



Trademark pending

US 12 Heritage Trail

Editorial—Sally J. Carpenter

The U S 12 Sauk Heritage Trail Promotional plan response has been very successful up and down the 209-mile corridor. Exciting ideas for the promotion have been shared with Downtown Development Authorities (DDAs) along the highway. That group even added and enhanced some of the original ideas for the Wheel Art: A US 12 Journey May 1 to May 31, 2003 event. I hope the DDA group ideas will also inspire you. Spring board off of their good ideas to other great ideas of your own.

- Need to tie into Michigan Week Activities
- Display a bike collection, perhaps bike stores could sponsor.
- Promote Drive-In Movie located in Coldwater
- May 16 – 18 is bike to work week
- Promote Motor speedways MIS, and Mottville, identify others.
- Display race related stuff
- Home Depot car display
- Walk MIS track event
- MIS vendor displays that promote wheel theme

On the topic of antique wheels

- Draft horse group organize a trail ride
- Covered wagon display
- Old Harley Davidson cycle display
- Cub Scout pinewood derby racecar display
- Hubcap collection
- Antique farm equipment display
- Spinner and weavers
- Old cannons
- Pinwheel display by area schools line the highway
- Hula-hoop contest
- Hot Wheels
- Car dealer's display along the highway
- Be a tourist in your town event: Tour historic places, restorations, and museums
- Local artist studio tours
- Carriage step tours

Involving Others:

- Township, cities collaborate on displays
- Along the road cleanup
- Involve the county Intermediate School District in pinwheel display

Bob Nagan of WhizBang! Training helped the Planning Committee put together the US 12 Promotion plan and he left us with a promotional planning tool for you to use in your business and community. The Promotional Planner is enclosed for you to use to plan your month long May Event. Remember, this project will only be as successful as each of us make it. Our business along the

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US 12 can only improve if we all cooperate on this exciting project. This promotion project was designed to be easily implemented, and very visible to bring recognition to US 12.

I met with the Southern Michigan Bed and Breakfast Association, as they are interested in the U S 12 Promotion Project. Encourage Bed and Breakfasts in your area to get involved with US 12 activities.

It was intended that the planning group give no more direction to the May US 12 Project than this final newsletter before the event. Look to your local community for planning, and look at your business to make this project a success.

St. Joseph County MSU Extension is in the process of putting together a listing of all Farm Markets along US 12 into a simple brochure. Stay tuned for that.

We will keep you informed on when T-shirt orders will be taken. We are waiting on trademark designation.

Information on the Tourist-Oriented Directional Sign (TODS) program is on page three. Businesses that qualify are cultural, historical, recreational, educational or commercial activity that is annually attended by 2,000 or more people and for which a major portion of the activity's income or visitors are derived during the normal business season from motorist not residing in the immediate area of the activity. The signs cost \$360 per sign per year and may be subject to a price increase. The TOD signs are allowed on any highway with a prefix of M or US not on interstate highways with an I prefix. For more information you can reach them Michigan Logos, Inc. at 888-645-6467 or 517-337-2267.



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Don't forget to post the OFFICIAL US – 12 HERITAGE TRAIL SIGN IN YOUR WINDOW. Download the sign in full color from www.msue.msu.edu/stjoseph then click on Community and Economic Development. If you would like to purchase a laminated 8 X 11 inch color copy of the US 12 logo place your order with Linda Towles at towlesl@msue.msu.edu by Friday, April 28, 2003 deadline. If we receive at least 25 orders we can offer them to you for \$5.00 each.

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Michigan Logos, Inc.

Tourist Oriented Directional Sign Program

TODS is the acronym for Tourist Oriented Directional Sign. The TODS Program provides the business identification and directional information for certain Tourist Oriented Activities.

A Tourist Oriented Activity is any lawful cultural, historical, recreational, educational, or commercial activity, located on rural highways. Signs must be located outside municipalities, but not at interchanges on expressways or freeways.

The Michigan Department of Transportation has contracted with Michigan Logos, Inc. to administer the TODS Program for the State of Michigan.

Eligibility—Tourist Oriented Activity Eligibility Criteria:

There are specific criteria each type of business must meet to be eligible for the program. The following information will help you to determine if your business is eligible.

General Eligibility Requirements for T.O.D.S.

