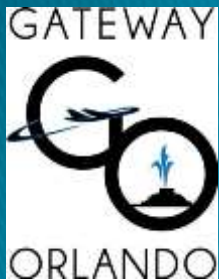



Implementing a Buy Local Program

Practices & Lessons Learned

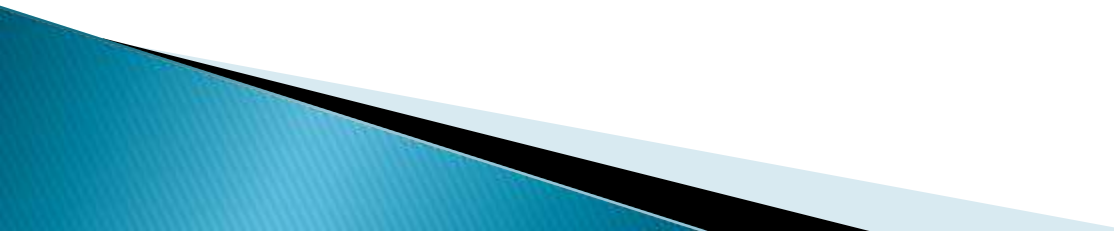
Brent Ward, former Business Development Chair,
Semoran Business Partnership/Gateway Orlando Partnership
www.buysemoran.org



Objectives

- ▶ Provide context & rationale for the program
 - ▶ Describe the team composition
 - ▶ Describe the original plan, the pilot and the revised program
 - ▶ Give an overview of sponsorship packages
 - ▶ Describe activity-oriented results of the program (events, distribution, feedback)
 - ▶ Propose marketing and forms of measurement
 - ▶ Detail technology and lessons learned
- 

Context of the Buy Local Program

- The Partnership was founded in 2010; low community awareness
 - Stipulation that projects should be self-funded in the new mission statement
 - 7 mile long "market street" called "the corridor"
 - Spanish-speaking majority within 1 mile of the center
 - Mostly Caucasian, 36% Spanish-speaking at five miles from the center
 - Median household income of \$36K per year within a 1 mile radius
 - Median household income about \$43K per year five miles from center
 - 535 businesses, restaurant, service, retail, banking and professional
 - South end is developing with many high-profile franchises, planned shopping center
 - Communities to the west of the corridor (Conway) are sought after customers in the south/central end of the corridor
 - No local newspaper for the entire area, small Facebook page (600 likes)
- 

Why a Buy Local Program?

Market Study -- Coldwell Banker Gap Analysis showed local residents tend to leave the area to purchase goods and services

The only business categories that attracted customers from outside the corridor were due to Wal-Mart and Lowes

Many business closures (Office Max, Petsmart, Chinese restaurant, Bally's Fitness..more)

Market Study team recommended a Buy Local Program

The Buy Semoran Team

- ▶ Business Development (Economic Restructuring) Chair
 - ▶ Seasoned marketing manager from BellSouth, in retirement
 - ▶ Business, Project Management, Web and Graphic Design students (6)
 - ▶ Advisory Board
 - Two retired marketing executives
 - One PhD-holder in social media
- 

The Program in a Nutshell



**Show the Card
Receive the Discounts!**

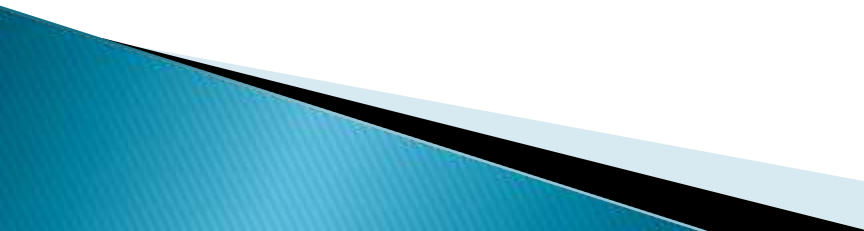
Discover great discounts from local
businesses at

