

Cape Girardeau, Missouri



DOWNTOWN
REVITALIZATION &
ECONOMIC
ASSISTANCE FOR
MISSOURI

MARKETING PLAN
JUNE 2009



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



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MARKETING PLAN

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The area of Cape Girardeau known as The Old Town Cape District has seen impressive revitalization and growth over the past several years, but to transform that area into a prime choice and location for tourism, shopping, and business, a focused and ongoing marketing plan is needed. The adage “If you build it, they will come” doesn’t apply unless you tell people about it.

This marketing plan identifies seven primary objectives. Taken together, these seven objectives promote one key message—**The Old Town Cape District is a unique and exciting place to shop, visit, work and live.**



Fireworks at Libertyfest

The seven primary marketing objectives for The Old Town Cape District are:

Objective 1: Rebrand The Old Town Cape District

Rebrand the target area to create a cohesive and exciting image, that is both easily understood, and which captivates the residents and visitors.

Objective 2: Restructure Old Town Cape, Inc.

Establish Old Town Cape, Inc. as the lead organization for The Old Town Cape District.

Objective 3: Monitor Residents and Market

Through the use of continued surveys and focus groups monitor resident and visitor attitudes about The Old Town Cape District.

Objective 4: Increase Sales

Increase the number of shoppers, diners and visitors to The Old Town Cape District.

Objective 5: Promote Positive Perceptions

Promote a positive perception of The Old Town Cape District in the minds of local and regional residents and Southeast Missouri State University Students.

Objective 6: Strengthen Business Environment

Increase the business and retail development in The Old Town Cape District and take steps to ensure sustainability.

Objective 7: Increase Residential Population

Increase the residential population in The Old Town Cape District area.

All seven of the objectives are interrelated to the successful marketing and revitalization of The Old Town Cape District. To provide a plan that is both measurable and effective for a longer period, more goals and strategies have been included than can be initially implemented. This allows stakeholders to implement selected goals and strategies now and others as more resources become available. Implementation of every objective is essential to maximizing The Old Town Cape District's potential. While each objective provides a benefit singularly, the synergy they create together produces the greatest return to the Old Town Cape District's stakeholders: residents, businesses and property owners, the City of Cape Girardeau, Southeast Missouri State University and the Chamber of Commerce.

The marketing plan addresses capitalizing on the student body at Southeast Missouri State University and residents in and near Cape Girardeau as well as attracting new visitors to the Downtown area.

A regular, sustained advertising campaign is needed to build recognition and create desire among target markets. Without an ongoing, sustained advertising plan promotions become spotty and disjointed, and momentum is lost. In the end, fewer results are achieved for the dollars spent.

Because it is unlikely that stakeholders will be able to implement everything in the marketing plan at one time, it is important to identify those goals and strategies that will be most beneficial to the Downtown area. It should be recognized that not all special events and new

initiatives will be highly successful the first time they are tried. Time is needed for the target market to discover and accept new initiatives for Downtown Cape Girardeau.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

Cape Girardeau is a family-friendly, small-town community that is large enough to serve as a regional hub for retail, health, commerce, and education for much of Southeast Missouri and Southern Illinois. Each day the population of Cape Girardeau grows from 36,000 people to well over 100,000 people who work, shop, and conduct business, placing it as the largest city between St. Louis, Missouri and Memphis, Tennessee. The Downtown area, which has been identified as The Old Town Cape District, covers more than 130 square blocks of the city and provides a significant draw for regional customers and tourists.

The large number of historic buildings in The Old Town Cape District provides the area with a high degree of distinction and appeal. The Old Town Cape District area includes four National Register Historic districts, seventeen separately listed National Register sites, and five of the city's local landmarks. (The Historic Districts are illustrated in Exhibit 8– Historic Districts & Buildings of the Map Reference Handbook).

Throughout the year, Cape Girardeau hosts many events that bring the community Downtown, and *The Southeast Missourian*, a local newspaper, does a great job of covering the events. When questioned, however, people felt that word-of-mouth was the major information source for visitors and residents about shopping, entertainment and special events in The Old Town Cape District.

