

# Town of Sackville

Marketing Strategy – FINAL

July 6, 2020



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## Town of Sackville Overview

The Town of Sackville: home of the Mounties, beautiful sweeping views and a vibrant arts and culture scene. A great place to live and to go to school. A Town that has so much to offer.

Located on traditional Mi'kmaq land, settled in 1708, and incorporated in 1903, Sackville serves as a gateway to Nova Scotia and the Tantramar Marshes. Often referred to as the Happy Heart of the Maritimes, Sackville's central location, with convenient access to the Trans-Canada Highway and proximity to the largest city in New Brunswick (Moncton), the ocean, beaches, lake, an international airport and train station make it an attractive hub for visitors and businesses alike. A friendly, walkable town dotted with specialty shops, cafés, pubs and a diverse range of culinary options, Sackville offers its residents and visitors an array of recreational, cultural and educational opportunities.

Sackville is a university town offering rich and diverse arts and cultural resources, including Mount Allison University's gallery, theatre, and noted fine arts and music programs. Established in 1843, Mount Allison has consistently been ranked the best primarily undergraduate university in Canada by Maclean's Magazine and remains an important influence on Sackville's continued development. Sackville is also home to internationally renowned music festival SappyFest, a film society, lively blues, independent music, and theatre scenes, and various art galleries.



## Context

As part of its strategic plan, the Town of Sackville has partnered with Portfolio to develop a Marketing Plan that will identify the Town's positioning and provide guidance for marketing initiatives and interactions with the public.

The process to develop this Plan includes an audit of the Town's current brand and all associated branding material and assets, a review of best practices, community engagement and consultation and will be expected to give strategic direction on:

- Investment Attraction
- Tourism
- Corporate
- Resident Attraction
- Town Values

The resulting plan needs to be realistic and achievable, aligned with existing assets and priorities and designed with clear tactics and execution plans that will facilitate effective implementation and continued engagement throughout the 5 years of the Plan.

## Methodology

### Phase 1 – Discovery: Onboarding and Research (October 28 – December 4, 2019)

1. Review of existing marketing material from the Town of Sackville
2. Discovery session with members of the Town of Sackville internal team
3. Discovery session with Town Council
4. Review of marketing assets for comparable Towns across North America

The Discovery phase included facilitated workshops with the members of the Town of Sackville's internal team as well as the Town Council to dive deep into the planning of how the marketing plan will help the Town build and grow. These sessions were designed to help solidify key details including:

Goals/Objectives Assessment	Functionality/ Organizational Assessment	Town Assessment	Opportunities/ Challenge Assessment
- Ensure clarity of goals and objectives throughout the Town's internal team and Council	- Is the Town delivering on its mandate and "brand" promise?  - What do stakeholders think (i.e. employees,	- Is the Town delivering on expectations (internal and external stakeholders)?	- What are the opportunities and challenges?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure clarity of mission/ vision of the Town</li> <li>- Ensure reasonable expectations of goals/ objectives and timeline to achieve</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>residents, businesses, students, visitors)?</li> <li>- What branding/tools/image is currently being used to market the Town?</li> <li>- What's working and what's not working?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What is the Town doing in terms of communications, as per the Strategic Plan?</li> <li>- What other towns do you compare yourselves to? Aspire to be like?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What ones connect with objectives/goals?</li> <li>- What are low-hanging objectives? Medium term? Long term?</li> <li>- Have you identified all key challenges? Do you have plans to address those?</li> </ul>
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The key for the Discovery to be successful was to find truth (in where we are and where we want to go) and then use that truth to build a Marketing Plan that will transform the Town into the growing, sustainable community we desire.

*For the complete Discovery Report, see Appendix A.*

## Phase 2 – Stakeholder Engagement (December 4, 2019 – January 15, 2020)

### Key Stakeholder Interviews:

Portfolio conducted 12 one-on-one telephone interviews with key stakeholders, including:

- Business owners;
- Representatives of the University, including members of the Mount Allison Marketing team;
- Investors; and
- Representatives of Community Organizations.

The goal of the stakeholder interviews was to gather information on the opportunities and challenges the Town has in terms of marketing. These conversations included questions such as:

1. What are the Town of Sackville's biggest selling points?
2. What would you like Marketing to achieve for the Town of Sackville?
3. What type of business makes sense in Sackville?



4. What channels do you think would work best to promote the Town of Sackville?

*For the complete Stakeholder Interview Questionnaire, see Appendix B.*



**World Café Session:**

To complete the Stakeholder Engagement piece of building the Marketing Strategy, Portfolio conducted a World Café session that was open to the public. The session was attended by approximately 25 people and focused on 3 important conversations:

1. Why Sackville?

- What attracted you to live in the Town of Sackville?
- What are the Town's biggest selling points?

2. The Town is talking about attracting more businesses and more people...

- Is that what you want?
- Why is that important to Sackville?
- How do you think we should attract more people or businesses?
- What's the one thing we would need to change to successfully attract more people and more businesses?

3. Sackville is home to Canada's #1 Undergraduate University, Mount Allison University...

- Why is Sackville better than other small university towns?
- What's our unique selling proposition?
- How can the relationship between the University and the town be further enhanced/improved?

*For the notes summarizing the input gathered at the World Café Session, see Appendix C.*

### Phase 3 – Strategy Development (January 15 – April 6, 2020)

Based on the stakeholder engagement and discovery phases, Portfolio is now equipped to develop a strategic blueprint of action which includes:

- Clear and actionable recommendations and tactics of Marketing priorities, opportunities and initiatives, including the scope of resources required to implement, timelines and distinct and quantifiable measures of success and key performance indicators;
- Direction on whether or not new branding is necessary and if so, what that branding should be;
- The creation of a final universal logo and various target market tag-lines;
- The identification of potential partnerships with private sector, regional tourism development organizations, senior government ministries and educational institutions; and
- A plan to leverage existing resources to build capacity.

## Stakeholder Generated SWOT Analysis

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location – regional hub potential as Sackville is in the middle of it all</li> <li>• Mount Allison University – offers a lot to the community in terms of sports and cultural opportunities, students add to the local economy and diversity</li> <li>• Arts and culture - cultural crossroads of the Maritimes, more museums than stop lights, a lot of history, live music</li> <li>• Natural landscape</li> <li>• Welcoming – feels like home, close-knit community, safe, happy heart of the Maritimes, where you belong, inclusive</li> <li>• Small town feel</li> <li>• Walkability</li> <li>• Affordability</li> <li>• Beauty and Nature - Beautiful place to live, nature, relaxing</li> <li>• Safe</li> <li>• Community connectivity – volunteer culture, back social causes</li> <li>• Diversity - diversity in ethnicity and activities offered, something for everyone</li> <li>• Schools, hospital, services</li> <li>• Family - A great place to grow up and raise a family, a great place to retire, see your future here</li> </ul>	<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No clear positioning statement – Stakeholders had difficulty answering the question “How would you describe Sackville?”, Mt A survey showed there wasn’t a clear understanding of what Sackville is</li> <li>• Blended community (rural, new urban and University) that is not all on the same page</li> <li>• Lack of diversity - old fashioned, conservative, sometimes too elitist</li> <li>• Business doesn’t have a voice or support – there is no longer a Chamber (may be coming back as a Chapter of the Moncton Chamber)</li> <li>• Financial – the Province doesn’t pay their fair share for the buildings the university has in town</li> <li>• No sense of belonging for students and new citizens</li> <li>• Lack of entrepreneurs</li> </ul>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better communication between Town and University</li> <li>• Economic development roundtable</li> <li>• Segment targeting for new business</li> <li>• Supply/support businesses in Moncton/Amherst</li> <li>• Non-retail business opportunities – co-working spaces, work from home, link different</li> </ul>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surrounded by nature but flooding always a threat – climate change</li> <li>• Provincial economy and outlook for it</li> <li>• History - citizens that hold onto the history and are anti-change</li> <li>• Burn out of Town staff and volunteers</li> <li>• Internal conflicts between resident groups</li> <li>• After effects of Covid-19 shut down</li> </ul>



<p>government opportunities as well as private sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Servicing growing senior population</li><li>• Sectors that appeal to students, citizens and visitors for growth – Acadia/Wolfville example</li><li>• Student participation in Town Council – youth council, ex-officio, round table on entrepreneurship, etc.</li></ul>	
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## Audience/Stakeholder Identification

To achieve the Town of Sackville's objectives with this marketing plan, it is necessary to identify its various stakeholders. By properly defining stakeholders and their expectations, we can develop appropriate strategies and tactics to tell the right story to the right people. The key stakeholders for this Marketing Plan are listed below:

### Internal Stakeholders:

Residents	Rural/agriculture + Urban, Volunteers, seniors (55+ is 50% of the population), students at the high school, Seniors Club
Clubs and groups	Rotary Club, sports organizations, art organizations, Social enterprise/ Not for Profit community – The Sackville Commons, Agricultural development
Citizen services	Healthcare, The Drew, Daybreak, Seniors College, Public sector education, Community policing officer, Community education officer (Jessica Hughes)
Business	BIA (Business Improvement Association), Moneris (200 employees), Business owners, Main Street redevelopment
Mount Allison University	Students, faculty, property managers, staff, union, student union

### External Stakeholders:

Potential new residents	Including out of province, within NB, international newcomers, new students and faculty, agricultural immigration.
Visitors	Tourism groups, nature enthusiasts, Canadian and international tourists, parents of students, families visiting for sports and cultural events.

Government	Province, Municipality, Council, Mayor, employees, other regional organizations (e.g. RDMO) to cover the Regional Service Commission and the potential for a Regional Destination Marketing Organization with the Commission and City of Moncton.
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## Discovery and Engagement Results – Main Themes and Target Audiences



### Residents:

The Town of Sackville has a lot going for it. Residents love the small town they call home. The top selling features for the residents include:

- Quality of life – welcoming, friendly, different/slower pace, walkable, advantages of rural and urban - “best of both worlds”
- Arts, music and culture – art galleries, theater, live music, liberal arts flavour
- Educational opportunities - Mount Allison University (#1 undergrad university in Canada), educated population, senior education center, good elementary and high schools

- Location – proximity to fastest growing city in New Brunswick (Moncton), centrally-located in the Maritimes, 30 minutes from an international airport, accessibility to highway, train station
- Nature – water fowl park, beaches, lake, clean and beautiful, environmentally conscious, active
- Access to outdoor activities – cross-country skiing, skating at waterfowl park, hiking, walking
- Freedom – safety, free to pursue what you want to pursue, be who you are, make your own opportunities, self-sustaining
- Diversity/Great mix of people – university students, families, kids, seniors
- Services – town services, snow removal, schools, hospital
- Real estate – affordable, low cost of living, housing market, established, comfortable, prosperous
- Food and drink – restaurants, coffee shops, bars, year-round farmer's market, local farms, seafood
- Lots of things to do – evening activities, socializing, always something to do
- Community connectivity - Community support for start-ups, Sackvillians back causes (refugees, hospital, schools), easy to belong, kids can be part of any activity, social solidarity, strong sense of caring, openness to ideas

The main challenges in promoting the Town to potential residents are the juxtaposition of wanting to grow but also wanting to maintain that small town, community feeling that is inherent to Sackville and the disunion that exists between the three distinct resident groups: rural/agriculture, urban/Educated/hipster and the Mount Allison students/faculty.