www.buysemoran.org

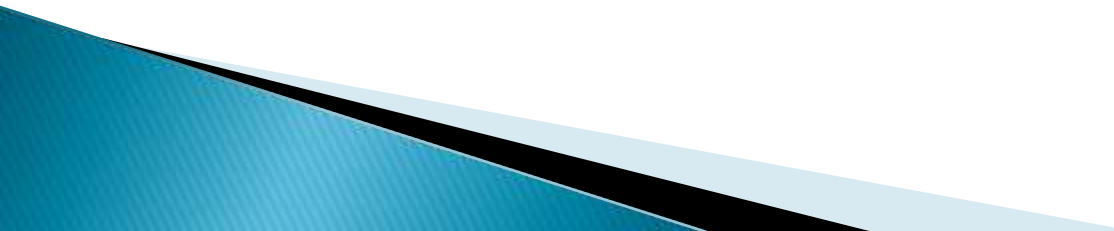
Card valid until December 31, 2014

Para information en Español por favor visite www.buysemoran.org

The Original Concept

- ▶ Research, Research, Research!!
 - ▶ 40–50 businesses would pay \$19.99 to post discounts online
 - ▶ Discount card distribution to 5000 local residences
 - ▶ Targeted distribution to homes most likely to use discounts within 3 miles of the center of the area
 - ▶ Homes with property values > 200,000 per year and higher
 - ▶ An army of volunteers would distribute cards to homes in targeted areas
 - ▶ Measurement of results through Florida Department of Revenue Sales Tax reports
 - ▶ 5 month campaign to allow measurement and revision of the program
- 

The Pilot

- ▶ Team members tested the idea by visiting local business operators
 - ▶ Significant mistrust, occasional disbelief we were volunteers; lack of awareness of the partnership
 - ▶ Zero sales to business operators
 - ▶ Evidence of significant “solicitor angst” among business operators
 - ▶ Large franchises were indifferent and unsupportive
 - ▶ Concerns about the newness of the program; “wait and see attitude”
 - ▶ Neighborhood councils – supportive – but police required solicitation permits for all volunteers at \$20 per volunteer; HOA’s have no-solicitation policies
- 

How it Worked

Local
Businesses

Pay \$0*

To Put

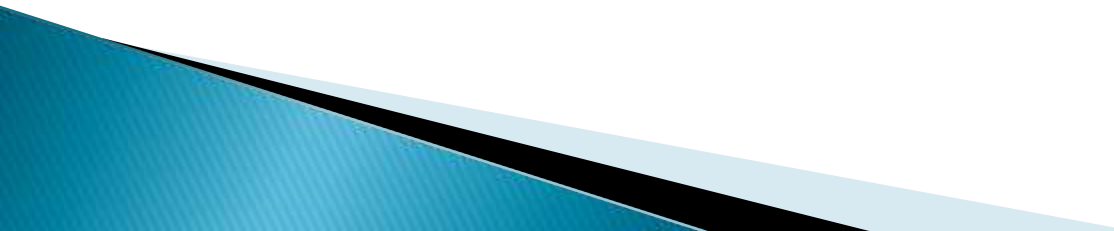
Discounts

Online

*Optional, Suggested Donation of \$25

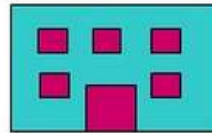
**Sponsors paid for
the Program**

The Revised Concept

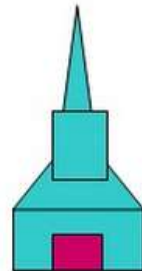
- ▶ Buy Semoran Discount Card (electronic, hard copy, at-home printable version)
 - ▶ Free, online discount submission for business operators
 - ▶ Attached list of businesses and discounts
 - ▶ At least three booths at events from August to December, 2014
 - ▶ Buy Semoran Rewards Program (rewards@buysemoran.org)
 - ▶ At least 40 discounts from Semoran Businesses
- 