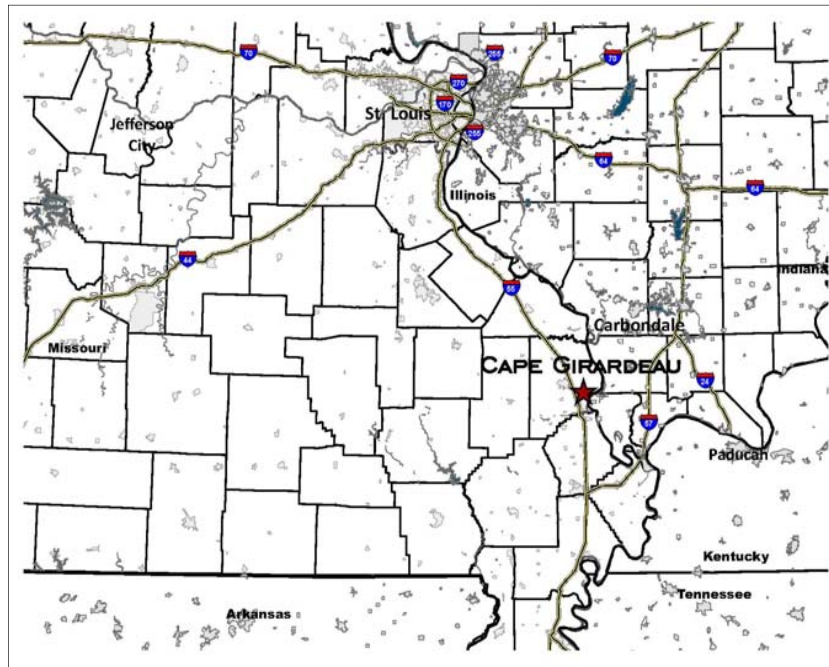


Figure 1: Regional Map

The Convention and Visitors Bureau distributes a convenient, easy-to-use, one-page map of Downtown and other brochures which describe the attractions of the city and region. With a rich historic district, a number of entertainment venues and various events throughout the year, The Old Town Cape District offers plenty of reasons for tourists to visit.

The Old Town Cape District has many characteristics that create a sense of place, such as the Mississippi riverfront, and many historic buildings, such as St. Vincent's Church. The predominance of brick masonry architecture, two or three-story buildings, and historic streetscape, create an attractive civic identity.

The Old Town Cape District has a good business mix with 40 percent retail, 40 percent dining, and 20 percent service. Business hours, however, are not customer friendly. Many shops are closed on Mondays, and most shops are only open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Retail that closes at 5 p.m. contradicts the desired perception of The Old Town Cape District as a viable destination for customers. Encouraging extended business hours furthers The Old Town Cape District's capacity to establish itself as a destination retail district. Of particular importance are hours of operation during and around special events. Expanding business hours and opening on Sunday during special events and festivals will do much to enhance a visitor's perception of The Old Town Cape District.

The entrepreneurial spirit is alive in The Old Town Cape District and includes new shops and offices. Many new businesses and start-ups are choosing to locate in Downtown. To encourage long-term success these entities must differentiate their product or service from the average customer experience, typically big-box retail or strip malls.

The rise of strip malls, Wal-Mart, and West Park Mall over the last 20 years have taken shoppers away from The Old Town Cape District area. Wal-Mart is now the major store where people do their everyday shopping. Some residents go to St. Louis for more luxury items or for a bigger selection than Cape Girardeau has to offer.

Identifying The Old Town Cape District as a destination shopping experience that offers unique retail and restaurants is a way for the Downtown to differentiate itself from the everyday customer shopping experience. Consequently, the target area should draw upon its

dynamic tactile environment and unique mix of businesses to create a concept of enhanced consumer experience.

The issues about which to inform the public; activities, new businesses and current business expansions, can be addressed with increased advertising. Rebranding The Old Town Cape District to be an all encompassing area for the Downtown as well as the three neighborhoods (Broadway, Riverfront, & Good Hope/Harrig) will call for a cohesive marketing effort to inform the public that all of these neighborhoods are within the Downtown area.



Existing Mississippi Riverfront in Cape Girardeau

Key volunteers from the business community are engaged in development efforts, and have asked for a structured plan, to which everyone should adhere, in order to improve the overall business development of The Old Town Cape District. Although the area has seen a resurgence in interest and development among key investors, a high turnover rate of businesses in Downtown has increased the number of vacant buildings, giving a negative image for sections of The Old Town Cape District.

There has been significant progress in rehabilitation efforts in The Old Town Cape District. These efforts include the redevelopment of the Marquette Hotel into an office building and renovations of other buildings into residential loft apartments. Other major developments that provide the stimulus for further revitalization include; the Bill Emerson Memorial Bridge, United States Federal Courthouse, Southeast Missouri State University's River Campus, rehabilitation of the *Southeast Missourian* Building, and the Mississippi River Tales Murals Project.

Although several buildings have undergone rehabilitation and improvement, many Downtown buildings still need significant facade improvements. Property owners need assistance in updating historic buildings and making historically accurate and appropriate improvements. The interest level of the Downtown business community in revitalization is extremely high. Several property owners are eager to develop their properties in many areas of Downtown, but want assurances that their future investments are secure with a quality, detail-oriented redevelopment plan.