#### Growth:

The residents of the Town want to see Sackville prosper but the idea of growth is approached with a “Yes, but...” response. Although residents understand growth is important for Sackville to maintain the level of services and assets they're used to and the opportunities it would bring in terms of an increased tax base, new energy, new skills and new businesses are appealing, residents do not want growth at any cost. They want sustainable growth that maintains the population and preserves what makes the town special. This means:

- No factories or big box stores (keep it Mom & Pop)
- Encourage the attraction of businesses that will enhance the Town
- Protect the heritage, environment/nature and what's unique about Sackville
- Reluctance about bringing businesses that compete with community businesses
- Stick to niche retail/commercial – more niche shopping will attract more traffic/visitors
- Decent jobs - Business/enterprise that aren't highly technical, businesses that can survive in an online world

#### Disunion of Residents:

Many of the stakeholders we spoke with mentioned the challenges of being a blended community. There appears to be three distinct groups of residents: rural, urban and University (students and faculty). These three groups have differing views on what the Town of Sackville stands for and where they want to see it evolve in the future. This disconnect manifests itself in feelings like:

- The relationship between the students and the Town as well as between residents and the University and the Town is not as strong as it could be.
- Not everyone is as warm and welcoming as we make it out to be.
- Some resident groups don't participate in making the Town a better place to live.
- There is a lack of communication between the Town and University.
- The University's top priority is to keep students on campus.
- There is no sense of belonging for students and new citizens.
- Student survey showed there wasn't a clear understanding of what Sackville is.
- As a Town, we are welcoming but also exclusive, diverse but also white and English
- A beautiful façade on the outside but economically depressed, big wealth and employment gap.
- Sometimes too elitist.

In order to position Sackville as a great place to live, there is some internal work required to get everyone on the same page when it comes to "Who we are" and "Why you should live here". The integration of the three resident groups: rural/agriculture, urban/Educated/hipster and Mount Allison students/faculty into one common purpose is integral to ensuring the marketing strategy succeeds.

#### Visitors:



Sackville's central location is perfect to use as a hub for a Maritimes adventure or a nice stopover along the way to Nova Scotia or PEI or, going in the other direction, to Quebec or Ontario. The main attractions that would bring visitors to Sackville are:

- Water Fowl park
- Music/cultural scene – Theater, Art galleries, shows, festivals and events
- University – parents would visit their kids (note there is a lack of accommodations in the Town for visitors to stay overnight)
- Easy to visit, i.e. close to the highway, accidental visitors, genuine and hospitable people, cute walkable small town
- History
- Food - Restaurants, Farmers market, Coffee shops
- Sporting events – hockey tournaments, high school and University sports
- Genealogical visitors – people tracing their family roots

Unfortunately, Sackville does have some challenges when it comes to attracting tourists and visitors. According to stakeholders, the biggest challenges are getting people off the highway and into Town, accommodations and the Visitor Information Center. Some other challenges include:

#### **Challenges Perceived by Stakeholders**

- Visitor Information Center: wasn't on Google Maps, perceived to be in a difficult location (the need to move it to where people can find it, in town, was expressed), the



location and set up isn't perceived to encourage visitors to go downtown, thought to cost the Town a lot of money but many felt no one goes there. Some stakeholders felt no one goes to information centres anymore and referenced New Brunswick's move to close 2 more of its VICs in Spring of 2019.

- Downtown business commitment – A few stakeholders expressed concerns about downtown restaurants closing during June and July and patios not being well-kept. They felt this was not attractive for summer tourists. Further research found only one or two downtown restaurants close during June and July.
- Town's promotional activities to tourists – Several stakeholders voiced their opinion about how the Sackville visitors guide has looked the same for years, a need to change the format and a need to better promote what there is to do in town. One stakeholder felt the Town does too much print and no one takes the brochure whereas another felt this is the best tool for visitors. The Town confirmed that, in fact, the Visitor Information Guide was completely revamped in 2018 and over 15,000 copies are circulated yearly.
- Town has no PR, social media is very event focused and there is minimal investment in internet - Need more photo-based beauty shots of the town, more video clips of the town and what there is to do
- Limited accommodations
- Lovely B&B's in town are hard to find out about, limited rooms
- Explore NB Visitors Guide - NB is no longer printing
- Campus is a no parking, pedestrian campus

With 14,000 cars driving by "exit 506" every day, there is an immense opportunity for increased visitors/tourists in the Town of Sackville.

### **Opportunities**

- Signage: On the 16, there's no sign so everyone stops at the Big Stop, at the exit: "one minute down this road leads you to this... (picture of town)" and directional signage for visitors
- 3-fold visitors guide with a map of downtown, stores and restaurants listed
- Accommodations – year-round writers' accommodations, writing circles, engagement with music and arts
- Mount Allison could be a bigger part of the Sackville tourism destination offering – even more conferences, more options to stay at residences
- Walking tours of arts and history
- Fort Folly – 70 acres of land recently purchased by the First Nations community. They are working on a strategic plan to develop that land.
- Continue to develop Lorne street to expand the downtown core.

### **Businesses:**

The focus for attracting businesses to Sackville is to fill the voids of services and opportunities for residents and students. These could include retail (clothing, shoes, furniture), accommodations for visitors and culture (i.e. more ethnic restaurants and diversity for international students) as well as businesses that will be a good fit and create jobs for residents and contribute to the economy of the town. To strategically assess the business needs in Town, a gap analysis of what's missing is needed. This would provide a plan and evidence to target and attract businesses that make sense. Some ideas brought forth from stakeholders were:

- Distribution companies that would hire larger numbers of employees
  - Stakeholders expressed the industrial park has lots of land and would be a great location for a transportation company.
  - Industrial park could get into attracting food production and distribution.
  - Further research found the industrial park has almost no land available and already has a cranberry processing plant.
- Small business and small enterprise, entrepreneurial, create your own job businesses, Farmer's market allows for food entrepreneurs
- Writers, journalists, bloggers, at-home businesses
- Enterprise and start-up community – could become an incubator for social engagement and social entrepreneurship
- Town has a lot of environmental, non-profit organizations - companies related to wildlife would be a good fit
- Accommodations – for visitors and tourism, with restaurants
- Campgrounds – trailer parks for tourism to focus on natural beauty and location
- Community organizations – NGOs, NFO, Salt Marsh, Fundy Biosphere, 36 indigenous
- Bulk food store/another option for local produce, besides the farmer's market
- Nightlife/Group activities – Many stakeholders felt there was not too much to do at night, after dinner. There are a lot of evening activities during the Mount Allison school year but less during the summer
- Culinary tourism, food innovation from University
- Sappyfest – keep doing it and do even more festivals like it

As was specified above in the residents' response to growth, there are some reservations about what businesses would be welcome and would make sense in Sackville. Besides the parameters listed on page 10, stakeholders noted the following characteristics of the types of businesses that would make sense:

- Pick sectors that appeal to students, citizens and visitors/tourists in summer for growth – Acadia/Wolfville example
- Businesses that collaborate with the University
- Experiential learning opportunities
- Anything that supports/compliments the university
- Academic jobs but not at the University
- Knowledge economy
- Commercial businesses would be the preference

One of the main challenges in promoting Sackville as a great place for businesses is the lack of business voice or support. The development of an organization that can help to attract and support businesses will be important. It would also be beneficial to work with the University to develop entrepreneurial opportunities for students.

### Overall Marketing Feedback:

Throughout the engagement process, we've been able to speak to many different people that make up who Sackville is today. These findings combined with the research we have conducted has led Portfolio to the following overall marketing feedback:

- Most stakeholders had a really hard time when asked "How would you describe Sackville?" Mount Allison's recent survey also showed there wasn't a clear understanding for students of what Sackville is. This clearly demonstrates a lack of cohesion about what the personality of the Town is currently or what it is striving to be.
- The "New kind of small town experience" slogan is viewed by residents and key stakeholders as too abstract and hard to grasp and, as a result, doesn't do the job of defining who Sackville is and getting everyone behind it. Residents can be amazing ambassadors for the Town, if they all are clear on its positioning and have a consistent "elevator pitch". Also, in today's age of social media and digital marketing, a shorter "handle" would be more beneficial in promoting Sackville and creating consistency across all mediums.
- The main communication medium for the Town appears to be the website. Although beautifully presented with lots of great elements, it is a very residential-focused site. The information included is what a municipality would communicate to its citizens, not something that is targeted at potential new residents, investors or tourists. Many municipalities fall into this pattern of talking to themselves and neglecting to market their town to outsiders.

As summarized below, a review of past and current marketing initiatives (Marketing Materials Audit) and a study of other similar-sized towns in the Maritimes and across North America (Environmental Scan) was also conducted as part of this project. All of this information has led us to the conclusion that Sackville has a lot going for it in terms of assets and resources. What's missing is something to tie it all together and define "Who are we?" and "Why should you come here?" and a more targeted marketing approach, rather than trying to "be everything for everybody". The first step will be some internal community engagement work to get everyone on the same page and define a personality for the town that it can deliver on.

Once this positioning is established, stakeholders would like to see Marketing achieve the following for the Town:

- Bring people into town, off the highway, more traffic, be more aggressive with signage on highway

- Increase tourism and create a tourism season
- Generate momentum for the town and the university – build on character and uniqueness
- Promote the town as a food and drink destination - Sackville could be New Brunswick's food town (26 restaurants for a town of only 5,000 people)
- Buy local - encourage citizens to live more of their life in Sackville - grocery shop in town, frequent local businesses
- Bring young families to town
- Guide so everyone becomes a town ambassador and can easily answer "how would you describe Sackville?" and "what's there to do in Sackville?"
- Keep people in the community for a few days
- Attract skilled labour
- "It all starts here" - 1<sup>st</sup> time tourists see the ocean when travelling from QC or ON, first entry to NB from NS and PEI
- Play on "exit 506", which is the NB area code
- Make people aware of what's going on in Sackville
- Attract more smaller businesses

*For the complete summary of the Stakeholder Engagement results, see Appendix D.*

## Impact of Covid-19

Following the completion of the stakeholder engagement phase of the marketing strategy, the world was brought to its knees as the Covid-19 global pandemic changed the way we live, the way we work and interact and the way we do business. This threat remains very real to every community in the world and its impact will be significant and long term.

As strategic solutions providers, Portfolio is committed to helping organizations understand that maintaining long-term sustainability is more important than short-term impact. Thankfully, the Government of Canada and each provincial government has quickly implemented support programs that will bridge these transitioning times.

As it relates to the Town of Sackville, we offer three key areas to consider:

- Maintain open and transparent dialogue with all your stakeholder groups – especially citizens, the University and local businesses.
- It's not too early to begin thinking of the long-term implications of COVID-19 and how our communities, businesses and organizations might emerge from this global crisis even stronger and more sustainable than before.
- Finally, it's paramount that you commit to taking care of yourself and those around you. This is critical to ensuring that you're capable of leading your organization and community through this new reality.

DRAFT

## Marketing Material Audit

When reviewing the marketing material from the town of Sackville we looked at a decades-worth of marketing approaches against the following criteria:

1. What is the material to be used for and is that clear?
  - Is it to educate and inform? Attract business? Attract residents?
2. Is there a clear audience?
3. Does the material match other marketing efforts in the marketplace?
4. Can we tell what content performed the best? Connected best with your audience?

In reviewing the material it's apparent that Sackville has implemented a lot of different marketing approaches over the last 10 years that were "one off" attempts to connect with an audience without full integration into all the marketing channels.

In the last 8 years, the Town of Sackville has used the following different brand/tag approaches:

- Cultural Crossroads
- Taste of Sackville
- Sweet Little Sackville
- Cultural Capital
- Where You Belong
- Simple Be Yourself
- Culturally Inspired, Naturally Beautiful
- LOVE
- A New Kind of Small Town

As well, marketing material has focused on a number of different community elements including:

- Culture and Arts
- Sackville's marsh
- Young people and seniors
- Food

### Audit Results:

#### Material Use

When looking at the collective sample of marketing materials against the first audit question – "What is the material to be used for?" there is a lack of clarity in target audience and purpose with the majority of Sackville's marketing efforts.

Other than event specific marketing, the generic ads for Sackville do not clearly present a clear target audience or marketing intent with the piece. Our research for this project, along with



years of place marketing experience, shows that targeted materials with clear intent delivers the best results for marketing efforts.

To date, Sackville has used a generic marketing approach, hoping to catch people with generic advertisements and marketing efforts as opposed to specific and targeted marketing.

**Recommendation**

Moving forward, it's recommended that Sackville begin to better target material. We have included a flow chart that may help to provide better focus for marketing material development moving forward. In general, Sackville must be able to determine:

- Why are we advertising or initiating this marketing activity?
- Who's the intended audience?
- What's the intended call to action?
- How did the material perform?

