

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Planning has started for “Christmas in the County” Mailer/ Flyer

Yes, we know....it seems as though summer just barely ended. However the planning and preparation for a successful **Christmas in the Country** promotion requires a head start! This year the ads are due by October 30th. The flyer will go out on in the mail on November 24th. Don't miss out on this opportunity to make it a successful holiday season by advertising your specials and special events in this year's flyer. We're trying to make 'advance planning' a regular part of the chamber's way of doing business and hope it assists our member businesses to create well thought out and successful advertising and marketing plans!

Our New Chamber Information Kiosk is Built and Awaiting a new Sign!

Thanks to the hard work of Herman Summers of American Dream Builders, our new Union Area Chamber of Commerce kiosk has been built but still needs to be painted and have signage to properly identify it as our new Chamber Information kiosk. Currently it's located on the parking lot of Crowning Touch Embroidery and is mounted on a trailer so it can be easily used for parades and other “on location events.” Please make sure we've got enough of your business cards and company brochures in stock for the new kiosk. And watch for details about the upcoming painting party (date yet to be selected)!

Our NEW Chamber Map & Guide is Printed and Looks Fantastic!

The Map & Guides were completed in time to be distributed at Union Fair and River Festival. Make sure you have them available at your store and / or office location. If you need more stop by and see Martha. We have renewed our membership with the Maine Tourism Association who is responsible for keeping our map & guides stocked at the information display centers located in Kittery, Yarmouth, Hampden North, Hampden South, Houlton, Calais and Freyburg,



UPCOMING EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Fall Conference / Seminar - tentative date: Friday, October 30th.

Our fall conference / seminar is in the planning stages and will again have a business management focus. We will be tackling subjects such as collections and bankruptcy, credit card security and human resource topics.

NEXT MEETING — MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Don't miss our next Union Area Chamber of Commerce meeting to be held on Wednesday, September 30th, 8 am at the Badger Cafe & Pub..



RECENT EVENTS

We're In The News!

The Union Area Chamber of Commerce received a mention in several local newspapers (Lincoln County News, MidCoast Beacon, The Free Press, Village Soup) for our participation in this year's successful Union Fair. The giveaway of free blueberry pies were made possible by Anne's Old Chairs, Appleton Ridge Technology, Cloud Hollow Farm, Erica Harriman CPA, The Free Press, Gibbs Library, Gosline Insurance, The Shaub's, The Union Area Chamber of Commerce, Union Pottery and Union Stone. The Chamber also donated a bicycle to be given away, as well as sponsored the Kids' Day activities and the fair parade. Many individual chamber members also volunteered their help for the fair.

Obtaining this recognition in the newspapers is part of our new public relations initiative to increase awareness among area residents of the positive and valuable contributions that both our chamber and our individual members provide to the communities in our service area..

TIPS & TIDBITS

*This monthly column offers business tips that will be useful to our members. If you find websites and/or other information that you think will benefit our membership, please let me know by sending me the link at chestnuthill@cablespeed.com. **Knowledge is Power! Let's share what we learn!***

Determining Your Advertising Budget — How much should you spend?

There are a number of ways to establish an advertising budget. However, there are three common mistakes many businesses make:

Budgeting based on habit — Many businesses budget future advertising based on what they spent in the past, perhaps adding a percent or more to offset inflation. This approach offers no leverage to take advantage of opportunities or deal with competitive challenges.

Budgeting what "we can afford" — This approach implies advertising is a luxury and usually means very little will be left for it after all the "important" expenses are made. This can allow your competition to launch unchallenged efforts to take business away from you.

Matching the competition — By definition, this approach is always reactionary and prevents you from taking the initiative and seizing additional shares of the market. Because you must always wait to see what your competitors do, it allows them to stay ahead of you all the time.

Fortunately, there's a better way to determine how much to budget for advertising. One that allows you to take the initiative against your competitors, build "top of mind awareness" among consumers and seize opportunities. This approach is based on applying a percentage of this year's sales goal toward advertising. Don't use last year's sales. Why not? If last year was a bad sales year, it will reduce this year's advertising budget, contributing to another bad year.

Do a quick check comparison on your advertising budget by going to this calculator at :

http://womeninbusiness.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?zi=1/XJ&sdn=womeninbusiness&cdn=money&tm=8&f=20&su=p284.9.336.ip_p560.7.336.ip_&tt=2&bt=0&bts=0&zu=http%3A//www.bhamnews.com/how_spend.html
(click on this link to go directly to the site)

NOTE: *This budget calculator uses the percentage of sales method to calculate advertising budgets. The calculator uses average national figures that do not take into account local market conditions, but it can be a good place to begin establishing your total advertising budget for the year. Keep in mind your advertising budget will need to be higher than the figure stated if you are a new store, in a high-pressure business, have heavy competition, or are located in a remote location*

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The Website Committee has started to meet to review our current website and determine how we can improve it to make it easy for visitors to use and learn how we can obtain an efficient and cost effective way to update the site information on as-needed basis.

Committee members are John Fromer, Paul Gaudreau, Cheryl McKeary and Marcia Drenzyk. If you have any thoughts on improvements you'd like to see, or if you would like to join the committee, contact John Fromer. Contact John for information about the date and location of our next meeting.

The Publications Committee had its first meeting on September 15th at Come Spring Cafe. The purpose of this committee is to review how the Chamber is presenting itself visually in our publications and on our website. We may wish to develop a graphic standards manual for our organization to be certain that we are visually 'branding' the Chamber. Creating a graphic look for our organization—and using it consistently—will assure us that we are creating an image for the Chamber that will make it more readily recognizable throughout our area.

There's still time to join, so please contact Paul Gaudreau for the time and place of the next meeting.

DO YOU HAVE A SUGGESTION?

Have an idea or suggestion for this newsletter? Please let me know.

Send to chestnuthill@cablespeed.com or call Marcia Drenzyk at 832-4133.