The Old Town Cape District is also in need of surface parking lot improvements. Signage is needed to identify which lots are for public use, and the general appearance of public lots needs improvement as well.



Marquette Hotel Building



Mississippi River Tales Mural

TARGET MARKET ANALYSIS

The Target Markets noted in this plan have been identified to assist The Old Town Cape District in efficiently influencing attitudes and behaviors. As the campaign develops and the strategies are implemented, it is important to understand how each initiative is affecting and reaching the targeted markets. Regular communication with these markets is crucial to maintaining visibility, integrity and trust.

Primary Market

An effective marketing plan for a community is in part targeted at its residents and local businesses. By recruiting these markets as “salespeople” not only will all downtown marketing plan objectives be more readily accepted, but all other revitalization efforts will be enhanced. It is also important for residents to feel proud and supportive of their community and that they live or conduct business in a dynamic downtown. Residents and local businesses are often overlooked.

The tools and messages sent to residents and local businesses are similar to those meant for visitors already in town; ease of downtown navigation, special events, general ‘feel good’ about town, and dynamic activity.

Success in the influencing of this market will build a base of activity that will provide a level of stable support and allow future marketing to the secondary and tertiary markets. The following categories compose the Primary Market:

- Local Residents - residents that live in Downtown and The Old Town Cape District Zip Codes (63701/63703)
- Area Residents - residents that live within 50 miles

- Downtown Business Owners
- Cape Girardeau or Downtown Visitors

Secondary Market

As the marketing message influence spreads and the Primary Market is saturated, it will be important to expand the outreach to add more people. The typical definition of a “tourist” is a visitor from at least 50 miles away. This visitor is more likely to be spending more and, possibly, staying overnight because of the distance travelled. With rising fuel costs, a 50 mile round-trip can immediately cost a visitor \$10—\$30. Such costs underscore how important it is that the marketing message to visit The Old Town Cape District is as compelling as possible.

The following groups comprise the Secondary Market:

- Regional Residents - residents that live 50-100 miles away
- Local & Regional Entrepreneurs

Tertiary Market

The key message of The Old Town Cape District should reach potential tourists looking for longer visits, new residents, and potential investors.

- Tourists within a 350 mile radius
- Retirees & Baby Boomers
- Real Estate Investors

Communication Channels

The following formats or media can be used to communicate with the primary, secondary and tertiary markets:

- Website
- Newsletter
- Ads
- Special Event Brochures
- Top 10 Things to Do in The Old Town Cape District
- Newsprint/Press Releases
- Signage/Wayfinding
- Flyers/Brochures
- Community Meetings
- Radio
- Visitor Information Centers



The Old Town Cape website masthead

OBJECTIVES, GOALS & STRATEGIES:

The following text outlines the specific Objectives, Goals and Strategies that must be followed to adequately and effectively market Downtown Cape Girardeau:

OBJECTIVE 1: Rebrand the target area to create a cohesive and exciting image that is both easily understood, and captivates the target audience.

Design a Logo which rebrands The Old Town Cape District as a destination:

- Redesign The Old Town Cape District and Old Town Cape, Inc. logos.

Define The Old Town Cape District as a physical, geographical area through the use of unifying elements:

- Complete and consistent Wayfinding;
- Streetscapes: Cohesive use of lighting, site furnishings, landscaping, art and gateway signage;
- Hierarchy of signage for The Old Town Cape District and the sub districts of Broadway, Riverfront and Good Hope.

By implementing the rebranding strategy, the Downtown area will have its own identity, The Old Town Cape District. By creating a cohesive identity for the different areas that comprise The Old Town Cape District the area will be able to retain its charm without the confusion of where it is located.

OBJECTIVE 2: Restructure Old Town Cape , Inc.

GOAL: Develop identity of Old Town Cape, Inc. as the lead organization for Downtown.

Target Markets: Civic Leaders, Citizens, & University

Strategy:

- Promote visibility and responsibility of Executive Director;
- Add staff;
- Develop sustainable funding source such as Community Improvement District;
- Establish Community Improvement District.

OBJECTIVE 3: Through the use of continued surveys and focus groups monitor resident and visitor attitudes about the Old Town Cape District.

GOAL: Develop a yearly community survey that builds on the DREAM Community Survey results.

Target Markets: Local residents, Regional Residents, & Southeast Missouri University Students.

Strategy: Old Town Cape, Inc. should conduct a , annual community survey that will measure the target market's perceptions and behaviors relative to the following areas:

- Opinions of Downtown;
- Awareness of Products & Services;
- Plans for Downtown;
- How respondents obtain Information for Events and Attractions in The Old Town Cape District;
- Number of Visits to The Old Town Cape District;
- Visits to other cities to shop or dine;
- Reasons for visiting The Old Town Cape District; and
- Reasons for not visiting The Old Town Cape District.

