

### **ABOUT THE SOLUTION CENTER**

The Main Street Solution Center is a free access portal to resources for communities and organizations working to revitalize and strengthen their local economies. The Solution Center's curated resources are designed to help guide and inspire local leaders and advocates as they navigate the complexities of downtown and neighborhood business district revitalization and economic growth.

### ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP

This Main Street Solution Center publication was underwritten by Michigan Main Street and Main Street Iowa. Their generous support demonstrates a shared vision and ongoing commitment to freely share knowledge, experience, tools, and best practices to fuel revitalization and economic growth in their own communities, and in locales spanning the nation.

### ABOUT THE CREATORS

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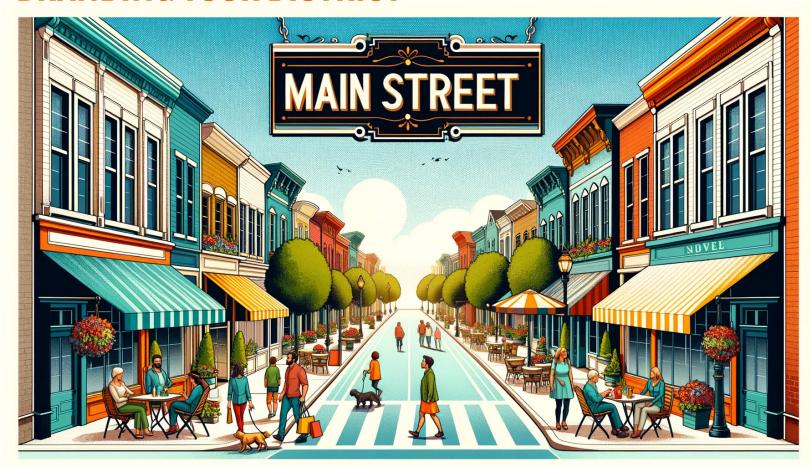
#### PRODUCTION DETAILS

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# **BRANDING YOUR DISTRICT**



### What is Community Branding?

Community or district branding refers to the process of creating a unique identity, image, and reputation for a specific community, neighborhood, or district. This branding effort aims to capture and communicate the distinctive characteristics, values, culture, and atmosphere of the area to both residents and outsiders. The primary goals of community or district branding include:

**Attracting Tourism:** By creating a strong, appealing brand, an area can attract visitors interested in its unique attractions, events, or local culture.

**Economic Development:** A well-branded community can attract businesses, investors, and developers by showcasing the area as vibrant, thriving, and conducive to growth.

**Community Pride:** Effective branding can foster a sense of pride among residents, enhancing community cohesion and satisfaction.

**Differentiation:** It helps differentiate the area from other neighborhoods or districts, highlighting its unique selling points (USPs) and reasons to visit, live, or invest there.

**Marketing and Promotion:** A clear and compelling brand makes it easier to market the community or district through various channels, attracting attention and interest from a wider audience.

The process involves identifying the key attributes, values, and experiences that define the community, and then creating a consistent and engaging brand message that can be communicated through logos, slogans, marketing materials, events, and digital presence. The goal is to create a strong, positive perception that resonates with both the internal community and external audiences.



# **WHAT MAKES UP A BRAND SYSTEM?**

A downtown or district management organization brand kit, designed to promote and maintain the identity of a community-focused initiative, typically includes a range of elements that ensure consistency and recognition across all forms of communication and marketing. Here's what is commonly found in a brand kit:

**Logo Design:** The centerpiece of the brand, available in various formats (full color, black and white, vertical, horizontal) to fit different uses and backgrounds.

**Color Palette:** A selection of primary and secondary colors that represent the brand's visual identity, including specific color codes (e.g., CMYK, RGB, HEX) for consistency across digital and print mediums.

**Typography:** Guidelines on font styles, sizes, and usages for headings, subheadings, and body text to maintain uniformity in all written communications.

**Brand Guidelines Manual:** A comprehensive document detailing how to use the logo, color palette, typography, and other visual and verbal brand elements correctly. It may include dos and don'ts, spacing specifications, and examples of proper and improper uses.

**Stationery Templates:** Templates for business cards, letterheads, envelopes, and other stationery items that feature the brand's visual elements.

**Marketing Collaterals:** Templates or examples for brochures, flyers, posters, and other promotional materials that adhere to the brand's aesthetic.

**Digital Assets:** This includes website design guidelines, email signature templates, social media icons, and profile/cover images that align with the brand identity.