Card Distribution Plan

**Distribution to
Employees of Local
Businesses**



**Pickup Locations at
Semoran Businesses**



**Hand-to-Hand
Distribution
at Community and
Faith-Based
Organizations**

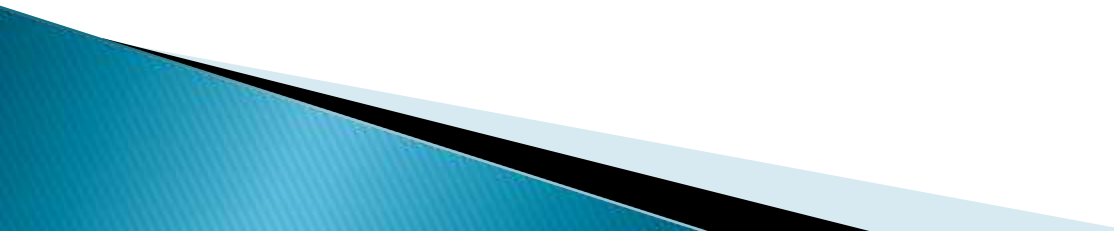


**HOA Hardcopy
Mailing and Printable
Email Attachments**



**Cell Phone
Images**

The Revised Concept (Cont'd)

- ▶ Integration with American Express Small Business Saturday
 - ▶ At least 3 cash mobs
 - ▶ Measurement of results
 - ▶ Distribution of 8000 cards
 - ▶ Press Releases to local newspapers
 - ▶ Social Media promotion (Conway Community Page; Partnership page)
 - ▶ Partnership Mailing List
- 

Program Sponsorship Benefits

- ▶ \$175 for Partnership Members, \$225 Non-members
- ▶ **Program Sponsors Received:**
 - ▶ Listing on the back of the first 1000 cards.
 - ▶ Listing as a program sponsor on all press releases
 - ▶ Logo on front page of www.buysemoran.org
 - ▶ Space on the [Sponsor Spotlight](#) page on buysemoran.org with info about your business.
 - ▶ Logo or text-based mention, with website on all email promotion.
 - ▶ Logo and discount on printable, downloadable flyer.
 - ▶ Logo on the discount page at buysemoran.org
 - ▶ 3-5 minute presentation at a Semoran Business Partnership Lunch 'n Learn on your business, with literature distribution.

Card Sponsors

- ▶ **Card Sponsorship**

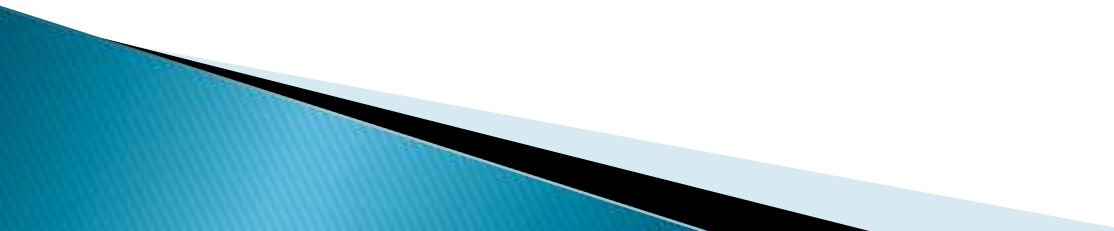
Partnership Members \$125

Non-Members \$175

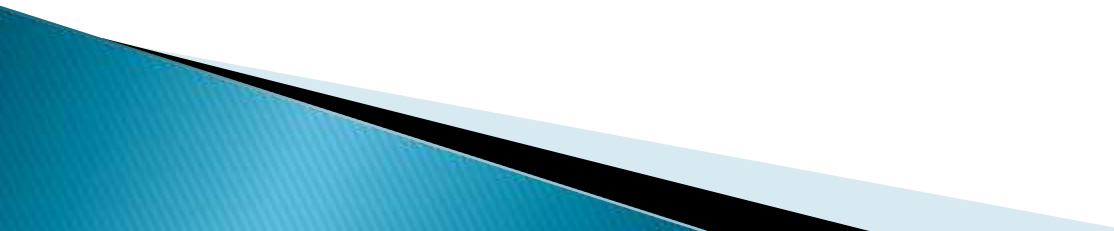
Your logo and/or discount on the of back of the next 1000 cards.