As mentioned, in reviewing the materials over the last decade it is difficult to clearly determine the intended audience for the majority of the marketing material. For Sackville, while ensuring consistent brand look and feel to all target segments, the messaging and content needs to be better targeted and focused.

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Marketing material must be targeted, both in terms of audience and intent. The material should have a call to action and should drive targeted segments somewhere to learn more, take action or to connect with someone directly.

In addition to this, we believe that the Town of Sackville should consider developing specific marketing properties targeted to specific stakeholder groups. We recommend dedicated marketing channels for tourist attraction, resident attraction, investment attraction and for the Town and its day-to-day business.

Channels could include:

- Visitsackville.com
- InvestinSackville.com
- MovetoSackville.com

### **Material Consistency**

A key to any successful marketing initiative/campaign is ensuring consistency of that campaign across all channels of communication to all target audiences. This means whatever might appear in print should also be consistent on digital and social channels as well. To ensure that your stakeholders begin to become “aware” of the initiative, it’s important to drive the campaign through all intercept points. For example, if the Town of Sackville were launching a resident attraction campaign for recently retired civil servants from Ottawa there should be a consistency of campaign across;

- Newspaper or magazine (targeted to Ottawa professionals)
- Town of Sackville website (especially <https://sackville.com/explore-sackville/move-here>)
- Town of Sackville Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
- Any links from Province of NB highlighting Sackville
- Town of Sackville tourism site (<https://sackville.com/explore-sackville/visitor-information/>) as most often new residents will be tourists first

Today there is virtually no consistency across channels for the Town of Sackville. While all professionally presented and well done, the look and feel across communications channels is each delivering a different message and different focus. The Town is trying to be everything to everyone. Focus and consistency will help to tie all the elements together.

### **Recommendation**

Upon finalization of the new branding look and feel (based on strategy) Sackville must ensure consistency across all channels. This is the only way a brand position will gain traction and begin to provide real returns on the investment.

### **Measuring Marketing Performance**

Every marketing initiative, online or offline needs to start with concrete goals. SMART goals will ultimately increase the impact of your marketing strategies. For those who may not be familiar, SMART is an acronym for specific, measurable, actionable, relevant, and time-bound. A SMART goal is critical to digital marketing efforts. To properly measure your results, you first need specific, actionable goals to work with.

When defining SMART goals for your campaign, you need to consider the following questions: Will this initiative continue to produce results for me? What is the long-term value of this initiative? Based on the goals and outcome, would I invest in a campaign like this again?

If you cannot come up with goals for a specific effort or campaign type, then you might want to reconsider the investment. Instead, focus your time and your money on a marketing strategy with results that you can quantify.

### **Tracking Your Efforts**

It is critical that you have a plan of action for testing and measuring the success of your marketing efforts. However, there is no cookie-cutter method that will effectively track all of your metrics.

If you want to gain valuable insights into your digital marketing methods, you need to take a close look at each one individually. Below, you'll find a list of the most popular digital marketing practices, and information on how to measure and analyze overall marketing performance.

#### **1. SEO**

Are the time and money you're investing in SEO improvement paying off? One of the most important metrics in search engine optimization is your keyword ranking. The higher you rank with keywords, the more likely your website will show up on the first page of the Google search results.

Another metric to pay attention to is the quality of the traffic you're getting from search engines. How long are users staying on your website? How many pages do they visit in one session?

Google Analytics provides access to this information and then some. If you're targeting the right keywords, you should find that users are browsing for more than 20 seconds. If that is not the case, you may want to try different keywords.

#### **2. Social Media**

There are many metrics to consider when it comes to social media. Pay attention to metrics such as overall engagement each week, new followers, likes, and most popular posts. While social media may not directly contribute to your ROI, it can be a significant source of traffic.

So, how do you measure your growth across these platforms? Many popular social media sites will provide you with analytics for your profiles for free.

Keep in mind that engagement will fluctuate frequently—no matter which social media profiles you choose to use. However, you might find that one post engages 10% of your total followers while another goes “viral” and is well received by a large number of people. Track the posts that do exceedingly well and see if you can uncover a formula to use for future posts.

You can also track how many leads and conversions your social media posts have facilitated. Use a customer lifetime value calculator to find out how much each new lead costs, as well the return on investment.

Overall, social media is a powerful tool to connect with new audiences. While it may be challenging to define the exact ROI for social media posts, this form of marketing will help boost PR efforts and foster a better relationship with target audiences. The type of content that is of interest to each stakeholder group will differ. For example, internal stakeholders (residents, university, clubs, etc.) will want to see what’s happening in Town this weekend, spotlight on local businesses, “pride of place” visuals and ads, community initiatives, etc. Whereas external stakeholders will be targeted through ads that focus on strategic key messages for each group: tourists, potential new businesses, potential new investors, potential new students, etc.

### **3. Email Campaigns**

Although its impending doom has been heralded for years, email is far from dead. Having an email list is essential for any business with an online presence. The more subscribers you have, the more sales you will ultimately make. You can set your own goal for list growth based on the current number of subscribers. Next, track results via the campaign manager on your email deployment software.

Open and click-through rates are another set of metrics you’ll want to monitor. Aiming for a 20% open rate and 2% click-through rate (or higher) is a good goal, but make sure you’re setting the baseline according to industry standards that are similar to your own. A marketing automation platform like [MailChimp](#) will have analytics built in for you to view. If you’re experiencing low opens and clicks, then you might want to try different strategies like using split testing to discover the types of content your audience prefers.

The last factor to consider in email campaigns is how many conversions you’re getting from your list. While a large number of email subscribers is great, if they aren’t converting into sales, then your efforts are missing the mark. Using a marketing automation platform and

linking it with Google Analytics will stop the guesswork by putting actual numbers behind your conversions.

#### **4. The Big Picture**

Now that you've measured and analyzed the results of various digital marketing methods, it's time to take a look at how these methods relate to your ROI. Pulling all the results together will show which marketing campaigns are lucrative and which ones are putting a strain on the company.

#### **5. Search traffic**

Is your SEO strategy working? If 40%-50% of your total website traffic is coming from search engines, the answer is yes. Google Analytics can help you determine how much traffic your website is getting from search engines. It will also give you those numbers for individual pages.

#### **6. Campaign traffic**

Campaigns are one of the most powerful digital marketing tools. They allow customers to continue to engage with your brand over extended periods of time. While you're running a campaign, take a look at how many people are interacting with the campaign and clicking through to your website or landing page.

#### **7. Referral traffic**

Referral traffic is traffic that's directed to your website from somewhere other than a search engine. You'll often find that referral traffic is coming from inbound links or social media posts.

Google Analytics provides information for you on your referral paths to help you identify traffic sources. You can also add [bit.ly](https://bit.ly) links into your social media or campaign posts to assist you in learning exactly where your traffic is coming from.

### **Recommendation**



Build marketing measurement into each targeted campaign to begin to get better insights into what is working, what needs to be revamped/changed and where there is opportunity for growth.

## Ongoing Audits

Moving forward, we recommend the Town of Sackville conduct its own marketing audit every two to three years. The following is an example of the process it can build into the process to ensure consistency of measurement and results.

Here are five steps to help you simplify your marketing audit:

### 1. Create an inventory of marketing assets

Before you can start sifting through your marketing campaigns to figure out what's working for you, it's important to create a complete list of all the marketing efforts you want to analyse during this audit. If you're conducting a comprehensive marketing audit, then you'll need to gather everything, from your email newsletters to your social media announcements, your website to any blog posts about the Town. To keep your work to a minimum, try looking at the assets specifically from the last 6 months or so. This should give you enough data without overwhelming your team.

### 2. Align your audit with your goals

Next, you need a baseline on which you can measure the success of your efforts. In other words, you need to know what you're trying to achieve, and how your marketing campaigns are taking you closer to your targets. Look at your current goals by target audience. For example, for businesses: Do you want to raise more awareness about the businesses that are in town, engage your current businesses owners or attract new businesses? Once you know your goals, you can ask yourself more focused questions throughout the audit, such as:

- How does marketing channel X achieve goal A?
- What is marketing channel X's ROI in line with goal B?
- How can we improve marketing channel X to serve our goals?

### 3. Gather data about your marketing performance

Gather as much information as possible about the marketing you're tracking as part of your audit. Certain channels will come with metrics that are easier to measure than others. For instance:

- To measure social media performance, you can look at likes, shares, engagement, click-through rate and social influence.
- To measure your website performance, you can examine bounce rate, average time on page, conversion rates and click-through rate.

- To measure email marketing, you can track open rates, subscription levels, unsubscribe rates, and click-through.

Look for a way to calculate the return on investment for each of the major marketing channels you want to address with your marketing audit. Remember, new residents or new businesses aren't the only conversions that drive value for the Town. An effective marketing campaign might not drive a lot of new residents, tourists or new businesses, but it could encourage better word of mouth marketing and social presence, which gives you a better brand reach. This will, with time, lead to growth and visits.

#### **4. Compare your results to your goals**

Next, you're ready to determine whether the goals you're getting are sufficient enough to continue your marketing investment or even increase it in a certain area. This part is tricky. It's easy to assume that a marketing campaign that isn't living up to your targets is failing. However, there's also a chance that you could be setting your goals too high. To ensure that you're not unrealistic with your marketing efforts, compare the results of your campaigns with the performance of similar competitors/towns in your space. While you might not be able to track every detail about your competitors, such as their bound rate, you can make some inferences based on the data you take from a competitor analysis.

#### **5. Adapt and optimise**

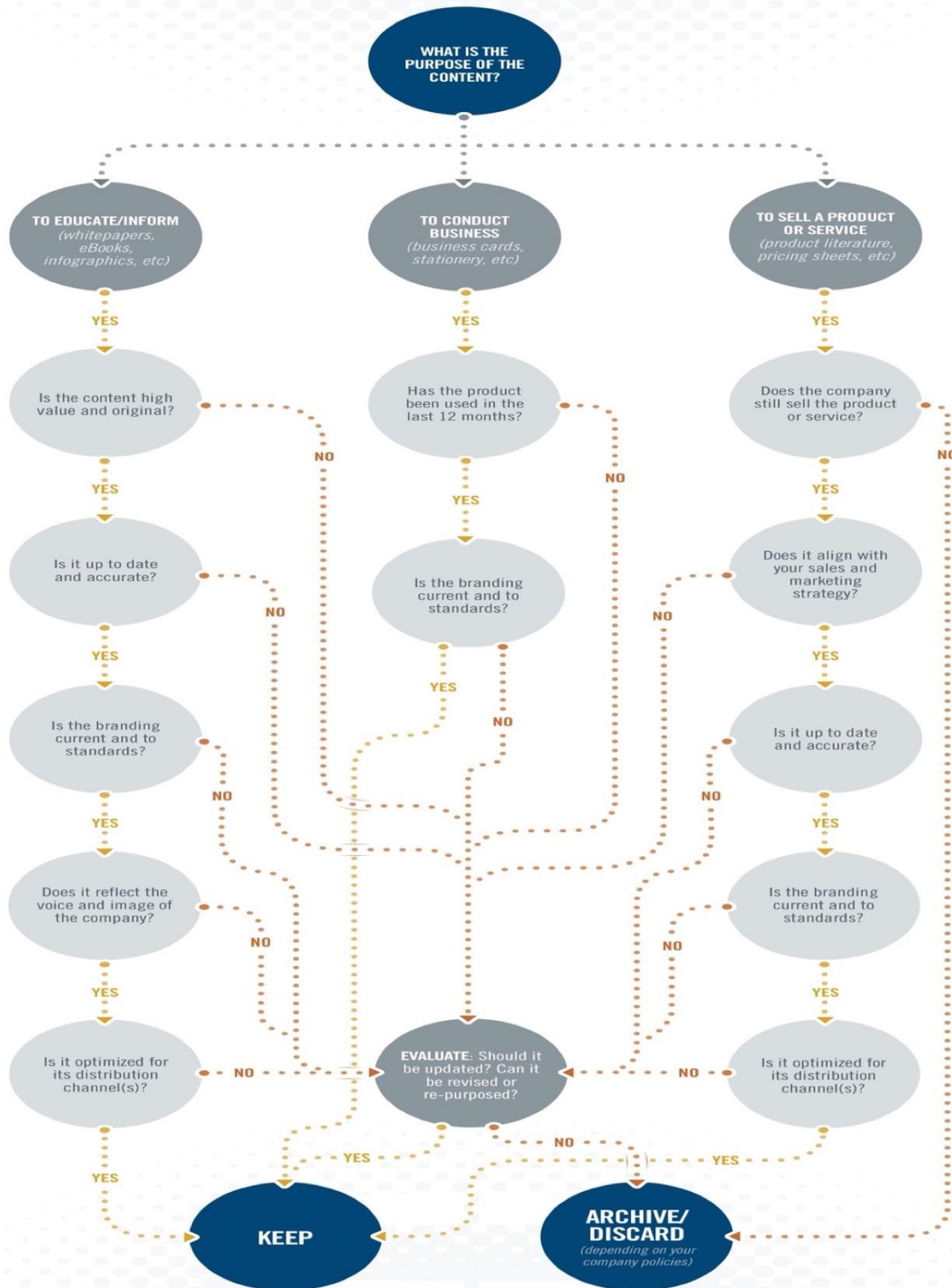
With your marketing audit in hand, you should make changes that are designed to improve your ROI and streamline the Town's marketing/advertising budget. Remember, don't conduct an audit if you're not willing to act. This is your chance to make sure that you're using your resources and time properly – both online and offline.