**Signage and Banners:** Guidelines and templates for outdoor and indoor signs, wayfinding signage, banners, and flags that feature the brand's logo and colors.

**Merchandising:** Guidelines for branded merchandise, such as T-shirts, hats, mugs, bags and other items, ensuring that products consistently represent the brand identity.

**Imagery Style:** A guide to the types of images and photography that complement the brand, including style, tone, and subjects that align with the brand's message and values.

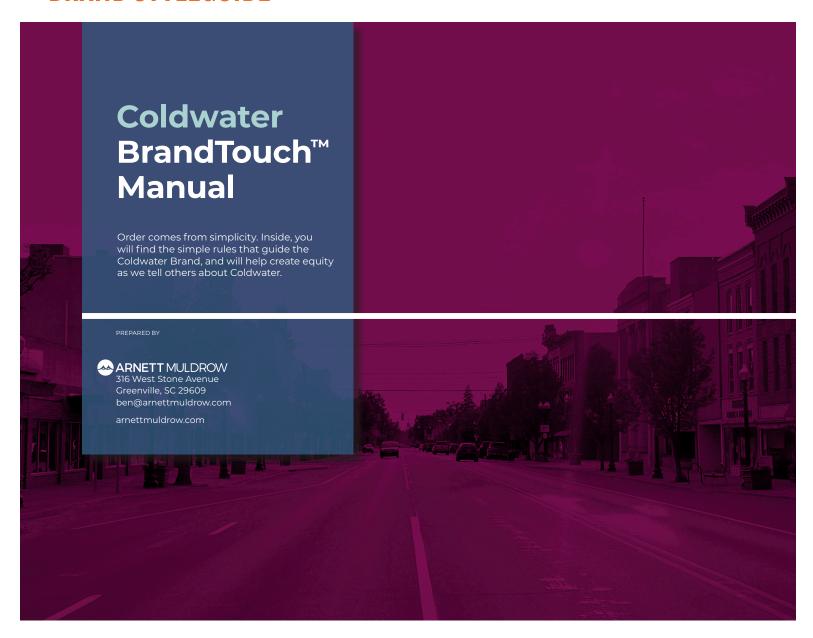
**Messaging Framework:** Key messages, taglines, and a tone of voice guide that outlines how the brand communicates its values and objectives to the public.

**Social Media Guidelines:** Recommendations for how to use social media effectively, including profile setups, post formats, hashtags, and engagement strategies that reflect the brand's identity.

Creating a brand kit like this helps an organization maintain a cohesive and recognizable identity across all touchpoints, fostering brand recognition, trust, and engagement within the community and beyond.



### **BRAND STYLEGUIDE**



An organization would utilize their brand style guide as a crucial tool to ensure consistency, coherence, and effectiveness in all their communication and marketing efforts. This guide serves as a comprehensive manual detailing the organization's visual and verbal identity, including specific instructions on logo usage, color palettes, typography, imagery, and messaging tone. By adhering to these guidelines, the organization ensures that every piece of content, from social media posts to promotional materials and beyond, aligns with its brand identity, reinforcing brand recognition and trust among the community, visitors, and potential investors. The style guide

helps maintain a consistent brand image across various platforms and materials, thereby enhancing the organization's professional image and the community's sense of unity and pride. Furthermore, it streamlines the creative process for staff and external vendors by providing clear, easy-to-follow instructions, ensuring that all marketing efforts effectively communicate the unique qualities and values of the district. This strategic use of the brand style guide is instrumental in building a strong, recognizable brand that resonates with the target audience and supports the organization's goals for economic vitality and community engagement.



#### 1.1 Brand Message

Your community already has a personality. The job of the brand is to preserve that personality while helping the community to realize its vision of its future.

#### A. LOGO

#### B. LOGOMARK

#### C. WORDMARK





#### 1.2

#### Logo Variants

Choosing the right dominant color for your brand is crucial. This color should appear on all your materials, including your logo and signage.

