

Low Cost, High Impact Strategies

- Regional map distribution—Pocket maps, placemat maps, wall maps for heavy traffic areas. The regional map was also hosted online for digital access.
- Collaborating with university classes
 - Partnered with a senior class to create regional and business branding tools
 - Partnered with a business class to conduct small business reviews
- Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) surveys—low funding but higher time cost; however, you can spread out this burden through round tables and training volunteers
- Hosting marketing and informational webinars for small businesses—local or state experts will often speak for a low fee
 - Marketing experts
 - Panel to educate on state and local resources
- Podcast—requires more time, but the platform was low cost. The podcast had consistent engagement.
- Hands-on retail and tourism specific curriculum/training (for employees) that is free to participants in the region. Extension may have a free version already; also state tourism boards can help with tourism training
- Work with existing entities, such as community colleges, Small Business Development Centers (SBDC), workforce boards, and regional tourism bureaus. Put the right partners in place and look at how to fill gaps and leverage existing assets; resources that can connect with colleges and universities are especially helpful.
- Partnerships between schools and local businesses:

- High School Field Trip—students were given behind-the-scenes tours of local businesses, such as theaters, restaurants, retail stores, etc.
- Downtown shop local field trip for students—elementary school students were transported to key tourism areas in their region. This was a partnership with local businesses and the school district.
- Window design project—students submitted window designs for local businesses which were then displayed.
- Customer courtesy campaign (very low cost)—flyers were distributed during peak tourism season to remind customers to be polite to frontline employees.