



# RETAIL ECONOMIC GARDENING

## WHAT'S “BRICKS & CLICKS”?

12-month, 3-part BRE program

1. ONE DAY-LONG WORKSHOP
2. CUSTOMIZED, I-ON-I TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
3. COMPETITIVE GRANT

WE BUILT CAPACITY, OFFERED INSPIRATION, DEVELOPED A  
COHORT OF SUPPORT & AWARDED SEED MONEY TO TRY NEW  
IDEAS

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU  
COMBINE  
MARKET DATA + CUSTOMIZED  
EXPERTISE + 10 MOTIVATED  
ENTREPRENEURS?

A chef with a beard and a blue cap is working in a professional kitchen. He is plating a dish that appears to be a salad or a vegetable medley. The kitchen has stainless steel surfaces and a large range hood in the background. The lighting is warm and focused on the chef's work area.

Bricks & Clicks:

Create great offline and online destinations & encourage more savvy digital marketing and e-Commerce

WE TRACKED 10  
GRANT RECIPIENTS  
OVER ONE YEAR

May 2018: 26 FT jobs/53 PT  
jobs → May 2019: 27 FT  
jobs/63 PT jobs

34.78% total sales revenue  
increases

New e-commerce took one  
retailer from \$114,000 to  
\$270,00 in sales – up 136%

Bricks & mortar shop footprint  
doubled

Website upgrade boost online sales 1%  
to 50%!

\$70,000+ invested in community

## HOW'D WE DO IT?

Building Entrepreneurial Economies Grants:

\$15,000 Planning Grant for Market Analysis

\$40,000 Implementation Grant for Bricks & Clicks

## TEAM APPROACH

*HDR, SBDC, City & County ED Depts, JMU's Madison Center for  
Community Development*

Split workload/logistics

Recruited TA providers & negotiated rates

Legal Review – T.A. provider contracts, grant award contracts

Application development

Applicant review metrics

## TEAM APPROACH

JMU free meeting facility

“Triage-approach” to assessments

Point person for each participant

Identified baseline data & interim and final report format

City was BEE grant fiscal agent

Media release & press relations

Archivist

BEE Final Report



CHEESY BUT HIGHLY INSPIRATIONAL  
& EFFECTIVE KICK IN THE PANTS

# Bricks & Clicks Workshop



## CONCEPTS:

Know & leverage what makes you unique

“Great customer service” isn’t it

Focus on top 10% repeat customers

Realize you can market & attract customers far away

Monument concept

No website? No way.

Customer segmentation, demographics require different strategies

Online sales = do it



## UNEXPECTED BONUS

STYMIED BY “UPS”

HOSTED 2 SUPPORT  
GROUPS WITH ADULT  
BEVERAGES AND TALKED IT  
OUT TOGETHER

= DRAFT UPS,  
COLLABORATIONS,  
PARTNERSHIPS, SUPPORT, X-  
PROMOTION – IT WAS  
AWESOME

# TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

VISUAL MERCHANDISING  
SEO/GETTING FOUND ONLINE  
ECOMMERCE  
WEBSITE IMPROVEMENTS  
MEDIA OUTREACH  
GOOGLE (ADWORDS, PROFILE, ETC)  
DIGITAL MARKETING

MARKETING PLANS  
STRATEGIC CUSTOMER  
TARGETING  
DIRECT MAIL CAMPAIGNS  
MARKETING ASSESSMENT  
SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY  
VIRGINIA ASSOC. OF MUSEUMS

## Store Overview



### OPPORTUNITIES:

- Consistency with display fixtures
- Uniform signage standards
- Traffic flow and Floorplan
- Clear separation between artists
- Relocating feature show
- Merchandising standards
- Lighting

## TARGET MARKET

In addition to the customer profile provided by the owners of The Isle Co. the [National Candle Association](#) offers some recent research that indicates the general demographic of candle buyers.

- 90% women
- Ages 30-60
- Like unique, locally-made, quality gifts
- Purchases driven by desire for cultivating the relaxation, stress relief, and comfort-enhancing qualities of candles in the home
- Aroma very important
- Men and women find candles to be an appropriate gift item for all occasions
- Price is just one element influencing decision-making along with scent, shape, and color

Cross-referencing those national and business-specific characteristics with the psychographic profiles identified in a [2017 Retail Market Analysis](#) of the Harrisonburg-Rockingham County demographic reveals three significant population segments identified as “College Towns,” “Bright Young Professionals,” and “Salt of the Earth” that overlap The Isle Co. general target market. While those three personas cover a wide-range of economic and lifestyle differences, the following in-common preferences, provide an even more accurate customer profile:

- Prefer environmentally-friendly products
- Comfortable with technology, although not equal in usage

## MARKET RESEARCH

**GENERAL.** A [review of the general trends](#) in the overall global home décor market through 2020 show that in addition to the preference for online shopping a “growing consumer preference towards adoption and usage of eco-friendly products, known for their minimal impact on the environment, has also boosted the growth of the market.”