LOGO USAGE



Coldwater























#### 2.2 Color Specs



#### 3.2 Primary Typeface

### Hello I'm:

## Kopius

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMN OPQRSTUVWXYZ** abcdefghijklmn opqrstuvwxyz 1234567890

#### 2.4 Color Blindness

| OFIGINAL       | 325870  |        | AADQDO  | 648560   | 677043 | F37858 | D45192 | 813085   | 3616.52  |
|----------------|---------|--------|---------|----------|--------|--------|--------|----------|----------|
| FROTANCEIA     | 424234  | 70/DA3 | 000000  | A4A47E   | 707051 | BFEDEO | 505A39 | 71 TE 73 | 504/44   |
| PROTANOMALY    | 26 4676 | 4AFEA2 | 810.450 | 9DA876   | 68754A | DDA25C | BC7C3S | 604378   | 68 29 48 |
| DEUTERANOMA    | 403071  | 7879A3 | 646600  | A2A682   | erecs4 | CecFe2 | A2AC38 | ssafeF   | 565041   |
| DEUTERANOMALY  | 294577  | 6003A2 | 820700  | 9DAD/7   | 607746 | 09995C | 807236 | EG SAZE  | 66324A   |
| TEITANCONA     | 336068  | BOARAS | A00000  | 968 C8 F | 683058 | E00768 | CD3F40 | A06562   | 753937   |
| TESTANOMALY    | 236176  | SFASA2 | ARDIDO  | SEAUA    | 676D4D | EF715E | CF4837 | AE-4577  | 7029 47  |
| ACHROMAT OPSIA | 506050  | 900000 | CSCSCS  | 242424   | ererer | SAULUA | 343434 | 676767   | 300000   |
| ACHROMATOMALY  | 425464  | 759A95 | BRCBCA  | SEABBA   | 687558 | C28C7C | A08456 | 8.5375   | 58 20-46 |
|                |         |        |         |          |        |        |        |          |          |

#### 3.3 Secondary Typefaces

ALT GOTHIC

### Hello I'm:

### **ALTERNATE GOTHIC**

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN OPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmn opqrstuvwxyz 1234567890







4.2

Collateral

Now is the time to

put your logo on everything. AND WE MEAN

EVERYTHING.

EXPLOYES HOMETOWN

Coldwater

DOWN TOWN

DOWN TOWN

Coldwater

**DOWNTOWN** 

Coldwater

DOWNTOWN



## **SAMPLE IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE**



A brand implementation checklist serves as a comprehensive guide to ensure the consistent and effective application of a brand's identity across all internal and external touchpoints. To use a brand implementation checklist, start by reviewing each item on the list, which typically includes tasks related to updating digital assets (website, social media profiles), applying the new brand across all marketing materials (brochures, business cards, signage), training staff on brand guidelines, and launching the brand to the public through a coordinated marketing campaign. For each task, assign responsible parties, set deadlines, and mark progress to track completion. It's crucial to regularly

review and update the checklist to address any emerging branding needs or gaps. Incorporate feedback mechanisms to gather insights on the brand's reception and make adjustments as necessary to maintain brand integrity and resonance with your audience. Utilizing a brand implementation checklist in this manner ensures a unified brand experience, reinforcing brand recognition and loyalty among your target audience.



Supplemental resources in a brand kit provide guidance for the expanded implementation of the community's brand by providing guidance, tools, and examples for partner organizations and stakeholder groups to plug-in. The contents provide direction and illustrate ways the organization and partners can integrate the community or district brand in social media, events marketing, communication planning, and related activities, and a tool for measuring the brand's overall implementation.

## **ENGAGING BRAND PARTNERS**

#### HOW TO BE A BRAND PARTNER **BRAND YOUR BRAND BRAND YOUR MERCHANDISE DIGITAL PRESENCE** PLACE Hats Request interest icons Add logo to website • T-Shirts Look for brand Add logos to Facebook From here, it's completely up to you, your Coffee cups extension opportunities as a gallery community, your event, or your organization. There's no proper order, only the things that Organizational logos Decals Link from web to make sense for you! Bumper stickers community website **Street banners** Use hashtag Wayfinding signage Shopping bags Share photos of Open signs **SHARE WITH US** Cycling jerseys branded items Store hours signs We would love to hear from you Pint glasses Shopping & dining Tweet the web address about all the amazing things Guitar picks Link google photo guides you come up with to do with the Water bottles galleries to share Advertising brand. Please share images and stories of the brand at work Outdoor gear **Pocket folders** Profile pics with us **Visitor guides** Polo shirts Send other businesses Climbing chalk bags **Business cards** and organizations to Hiking stick medallions the web address **Brochures CHECK OFF ONE OF** Rain jackets Instagram people **Annual reports** THE SUGGESTIONS. AND YOU ARE A Guitar straps Maps having fun **BRAND PARTNER!** Koozies Trail guides Socks **Shopping bags** Loyalty cards Invent something

A "How to Be A Brand Partner" page is an invaluable resource for inspiring creativity among businesses, organizers, and groups, encouraging them to actively implement and embody the community brand in unique and innovative ways. This page should serve not only as a guideline but as a source of creative examples on how to integrate the brand into various aspects of their operations, events, and communications. By highlighting the benefits of brand partnership, such as increased visibility and alignment with community values, the page can

motivate stakeholders to think outside the box and explore new avenues for brand application. Encouraging user-generated content, co-branded initiatives, and community-driven projects can further foster a sense of ownership and pride in the brand. This approach not only amplifies the brand's reach and impact but also cultivates a vibrant, collaborative ecosystem where creativity flourishes, and the community brand becomes a living, breathing entity within the local landscape.