- ▶ Free listing on the discount page at buysemoran.org

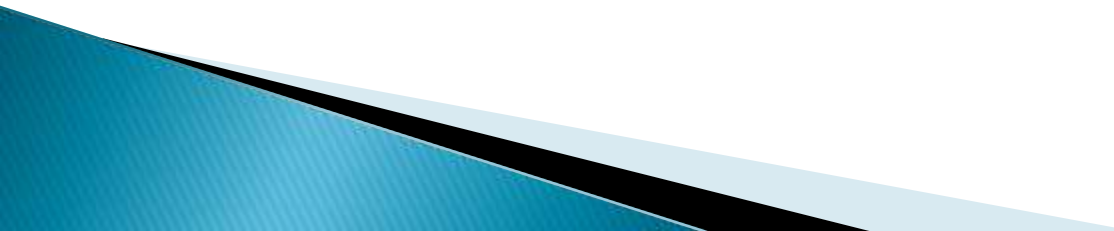
Sponsors

- ▶ Program Sponsor:
 - Platinum Signs (printing company)
 - ▶ Card Sponsors
 - Fairwinds Credit Union
 - Compassion Pediatrics
 - Christ the King Episcopal Church
- 

Actual distribution

- ▶ 8000 cards
 - ▶ 2500 through a local Christian School and church
 - ▶ Hundreds to Wal-Mart, Publix, Keiser University, Ana Mendez University to employees in pay envelopes and employee work mail slots
 - ▶ 1000 through visits to local businesses to give to employees
 - ▶ 600 through at home-delivery
 - ▶ About 300 through HOA mailings
 - ▶ 1500 through a local middle school with report cards
 - ▶ Speakers at National Night Out, Neighborhood Associations, Neighborhood Councils, CPTED Training, community events distributed cards
- 

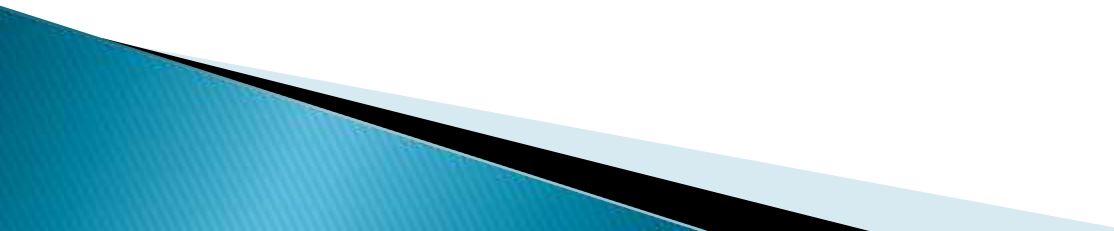
Community Events

- ▶ 10X10 booth with lots of giveaways
 - ▶ Business operators took promotional materials to our program sponsor (graphic design company) for our pickup
 - ▶ Graphic design company used promo materials to build a leads list
 - ▶ Church block party; Azalea Park Celebrity Baseball Game; Conway Farmers' Market; All tune and Lube Grand Opening
- 

The Rewards Program

- ▶ Distributed/facebooked a ¼ size flyer indicating we would give a free pizza to anyone who provided a receipt with a Semoran address to rewards@buysemoran.org
- ▶ Free hotel stay for everyone who provided three receipts to the email address
- ▶ \$100 cash prize on Small Business Saturday at a Buy Semoran event at Broadway Pizza
- ▶ Every \$5 of spending gave the receipt-holder a draw ticket

The Cash Mobs

- ▶ Highly Successful
 - Pershing Chinese Restaurant – 15 people
 - Mike's Italian Ice (2 mobs of 5 people each)
 - Broadway Pizza (2 mobs; 15 people & 30 people)
 - ▶ Be creative in defining what a cash mob is!
- 