The rise of experiential retailing paired with e-commerce options is another trend that should be incorporated into The Isle Co. marketing strategies. While [projections](#) show that 70% of retail sales are still expected to be made in-store through 2020, capitalizing on retail space to draw potential customers for entertainment, events, classes, or hands-on experiences, then converting them to followers, customers, and also encouraging repeat purchases online, is a growing preference not to be ignored.

**INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC.** More specific [industry predictions](#) for 2018 target consumer engagement through the use of technology, omnichannel approaches to selling directly to the consumer, and ethical sourcing as part of a solid brand strategy.

**LOCAL.** In the local Harrisonburg and Rockingham County market, a [2017 Retail Market Analysis](#) revealed several key opportunities for retail businesses, including an influx of new residents, a burgeoning downtown residential population, and a universal sales leakage in online retail. The study also showed that household goods, furnishings, and gifts are primarily purchased “Elsewhere in Harrisonburg/Rockingham” and businesses are overwhelmingly searched for on Google, two points that need to be addressed in any marketing strategy for The Isle Co. Additionally, the study attributes half of the City’s sales surpluses to visitors, therefore developing a specific tourism strategy to leverage visitor purchasing is an important recommendation.

**ONLINE.** According to a compilation of research and expert advice for 2018 reported on bigcommerce.com, the following ecommerce trends will drive online sales in 2018. For The Isle Co. to move more significantly into the ecommerce marketplace, targeted adoption of some of these strategies should be considered.

- [Localization, Personalization & CX](#). Customer experience is the differentiator, and creating an online experience that uses data points, localization, surveys, apps, and visual merchandizing to provide personalized recommendations, customization, and a responsive feedback loop is key to standing out in ecommerce.
- [Community Building, Customer Engagement & CRM](#). In order to learn how to attract and sell to more customers online, engaging more effectively with current customers is a must. Researching and doing a test run with a customer relationship management system is a next step in building an online sales funnel.
- [New Content Types & SEO](#). Spending some time and effort in capturing just the right keyword searches, particularly niche, or “long-tail keywords.”
- [Mobile Optimization](#). Adding digital wallet is a simple way to optimize mobile web sales.
- [Social Media Advertising, Campaigns & Retargeting](#). Establishing a social advertising strategy and budget is an important part of an ecommerce effort.
- [CRO & Data-Driven Optimizations](#). Consider integrating a conversion rate optimization tool in online store to help better understand how site visitors are using the store.
- [Technology](#). Exploring more ways to manage and increase ecommerce tasks via technology can exponentially improve efficiency, inform new strategies, and ultimately improve customer experience.
- [Email Marketing, Automation & AOV](#). Email marketing should be an integral part of your ecommerce strategy, particularly in building customer loyalty, repeat business, and draw in new customers.

**Smarter Ecommerce.** Taking time to research and establish a streamlined, omni-channel ecommerce strategy that incorporates tools geared for understanding ecommerce buyers specifically, optimizing customer experience, capturing long-tail keywords, integrating communication and data collection tasks, and increasing reach via advertising, customer management, and influencer marketing will get online sales goals on track.

- Streamline with a CRM
- Content and keyword research as part of developing a content plan
- Integrated website, social, email, and promotional messaging
- Take a deeper look at ecommerce buyers and [create persona](#) and tailor strategies just for them

# GRANT PROJECTS

NEW OR ENHANCED WEBSITES

NEW OR ENHANCED ECOMMERCE

NEW SHOP  
LAYOUTS/MERCHANDISING

“MONUMENT”

VIDEO PRODUCTION

MARKETING MATERIAL  
DEVELOPMENT

NEW WINDOW DISPLAYS

DIGITAL CAMPAIGNS

DIRECT MAIL CAMPAIGNS

FORMAL SECRET SHOPPER  
PROGRAM

SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

BLOG CONTENT & OTHER SEO  
IMPROVEMENTS



“I WAS MOTIVATED IN MANY WAYS BY ‘CREATING A MONUMENT.’ SOLACE STUDIOS IS  
UNIQUELY SITUATED AT THE POINT OF A TRIANGLE. A PERFECT LOCATION TO BE  
DESIGNATED A LOCAL ‘MONUMENT.’”  
-BARB POLIN, OWNER OF SOLACE

