Stay up-to-date on all things Venture Portland by ‘Liking’ us on Facebook and ‘Following’ us on Twitter, Instagram and YouTube and Vimeo!
Members, Members, Members!
Magnifying Business Benefits and Running Strong Campaigns

10/18/17
STRONG MEMBERSHIP

Why It’s Important:
• Revenue
• Volunteers for Board and Committees
• Credibility

How It’s Measured:
• Percentage of district business that are members
• Diversity (business mix, racial/ethnic, district geography)
• Member engagement
• Revenue
MEMBERSHIP IS MOMENTUM

More members → More appeal → More ability to provide benefits → More revenue, credibility, board members & volunteers

- More members
- More appeal
- More ability to provide benefits
- More revenue, credibility, board members & volunteers
IT’S a BUSINESS DECISION

“TELL MIKE IT WAS ONLY BUSINESS. I ALWAYS LIKED HIM.”

ABE VIGODA 1921-2016
**Key Components**

**Customers:** Businesses in the district

**Product:** Benefits of membership

**ROI:** Quantifiable results of your benefits

**Competition:** Other business investments: advertising, staff, inventory, etc.
WHAT IT TAKES

• Contact list of businesses in district
• Valuable benefits
• Professional approach
• 3-month campaign
• Tracking and payment systems
WHAT DOESN'T WORK

• Expecting a list of district businesses to appear from thin air

• Vague or poor benefits

• Sending an email and waiting for members to rain from the sky
The Times They Are a Changin’

What worked 10, 5 or even 1 year ago might not work today
Case Study: NE Broadway

Problem:

• Longtime programming did not cater to current business mix
• Declining membership

Solution:

• Map out new benefits for current business mix for the following year and promote them in current membership packet

Outcome:

• Membership decline reversed
• 30% increase in membership
STRENGTHENING BENEFITS
SYSTEMS
GET YOUR HOUSE IN ORDER

- Membership Year
- Annual Meeting Date
- Campaign Start and End
- Dues
- Pro-rate Policy
- Member Packet
- Payment systems
The Complete Package

- Solicitation Letter
- Year in Review
- Benefits Sheet
- Membership Form
- Envelopes
THE CAMPAIGN
KEVIN COSTNER LIED
SHOOT FOR THE MOON...REALISTICALLY

Membership Goals

• Long-term: at least $\frac{1}{3}$ of businesses in district

• Annual Goal: 10-20% increase
A LITTLE HUMAN TOUCH

• Email with no follow-up: 1-3%
• Mailed packet: 15%
• Phone follow-up: 25%
• In-person asks: 50%
Case Study: Nob Hill

Problem:

• District businesses unaware of association activities/benefits

Solution:

• Create membership packet
• Build social media from nothing
• Hire staffer to spend time in the district and forge relationships

Outcome:

• 150% increase in membership in 1 year
THE CAMPAIGN: PLAN YOUR WORK, WORK YOUR PLAN

• Launch campaign 3 months before Annual Meeting
• Member-only incentives
• End campaign before Annual Meeting
• Sales: multiple contacts, relationships, follow-up
Be Strategic

• Renewals: **70%** return rate with follow-up (estimate)

• Lapsed: find out why

• Prospects: develop relationships

• Who gets visits? Phone calls?
Make IT Happen
Show me the money

• Dues is an art, not a science
• Dues should provide enough revenue to deliver benefits
• Budget to communicate with members through various channels
• $500 = 325 piece mailing (estimate)
RALLYING THE TROOPS
Case Study: Central Eastside Industrial

Problem:
• Benefits don’t line up with rapidly evolving business mix
• District brand was unclear & technical

Solution:
• Staff and Board team up for in-person business visits
• Getting on map creates urgency

Outcome:
• 140% increase in membership
• Multiple sectors
QUESTIONS?