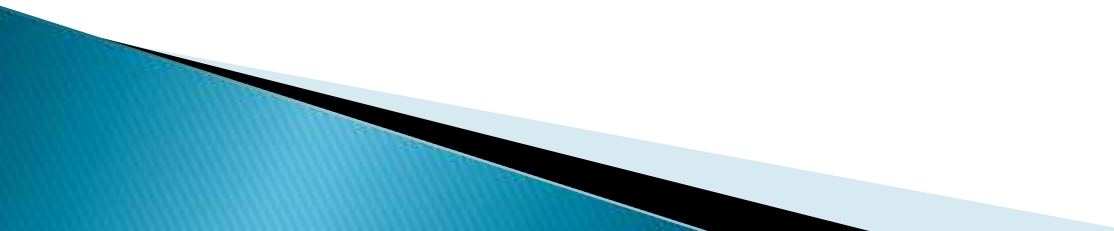
The Discount Card Effectiveness

- ▶ Scattered reports of sales increases
- ▶ Several business operators reported a spike in traffic after local card distributions
- ▶ Important to have the discounts attached to the card – and not only online
- ▶ Deep discounts attracted the most interest.
 - 10% off versus 15% off made a difference
- ▶ Partnership wants to do it again as a continuous program


Levels of Measurement

- ▶ Activity – number of cards distributed, number of discounts offered, number of events held
- ▶ Satisfaction – use a Net Promoter Score to judge operator satisfaction – as why
 - $NPS = (\% \text{ rating } 9 \text{ or } 10) - (\% \text{ rating } 1 \text{ to } 6)$
 - Business Operator retention rate when you renew the program
- ▶ Results
 - Self-reported number of sales from business operators
 - Change in sales tax receipts through Florida Department of Revenue (blunt reports only)

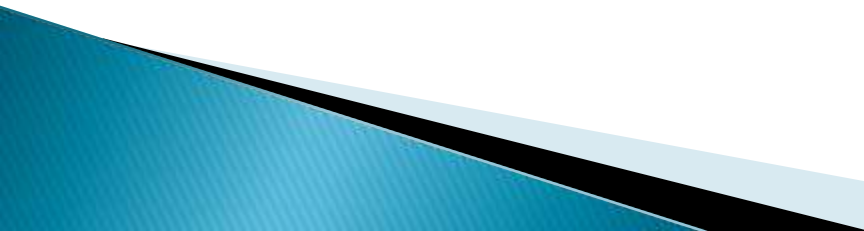
Press Releases

- ▶ A version and B version
 - ▶ Orlando Sentinel, Orlando Business Journal, Conway News
 - ▶ Not picked up by any newspaper
 - ▶ Conway News indicated they would not support the program
- 

Tapping into Existing Channels

- ▶ Spoke to neighborhood leaders in Conway
 - ▶ Engaged 5 HOA presidents with the program
 - ▶ All agreed to distribute cards to their neighborhoods through email and mailings
 - ▶ Invitation to post the program on the Conway Community Page (6000 likes at the time)
 - ▶ Joined a Conway Community Council to solidify access to their Facebook Page
 - ▶ Weekly promotions of the program; recommendations
- 

Engaging Business Operators

- ▶ Use the Ben Franklin method (go to hot leads, then warm leads, then colder leads – share your supporters with everyone as you go).
 - ▶ Get referrals/personal introductions from business operators to other merchants who might want the program
 - ▶ Set expectations for business operators with whom you do business that they will participate
 - ▶ Give personal business to prospective participants
 - ▶ A good relationship with many business operators, established well-before you start your program is critical
 - ▶ Make participation easy (you type their discount into the online application, they confirm by email)
- 



November 29th is Small Business Saturday!

Huge Savings from businesses at
Semoran and Pershing all day!

Yo Casta Beauty Salon
15% off your bill

Mike's Italian Ice
10% off your order

More Deals to come!!!

Pershing Chinese Restaurant
30% off your walk-in order

Beauregards Pet Grooming
30% off all retail store items
(shampoo, conditioner, dog collars, leashes and more)

Kiara Beauty Supply
Buy One Get One Free
(conditioners, shampoo, and Moca De Gorila Gel)
50% off other selected items



November 29th, 2014
5:00 p.m. — 10:00 p.m.