For instance, you might:

1. Drive resident advocacy adoption.
2. Implement new SEO measures and keywords.
3. Produce and publish more website content.
4. Adapt your user personas and segments.
5. Switch to a different social media channel or add extra channels to your campaign, targeted at specific key audiences.
6. Build out your email campaigns.

#### **Sample Marketing Material Workflow:**

# COLLATERAL AUDIT WORKFLOW



## Town of Sackville Environmental Scan

### Lessons learned from successful community marketing initiatives:

As part of our engagement with the Town of Sackville, Portfolio completed an environmental scan of municipal marketing and branding across North America. We looked at a random sampling of towns and small cities that have been highlighted as doing a good job at achieving similar goals to those set by the Town of Sackville.

Our research shows clearly that people, when searching for somewhere to go, something to do or somewhere to live, search by activity first and then location second. People will search for “bird-watching Atlantic Canada” or “Best place to live in Canada.”

Our research has also shown that a lot of community-based marketing is ineffective, because people immediately (consciously or subconsciously) filter out everything that doesn’t directly relate to what they are looking for.

The successful communities act more like a business by narrowing the focus of what they’re good at. Some of the things we have seen in looking at other communities include:

- 1) Successful marketing communities have identified those key things that people they are hoping to attract can’t get or do closer to where they live or are located now;
- 2) Highlighting what makes a visit/trip/move to the town special and worthwhile; and
- 3) Highlighting what sets the community apart from everyone else.

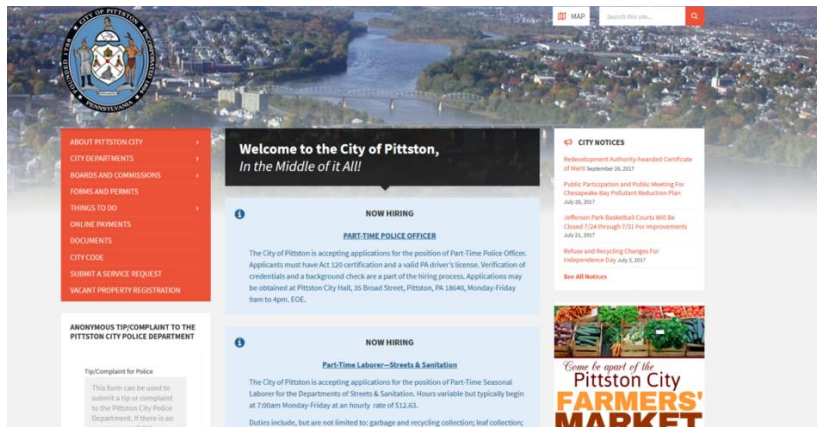
***“The most successful towns, large or small, are those with a clear vision of what they want to be. Whether it is a town like Waynesville, Ohio (pop. 2,500), the “Antiques Capitol of the Midwest;” Sprague, Connecticut (pop. 3,000), “A 19th Century Town Restored for 21st Century Commerce and Recreation;” or Berthoud, Colorado (pop. 4,839), “The Garden Spot of Colorado,” growth management starts with community vision.”***

**Marano (2005)**

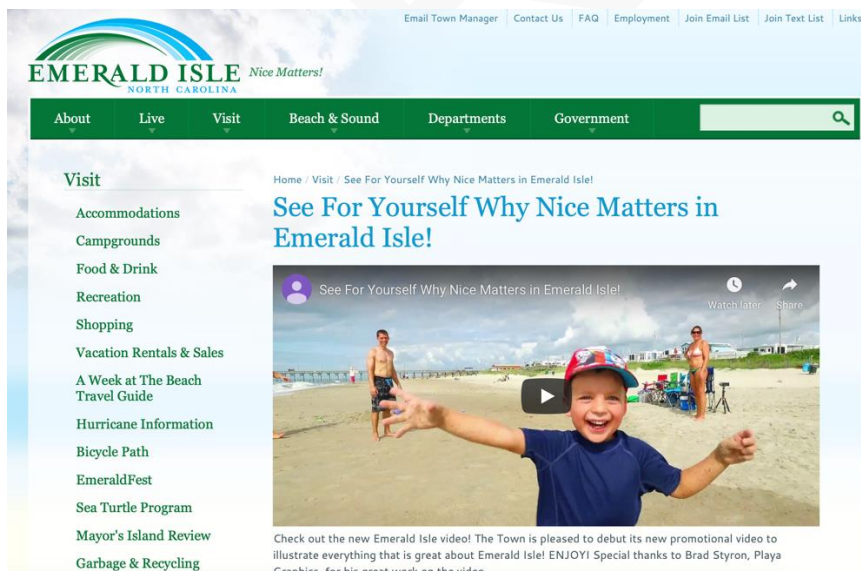
The City of Pittston Ohio is located in between the cities of Scranton and Wilkes-Barre so Pittston adopted the tag line *“in the middle of it all”* as well as *“quality tomato capital of the world”*. The secondary tagline is often used as an ego boost so it may be better to think of it this way:

**First Tagline:** Your intro to the world

**Second Tagline:** Your claim to fame



Emerald Isle choose *“Nice Matters”* which gives you a good first impression as to the old-fashioned southern hospitality wherein nearby Surf City chose *“Big enough to be competitive but small enough to be happy”*. The town of Jackson Wyoming chose *“Last of the Old West”*. The point of the tagline is to create an emotional connection with visitors that can conjure up an image of what the town is all about while existing residents will hear it and be like “yeah, that fits”.



Our scan shows clearly that whatever it is that makes a community different or clearly better is what it must focus on. The most successful communities, however, have discovered that it isn't enough for them to claim that they're different or clearly better. That difference has to come by third party endorsement. Other people have to say it, too.

Most communities are stuck in the “group hug mentality.” They try to make everyone happy with their tourism marketing. The “membership mentality” of “we don't want to leave out any of our members” leads to generic, “something for everyone” marketing that is ineffective.

### Communities we looked at:

#### **St Stephen, NB –**

“The Middle of Everywhere”. (Formerly - “Canada's Chocolate Town”)

<https://town.ststephen.nb.ca/>



“Future St Stephen” – Forward looking messaging around revitalization and growth

New to Town St Stephen - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=127&v=H-HtDAuKv5A&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=127&v=H-HtDAuKv5A&feature=emb_logo)

Cultivating an Environment for Business Success - <https://town.ststephen.nb.ca/entrepreneurs/>

#### **St Andrews, NB**

St Andrews By the Sea - <https://standrewsbythesea.ca/>

#### **Mahone Bay, NS**

Mahone Bay – Nothing to Sea Here - <https://www.mahonebay.com>

#### **Charlottetown, PEI**

Charlottetown - City Life, Island Style - <https://www.discovercharlottetown.com>



**Antigonish, NS**

Antigonish – The Highland Heart of NS - <https://www.visitantigonish.ca/>

**Sherbrooke, Quebec**

Sherbrooke – Heart of the Townships - <https://www.destinationsherbrooke.com/en/visitors>

**Sault St Marie, Ontario**

Sault St Marie – “Welcome to the Soo” - <http://www.saulttourism.com>

Invest Sault St Marie - <http://www.sault-canada.com>

**St Catharines, Ontario**

You Are Here. St Catharines - <https://www.tourismstcatharines.ca>

Grow with St Catharines – Business Investment -

<https://www.stcatharines.ca/en/investin/InvestIn.asp>

**Salmon Arm BC**

<https://www.saeds.ca>

**Orangeville Ontario**

<https://www.orangevilletourism.ca/>

<https://orangevillebusiness.ca/>

**Yakima Washington**

<https://www.visityakima.com>

**Tillamook Oregon**

<https://tillamookcoast.com/>

**Clarksdale Mississippi**

<https://www.visitclarksdale.com>

**Charlestown West Virginia**

<http://www.charlestownnow.com/home.html>

**Hallock Minnesota**

<https://hallockmn.org>

## Some Interesting ideas discovered through this scan

### 1. Connect with Current & Former Residents

One idea that came out of the environmental scan is connecting with current residents to connect with potential new residents.

Trevor Lee, Executive Director at Valley County Economic Development in Ord, Nebraska (population 2,112), approaches current and former residents in unique ways that are yielding results. He and his team targets seniors – both in college and in life – as a part of his goal to attract talent to the region. Here are three interesting examples:

- One of the ways Mr. Lee connects with former residents is by making connections with senior citizens on their own turf. He visits the local senior center, joins early bird coffee drinkers, and joins Sunday worship activities at local assisted living facilities. During these talks, Lee visits with seniors about their grandchildren and other relatives. Through these conversations, he can gather contact information about residents' family members who live outside the region but have an interest in returning. He then conducts targeted outreach to former residents, and he has seen some of them move back to Ord as a result.
1. Valley County Economic Development also sends college seniors a creative Valentine's Day mailer with a USB stick of information about working and living in Valley County.



- At the end of each school year, the Valley County team presents to junior and senior high school classes to increase awareness about opportunities in their hometown. They also gather contact information from students and information about their future plans.

## 2. Influence the Influencers

According to DCI's Winning Strategies Survey, it is estimated that site selection consultants influence 40 percent of location decisions. Below are four ways to connect with this audience:

- **Desk-side Visits:** Leverage your travel to a key market where many consultants are located, such as New York, Chicago or Atlanta, and meet with consultants at their office for a sit-down conversation about your community. These face-to-face connections will help you build better relationships so that consultants will know who to call when they have a potential project that could be a fit for your community.
- **Community Tours:** Nothing beats seeing a place firsthand. Inviting site selectors and other influencers to visit your community and showcasing your greatest assets can be a powerful way to sell your community. Many communities – both large and small – conduct yearly familiarization tours. Check out eight tips for a memorable site selection consultant FAM tour here.
- **Consultant-only Events:** Attending a site selection specific event, such as the Site Selectors Guild Annual Conference or Consultant Connect is also a great way to network with this group.
- **Share News (rather than newsletters):** Distribute news as it happens on topics relevant to site selectors – such as expansions/relocations, key business rankings about your community or workforce news. Instead of a long e-newsletter format, which may work well for your local stakeholders, keep your email communication short by sharing a piece of relevant and timely news.

## 3. Tell Your Story Via the Media

Is the media talking about your community? Articles in newspapers and magazines are the second leading source influencing executives' perceptions of a community's business climate, according to Winning Strategies.

