

DMRC & Chamber of Commerce Offer Marketing Tips at Small Business Workshop

A group of local business owners attended a small business workshop entitled “Enhancing Customer Experience & Spreading the Bucks” Monday, February 23rd in the conference room at the Mantua-Shalersville Fire Department.

This workshop is part of a series sponsored by the Downtown Mantua Revitalization Corporation and the Mantua-Shalersville Area Chamber of Commerce. Michelle Barnauskas, owner of Business Image Solutions and marketing manager for 80 Pizza Hut locations in northeast Ohio led the workshop.

Businesses from Mantua and neighboring communities came eager to be advised of how they can market their business through adopting excellent customer services practices, effective merchandising, creative marketing, community networking as well as low and no-cost advertising.

Barnauskas gave specific examples of local businesses marketing their business throughout the workshop. Denise Pasquerella, owner of The Nanny’s Salon For Dogs implemented a fundraiser where \$10 from each dog groomed during the month of August was donated to the Crestwood Band. This raised \$500 for the band and gained the attention of the the Community Journal, which resulted in free newspaper coverage announcing the generosity and success of the event in a front



Local business owners take a few minutes to fill out a questionnaire regarding their interest in other marketing topics.

page article.

Another example included Zagursky’s Pierogies. Owners Rick Harr and Caren Stutzman donate pierogies which are fresh but do not meet the visual standards for sale to Parrot Hope Sanctuary. These pierogies make a tasty treat for the dozens of parrots and large birds housed by this non-profit group located in Mantua.

There are many ways you can market your business. Join your local chamber of commerce or other organizations where you can network with business owners and individuals who are tuned in to local shopping.

Barnauskas also emphasized the importance of curbside appeal and the view once inside your business. Are the windows clean? Does everything appear to be neat and well maintained? Customers who feel comfortable in your establishment are likely to spend more time and money in your business. Create a level of comfort between you and your customers, offer coupons which encourage them to return and/or incorporate a frequent shopper program which rewards your customers for multiple purchases.

Businesses owners were given a 25-page workbook so they could follow along and take notes during this interactive program.

In addition to the workbook and delicious refreshments donated by local restaurants, those in attendance were given a Business Resource Guide to help them grow their business. The contents included contact and general information for various organizations whose goal is to support you in your marketing plan. Business plan preparation, consulting, low cost advertising and business mentoring organizations are all in our immediate reach and can be utilized when we need them.

Business owners left with homework to help them recognize the areas in which they could use improvement. They were asked to shop the competition, shop themselves, survey customers, perform a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats) analysis, make one small change, re-assess their business and to attend the next seminar.

A survey was passed out and requested the opinions of those in attendance of the types of workshops they would be likely to attend and what they were interested in learning more about. The results were tallied and the next workshop in the series is being planned for April.

For more information about the “Marketing Mantua” Business Workshop series, contact Becky Newell at 216-990-5086 or bbjnewell@neohio.twcbc.com

DMRC to Host “Marketing Mantua” February 23rd

Are you happy with your sales? Do you wish you could get professional marketing advice without the usual high cost? Here’s your chance!

The DMRC (Downtown Mantua Revitalization Corporation) will be hosting a series of business improvement workshops titled “Marketing Mantua”. The first workshop will be held on Monday, February 23rd at the Mantua Shalersville Fire Depart-

ment (conference room) from 5:30-9:00PM. There is a modest fee of \$10 to cover the cost of refreshments and workshop supplies.

Michelle Barauskas, a 15-year retail marketing veteran with a degree in economics will lead the workshop with assistance from local business owners.

Bring a pen/pencil, notebook and pictures of the interior and exterior of your business (if possible). Those in attendance

will leave with an assessment of your operation, examples of easy-to-implement, no cost improvements you can make now and a list of tools/resources for the future.

Contact DMRC secretary, Becky Newell at bbjnewell@neohio.twcbc.com or 216-990-5086 or 330-274-3238 to reserve your spot by Wednesday, February 18th.

- *The Community Journal, February 5, 2009*