Music, Prizes, Pizza, Family!

Broadway Pizza
1700 Woolco Way, Orlando 32822

Music by:
Mr. Richard, 5:30-7
Jazzin' Sectors, 7:30-10



*Hotel stay giveaways from
7:00 to 7:30 for receipts from Buy
Semoran businesses*

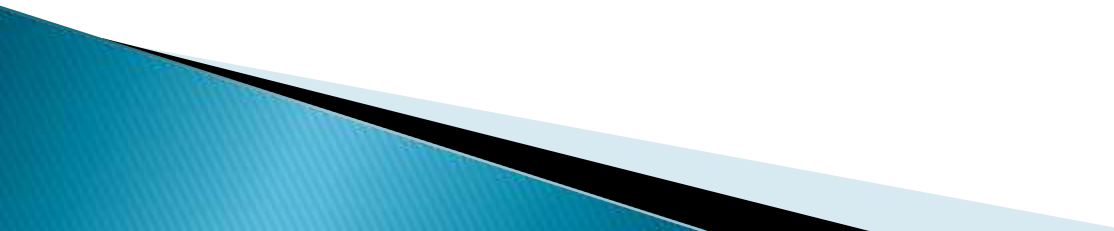


Full details at
www.buysemoran.org

Sponsored by the Semoran Business Partnership



Technology List

- ▶ Weebly.com static website
 - ▶ Domain Name registration www.yola.com (.org and .com)
 - ▶ 123ContactForm.com for online discount submissions to your email; repost on Weebly
 - ▶ PaySimple.com for receiving sponsorship payments
 - ▶ Total Cost of the program was about \$500.
- 


Lessons Learned

- ▶ Paid distribution is better
 - 5,000, 10,000, 50,000 piece distribution – think BIG and get the funding to execute
 - 0.18 per piece for 5000
 - Price break of 0.15 per piece at 50,000 units, or to condos
 - .05 additional inclusion in bags if already distributing
 - Bag sponsorship
 - Targeted versus established mail routes (0.18 rate is same as post office); GPS tracking, solicitors permits covered
- ▶ Change the name to Choose Semoran
- ▶ Ask Local Department of Economic Development/Commissioner to encourage State Dept of Revenue to give us sales tax receipt reports.

Lessons Learned

- ▶ Paid newspaper advertising; stick with targeted distribution
- ▶ Traffic counts of 50,000 per day on Semoran
 - Billboard advertising?
- ▶ Net Promoter Score survey to business operators
- ▶ Continue with Cash Mobs, Local Events, partnering with neighboring communities
- ▶ Be more focused -- have the distribution area well-defined when approaching business operators
- ▶ Use plastic window stickers
- ▶ Provide a keychain card to keep the program in the minds of the community
- ▶ Distribute the actual discounts in a rack-card format (all discounts listed on the card, which folds up in your wallet)
- ▶ Business Operators on the committee to influence fellow owners in their plaza/district!!!

Key Success Factors for a Successful Buy Local Program

- ▶ A large number of independently owned, small businesses; large franchises don't participate
 - ▶ Many business operators on your Buy Local Committee; they will engage other business operators and make participation more expansive
 - ▶ Adequate funding to engage in paid distribution and advertising since many will see the program as a commercial, not a service-oriented venture
 - ▶ Expansive, existing communication channels in your local community (newspaper, social media pages, billboards).
- 

More Information?

- ▶ See www.buysemoran.org
- ▶ Brent Ward bward@musicaroundtown.net
- ▶ Visit American Independent Business Alliance Website
<http://www.amiba.net/buy-local-campaigns/>
- ▶ Chambersburg Chamber of Commerce buy local program that inspired ours: www.chambersburg.org/pages/ChamberCard
- ▶ Small Business Saturday Resources
Shopsmall.com/rally-signup
- ▶ <http://www.localflyerdistributionservice.com/>
1.866.862.8589 (Emi)
- ▶ Also... netpromotersystem.com/about/measuring-your-net-promoter-score.aspx