Sunday  
**Los Angeles Times**  
#1.00 DESIGNATED AREA HIGHWAY © 2016 WFT SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2016 latimes.com



Photographs by GERARDO MOLINA Los Angeles Times  
**DARIO MOLINA**, 22, who once worked in the fields of Salinas, Calif., is now enrolled in a program at Hartnell College's Alisal campus that crams a four-year computer science curriculum into three years.

## Salinas reboots itself

The city hopes to become the state's agricultural technology center and to turn the children of farmworkers into computer scientists

By GEOFFREY MOSHAN  
REPORTING FROM SALINAS, CALIF.



**D**ario Molina's alternative life scrolls by on both sides of Highway 101 north: acre upon acre of lettuce, spinach, heartbreak.  
 Not me, he thinks. Not anymore.  
 "Sometimes I reminisce," Molina says. "Damn, I remember that head... that song. Now I'm just thinking, I just want to get over this."  
 He tucks a water bottle between his back and the driver's seat of his 1996 Civic to keep his lumber muscles from stiffening as towns drift by: Greenfield, Soledad, Gonzales, Chualar. Rich as poor as the next. He turns

As you think about your community's stories, run your ideas through the "FUEL test" to help determine if your story is newsworthy to national or regional media. FUEL stands for **F**irst, **U**nique, **E**xtraordinary, **L**argest.

Stories in your community that truly fit this description are often worthy of national or regional media attention.

#### 4. LinkedIn is King

Seventy-four percent of corporate executives with site selection responsibilities use LinkedIn for business. Here are three ways to take advantage of this platform:

- **Build up your connections:** Make it a habit to connect with new people after an event, tradeshow or business meeting. The more connections you build, the more you can leverage those connections for introductions to potential investors or influencers via LinkedIn. We do not recommend trying to connect with people you do not know.
- **Research leads in advance of meetings/opportunities:** Put on your “stalker hat” and check out prospects’ profiles in advance of a meeting. Additionally, you can use LinkedIn to research reporters in advance of pitching them. LinkedIn’s search tool allows users to find people based on location, company, industry, education and other factors.
- **Advertise to target companies:** While ads can be pricier on LinkedIn than some other online platforms, they are highly targeted. LinkedIn’s advantage is it allows you to target very specific groups, titles, companies, locations, industries and more so that your ad only shows up where you specify, and you are only charged when someone clicks on the ad.

## 5. Wooing Provincial and Regional Allies

Build close relationships with Provincial and regional economic development organizations by inviting them to visit your community every year and keeping them updated on new developments. Look for opportunities to partner on marketing missions, trade shows and special events. Additionally, find opportunities to link to their website, or ask them to link to yours, where appropriate.

## 7 Takeaways from Environmental Scan

### 1. Don’t get hung up on logos and slogans.

They are not brands. They are just marketing messages that support your brand. Logos and slogans are 2% of marketing, but 98% of most community’s attention goes to them. You don’t choose Ford over Chevy because of their logo or slogan.

### 2. A brand is a perception.

A brand is what people think of you, not what you say you are. We create them through visual cues, people and attitudes, word of mouth, publicity, and social media. Negative perceptions can require a repositioning or rebranding effort. Good brands evoke emotion. They make a statement. They **sell a feeling, not a place or a product**. Brands are all WHY, not WHAT or WHERE.

### 3. Successful brands have a narrow focus.

If you can take out the town’s name, and plug in any other town, it fails. It ends up that the community is just saying the same thing everyone else is saying. You must **jettison the generic**. You cannot be all things to all people. Promote your primary lure.

Here are some of those “everyone uses them” words and phrases to delete from your marketing:

- explore
- discover
- outdoor recreation
- so much to do
- four season destination
- historic downtown
- center of it all
- best kept secret
- close to it all
- playground

**4. Narrow focus so much that your name becomes synonymous with your brand.**

Napa Valley for wine. Las Vegas for adult fun.

**5. Brands are built on product, not just marketing.**

People are looking for things to do, not just things to look at. That’s why it’s so hard to market history in tourism. You have to find ways to make people involved in the experience of that history. The most successful brands are always experiential. However, most tourism organizations wrongly sell cities, towns and countries before experiences. Economic Development groups sell infrastructure and land before opportunities.

**6. You never “roll out” your brand until you can “deliver on the promise.”**

If you market your community for a niche you really don’t deliver on, you are setting up for upset visitors or new residents. Brands are earned, good or bad. Some successful communities have used transitional brands to talk about what they are becoming.

**7. Great brands seem to have always started with a plan.**

In the examples we looked at, communities began with a plan that asked specific questions:

- What do we want to be known for?
- What do we need to own the brand?
- How will we tell the world?
- What goes on the to do list?

## Strategic Focuses for Marketing Plan

This leads us to the development of three strategic focuses that best reflect the marketing needs of the Town of Sackville and the building blocks required to achieve its desired objectives. These focus areas help us to answer the important questions listed above to ensure a solid, successful plan and are used as guides to develop tactics specific to each key stakeholder group.

1. **Resident Engagement** - To make all residents (rural/agricultural, urban and University students and faculty) feel part of Sackville's "Social Purpose". This axis will focus on what we do to own the brand. As mentioned above, "if you market your community for a niche you really don't deliver on, you are setting up for upset visitors or new residents."
2. **Consistent Positioning** - To create a positioning statement that answers the question "What do we want to be known for?" and ties all the Town's assets together. We will also look at transitional branding tactics to talk about what the Town is working towards becoming as it completes the work of Resident Engagement.
3. **Attraction** - To market and promote "Why you should come here" to potential residents (including students and faculty), visitors and businesses. This axis will focus on how we tell the world in a focused and targeted way.

## Tactics – Phase 1 (July 2020 – April 2021)

Before Sackville can position itself to attract residents, businesses and tourists, the Town has some internal work to do to ensure everyone is on the same page. The integration of the three resident groups (Ag/rural, urban/Educated/hipster and students/Mount Allison) into one common purpose is integral to ensuring the marketing strategy succeeds. As such, Phase 1 is focused heavily on Resident Engagement, so the Town can deliver on its brand promise.

### Strategic Focus: Resident Engagement

Goal: To bring the residents together and create a sense of pride and belonging for all (rural/agricultural, urban and University students and faculty).

#### 1. Internal marketing and communications

Execution	Target Audience: Residents, Clubs and Groups
Develop an internal marketing and communications plan to bring resident groups together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Social media plan for residents that promotes what's happening in Sackville, shares the Town's successes and reasons why residents are so lucky to call Sackville home.</li><li>- Further develop the monthly email newsletter or online platform to keep residents informed about what's happening in Town. Use example of 'Pickle Planet' in Moncton (<a href="http://pickleplanetmoncton.com">pickleplanetmoncton.com</a>) and see if a local influencer could be hired to write this, so it's not seen as coming from the Town.</li></ul>
COVID-19 Sustainability Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Develop a plan that addresses the long-term implications of COVID-19 and how the Town, University and local businesses could emerge from this global crisis even stronger and more sustainable than before.</li><li>- Involve the University and business community in planning and remain open and transparent with all stakeholders about the Town's response and plan.</li></ul>
Buy Local Campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Develop a campaign to encourage residents to support local businesses – groceries, retail, restaurants, activities, etc.</li><li>- Involve local businesses in the development of the campaign so they see it coming from them, rather than the Town.</li></ul>
Develop a residents-only celebration, such as a picnic, that celebrates Sackville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- At a time when students are still in school and everyone can be included (could be free for students to encourage participation)</li><li>- Location could be the Farmer's Market or Downtown</li><li>- Could follow same set up as the Fall Fair's Harvest Supper</li></ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Showcase local restaurants, retail and farms to tie into the Buy Local campaign</li> </ul>
Community engagement for planning	<p>Create a working group that includes residents, club and group representatives, university representatives, students and business owners to plan internal initiatives aimed at creating cohesion between resident groups. Projects could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COVID-19 Sustainability planning</li> <li>• Buy Local campaign</li> <li>• Festival and events audit</li> </ul>
Festivals and Events audit	<p>Working with interested local festival organizers, audit the current festivals and events and offer to help revamp 2-3 to ensure locals are participating, including students, and enjoying what Sackville has to offer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are these festivals marketed? Is that effective?</li> <li>• Who currently attends? Who is not attending and why?</li> <li>• Is the business community behind them?</li> <li>• Are our residents tired of the same events every year?</li> <li>• Are they all needed? Should we focus our efforts and do fewer festivals?</li> <li>• Could we tweak them a bit to make them more successful?</li> <li>• How could we make them more experiential?</li> <li>• What is Sappyfest doing that makes it such a success?</li> <li>• Are there other simple ideas we could implement to refresh our current events?</li> </ul> <p>Examples of simple but effective festivals that bring residents out during the winter months are Moncton's Taco Fest or Burger Fest and the Light up Riverview.</p>

## 2. Make students feel at home in Sackville

Execution	Target Audience: University students and faculty
Have a great summer! postcard campaign from Sackville to students	<p>Similar to Trevor Lee's idea in Ord, Nebraska, the Town could develop a cute campaign where each student receives a little "Have a great summer!" postcard from the Town during exam period. This postcard could feature:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The reasons why Sackville is a great place to live during university, during the summer and after you graduate.</li> <li>• Why the town is going to miss the students during the summer.</li> </ul>

<p>Welcome back students for return from COVID-19, integrating Buy Local campaign</p>	<p>Develop a welcome back campaign with local businesses. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sticker decals in local businesses windows “Welcome back students! We missed you!”</li> <li>• Welcome back student specials at local coffee shops, retail and restaurants.</li> <li>• A student loyalty/buy local card that, once completed with a stamp from every business on the card, they receive a free handmade soap in a bag with “Sackville: My home away from home” branding.</li> </ul>
<p>Create a monthly Sunday dinner in conjunction with local restaurants</p>	<p>Encourage local restaurants or use the space at the farmer’s market to create a “Sunday dinner” for residents and students to mingle with people from the Town and sit down for a family-style meal together.</p>
<p>Student participation in Town Council</p>	<p>Youth council, ex-officio, round table on entrepreneurship</p>
<p>Review Town and Gown</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review current methods (2 working groups - senior managers of the Town and the University and Community Partnerships Committee) of keeping lines of communication open between the Town and the University.</li> <li>• Research how other university towns enhance this relationship.</li> <li>• Ensure right mix of students and other key influencers are involved.</li> </ul>

### 3. Business Community Voice

Execution	Target Audience: Business
<p>A Business Voice</p>	<p>Coordinate/support the development of an organization to represent the businesses in Town – led by local business, not by the Town. Could be part of the Moncton Chamber, but specific to Sackville. Things they could do include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Represent and support local businesses;</li> <li>• Be involved in the COVID-19 sustainability plan;</li> <li>• Be involved in developing the Buy Local initiative;</li> <li>• Be involved in developing community engagement initiatives;</li> <li>• Help attract new businesses and employees as per Gap Analysis; and</li> <li>• Work with the University to develop entrepreneurial and experiential learning opportunities for students.</li> </ul>

Main Street website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the Main Street Sackville group that is developing a website of the downtown businesses to ensure consistent branding and meeting the needs expressed in the stakeholder engagement, i.e. a map of downtown businesses.</li> <li>• Develop a more targeted “What’s there to do in Sackville?” for families, music lovers, art and culture lovers, foodies, etc.</li> <li>• Link to Town marketing assets.</li> </ul>
Business Gap Analysis	<p>Complete a gap analysis to identify what people (workforce) and businesses are missing in the Town then use this evidence to strategically target and attract the types of businesses and people you want/need to fill the gaps.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Mount Allison and the enterprise and start-up community - could become an incubator for social engagement and social entrepreneurship</li> </ul> <p>Ensure the selection criteria set out by stakeholder engagement is respected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target new businesses that enhance the Town</li> <li>• Protect the heritage, environment/nature and what’s unique about Sackville</li> <li>• Target sectors that appeal to students, citizens and visitors for growth</li> <li>• Town has a lot of environmental, non-profit organizations - companies related to wildlife would be a good fit</li> <li>• Consider innovative business opportunities – co-working spaces (as part of MtA’s new library plan), work from home, link different government opportunities as well as private sector</li> </ul>