GOAL: Enhance the Old Town Cape, Inc website to be the central website for cultural, entertainment and hospitality information.

Target Markets: ALL

Strategy: Create categories for the Old Town Cape, Inc. website that highlight and illustrate the following categories:

- Entertainment - Nightlife, Music Events & Special Attractions;
- Dining - Restaurant/Bar Locations for The Old Town Cape District;
- Shopping - Retail Locations;
- Tourism - Includes lodging information;
- Development - Buildings & Sites for sale; and
- Housing - list of single-family, apartments & condominiums.

By improving the Old Town Cape, Inc. website to serve as an “online concierge” where all visitor information can be centrally located, it will provide residents and out of town visitors with information related to entertainment, festivals, dining and shopping options.

Strategy: Coordinate all calendars from the City of Cape Girardeau, Chamber of Commerce, Convention and Visitor’s Bureau and the Old Town Cape, Inc. websites to ensure that all event information is centrally located. Creating a comprehensive list of activities through an “Old Town Cape District Community Calendar” provides visitors and residents with comprehensive information. Include links on all official Cape Girardeau sites.

Strategy: Enhance the visual layout and navigability of the current Old Town Cape, Inc. website. Make the website easy to use and navigate.

Strategy: Provide downloadable versions of all of Cape Girardeau’s brochures in PDF format.



Existing Marketing Brochures for Cape Girardeau

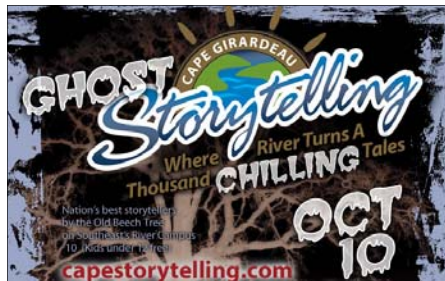
Strategy: Tag all possible keywords for internet search related queries.

- Cape Girardeau
- The Old Town Cape District
- Riverfront
- Entertainment
- Missouri
- Shopping
- Southeast Missouri State University

Strategy: Through the Old Town Cape, Inc. website and the Old Town Cape District Community Calendar create descriptions of annual events. The annual events are included in the Cape Girardeau Visitors Guide, but expanding upon this brochure through the website allows both visitors and residents to learn more about special events in Cape Girardeau.

Strategy: Publicize and promote special events and expand on the information that the *Cape Girardeau Brochure* includes by providing pictures and descriptions of such special events as:

- Storytelling Festival
- Ghost Storytelling Festival
- Tunes of Twilight
- Other events located in The Old Town Cape District.



Ghost Storytelling Festival

Strategy: Modify Old Town Cape, Inc. website to include content that would interest students. Use Facebook, YouTube and MySpace pages to promote The Old Town Cape District. These communication avenues would be good choices for communicating with Southeast Missouri State University students. In addition, adding a student blogger on the Old Town Cape, Inc. website about events in The Old Town Cape District would increase student interest.

OBJECTIVE 4: *Increase the number of shoppers, diners and visitors to The Old Town Cape District.*

GOAL: *Increase awareness of what products and services are available in The Old Town Cape District.*

Target Markets: *Cape Girardeau residents, regional residents, & Southeast Missouri State University students*

Strategy: Informing residents of new dining and shopping opportunities in The Old Town Cape District is important. The Old Town Cape, Inc. newsletter is an effective way to accomplish this goal. The community newsletter is mailed primarily to Downtown merchants. The Old Town Cape, Inc. budget should allow for mailing the newsletter to the greater Cape Girardeau community, at least on a quarterly basis.

The newsletter should be available at the Southeast Missouri State University campus, retail locations in Cape Girardeau and The Old Town Cape District. It should also be available in the form of an e-newsletter. The newsletter can be linked on the Old Town Cape, Inc. website.

Create a listserv or e-mail listing in order to distribute the e-newsletter. This will also allow for updates of new restaurants, retail locations, upcoming events, etc.

Strategy: Develop a stronger presence on the Southeast Missouri State University campus through special discounts for students at Old Town Cape District shops. Also place ads in the school newspaper and work with the campus editor to investigate the possibility of designating a beat reporter for The Old Town Cape District.



Southeast Missouri State University Campus

Provide information/gift bags to visiting athletic teams, performers, professors, etc. Finally, have special goody bags for freshmen students at registration featuring gifts and coupons to Old Town Cape District shops.