## COMMUNICATION PLANNING MATRIX

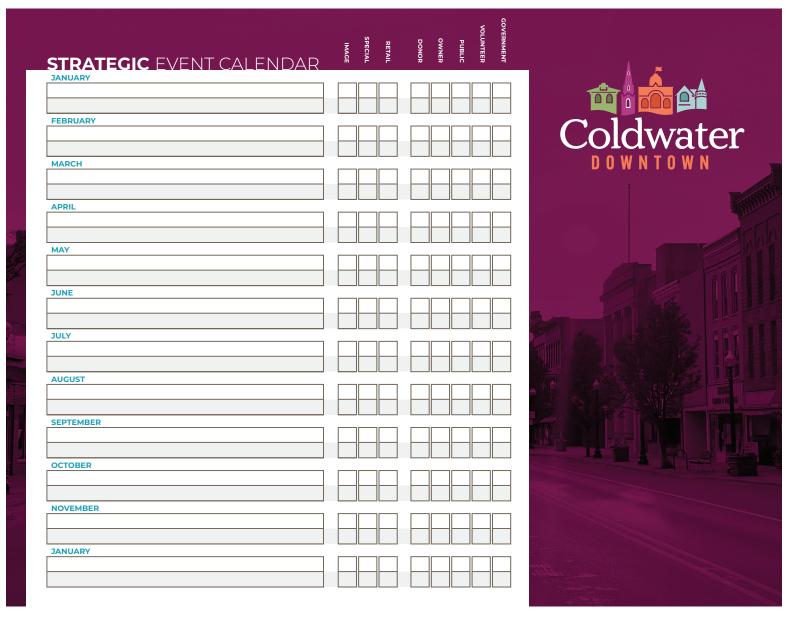
| SOCIAL  | BOARD | DESIGN | PROMOTION | ORGANIZATION | ECONOMIC<br>VITALITY |   | WEEKLY | MONTHLY | ANNUAL | DONOR | OWNER | PUBLIC | VOLUNTEER | GOVERNMENT |
|---|-------|--------|-----------|--------------|----------------------|---|--------|---------|--------|-------|-------|--------|-----------|------------|
| Facebook Page   |       |        |           |              |                      |   |        |         |        |       |       |        |           |            |
| Facebook Merchant Group Page  |       |        |           |              |                      |   |        |         |        |       |       |        |           |            |
| Facebook Volunteer Group Page   |       |        |           |              |                      | T |        |         |        |       |       |        |           |            |
| Instagram   |       |        |           |              |                      |   |        |         |        |       |       |        |           |            |
| Instagram Stories   |       |        |           |              |                      |   |        |         |        |       |       |        |           |            |
| Twitter   |       |        |           |              |                      |   |        |         |        |       |       |        |           |            |
| Pinterest Product Catalog   |       |        |           |              |                      |   |        |         |        |       |       |        |           |            |
| Pinterest Sweet Shot Catalog  |       |        |           |              |                      |   |        |         |        |       |       |        |           |            |
| Tik Tok   |       |        |           |              |                      |   |        |         |        |       |       |        |           |            |
| Press Releases<br>Web Updates   |       |        |           |              |                      |   |        |         |        |       |       |        |           |            |
| Blog Posts Newsletters IMPACT Tool  |       |        |           |              |                      |   |        |         |        |       |       |        |           |            |
| Newsletters IMPACT Tool RELATION & PRESENTATION   |       |        |           |              |                      |   |        |         |        |       |       |        |           |            |
| Newsletters  IMPACT Tool  RELATION & PRESENTATION  Council Update   |       |        |           |              |                      |   |        |         |        |       |       |        |           |            |
| Newsletters  IMPACT Tool  RELATION & PRESENTATION  Council Update  Council Presentation   |       |        |           |              |                      |   |        |         |        |       |       |        |           |            |
| Newsletters  IMPACT Tool  RELATION & PRESENTATION  Council Update  Council Presentation  Organizations Presentation                                     |       |        |           |              |                      |   |        |         |        |       |       |        |           |            |
| Newsletters  IMPACT Tool  RELATION & PRESENTATION  Council Update  Council Presentation  Organizations Presentation  Volunteer Campaign                 |       |        |           |              |                      |   |        |         |        |       |       |        |           |            |
| Newsletters  IMPACT Tool  RELATION & PRESENTATION  Council Update  Council Presentation  Organizations Presentation  Volunteer Campaign  Donor Campaign |       |        |           |              |                      |   |        |         |        |       |       |        |           |            |
| Newsletters IMPACT Tool RELATION & PRESENTATION   |       |        |           |              |                      |   |        |         |        |       |       |        |           |            |