#### 4. If you build it, they will come...

Execution	Target Audience: Visitors
Accommodations	<p>Develop a plan to strengthen accommodation businesses in Sackville so visitors can visit for a few days. Some initial ideas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year-round writers’ accommodations</li> <li>• Mount Allison could be a bigger part of Sackville’s tourism destination plan – more conferences, opportunities to stay at residences</li> <li>• Campground</li> <li>• Work to strengthen current accommodations to develop on-site restaurants or eating opportunities.</li> </ul>
Experiential tourism	<p>Work with local businesses to create 2-3 experiential tourism attractions that could be strategically marketed through influencers in the Attraction tactics. These could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing circles;</li> <li>• Music and arts experiences;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walking tours of arts and history;</li> <li>• Culinary tourism; or</li> <li>• Agricultural tourism.</li> </ul>
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### Strategic Focus: Consistent Positioning

Goal: To create a positioning statement that answers “What do we want to be known for?” and ties all the Town’s assets together

### 5. Develop Consistent Positioning Assets

Execution	Target Audience: All stakeholders
Develop a positioning statement	<p>The Town of Sackville needs something simple and targeted to tie it all together. Some ideas to be explored are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Life’s Better in Sackville</li> <li>• Sackville: Canada’s Perfect University Town</li> <li>• Sackville: Where life begins again</li> <li>• Sackville: Canada’s smartest little town</li> <li>• Sackville: The perfect place to grow... (a business, a family, your mind, a garden, an idea)</li> <li>• Sackville: Small town. Big conscience.</li> <li>• Sackville: Socialize, Arts, Culture, Knowledge</li> <li>• Sackville: home of Mount Allison University and a very cool lifestyle</li> <li>• Sackville: that university town lifestyle, for life.</li> </ul>
Test the statement	<p>In order for a positioning statement to get traction, it needs to be supported by the people that live in the Town.</p> <p>Before publishing a new positioning statement, we recommend checking in with residents, groups, clubs, students, etc. to get feedback and buy-in. Rather than telling them what the new positioning statement is or will be, a few options could be presented so they feel like they’re part of the decision.</p>
Ensure consistency across all platforms	<p>Once the new positioning statement has been established, ensure it is being used across all platforms, including those of partners.</p>

## 6. Target key messages

Execution	Target Audience: tourists, new investors, new business
Create targeted marketing channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Movetosackville.com, #movetosackville</li> <li>Investinsackville.com, #investinsackville</li> <li>Visitsackville.com, #visitsackville</li> </ul>
Develop key messages for each stakeholder group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Move to Sackville – benefits of living in a small, walkable town that’s safe and the perfect blend of arts, culture and nature.</li> <li>Invest in Sackville – what types of businesses thrive in Sackville, results of gap analysis for evidence of what businesses are needed in Town, support resources, business community testimonials.</li> <li>Visit Sackville – experiential tourism, local attractions, what to see and do in Sackville for families, for bird watchers, for foodies, for music, for arts and culture, calendar of events.</li> </ul>

## Tactics – Phase 2 (April 2021 – April 2022)

### Strategic Focus: Attraction

Goal: To market and promote “Why you should come here” to potential residents (including students and faculty), visitors and businesses.

## 7. Target and attract according to Gap Analysis findings

Execution	Target Audience: new residents, new investors, new business
Execute on the Gap Analysis	Use the Gap Analysis to build a plan for attracting the types of new businesses you want to attract.
Site selection campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using the targeted messaging from “Move to Sackville” for potential new residents and businesses, create a campaign for site selection magazines.</li> <li>Develop a PR plan to invite site selection influencers to come to Town or receive a PR kit from the Town.</li> </ul>
Get people talking about Sackville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through PR and influencers, get the media talking about Sackville. Media should be targeted as part of the social media attraction campaign.</li> </ul>
Social media attraction campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a social media plan specifically for attracting people to Sackville, using the key messages listed above and specifically targeting the people and businesses determined through the Gap Analysis in Phase 1.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure to include video footage as it is much more powerful on Social Media and people are more likely to watch a short video than read a description or document.</li> </ul>
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## 8. Rethink how we get information to visitors

Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change major signage on highway to show people what the town has to offer, if they exit the highway and go into town. Sign could include an inviting picture of downtown with a simple call to action: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Little Town. Perfect Stop. VisitSackville.com</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Expand beyond the printed Visitors Guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Given that the printed Visitors Guide is currently circulated to over 15,000 people, we would recommend continuing to print and offer it while also offering a more environmentally friendly and modern way of communicating with visitors, invest in mediums such as a revamped VIC, as described below, and a targeted URL for visitors with messaging according to if they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Coming to visit for a bit – what to do in and around Sackville for families, foodies, art and culture lovers, music lovers, history lovers, nature lovers, bird lovers, etc.</li> <li>○ Stopping for a quick bit and a coffee</li> <li>○ Coming for a little day trip – what to do in Sackville for families, foodies, art and culture lovers, music lovers, history lovers, nature lovers, bird lovers, etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Modernize Visitor Information Centre	<p>Although moving the Visitor Information Centre into Town could help get visitors off the highway and bring them in to spend time and money at local businesses, it would be a very expensive and perhaps unattainable strategy at this time. However, some changes to modernize the current visitor information center could have a great impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design a beautiful, inviting space with big screens and interactive kiosks to allow visitors to choose between a family visit, an outdoors and nature visit, an arts and culture visit, a foodie visit, a book lovers visit, a music lovers visit or a mix of all the things that make Sackville unique.</li> <li>• Create a modern, environmental-friendly take on providing visitors with information to begin replacing all the printed brochures.</li> <li>• Visitors would leave with a personalized to-do and to-see list and map with interactive quizzes, videos, etc. emailed or texted to them so they can follow on their phones.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The University students could be involved in creating the virtual/interactive visitors guide content.</li> </ul>
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### **Strategic Focus: Resident Engagement**

Goal: In phase 2, we suggest continuing to work on engaging residents. By this time, many of the tactics recommended in Phase 1 will be in place and changes/adaptations will follow in Phase 2.

### **Strategic Focus: Consistent Positioning**

Goal: To ensure consistency across all channels.

<b>Execution</b>	<b>Target Audience: all</b>
Marketing Tool Box	Based on the positioning work completed in Phase 1, develop a toolbox of marketing assets that is targeted and specific for partners to share throughout their networks.
Allocate sufficient human resources to ensure the plan is carried out	In order to follow through on the Marketing Strategy and ensure consistency across all Marketing channels, significant human resources would be important.

## **Tactics – Phase 3 (April 2022 – April 2023)**

### **Strategic Focus: Consistent Positioning**

Goal: To create a positioning statement that defines “Who are we?” and ties all the Town’s assets together

<b>Execution</b>	<b>Target Audience: all</b>
Ongoing evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to monitor the effectiveness of positioning statement, it’s integration into marketing and attraction efforts.</li> </ul>

### **Strategic Focus: Attraction**

Goal: To market and promote “Why you should come here” to potential residents (including students and faculty), visitors and businesses

Execution	Target Audience:
Part of regional economic development conversation	Consider joining forces with other communities within region southeast for attraction efforts. Focus on key priority areas and how they can fit within a regional compliment. Also focus on key opportunity areas such as life sciences incubator, back office and education.
Evaluation of attraction efforts	Continue to monitor the effectiveness of attraction efforts against specific KPIs including population growth, tax base growth, business diversification and jobs creation

## Conclusion:

Although the last few months have thrown a curve ball into this Marketing Plan and the future, post COVID-19, will look different than the world we are used to, the Town of Sackville could take the opportunity to emerge from this global crisis even stronger and more sustainable than before. The Town has so much going for it. As people begin to place even more importance on community, food security, safety and quality of life, Sackville is perfectly positioned to offer a wonderful place to live, visit and have a business. And maybe this global pandemic we are all living through will help to accelerate the internal work of bringing the different resident groups together under one common purpose and vision for the community, as this will be vital to ensuring the marketing strategy succeeds.



Appendix A – Discovery Report

Appendix B - Stakeholder Interview Questionnaire

Appendix C – World Café Summary Report

Appendix D - Stakeholder Interview Summary Report

DRAFT

# *DISCOVERY REPORT – TOWN OF SACKVILLE*

*Portfolio / December 18, 2019*

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## CONTEXT:

As part of its strategic plan, the Town of Sackville has partnered with Portfolio to develop a Marketing Plan that will identify the Town's positioning and provide guidance for marketing initiatives and interactions with the public.

The process to develop this Plan includes an audit of the Town's current brand and all associated branding material and assets, a review of best practices, community engagement and consultation and will be expected to give strategic direction on:

- Investment Attraction
- Tourism
- Corporate
- Resident Attraction
- Town Values

The resulting plan needs to be realistic and achievable, aligned with existing assets and priorities and designed with clear tactics and execution plans that will facilitate effective implementation and continued engagement throughout the 5 years of the Plan.

As part of the consultation process, Portfolio conducted Discovery Sessions with the Town's management team and the Town Council. Below is the consolidated report from these sessions.

## SESSION PARTICIPANTS:

Upper Management team session:

- Dwayne Action, Town Engineer
- Todd Cole, Manager of Parks and Facilities
- Ron Kelly Spurles, Manager of Tourism and Business Development
- Matt Pryde, Manager of Recreation Programs and Events (until 3pm)
- Mike Beal, Treasurer
- Liz Hartling, Assistant Treasurer
- Craig Bowser, Fire Chief
- Becky Goodwin, Assistant Clerk
- Jamie Burke, Senior Manager of Corporate Projects
- Michelle Roy, Mount Allison Experiential Learning Intern

\* Note: Staff members Phil Handrahan, CAO, Donna Beal, Clerk and Barry Hicks, Acting Superintendent of Public Works were unable to attend.

Town Council session:

- John Higham, Mayor

- Ron Aiken, Deputy Mayor
- Andrew Black
- Allison Butcher
- Bill Evans
- Shawn Mesheau
- Bruce Phinney
- Mike Tower

\* Note: All council members were in attendance except for Joyce O'Neil

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

The main goal and objective of this Marketing Plan is to attract people to come to the Town of Sackville: come to live, come to visit and come to set up their business. Some key findings for each group include:

### For new residents:

- Community begins to speak in one voice – consistent messaging, consistent story
- Promote culture, safety, sports and recreation, small town/proud community feeling
- Increase/maintain the population through growth and development - Keep the younger population and families here
- Create a sense of pride in the community – differentiate us from other places

### For visitors:

- Attract tourists and strengthen the tourist season
- Capitalize on parents coming to visit their children at Mount Allison and those coming for cultural events
- Expand the Town's offering for tourists – accommodations, RV park, camping, etc.
- Leverage other sources of marketing – tourism, province

### For new businesses/investment:

- Promote what kind of businesses already exist here and how they've succeeded
- Create a reputation for business - footloose, knowledge-based business, entrepreneurial, start-ups, distribution
- Find companies that could come here and set up and provide services to residents

The Town of Sackville's story starts with the brand.

There are some positive themes on where the Town of Sackville's brand is now and where they would like it to be. It is also important to note that the Town faces some challenges that need to be recognized and confronted in order to achieve its goals.