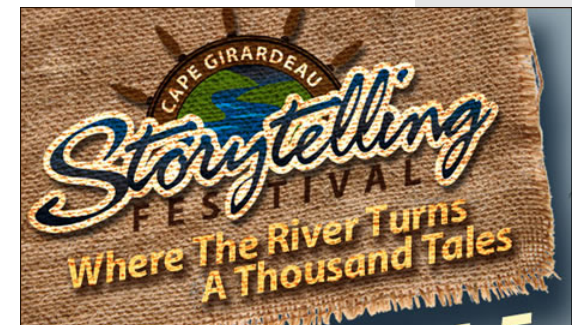
Strategy: Increase outside advertising for The Old Town Cape District. Advertising should be consistent and each ad should build on impressions made by previous ads. Ad campaigns that coincide with planned newsletter delivery or a campaign that is coordinated with the special events of The Old Town Cape District will foster more recognition within the target audience.

Consider different media alternatives to deliver the message. Advertise to local areas (Carbondale, IL; Sikeston, MO; Paducah, KY, Springfield, MO and St. Louis, MO) with billboard campaigns along Interstate 55.

Use print and digital media in select markets such as Indianapolis, Memphis, St. Louis. Identify cultural events in these markets which attract visitors who would be attracted to cultural events in Cape Girardeau, especially any events related to arts and culture.

This type of marketing is also encouraged in the neighboring cities in the tri-state area. Taking such creative marketing efforts is a way to get instant and widespread recognition in regional and national markets.

Strategy: Marketing efforts should build on the success of previous events. The Storytelling Festival of 2008 is a good example. A spinoff of this event is the Ghost Storytelling that occurs in October. When promoting these events, consider using creative and new venues to inform the public. Impromptu sketches or storytelling events that happen in large crowds and spur-of-the-moment sketches at other events in The Old Town Cape District are viable methods for increasing exposure.



Storytelling Festival

GOAL: Create a list of the “Top 10 Things to Do in Old Town Cape Girardeau.” The Top 10 Things to Do should be updated annually and released prior to the Storytelling Festival.

Target Markets: Local & Regional residents and Southeast Missouri State University students

Strategy: Creating a guide to illustrate previous visitors’ and residents’ favorite things to do can provide a useful guide to see all of The Old Town Cape District. Include testimonials if possible. Not only will this allow tourists and visitors to identify with others who find The Old Town Cape District an appealing tourism destination, but this also encourages residents to be tourists in their own city.

Coupling this document with the “Shop Downtown... Shop Old Town Cape” provides exposure for reasons to visit and shop in The Old Town Cape District.

GOAL: Create Customer Appreciation for residents and Southeast Missouri State University students.

Target Markets: Local residents, Southeast Missouri State University students

Strategy: Resident Appreciation

Implement a Resident Appreciation Week that offers specials and discounts to Old Town Cape residents. With a proof of residency within Old Town Cape District, residents will receive discounts to Old Town Cape District restaurants and retail stores. Host special events such as Wine Tastings, discounts on Christmas Trees or Pumpkins (if held during Holidays), discounted tickets to local plays or music events, discounted admission to local museums, and reduced rates at bed and breakfasts in The Old Town Cape District.

Strategy: Student Stroll

On a monthly basis hold a “Student Stroll,” where with the proof of a college ID. Southeast Missouri State University students receive special discounts at Old Town Cape District restaurants. Retail locations can also offer 10 percent discounts with a minimum purchase. This will bring students to The Old Town Cape District and expose them to local shops, retail, restaurants and attractions.

GOAL: Position The Old Town Cape District as a unique shopping experience in the minds of local and regional residents.

Target Markets: Cape Girardeau residents, customers within a 50-mile radius of The Old Town Cape District, and Southeast Missouri State University students

Strategy: Reinforcing the idea that The Old Town Cape District is an exciting place to visit and shop is important to help reinforce its identity. Marketing the area as a place that has something for all target markets including workers, college students and residents, is important in enticing these groups to visit The Old Town Cape District.



Bellevue Bed & Breakfast

Strategy: Promote The Old Town Cape District for what it is not - it is not like shopping at the mall, strip mall or chain store.

Market The Old Town Cape District as a boutique and unique shopping experience. It is important to market the area by showing customers the special and unique experiences that are only available in The Old Town Cape District.



Retail Stores in Riverfront Area.

Strategy: Allow licensed street vendors/performers in the Riverfront area of The Old Town Cape District; including magicians, jugglers, caricature artists, musicians and food vendors. Start with only allowing them on certain days, such as Friday evenings and Saturdays or during special events. Also, limit the number of vendors who are allowed on particular days; and make sure they actually show up for the days and hours they are licensed to be there. The vendors can pay a set fee for the privilege of performing in The Old Town Cape District. There will

need to be a set of guidelines governing their appearance, general conduct, and performances that are allowed. Everything should be acceptable for family audiences. The street entertainers reinforce the concept of The Old Town Cape District as a place of excitement and energy.

