Facebook Ads	164,719	103,081	7,740	\$2,078.74	3,320

TACTICS:

- Add sponsor funded attractions such as glass blowing, a bar, ice sculpture, Santa.
- Retail stores should consider offering free shipping to entice customers to shop in store (digital campaign).
- Form a Christmas committee to evaluate successes and failures of the past events, planning for the next season, and finding vendors for CCV.
- Improve Christmas decorating and lighting throughout the Historic Bethlehem District.

MARKETING TACTICS

Promoting a vibrant regional image through advertising, public relations, partnerships, events, community relations, and other promotional materials and activities is essential for a successful campaign.

PRIMARY GOALS

- **GOAL #1: DOWNTOWN BETHLEHEM IS THE PREFERRED PLACE TO SPEND TIME AND MONEY**
- **GOAL #2: GROW MEMBERSHIP**
- **GOAL #3: PROMOTE WHAT SETS BETHLEHEM APART**
- **GOAL #4: PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHER CITY ORGANIZATIONS**
- **GOAL #5: CAPITALIZE ON DIGITAL MARKETING ESTABLISHED BY THE DBA FOR ITS MEMBERS**

BRANDING, PROMOTION & DISTRIBUTION OF MARKETING MESSAGE

WEBSITE

<http://www.getdowntownbethlehem.com>

The website serves as a one-stop-shop for everything you need to know about the district. It should include a section for visitors, a calendar of events, news links, and a comprehensive business section that includes reports and links to helpful information. The website should include a resources section where businesses can find out more information about available retail space and joining the community.

PRINT MATERIALS

- Rack cards will be placed in visitor centers, businesses, borough offices, etc.
- Develop marketing materials to promote the DBA.
- Develop event and promotional materials for all events.
- Develop promotional advertisements.

SOCIAL MEDIA

OVERVIEW

Communication is universally important. From family conversations around the dinner table to polite chitchat with the barista, we engage in meaningful communication daily. Social media makes it possible to communicate in the digital realm. It's more than a marketing tool or an advertising platform, it's a way to develop clear and consistent communication. A successful social media account balances content, community, and conversation in order to engage, inform, and entertain followers.

■ RULE 1: BE AUTHENTIC

As a communication tool, social media works best when it is conversational. Your online presence should be a natural reflection of your own personality. Share experiences that are authentic to you.

■ RULE 2: DON'T OVERTHINK

Be straight-forward and simple. Present information that is clear, direct and easy to understand. Most social media platforms are designed so content loads in a scroll, which means that most users are browsing content and not interested in reading lengthy paragraphs of text. Remember that most users are scrolling because they are bored. Seek to entertain and inform.

■ RULE 3: HAVE FUN

Social media is a user-friendly experience. Experiment with different kinds of photos, videos, and polls. Most platforms come equipped with tools (i.e. filters and stickers) to enhance your creativity. You will eventually find your voice and become more comfortable. Not every post will go viral. Aim to build a loyal and dedicated audience who genuinely enjoys the content you post.

HASHTAG

A great way to unify the content you produce via social media and invite others to share similar content is to use a unique hashtag. Hashtags create galleries of content that can be browsed as a whole, creating a digital story with multiple sources contributing each piece. This will help Downtown Bethlehem carve out a space on the Internet to spread good news. It's important that the hashtag be relevant, recognizable, and brand-specific.

Instagram: The hashtag #getdowntownbethlehem should be used by members and included on every Instagram post.

Facebook : Members should tag @HeartofBethlehem on all Facebook posts

SEASONAL CONTENT GUIDE

A content calendar is an important tool in planning a social media strategy. However, a day-to-day plan can make your social media presence feel robotic. A seasonal calendar can be used every year.

People check their social media feeds multiple times a day, so posts should always be written in the present tense. Look for ways to include Bethlehem in national or global themes. For example, Christmas is an almost universally-recognized holiday, but how is it celebrated in Bethlehem? Highlight unique foods, community events, and traditions.

STARTING IN 2019:

WINTER

- Holidays
- Shopping
- Gift guide
 - Best places to buy gifts
 - New year
- Capitalize on "Best Of's" (this makes a great poll)
 - Best Pizza
 - Best Diner
- Resolutions
- Winter Restaurant Week
- Cold weather
- Snow
- Chocolate Trail
- Valentine's Day
- Parade of Shamrocks
- St. Patrick's Day

SPRING

- Flowers and gardens
- Hiking/biking/running trails
- Easter
- Mother's Day
- Spring sports
- Historic District Clean-up
- Tunes at Twilight (on going)

SUMMER

- End of school
- Father's Day
- Vacations
- Summer Restaurant Week
- Outdoor activities
- Fourth of July
- VegFest
- Fireworks
- Back to school shopping (another opportunity for a shopping guide)

FALL

- Harvest Festival
- Halloween
- Ghost Tours
- Cemetery Tours
- Thanksgiving Eve (bar holiday)
- Thanksgiving
- Tree Lighting Ceremony
- Cocktail Trail
- Extra Merry Hours
- Live Advent Calendar
- Christmas City Village

CONCLUSION

The Downtown Bethlehem Association (DBA) has a successful history of creating and promoting the district and events that draw visitors downtown. In 2016, the district launched a new branding campaign and in 2017 began a data driven SEO/SEM campaign. Website and social media traffic have increased exponentially. Although many businesses have seen an increase in sales, retail shops can do more to capitalize on the foot traffic during events. In 2019, we will help business owners profit from the success of the DBA's marketing efforts. We will also work to improve the DBA's image in the community and communicate our recent successes in order to grow membership.