1. The business must be in operation 8 hours/day, 5 days/week, one of which must be a Saturday or Sunday during the normal business season.
2. The business must derive a major portion of its income from motorists not residing within 10 miles of the activity.
3. The business must have an attendance of at least 2,000 in 12 consecutive months.
4. The maximum distance of services from signed intersections for all establishments are as follows:
Lower Peninsula—10 miles
The distances can be increased if approved by the review board.
5. Food and lodging businesses are required to meet the additional following criteria:

FOOD:

South of M-46—Businesses having a cultural or historical nature, a unique feature or theme or listed on the state or National Register of Historic Places may participate.

LODGING:

Lower Peninsula: Only non-corporate or non-franchise businesses or businesses listed on the State or National Register of Historic Places may participate.

Note: The review board can grant exceptions to the above criteria.

TODS Location, Placement and Size

The signs will be located on state highways within a 1/2 mile of intersections with other state highways or local roads. The signs will be offset 10-20 feet from edge of pavement, in line with the existing highway guide signs. Signs may be placed up to 10 miles from the activity.

The business signs are 6' wide by 2' high. There is a maximum of 4 signs per sign structure with a 6' wide by 1' high header plaque. A symbol or logo is allowed on the signs. No more than three sign structures may be installed at an intersection.



Marketing and Promotion Examples

This section analyzes the approach used by Villages of Van Buren, Iowa, to develop a strong market presence. Staff and volunteers worked on several fronts simultaneously to keep awareness and interest in visiting this rural county high.

Villages of Van Buren, Iowa

Villages of Van Buren attribute their success as a new player in tourism to “having had a dream of what we could become, and then our citizens rolled up their sleeves and worked. “The office staff, in cooperation with the volunteer marketing committee, addressed most issues related to effective marketing.

- The **tourism product is well-positioned**, with a **strong image**: a traditional rural lifestyle, history, and a change of pace, all in a beautiful outdoor setting with lots of recreation opportunities along the Des Moines River.
- Over time, a consensus was built to **market as group of twelve communities** because no one village was strong enough to draw visitors on its own.
- Tourism is part of a larger **economic development program**, promoting new business and industry and supporting the existing economic structure.
- Tourism there **started out with a success** —”Bike Van Buren” — that demonstrated tourism potential to local residents, and showed the type of small-scale, authentic tourism planned for the community.
- **Target markets** and the needs of each were narrowly specified: senior citizens, young professionals, and young families that like to camp and attend festivals.
- The Villages **refined their marketing mix** as they became more experienced. They matched visitor profiles with media demographics, concentrated on certain population centers, and experimented.
- Part of the \$82,000 budget from city and county government, membership drives, donations, and a foundation was used to set up an **effective office operation**. This allows timely response to tourist requests for information.
- A **good variety of publications is available**, including the new edition of *Village Visitor’s Guide* (a 56-page magazine format on newsprint paper), the county brochure “Explore the Villages of Van Buren,” several individual town brochures designed in “look-alike” formats, the state park publication, and various brochures from private businesses.
- A simple, photocopied **county map**, with points of interest on it, is distributed free at various county locations.
- The **county-wide billboard and signing program** creates an image, enticing the pass-through motorist and directing tourists to sites of interest.
- The office staff **works with the formal travel trade**, in particular the motor coach industry, by attending trade shows, such as the Jefferson Lines show in Des Moines.
- There is **marketing within Jackson County** as well — the “Explore Your Own Backyard Tour” was created to familiarize residents with county attractions. Hospitality seminars, with an emphasis on giving directions and cross-selling, are regular events.
- There is **extensive cooperative advertising** with local businesses and other Iowa tourism groups. For example, Villages of Van Buren has a full-page, 4-color ad in the travel insert to *The Iowan* magazine.
- Potential **marketing sources at a distance** are also utilized—the Iowa Welcome Centers distribute county literature, and the Villages are part of a loop tour on a map circulated by the State.
- The future looks just as busy: a **promotional video** is being filmed, “**fam**” **tours** for newspaper and magazine feature writers and free-lancers are

being organized, a **visitor survey** is underway, and there are plans to tap into nearby riverboat gambling by offering add-on tours to Van Buren County.

The only areas the Villages of Van Buren need to improve are preparing a formal marketing plan, and designing evaluation into all promotion activities.

Select the Target Market

Who will buy the product your community is marketing? One certain way to fail is to try to sell everyone with the same product. An example of the level to which specialization takes place in tourism is Disneyland, which offers 43 separate tickets with different target markets, ranging from senior citizens to corporate events to nearby residents, who visit several times a year.