GOAL: *Extend shopping hours in The Old Town Cape District.*

Target Markets: *Old Town Cape District business owners, local and regional residents, Southeast Missouri State University students*

Strategy: The Old Town Cape District should encourage businesses to extend store hours. Extending store hours creates an atmosphere that promotes shopping after work. Develop incentives to encourage businesses to stay open a certain number of evenings.

One incentive could be extra ads and promotions in the newsletter and on the website, featuring businesses that are open longer.

Strategy: Start with extending hours for special nights, such as First Fridays (throughout the summer). Discounts and special sales should be offered by local businesses. Sections of the streets could be closed off and area restaurants could offer seasonal outdoor dining in the street for a unique dining experience. This can be extended into First Friday Arts, placing emphasis on retail, restaurants and art.

GOAL: *Ensure that Downtown shoppers and visitors know what shops are in The Old Town Cape District that would be of particular interest to them.*

Target Markets: *Visitors to The Old Town Cape District*

Strategy: This goal can be accomplished by promoting and marketing The Old Town Cape District with the resources currently in place as well as the enhanced website with retail and restaurant directories. The newsletter and e-newsletter are also ways to inform the public about new retail establishments, businesses, and extended hours.

GOAL: *Increase the number of day-trip visitors to The Old Town Cape District.*

Target Markets: *Regional residents*

Strategy: Use mailers, billboards and newspaper ads in markets within a 50-mile radius to convey the Old Town Cape District experience. This would be a particularly good market to target for promotion of some of the smaller events such as Second Saturday Trade Days, Ghost Storytelling, Christmas in The Old Town Cape District, and Tunes at Twilight.

Strategy: Build upon local events at Southeast Missouri State University, and other local Cape Girardeau events, to draw parents, alumni, and visitors to The Old Town Cape District before and after such events. Retailers and restaurants could offer discounts and special promotions.

- SEMO District Fair
- Family Weekend at SEMO
- River City Music Festival
- Cape Girardeau Comic Con
- Libertyfest
- Trail of Tears Triathlon
- Christmas Parade of Lights

GOAL: *Increase the number of overnight visitors.*

Target Markets: *Visitors from metro areas within a four-hour drive from the Old Town Cape District*

Strategy: The Convention and Visitors Bureau has already produced an excellent marketing DVD—“Come Explore Cape Girardeau, Missouri.” The DVD is a prime tool for soliciting conventions and tour groups. It should also be made available via the Old Town Cape, Inc. website as a resource for tourists thinking about visiting Cape Girardeau.



River City Music Festival



SEMO District Fair



Libertyfest

Strategy: Cape Girardeau is located within easy driving distance (a half day drive or less) from St. Louis as well as Springfield, MO; Nashville, TN; Memphis, TN; and Evansville, IN. For major events, promotional campaigns that target these cities would be advisable. The campaigns should definitely include news releases to newspapers in those cities and their suburbs. The releases should be pitched directly to travel and entertainment editors/reporters. The releases can also be sent to the managing editors and posted in the travel/entertainment section of the paper. In addition, targeting specific individuals in those areas would also be successful.

Strategy: Create “recommended” two and three-day tour packages including approximate costs for all points of interest on the tour. The packages can also include stays at specific B&Bs or hotels, and dinner at restaurants. Offer discounts on the packages. Make

the purchase of these packages available around special events. These packages should be available from the Old Town Cape, Inc. website.

Strategy: Create an interactive section on the Old Town Cape, Inc. website that allows people “design your own tour.” The site would offer different activity options, point-of-interest options (broken into categories), different dining options (again broken into categories), varying distances, accommodations options, etc. For instance, someone could specify that they wanted to stay at a B&B, would like to visit historic sites within a 15-mile radius, eat at an Italian restaurant, walk/bike along a trail, and end with a concert.

The tour itinerary could then be printed out. This would be a good way to promote to both locals and tourists, the variety of activities that are available in Cape Girardeau. Students and locals might also want to use this resource when they have visitors.



Heroes and Legends Air Festival



Cape River Heritage Museum



St. Vincent De Paul Church

OBJECTIVE 5: Promote a positive perception of The Old Town Cape District in the minds of local and regional residents and Southeast Missouri State University Students.

GOAL: Establish the identity of Downtown as The Old Town Cape District in the minds of local residents, and consequently increase its image as a vibrant and exciting neighborhood.

Target Markets: Cape Girardeau and area residents, Southeast Missouri State University Students

Strategy: Begin a communication campaign that always refers to Cape Girardeau's historic Downtown area as The Old Town Cape District. Stress the historic richness of the area. Use the newsletter, newspaper, ads, talk-radio interviews and billboards to promote Cape Girardeau as a destination. Always referring to the area as The Old Town Cape District enables future promotions of the area to build on previous impressions.

GOAL: Increase the awareness of the positive progress and beautification accomplishments that have occurred. Also increase the awareness of improvements that are planned for The Old Town Cape District.

Target Markets: Cape Girardeau and area residents, Old Town Cape District business owners

Strategy: By creating a section on the Old Town Cape, Inc. website that highlights plans and improvements for The Old Town Cape District, regular and ongoing communication can be achieved informing the public of completed projects, those that are under construction and projects that are in the early

development stages. This section of the Old Town Cape website can also contain information on beautification and sustainable "green" efforts of The Old Town Cape District.

GOAL: Improve the appearance and appeal of Old Town Cape District businesses and buildings.

Target Markets: Old Town Cape District business and building owners

Strategy: Encourage businesses to add flower boxes, paint facades, and make window-display improvements. By implementing these minor improvements the area becomes more inviting to residents and consumers. Encourage businesses to decorate stores for the holiday season. Make business owners aware of facade improvement programs and other financial assistance available for building improvements.

Strategy: Work with shop owners to help them improve their presentation of merchandise in their shop windows and shops. Currently, the appearances of many Downtown shop windows are cluttered or unkempt. It is also important to remind shop owners of the importance of maintaining an attractive presentation of their merchandise if they are going to be competitive with other businesses. Ultimately, an attractive presentation can dramatically affect a business' bottom line.

Strategy: Fill vacant store fronts with local art and signage promoting Downtown or other stores window displays. If storefronts remain vacant, make sure they are maintained.



Example of Artists' Work Displayed in Empty Storefronts

Strategy: Maintain upper floor windows. Some second-story windows are unattractive, have broken windows or are boarded up. This gives the impression of an area that is in a stage of deterioration. The area appears more vital, healthier and safer when windows on the upper-floors are repaired and are well-maintained.

Strategy: Start contests for the most attractive shop window to encourage Old Town Cape District businesses to improve window displays. These contests and judging could be kept strictly within the business community, or visitors to the Old Town Cape District could become involved in voting for their favorite shop window. The latter would be especially appropriate during the Christmas Season. The contests could be

based strictly on appearance, or they could also be theme based, which would be most appropriate around certain holidays and seasons.



Examples of Storefronts Decorated for Christmas

Involving stakeholders in the decoration of these window displays is a way of including the local citizens in the development and beautification of The Old Town Cape District.

OBJECTIVE 6: Increase the business and retail development in The Old Town Cape District and take steps to ensure longevity.

GOAL: Increase education and available resources to current and new business owners.

Target Markets: Old Town Cape District businesses

Strategy: An educational component for Downtown business owners would encourage development of business skills necessary for the establishment of successful businesses; designing a lecture series or series of seminars that provide the skills and knowledge for local business owners to streamline business processes, would be particularly beneficial for area businesses.

Enhance the working relationship with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Southeast Missouri State University. Encourage business owners to participate in the training events offered by SBDC.

Strategy: Identify the current needs and desires of the customer base (visitors, local and regional residents, and Southeast Missouri State University students). Extending business hours is an easy way to accommodate more customers and the schedules of dual-income households. Coordinating business hours with special events will increase foot traffic into the stores.

Strategy: Create a cooperative effort to advertise and market the local businesses, retailers, and restaurants. This is a cost-effective approach that will both promote The Old Town Cape District and, at the same time, draw special attention to the businesses. Clustering mailing promotions among a variety of stores located within a concentrated area will allow more businesses to capitalize on marketing efforts. Working with the Downtown retailers to advertise The Old Town Cape District as a special retail experience creates a unified effort that will increase the awareness of the area.

OBJECTIVE 7: Increase the residential population in the Old Town Cape area.

GOAL: Increase awareness of housing opportunities in Old Town Cape.

Target Markets: Cape Girardeau and area residents, historic-homes enthusiasts

Strategy: Produce articles and news releases about the conversion of Old Town Cape buildings to residential units. Also, prepare and publish articles about the renovations of some of the historic, single-family homes in Old Town Cape. Photos of these conversions should be included to visually support the articles. Pitch these stories to local papers, real estate magazines, radio talk shows, and local news programs. To reach people who may be interested in restoring historic buildings, distribute these stories to national magazines that appeal to that market.



Existing Retail in The Old Town Cape District

GOAL: Increase the 24 hour population.

Target Markets: Baby Boomers, Retirees, Young Professionals, University Staff

Strategy: Increase the number of available housing units in the Downtown area. Many baby boomers and young professionals are looking for alternative housing that provides an urban feel. These housing options are located within the Downtown and are within walking distance of shopping, dining and entertainment opportunities. Highlight the ways in which Old Town Cape living meets the life style needs of retirees and young professionals. Include testimonials from individuals that live in the area and consider the idea of housing tours to increase awareness of housing in Old Town Cape.



"Live the River" at Mississippi Riverfront Downtown Lofts

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APPENDIX

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SWOT Analysis

A SWOT (Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis is a highly effective way of identifying Strengths and Weaknesses (of existing conditions) and the Opportunities and Threats (of future conditions) which may be present or emerge within any given community. Carrying out this type of analysis will assist an entity in capitalizing on its strengths and opportunities and on focusing needed attention on those areas requiring improvement.

The sponsors of the DREAM Initiative have long recognized the benefits that can be derived from a community's willingness to identify and address features, both physical and psychological, that may hinder its progress. As part of the analysis process that was conducted for Downtown Cape Girardeau, the consultants and local leaders facilitated a series of Focus Group Meetings with representative groups from the Downtown community; they conducted a Key Business Stakeholder Meeting, performed a variety of user surveys of area residents; met with individual business owners; and conducted on-site visits of Downtown. The summary of the analysis is listed below as strengths, weaknesses, opportunities or threats of Downtown Cape Girardeau. The summary is listed on the following page.

Old Town Cape District SWOT Analysis:

The DREAM Initiative has facilitated Focus Groups Meetings, a Key Business Stakeholder Meeting, and on-site visits. The summary of the SWOT Analysis is listed below:

Strengths

- Downtown Cape has a large stock of historic and architecturally significant buildings.
- Downtown Cape has an existing streetscape throughout the Riverfront, Broadway and Good Hope Districts.
- Downtown has a thriving art community with galleries and special events geared towards the art world.
- Throughout the Riverfront Area there are a dozen murals located along the flood wall.
- The Convention and Visitors Bureaus has a variety of visitor guides, brochures and marketing material related to Old Town Cape and the City of Cape Girardeau.
- The Old Town Cape District has a strong retail base and destination type shopping options.
- The Old Town Cape District has several special community events throughout the year.
- The Old Town Cape District has several entertainment option.

Weaknesses

- The City of Cape Girardeau website is hard to navigate.
- Areas within The Old Town Cape District are perceived to have safety issues.
- There are an abundance of vacant buildings and storefronts.
- There is a high turnover rate of downtown businesses.
- Storefronts are cluttered and unkempt.
- Second-story windows are boarded-up and appear deteriorated.
- Many businesses in the district keep inconvenient business hours.
- Businesses are closed on Sundays.
- The Old Town Cape District is not properly marketed.
- Businesses in Old Town Cape have poor advertising.
- There are no public restrooms in The Old Town Cape District.
- The Old Town Cape District is poorly lit.
- There is not enough signage about attractions in The Old Town Cape District.
- The Old Town Cape District lacks a specific identity.
- The Visitor Center is hard to identify in The Old Town Cape District.
- Safety in The Old Town Cape District is an issue.
- The Riverfront is underutilized.

Opportunities

- There is a great opportunity to enhance the Riverfront.
- The creation of bike trails throughout The Old Town Cape District can benefit business and residents.
- A stronger presence of Southeast Missouri State University can benefit both Downtown and the University.
- There is a chance to create cohesive streetscape and wayfinding systems to establish a consistent look and feel to The Old Town Cape District.
- Residential expansion will be effectively encouraged throughout the Good Hope area.
- Increasing the 24 hour population in The Old Town Cape District will bring a vitality to the area.
- Continued beautification of The Old Town Cape District will be a priority.
- An increase in the amount of green space can be effectively incorporated into the area.
- The amount of recreation space can increase.
- The wayfinding and signage systems can improve.
- There can be increased community advertising and marketing opportunities.
- Old Town Cape can create a niche shopping experience and atmosphere.
- A special Business District that includes all of The Old Town Cape District can create a new identity.
- A Facade Incentive Program can enhance the aesthetic qualities and experiences of The Old Town Cape District.
- A one stop shop program for those attempting to get building permits can be created.
- The area's image as a tourist destination will increase.
- The Old Town Cape District can become a destination.
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Threats

- Residents will continue to shop for luxury items outside the area.
- There is a possibility of the loss of businesses in The Old Town Cape District.
- A lack of Public Transportation options will exist.
- Safety will continue to be a concern.
- Difficulty redeveloping Downtown buildings will persist.
- Difficulty financing individual projects due to a declining Downtown area.
- Redevelopment will drive an increased cost of living.
- The demolition of historic and significant buildings can continue if the Downtown loses commerce, further deteriorating the identity of the city.
- A lack of diversity will continue.
- A tax of a Special Business District could be imposed.
- A lack of direction with zoning will continue to fragment the area.