WE ARE SO VERY, VERY GRATEFUL FOR THIS PROGRAM. I LOVE HOW YOU CARE ABOUT RETAINING EXISTING BUSINESSES. AS YOU'LL SEE WE MADE SIGNIFICANT STRIDES! WHEN WE STARTED THE PROGRAM, OUR TRAJECTORY WAS NOT GOOD AT ALL AS OUR SALES WERE SPIRALING, BUT ONCE STARTING THE PROGRAM, THEY STARTED GOING UP AND CONTINUED ON THAT TRAJECTORY WHICH IS PHENOMENAL. I THINK THE KEY FOR US WAS TO REMEMBER, LIKE SCHALLERT DISCUSSED, WHAT MADE US UNIQUE WHICH I THINK IS KEEPING WITH A BOUTIQUE OUTFITTER- CLEAN, ORGANIZED, AND WITH CURATED ITEMS AND EXCELLENT, CARING, AND KNOWLEDGEABLE STAFF.”

-- TINA MILLER, WALKABOUT OUTFITTERS



	<b>Expense</b>	<b>Revenue</b>
	1929.12	
<b>Advertisements</b>		
<b>Ticket Sales</b>		\$8,100.00
<b>Catering &amp; Shuttle &amp; \$25 Room Fee</b>	\$3,735.97	
<b>Schallert Travel and Fee</b>	\$9,042.00	
<b>Travis Design Consultations</b>	\$720.00	
<b>Karen Marketing Consultations</b>	\$1,250.00	
<b>Immerge Digital Consultations</b>	\$1,440.00	
<b>Immerge Sponsorship</b>		\$700.00
<b>Partner Contribution</b>		\$7,000.00
<b>BEE Grant</b>		\$40,000.00
	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>Total Revenue</b>
	\$16,187.97	\$55,800.00
<b>Revenue-Expenses: \$39,612.03</b>		

## R(IP OFF) & D(UPLICATE)

- BRAINSTORM WITH PARTNERS & BUSINESSES FOR T.A. PROVIDER IDEAS (IT COULD BE ANOTHER BUSINESS OWNER, A SPOUSE, COLLEGE FACULTY, SBDC, COMMUNITY COLLEGE RESOURCE, CHAMBER OR ROTARY MEMBER, ETC)
- NEGOTIATE RATES FOR T.A.
- FOCUS ON THE TRAINING AND/OR T.A. IF YOU CANT FUND GRANTS
- RELAXED IDEA SHARING AMONG BUSINESSES SO THEY CAN HELP EACH OTHER (GET THEM OUT OF COMMITTEE MEETING SETTING)
- RECRUIT SPONSORS – OFFER GRANT NAMING RIGHTS
- PARTNER WITH OTHERS IN REGION – ESPECIALLY IF IT OPENS UP FUNDING



# MARKETING MADE EASY

5 part series - @\$75 registration

Free speakers (SBDC, HDR, 2 marketing consultants)

Not trying to create marketing experts

All their content is already right in front of them

30-minute consultations with speakers

To be followed by Bricks & Clicks TA & Grants!



UNDERSTAND YOUR  
CUSTOMERS (DAY  
IN THEIR LIFE &  
HOW YOUR  
MESSAGES REACH  
THEM)

DO WHAT YOU  
LOVE & DON'T  
FORCE WHAT YOU  
DON'T

NO OVERTHINKING  
– DON'T SACRIFICE  
THE GOOD FOR  
PERFECT

DON'T STAGE  
PERFECT MOMENTS



YOU DON'T NEED  
TO CREATE A  
STORY, YOU  
ALREADY HAVE A  
STORY

REVIEW VALUE  
PROPOSITION/  
UNIQUE  
POSITIONING  
STATEMENT/  
DIFFERENTIATION

CONTENT  
CALENDARS & THE  
MAGIC OF  
AUTOMATION



GET INTO VIDEO for SOCIAL MEDIA & SEARCH ENGINE ALGORITHMS

VIDEO EDITING TOOLS ARE IN YOUR PHONE.

HELP STAFF GET INTO THINKING ABOUT CONTENT MARKETING – CAPTURE GREAT MOMENTS WITH CUSTOMERS, NEW PRODUCT ARRIVALS, TEAM-BUILDING LUNCHES – LOOK FOR MOMENTS & DOCUMENT THEM.

TRY ONE IMAGE-ONE SENTENCE POSTS

GO BEHIND THE SCENES!



THANK YOU!

Questions?

[Andrea.Dono@harrisonburgva.gov](mailto:Andrea.Dono@harrisonburgva.gov)