

SANDWICH BUSINESS GROUP

MINUTES

April 6, 2009

ATTENDING: Ben Adriance, Gunnar Berg, Don Brown, Patsy Carega, Susan Davies, Julie Deak, Diane Johnson, Eric Johnson, Janina Lamb, Susan Larakis, Bob MacArthur, Don Sutton, Peter Van Winkle, Sarah Zucarelli

Chairman Don Brown called the meeting to order at 8: 40 a.m. at Mocha Rizing.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the March 2, 2009 meeting were approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Membership dues are coming in with 19 members investing in enhanced web sites. We have 65 members this year. We lost 8 and gained 9. Our balance as of April 6, 2009 is \$7,684.12. The Treasurer's report was approved.

MARKETING COMMITTEE UPDATE

2009 Discover Sandwich Brochure

Janina Lamb and Don Sutton reported on the status of the brochure. Janina has all the current content, and she has been given some pictures. After discussion we agreed to:

Print two different versions, one with open back for mass mailings and one with copy.

Use the olive color this year.

Don will post a PDF of the final proof on the SBG web site. We will print 25,000 brochures in mid-April with delivery in early May. As agreed earlier we will send 8,000 to six area towns via bulk mail.

Advertising

Best Read Guide will offer same rates as last year at \$165/mo for four months. Brochures will be distributed through four north bound rest areas (Canterbury, Hooksett North, Seabrook and Salem) at a cost of \$33-45 for all four for the year.

The cost of our ad in the BRG last year was \$1,560 for ½ page, which meant participating businesses paid \$142 to participate in the ad. Don thinks that the lower distribution cost is related to us taking out an ad. This year only four businesses have responded to date with interest in participating. If we had five we could do ¼ page = \$995. A \$250 contribution from SBG is not budgeted. After discussion, we agreed to go forward with a ¼ page ad and SBG to contribute up to \$300.

Ossipee Chamber Guide. Last year we did a group ad that cost us \$30+. Don will gather more information and bring this back to us with more information.

Posner Audio Guide

Richard and Marion Posner have confirmed their plans to produce and disseminate an Audio Guide of Sandwich that includes descriptions of businesses “as we pass them by.” There is a two-tier cost to advertise. A 15-second slot will cost \$75 and a more detailed spot (up to 30 seconds) will cost \$150. The Posner’s need to hear from interested businesses by email in the next 10 days.

OLD BUSINESS

March’s Second Cup conversation identified issues important to the business community in the development of the next Town Master Plan. Because of the snow storm fewer people than normal attended. The discussion surfaced the following priorities of those in attendance:

Broad band internet

Parking in town

Sewer’s ability to sustain future growth

Zoning regulations

Could historic district examine guidelines for alternative energy?

NEXT MEETING

The next SBG meeting will be May 4, 2009 at 8:30 a.m. at Mocha Rizing.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:38 a.m.

Bob MacArthur facilitated a Second Cup Conversation on web site design and maintenance. (Notes appended)

Respectfully Submitted,

Bob MacArthur

Notes from the Second Cup Conversation: April 6, 2009

Web Site Design and Maintenance

Participating: Ben Adriance, Don Brown, Gunnar Berg, Susan Davies, Julie Deak, Diane Johnson, Eric Johnson, Bob MacArthur, Peggy Merritt, Don Sutton

What is the purpose of your site?

Answering that first is important. Brochure, sales, multiple reasons.

Gunnar: The index page is more key than keywords and metatags. Name the image on your index page.

Don S: compelling content that changes weekly would be what I understand as the index page.

How to increase traffic to your site?

External links, blogs, compelling content, think in terms of your potential customer and have that word on the home page; get to the Google results page and look at the paid sponsors that are there. Create a comment section that lists the various search terms;

Do Google ads work?

Yes. You get charged per click up to a limit that you determine, and then the ad is removed. Some key words are more expensive than others. Is it realistic for Sandwich businesses to do this?

How much time are people willing to read?

Very little. Pertinent text with clear links and contact info is the most effective approach.

How can I set up a page on the SBG site?

After Don completes the brochure he will turn to helping web pages; he used Go Daddy to get it on the web. Judi Dunlap and Diane Johnson's sites are examples (see www.radunlapexcavation.com and www.softtouchfarm.com). Gunnar suggested that people who do not have a domain or do not want to mess with it could use the Discover Sandwich site to host. Don B: does the presence of more pages on the Discover Sandwich site increase our connectivity? Probably yes.

Who does web sites and how do you select someone?

Look at: web sites they've done; cost; software that they use. SBG uses Netfusion. Eric: Dreamweaver is #1 professional use of software. Jumbala and .Net are others. Check references; some vendors are great designers but do not provide good service. Will they come to your place of business to understand your business? We identified these resources.

Eric Johnson.

Look at various chambers to see the web designers.

Web sites of local businesses.

You need a good relationship with your designer.

Mountain Brook Designs – Sanbornton

People who advertise on Tamworth exchange.

Google web designers in the Lakes Region.

Use your own site or others'?

Explore the use of SBG, Home Industries or the association site that you belong to.

On line sales?

For Go Daddy and other sites you need to make sure your domain name in order to do e-commerce. People on ETSY will find your site if they have already been there. Once you go on line you may find yourself with more sales than you can deliver.

Next Second Cup Conversation: May 4th: 9:30-10:30. Topic: Blogs, social networks and e-newsletters