<b><u>Positives</u></b>	<b><u>Challenges</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcoming – feels like home, close-knit community, safe, happy heart of the Maritimes, where you belong, inclusive</li> <li>• Family - A great place to grow up and raise a family, a great place to retire, see your future here</li> <li>• Home - No place like home, your home away from home, where we belong</li> <li>• Beauty and Nature - Beautiful place to live, nature, relaxing</li> <li>• Diversity - diversity in ethnicity and activities offered, something for everyone</li> <li>• Culture - cultural crossroads of the Maritimes, more museums than stop lights, a lot of history</li> <li>• University – offers a lot to the community in terms of sports and cultural opportunities, students add to the local economy</li> <li>• Location – regional hub potential as Sackville is in the middle of it all</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversity - welcoming but also exclusive, diverse but also white and English, wide range of income levels</li> <li>• Blended community - relationship between students and the Town as well as between residents and the University and the Town is not as strong as it could be</li> <li>• Sometimes too elitist</li> <li>• Surrounded by nature but flooding always a threat – climate change</li> <li>• Old fashioned, conservative</li> <li>• Provincial economy and outlook for it</li> </ul>

## Residents:

There are a lot of choices when deciding on a place to live in Southeastern New Brunswick. The main factors that are believed to influence that decision are:

- Services – health, recreation, schools, education, jobs, good roads, transit, safe drinking water, cultural opportunities
- Quality of life – safety, like-minded people, community, social opportunities
- Representation – a voice in the community, transparency and openness, leadership on issues such as climate change and social inclusion
- Options – language, religion, more jobs available, diversity

The Town of Sackville has a lot of these services and benefits people have come to expect from their community today. In order to stand apart and define why it's a different kind of small town, it needs to promote what it can offer over and above those expectations. It is believed the main selling features for why people would want to live here include:

- Educational opportunities - Mount Allison University, educated population, senior education center, good elementary and high schools
- Real estate – affordable, established, comfortable, prosperous
- Lifestyle – Cultural and recreational opportunities that are not normally available in a small town, thanks in part to being a University town – pool, festivals, camps, music and culture offerings at Mount Allison, fun, friendly, quality of life
- Nature – water fowl park, clean and beautiful, environmentally conscious, active
- Freedom – safety, free to pursue what you want to pursue, be who you are, make your own opportunities, self-sustaining

The main challenge in promoting the Town to potential residents is the juxtaposition of wanting to grow but also wanting to maintain that small town, community feeling that is inherent to Sackville. Other challenges to recruiting new residents include:

- Business doesn't have a voice or support – there is no longer a Chamber (may be coming back as a Chapter of the Moncton Chamber)
- History - citizens that hold onto the history and are anti-change
- Financial – the Province doesn't pay their fair share for the buildings the university has in town
- Climate change and flooding
- Burn out of Town staff and volunteers
- No sense of belonging for students and new citizens
- Lack of entrepreneurs

## Visitors:

The main attractions that would bring visitors to Sackville are:

- Water Fowl park
- History
- Food
- Sporting events – hockey tournaments, high school and University sports
- Music/cultural scene – shows, festivals and events
- University – parents would visit their kids (note there is a lack of accommodations in the Town for visitors to stay overnight)

## Businesses:

The focus for attracting businesses to Sackville is to fill the voids of services and opportunities for residents and students, such as retail (clothing, shoes, furniture), accommodations for visitors and culture (i.e. ethnic restaurants) and to attract businesses that make sense and will contribute to the economy of the town, such as:

- Distribution companies that would hire larger numbers of employees
- Small business and small enterprise, entrepreneurial
- Accommodations – for visitors and tourism
- Campgrounds – trailer parks for tourism to focus on natural beauty and location
- Commercial businesses would be the preference

One of the main challenges in promoting Sackville as a great place for businesses is the lack of business voice or support. The development of an organization that can help to attract and support businesses will be important. It would also be beneficial to work with the University to develop entrepreneurial opportunities for students.

## Key Stakeholders and Important Partnerships:

The key stakeholders for this Marketing Plan are grouped below into 7 main categories:

1. Citizens – volunteers, seniors (55+ is 50% of the population), students at the high school, Seniors Club
2. Visitors – tourism groups, nature enthusiasts, parents of students, families visiting for sports and cultural events.
3. Business – BIA (Business Improvement Association), Moneris (200 employees), Business owners – Main Street redevelopment, A big developer that has a project in the works – John Lafford
4. Mount Allison – students, faculty, property managers, staff, union, student union
5. Clubs and groups – Rotary Club, sports organizations, art organizations, Social enterprise/ Not for Profit community – The Sackville Commons, Agricultural development



6. Citizen services – Healthcare, The Drew, Daybreak, Seniors College, Public sector education, Community policing officer, Community education officer (Jessica Hughes)
7. Government – Province, Municipality, Council, Mayor, employees, other regional organizations (e.g. RDMO) to cover the Regional Service Commission and the potential for a Regional Destination Marketing Organization with the Commission and City of Moncton.

In order to maximize the success of the Marketing Plan, it will be important for the Town to leverage several key partnerships, including:

- The University
- The Provincial government
- A Business voice – need an organization to represent businesses in the Town
- Not for profit groups

## Defining the Brand:

### Sackville Today:

- A different kind of small town
- A work in progress, a possibility
- An educational opportunity
- A great place to live
- Family friendly
- Feels like home
- Beautiful and welcoming
- An evolving, growing community
- The cultural capital of the Maritimes
- Inhibited by negativity – boring, conservative, white, English

### The future:

- A place where kids and grandkids can live and work
- A small town with big opportunity
- Still a great place to live
- Still the happy heart of the Maritimes
- A leader in climate innovation
- A come together mindset

## Methods that have delivered results in the past:

- Yes, we can! attitude from the Town
- Water fowl festival
- Doctor recruitment program
- New Town Hall
- Better working relationship with the University

- Town Ambassador program

## Measurement

The goal of this Marketing Plan is to bring people to Sackville: to visit, to live and to set up their business. As a result, the success of the plan will be measured against the following criteria:

Residents:

- # of residents – by age and by group
- Resident satisfaction survey
- Assessed value of properties

Students:

- # of students enrolled at Mount A, in high school and elementary levels

Visitors:

- # of visitors to the V.I.C.

Businesses:

- Growth of current businesses – increased employment
- Less turnover of businesses downtown
- Construction starts

## Conclusion:

The Town of Sackville has a lot going for it. It has that small town feel but is able to offer first class services and opportunities to its residents. The Discovery sessions began to uncover the real truths that will help shape the Marketing Plan into a roadmap that is realistic and achievable, aligned with existing assets and priorities and designed with clear tactics and execution plans.

The next step in the development of the plan is a series of one-on-one interviews with identified key stakeholders and a World Café event that will engage citizens and give them a voice in the development process.

Following the completion of these, we will have sufficient input and information to begin strategy development – including recommendations around brand positioning.

## **Town of Sackville: One-on-One interview Questionnaire**

1. What attracted you to the Town of Sackville to set up your business/as a place to live?
2. What are the Town of Sackville's biggest selling points?
3. How would you describe the Town of Sackville?
4. What do citizens in Southeastern New Brunswick expect from their community today?
5. Why would people want to visit Sackville?
6. Why would people want to move to Sackville?
7. What would you like Marketing to achieve for the Town of Sackville?
8. What services do the residents of Sackville need?
9. What's missing in your business mix?
10. What type of business makes sense in Sackville?
11. Help me describe those businesses that make sense here.
  - How many people do they employ?
  - Are they commercial or industrial?
  - White collar or blue collar?
12. What information channels do you use most frequently?
13. What channels do you think would work best to promote the Town of Sackville?

14.If people were going to think one thing about Sackville what should that one thing be?

## **Conversation #1:**

### **Why Sackville?**

- **What attracted you to live in the Town of Sackville?**
- **What are the Town's biggest selling points?**
- Quality of life
- Cradle to grave community - great place to raise kids, great place to retire
- Small town feel - Rural/urban "Rurban dream", Walkable, advantages of rural and urban "best of both worlds"
- Mount Allison University, good schools, Senior's college
- Location - Happy heart of the Maritimes, proximity to lake, ocean, beaches, 30 minutes from an international airport, train station, hub – gateway Visitors centre
- Beautiful – waterfowl, nature, outdoors, under-rated, eco-system
- Envy from others – Saturday morning vibe, water fowl park, arts and culture (Sappy Fest), openness/Innovation, Creative
- Community connectivity - Community support for start-ups, Welcoming/diverse, Volunteer "Rainbow", Sackvillians back causes (refugees, hospital, schools), easy to belong, kids can be part of any activity, social solidarity, strong sense of caring, openness to ideas
- Arts & Culture – galleries, live music, festivals (Sappy Fest)
- Affordable but great services - Snow removal, policing, hospital, good schools, home ownership is possible
- Canadian history – Forts, Colville, Indigenous, tradition and heritage
- Bilingual
- Non-Profits, Co-working opportunities, business opportunities, bilingual workforce, loyal workforce, science-nature organizations
- Generations have stayed – old family names make up a good part of the population
- Under-rated – well above our weight culturally
- Food and drink – restaurants, coffee shops, bars, year-round farmer's market, local farms

## **Conversation #2:**

### **The Town is talking about attracting more businesses and more people...**

- **Is that what you want?**
- **Why is that important to Sackville?**
- **How do you think we should attract more people or businesses?**
- **What's the one thing we would need to change to successfully attract more people and more businesses?**

### **Yes, we want growth but...**

- Not at risk of quality of life - Don't want a "big city" mentality in our small town
- Not at any cost - No factory, No big box stores (keep it Mom & Pop), be selective about what kind of businesses, only those that enhance what we already have, Protection of

heritage, protect/nurture what's unique about Sackville, Not to compete with community businesses, Green/environment

- Sustainable/ Population maintenance/ appropriate growth – preservation of what makes the town special
- Niche retail/commercial – more niche shopping will attract more traffic/visitors
- Decent jobs - Business/enterprise that aren't highly technical, Businesses that can survive in an online world
- Take care of the people who are here
- Fort Folly – radio Canada
- Community engagement around planning - Identify what people and what businesses we are missing then target effectively
- Research new methods of advertising to target new people and new business
- Analyse demographics/how does Sackville become more than a retirement community – is that possible? Do we need to further capitalize on this?

#### Why is growth important for Sackville?

- If we were bigger = more services, increased tax base, new blood, new energy, new skill sets, new businesses would revitalize the town
- Sustain and maintain services, our quality of life - If we don't grow, we risk shrinking/dying
- Keeping businesses in town, ability to buy locally, keep the money in town
- Businesses evolving with new ideas to keep customers coming
- + support for schools and hospitals – key services
- New friends, dynamic, diverse

#### How do we attract more people and businesses?

- Highway signage - Map signage at way station
- Newcomer support – municipality and community
- New business support - Welcoming to new entrepreneurs to build on existing businesses and strengths
- Students – Incentives to bring students downtown, adopt a student, alumni, more connections
- Buy local, Buy Sackville campaign – market, Downtown Business Association
- Online presence – Directory, Social media
- Succession planning
- Get people off the highway – visitors centre, tourism bureau
- Economic development roundtable
- What are we missing – Segment targeting
- Something between students and retirees
- Supply/support businesses in Moncton/Amherst
- Non-retail – locate anywhere
- “Centre of excellence” – specialize in something
- IT infrastructure – world class to support new businesses
- Local focus/regional lense

- Visible amenities
- Non-retail business opportunities – recruit/attract businesses and people who can locate anywhere – co-working spaces, work from home, link different government opportunities as well as private sector (Ottawa example)
- Incubator – next step from commons
- Proximity to similar professionals, business people
- Advertise/recruit/attract people looking for remote working locations
- Facilitate/enable WF+1 opportunities
- Exploit opportunities servicing growing senior population
- Ensure accessibility for seniors and others – infrastructure

If we could change one thing:

- Heritage board
- Marketing package for new business development – travelling business people
- Simplify/enable new business start-ups – guidance to navigate “red tape”, more flexible zoning/by-laws, business development function (individual recruitment) to assist, enable, build networks that promote, attract specific types of businesses/people
- Communicate – integrate
- 0 drive by culture – detour! Show how much time to access downtown amenities
- Know ourselves – what’s good and special, know how to show ourselves off
- Stronger tie to provincial government
- Compelling ambassadors
- Racially homogenous
- Film industry – what’s the sector?
- Simplify/enable NB – support, networks, specific business/critical mass

**Conversation #3:**

**Sackville is home to Canada’s #1 Undergraduate University, Mount Allison University...**

- **Why is Sackville better than other small university towns?**
- **What’s our unique selling proposition?**
- **How can the relationship between the University and the town be further enhanced/improved?**

Sackville is better because:

- Support for LGTBQ+
- Creative/cultural town – art galleries, music, creative community
- Safe/secure – well policed
- Volunteerism culture
- Walkable/location, proximity to airport, Center of the Maritimes, “away” but not away
- Inspired faculty – Mike Fox
- Springboard Atlantic – sit down
- Small - low staff/Prof ratio
- Access to bilingualism
- Affordable rent



- Stay/dinner
- Services - Hospital in town
- Small town niche, picturesque
- Pace of small town, feel of a big city
- Well-rated - #1, 16 out of 24 years, good reputation
- Niche programs – fine arts, music, computer science
- Student centre
- Stay awake longer MtA
- Bars
- Outdoor activities

#### **Unique selling proposition:**

- Biggest salt marsh in the world
- Biosphere
- Social innovation, President
- Nurture a bridge for experiential learning
- Cornboil
- Well-rated
- Small staff/student ratio
- Mhein Center
- Wild NGO
- Coffee shops/restaurants

#### **What could be?**

- Experiential learning
- Community learning campus
- Springboard
- Cornboil calendar
- Wild wild east – prototyping, incubation, start ups
- Student participation – youth council \*, ex-officio, round table on entrepreneurship, etc.
- Indigenous support
- Ecosystem centre – UNESCO
- RCE Tantramar
- Citizen engagement
- Community organizations – NGOs, NFO, Salt Marsh, Fundy Biosphere, 36 indigenous
- Pick sectors that appeal to students, citizens and visitors for growth – Acadia/Wolfville example

#### **Challenges/opportunities:**

- Not sure it is better

It is so isolated

First year retention rate

Parents accommodations and dining is lacking

Language – Town and Gown is very divisive – is the University interested in attracting ALL townspeople (mutual)

Mount A – Public institution

Mount A's new rule – no drinking in residence

Lack of Communication between town and University – Town Council and Mount A

Renter support and tenants – student ghettos

Not cool like Wolfville – microbrewery appeals to all ages

### **Stakeholder Engagement Notes:**

1. What attracted you to the Town of Sackville to set up your business/as a place to live?

- Started a business in Mt A entrepreneurship class then bought it out and stayed
- Inexpensive real estate
- Strong music and arts culture (for a small town)
- Mount A to work
- Mount A grad
- Land availability
- Small town close to major cities
- Cost of living
- Grew up in Sackville
- Green space
- Walkability
- Accessibility – errands, movies, dinner
- Picture postcard perfect
- University adds a nice economic vibe

2. What are the Town of Sackville's biggest selling points?

- Arts, music and culture – galleries
- University (#1 undergrad university in Canada)
- Location – close to a lot of big cities, including a growing one within 30 minutes, close to an airport, good location as a hub, to use as a base for exploring the Maritimes
- Natural, physical environment - Interesting natural area
- Access to outdoor activities – cross-country skiing, skating at waterfowl park, hiking, walking
- Quality of life, Different pace of life, Unique lifestyle, personal connections
- Diversity/Great mix of people – university students, families, kids, seniors
- Small, safe community, Small town vibe
- Dense downtown – can walk everywhere but still lots of space
- Housing market
- Healthy retirement life-style with low rent

- Accessibility off highway
- Has everything you need
- Services – very good amenities but low cost of living
- Lots for families to do

3. How would you describe the Town of Sackville?

- Really hard to describe Sackville
- New small-town experience is hard to grasp
- There is a dichotomy in town – rural vs urban
- 3 towns in one – warm and welcoming, negative, don't participate (University)
- Unique combination of history, nature and culture
- Always something going on
- Energetic
- Friendly
- Small town but urban feel
- The ideal university town
- One big community
- Small town charm
- Vibrant arts and culture niche
- Affordable
- Scenic – natural elements (Northumberland strait, Bay of Fundy)
- Multi-cultural – students and towns people

4. What do citizens in Southeastern New Brunswick expect from their community today?

- Services – snow removal, activities, options, arts, restaurants/retail, hospital, education
- Safety
- People choose a small town for: Sense of community, walkability
- Parks
- Affordable - inexpensive real estate, taxes
- Employment opportunities – can also work in Moncton
- Good reputation
- Vibrancy
- Nature – eco-friendly, sustainable

5. Why would people want to visit Sackville?

- Easy to visit, i.e. close to the highway
- Well-situated – a good home base for travelling in the area+
- Waterfowl park - Bird watching
- Mix of arts, culture and nature – Theater, music, Art galleries
- Genuine, friendly and hospitable people
- Restaurants, Farmers market, Coffee shops
- Cute, little small town
- Good stopover on the way to something else
- Accidental visitors
- Genealogical visitors – people tracing their family roots

6. Why would people want to move to Sackville?

- Community – small, activity center, you can get involved in anything, social interactions create sense of community
- Don't have to drive – walk, bike everywhere
- Well situated - close to a major, growing city and within driving distance of other big cities
- Hospital, golf course, university and lots of stuff to do all in a small town
- Walking trails, nature, fresh air
- Not a lot of traffic
- Food – farmer's market, really good local food and farms – dairy, beef, seafood
- Lots of things to do – evening activities, socializing, always something to do
- University and town are very intertwined – liberal arts flavour
- It's like the nicest neighborhood in Halifax
- Cost of living
- Quiet and friendly town
- Welcoming, friendly, relaxed – you can be imbedded into the community very quickly
- A little slower lifestyle
- Safe

7. What would you like Marketing to achieve for the Town of Sackville?

- Bring people into town (off the highway, drive through the town)

- Increase tourism (get a lot of European travellers – why? How can we capitalize on that?)
- Define who Sackville is – positioning statement
- Need to market to the people in town first to create a personality for the town
- Promote the town as a food and drink destination
- Sackville could be New Brunswick's food town – 26 restaurants for a town of only 5,000 people
- Culinary tourism, food innovation from University
- Buy local - Would like to see citizens live more of their life in Sackville – they don't grocery shop in town, don't frequent local businesses
- Bring young families to town
- More traffic but not too much growth
- Guide so everyone becomes a town ambassador and can easily answer "what's there to do in Sackville?"
- Keep people in the community for a few days
- Attract skilled labour
- 1<sup>st</sup> time tourists see the ocean when travelling from QC or ON. "It all starts here".
- From NS and PEI, first touch on NB
- Play on "exit 506", which is the NB area code
- 14,000 cars drive by every day – we need to get them off the highway and into Town
- Make people aware of what's going on in Sackville
- Attract more smaller businesses
- Signage on highway – have a little banner on the bottom for MtA but doesn't do much for the Town – need to be more aggressive
- MtA is currently working on an updated website. Could do a better job of promoting Sackville on the website – survey showed there wasn't a clear understanding of what Sackville is
- Micro-site for prospective students – video view book of campus life, including Sackville
- Generate momentum for the town and the university – build on character and uniqueness
- Strategic action points should be: grow population, business growth and MtA

8. What's missing in your business mix?

- Gap analysis of Sackville to see what's missing – have evidence to show what's needed and how it could be successful in town
- Bulk food store
- Nightlife - Not too much to do at night, after dinner
- Practical shopping
- Group activities
- More diverse food options for International students
- Another option for local produce, besides the market
- Higher quality restaurants
- Women and men's apparel
- Outdoor apparel
- Campground for tourists
- Most of the downtown is restaurants, need more retail (general merchandise, specialty retail)
- Accommodations with restaurants

9. What type of business makes sense in Sackville?

- Appealing to students but good for tourists in summer, too
- Sappyfest – keep doing it and do even more festivals like it
- Industrial park – lots of land and great location for a transportation company
- Create your own job businesses
- Collaboration with the University
- Experiential learning
- Industrial park could get into attracting food production (cranberry) and distribution
- Farmer's market allows for food entrepreneurs
- A lot of really good farms – dairy, beef, seafood from the ocean
- Anything that supports/compliments the university
- Academic jobs but not at the University
- Knowledge economy
- Town has a lot of environmental, non-profit organizations, companies related to wildlife, good place for it
- Enterprise and start-up community – could become an incubator for social engagement and social entrepreneurship

- Writers, journalists, bloggers, at-home businesses

10. What information channels do you use most frequently?

- Website
- Social media
- Digital marketing
- Booking.com
- Expedia
- Blogs
- Newspaper
- Radio

11. What channels do you think would work best to promote the Town of Sackville?

- Social media
- Aging population still requires printed material
- Printed visitors guide is well-received by tourists
- Times and transcript – needs to reach the right markets
- Highway signage
- Signage at the service exit for the weigh station – could be developed into an advertised rest stop with comprehensive maps of what's in town and where to go to eat, drink, explore
- \*festivals that are run by the Town are not great – local businesses don't even get involved
- Sappyfest is run by a Board of Directors and is very well supported and attended
- Need a digital media strategy – more reach, more bang for your buck

Opportunities:

- City could buy the parking lot near the car dealership and put in a charging station for cars and spaces for RVs – you could charge your car while you go to the thrift store, buy records, get a coffee, grab a few groceries
- Lean-to structures for farmers market – bring it all into town
- Patios are amazing – need to work on filling them
- If Sackville had another block, it would complete the downtown nicely



- Do things that bring the 3 groups in town together and are more inclusive, more general, i.e. “Sackville Days”
- Promote our successes to ourselves
- Mt A could be part of tourism destination – conferences, stay at residences
- Signage that shows “one minute down this road leads you to this... (picture of town)”
- 3-fold visitors guide with a map of downtown, stores and restaurants listed
- Accommodations – year-round writers accommodations, writing circles, engagement with music and arts
- Walking tours of arts and history
- Fort Folly – 70 acres of land, given to First Nations community. They are working on a strategic plan to develop that land
- Develop Lorne street to expand the downtown core

#### Challenges:

- Students don’t add a lot to the Town. 2/3 of them stay on campus all the time.
- A beautiful façade on the outside but economically depressed, big wealth and employment gap, structural problems
- Citizens expect too much - Town tries to have everything for everyone
- Used to have the swan pond
- The Town does not need to promote the University, University’s top priority is to keep students on campus
- If MtA does well, the town does well
- Need directional signage
- There is commercial space available in town but it’s not all up to code
- Main street will be doing a website
- Lovely B&B’s in town are hard to find out about
- Sackville needs more skilled workers – carpenters, electricians to help build new businesses
- Need businesses to step up and commit to the success of the town – a lot of restaurants downtown closed in June and July (wood oven pizza, Korean, etc.), patios are not well-kept, it’s like they give up when students are gone. Not attractive for tourists.
- The highway sign is just a picture of what you already see out your window
- On the 16, there’s no sign so everyone stops at the Big Stop

- Have difficulty staffing positions, not a bilingual workforce
- Commercial leasing is hard and expensive
- Tourist bureau is in bad location – need to move it where people can find it, in town
- NB is no longer printing their Explore NB visitors Guide
- Sackville visitors guide has looked the same for years – need to change the format, promote what there is to do in town
- Visitors Centre doesn't even push people to go downtown
- Town does too much print – no one takes the brochure
- Town has no PR, social media is not very good and no investment in internet
- VIC isn't on google maps
- VIC costs the town a lot of money but no one goes there (no one goes to information centres anymore. Most in NS and NB are closed now)
- The town does the same thing year after year – very difficult to get them to do anything different
- Stop calling ourselves Border town, Amherst is the border town
- Need to do a better job with social media – currently very event focused, need more photo-based beauty shots of the town, more video clips of the town and what there is to do
- Mt A does its own marketing of the town, i.e. “The ideal University town”, need more cohesion
- Campus is a no parking, pedestrian campus

### **Sackville schools 2020 group**

- Bring 21<sup>st</sup> century education to Sackville
- Vision is to have a community campus that includes a centralized library, athletic facilities, mental health resources, daycare, senior care, partner with MtA.
- Develop creativity, collaboration, resilience in young people
- If Sackville had a leading-edge education system, the Town would be even more attractive