A **target market** is a group of individuals sharing common characteristics toward whom marketing efforts will be directed.

The process of dividing the total market into high-potential markets is called **market segmentation**. It involves these steps:

- Identify and describe the different segments that make up the total market.
- Evaluate the economic potential of each segment.
- Choose one or more market segments on which to focus.

You cannot afford to spend scarce promotional dollars in appealing to people who are not prospects for purchase of your product. Current visitors are a good indication of target markets attracted to your commu-

nity. New prospects are likely to have many of the same characteristics unless you are planning a product shift.

Identify market segments

Target markets can be defined by several factors: geography, demographics and behavior. **Geographic markets** refers to where potential visitors live. Travel time and positive attraction factors are widely recognized as the two main variables that determine where customers choose to go and what they choose to see.

Demographic markets are based on characteristics like age, sex, marital status, number and ages of children, and life stage (young single adult or retired couples, for example) that have direct and obvious effects on travel patterns. Plainly, young unmarried men and married couples with children have vastly different travel patterns.

A **behavioral market** takes into account how potential tourists act, such as length of stay, new versus repeat visitors, and skill level (novice or expert). But market segmentation using behavior variables may also refer to why they behave as they do, their interests, and their values. There are many factors that affect travel by individual consumers: their reasons for travel, activities enjoyed during travel, their general interests and opinions about travel, and personal values. For one person, travel may mean a tour of museums, monuments and other cultural attractions in your community. Another person may travel to a meeting of a professional organization. A third person seeks amusement at a sporting event; another visits a park to fish. For different reasons they engage in different activities while traveling and value different types of attractions.

Promotion Planner

OVERVIEW

Name of Event _____

Start Date _____ End Date _____ Hours _____

Objectives of the promotion

How will we evaluate the success of this promotion?

Sales goal? _____

Total Budget _____

THE DETAILS

Detailed description of the event

What elements will make this event fun or memorable for our customers?

Materials / supplies / prizes needed

STAFF

Additional staffing requirements for the promotion? (over normal hours scheduled)

Pre-event-

During Event-

After Event-

Special staff training or explanation of promotion needed?

ADVERTISING

FREE (or almost free) ADVERTISING

- In-Store Signage
- In-Store Brochures
- Regular store newsletter
- E-mail list
- Press releases to
 - _____ newspapers
 - _____ radio
 - _____ local and regional magazines
 - _____ special interest magazine
 - _____ other

Purchased advertising

- Direct mail postcard / letter / flyer to customers
- Printed posters
- Newspaper—which papers?
- Radio—which stations?
- Television—which stations?
- Other—list other advertising methods

Promotion Checklist

Event Name:

Job / Task To Be Done

Responsible

Date

4-8 Weeks Before The Event

2-4 Weeks Before the Event

The Week Before the Event

Notes:

Promotion Checklist

Job / Task To Be Done

Responsible

Date

The Week of the Event

The Day of the Event/ During the Event

After the Event

Notes:

Promotion Budget Worksheet

Advertising

	<u>Projected Cost</u>	<u>Actual Cost</u>	<u>Notes</u>
<u>Signs/Posters</u>			
Design			
Printing			
Cost of Distribution			

Total			
<u>Direct Mail</u>			
Design			
Printing			
Postage			

Total			
<u>Newspaper</u>			
Design			
Ad cost			

Total			
<u>Radio</u>			
Create Ad			
Spot cost			

Total			
<u>Other</u>			

Total			
<u>Total Ad Cost</u>			

Promotion Recap

Name of Event:

Date:

Weather:

OVERVIEW

Were promotion objectives met? How do you know?

Sales

Plan _____ Actual _____

PRE EVENT PLANNING

What worked?

What didn't?

What can we do better and/or differently next time?

THE EVENT ITSELF

What worked?

What didn't?

What can we do better and/or differently next time?

Promotion Recap

AFTER THE EVENT

What worked?

What didn't?

What can we do better and/or differently next time?

ADVERTISING

What worked?

What didn't?

What can we do better and/or differently next time?

OVERALL COMMENTS

Do IT AGAIN? YES OR NO

Worksheet 3: ATTRACTION PACKAGING

A. Primary Attractions (list)

Secondary Attractions (list)

B. How do primary attractions fit and work together? Do the attractions create a strong compatible image or theme possibilities?

C. The primary tourism attraction package for our town is: