Shop Small® Lakeview

Tamarack District Library

Adults

Shop Small® Lakeview

Sep 20, 2017

$1-50

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Byline

Hope Nobel, Director, Tamarack District Library, Lakeview, Michigan

As a Neighborhood Champion for Small Business Saturday®, Tamarack District Library organized a scavenger hunt showcasing local businesses and incorporating Shop Small® swag.

The event was held in collaboration with 19 small businesses, including restaurants, retail shops, an artist studio and a grocery store. Participants had a week to visit the businesses, pick up a Small Business Saturday card that the library created for them, and return to the library to collect a prize.

Advanced Planning

Our library is committed to support of positive initiatives in our community, including the economic development possible through local businesses. As part of our support of local businesses and in response to information presented via email by ALA, the library completed the online application to be a Neighborhood Champion for Small Business Saturday. We signed up at ShopSmall.com/ALA.

Our only challenge was that we were notified late (or missed the initial notification) that we had been chosen to participate. The boxes of swag appeared two weeks before the date of the program, and they served as notification that we were participating. With only two weeks to go, we had some very quick planning to do!

Marketing

Because we had a quick turnaround, we marketed our program primarily through a Facebook event, which also listed local businesses as co-hosts. We used the Small Business Saturday marketing materials, available online to participating organizations, to design all materials; we found them to be very easy to personalize for our use and really attractive.

While much of the Small Business Saturday swag was given to scavenger hunt participants, other materials — including pens, buttons, pet bandanas, balloons, save-the-date cards and more — were shared with participating local businesses.

We also displayed a banner and posters provided through the program. Our marketing was very successful, and we were impressed by the quality of the materials.

Budgeting

So many great resources were provided by American Express®, we had to spend very little money. Our printing costs were under $25, spent for copies on our in-house copier.

We estimated 15 hours of staff time to design materials, coordinate with businesses and distribute materials. With a little more coordination, it may have been possible

to reduce staff time by asking businesses to pick up their own materials, but we considered it time well spent in networking opportunities.

Day-of-event Activity

On the day of Small Business Saturday (Nov. 26, 2016), front desk staff were responsible for signing people up for the scavenger hunt and distributing materials. Regularly scheduled staff were thoroughly briefed beforehand and were able to absorb the extra transactions without difficulty.

Program Execution

We received truly fantastic swag for this program, including canvas bags, a large banner, welcome mats, pens and a variety of other small items. We set up a very basic scavenger hunt in which those wishing to participate could sign up, get a scavenger hunt brochure and a Shop Small canvas bag, and be on their way.

Participants had one week to visit businesses on the list and collect little "Show Your Love" cards (one of the customizable files available from American Express), which we had previously distributed to those businesses. The cards were hole-punched, and participants were given a free key ring to keep their cards together.

Once they had visited 15 businesses, participants could return to the library anytime within the next week to collect a finisher prize of more swag. Participation was excellent, and the patrons were enthusiastic.

Participants were encouraged to sign up on teams, which could be anything from families to residents of a senior care home. Twenty-one groups (comprising 48 individuals) completed the scavenger hunt.

Businesses appreciated the extra exposure, and because we visited personally to distribute and pick up program items, this was a great fit for our current focus on building relationships with local businesses. The timing of this program has the added benefit of being just one week before our library's annual Christmas open house, and we purposely designed the timing of the scavenger hunt to drive participation to that as well.

Advice

Contact the businesses at least six weeks in advance to gain their cooperation and give them the opportunity to plan special activities or promotions.

Did you try this program at your library? Share your experience using this form.

Supporting Materials

Document
scavenger_hunt_brochure.pdf
Document
scavenger_hunt_collection_cards.pdf
Download this Program as a PDF

- Programming Librarian Facebook Group

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Audiences:

Adults (21 and up)