The Main Street Communication Planning Matrix is a strategic tool designed to streamline and enhance the effectiveness of external communications. By laying out different types of communication activities (such as social media updates, press releases, and email newsletters), identifying specific target audiences (local businesses, residents, tourists), setting communication frequencies (daily, weekly, monthly), and assigning responsible parties, the matrix ensures a comprehensive and organized approach to engaging with the community and beyond. Utilizing this matrix, organizations can visually map out their communication strategy, ensuring that all messaging is consistent, timely,

and tailored to the needs and interests of each audience segment. This level of planning helps in identifying gaps or overlaps in communication, enabling more efficient resource allocation and task delegation. Moreover, it fosters collaboration among team members, as everyone clearly understands their roles and responsibilities in the communication process. Regularly reviewing and updating the matrix allows for adaptability in response to community feedback or changes in strategic objectives, keeping the organization's external communications dynamic and effective.



## STRATEGIC EVENT CALENDAR



The strategic event calendar is a pivotal tool for organizations, enabling them to meticulously plan and categorize their events throughout the year. By mapping out all strategic events on this calendar, organizations can classify each event into distinct categories such as special events, image-building events, retail promotions, or business development initiatives. This systematic categorization helps in visualizing the organization's annual event strategy at a glance, ensuring a balanced mix that caters to both community engagement and economic development goals. The strategic event calendar aids in identifying potential gaps in programming, such as periods with too few events that engage

the community or missed opportunities for retail promotions. It also highlights overlaps that could dilute event impact or strain resources. With this holistic view, organizations can make informed decisions about introducing new events or adjusting existing ones to better serve the needs of citizens and businesses alike. The strategic event calendar thus becomes not just a planning tool, but a strategic asset in enhancing the vibrancy, cohesion, and economic vitality of the community.



## **PHOTO ASSETS**

Creating a comprehensive photo asset library is essential for capturing the essence of your district's life and vibrancy throughout the year. These quality images are invaluable for creating engaging designs, social media posts, and marketing materials. Here's a checklist to help you get started:

**Seasonal Landscapes and Street Scenes:** Capture the changing seasons, showcasing how your district looks in spring, summer, fall, and winter. Include bustling streets, quiet mornings, and festive decorations as they change throughout the year.

**Local Businesses:** Document the exteriors and interiors of local shops, cafes, and businesses. Highlight unique storefronts, popular products, and special services offered as well as the local business owners themselves.

**Public Art and Street Art:** Document murals, sculptures, and other forms of public art that add color and interest to your district.

**People and Daily Life:** Capture candid and posed shots of residents and visitors enjoying daily life and special moments in the district. Include diverse groups to reflect the community inclusively.

**Nature and Green Spaces:** Showcase parks, gardens, and green spaces within the district, highlighting places where people can relax and connect with nature.

**Night Scenes:** Include images of your district after dark, focusing on well-lit streets, nightlife, and any evening events.

#### PHOTO ASSET CHECKLIST Examples Main Street Context Restaurants Davtime Restaurant Front-Day Nighttime Restaurant Front- Night Winter Dining Room w/ People Holidays Outdoor Dining w/ People Festival Food Shot Serving Shot Drone Farmers Market Office/Co-work **Building Front** Setup Produce Detail Interior Shot Product Detail **Employees working** Vendor Shot Saavy Logos on things **Busy Shot** Transaction Shot Parades Public Safety Patio Dining Event Setup Pets Rike Racks Marketing **Busy Shot Business Owner** Transaction Shot People Storefront Day with People Storefront Night Context with People Product Detail Transaction Shot

**Retail and Dining Experiences:** 

Photograph shopping experiences, dining, and entertainment options, emphasizing the variety and quality available.

#### Infrastructure and Amenities:

Document transportation options, parking facilities, benches, lighting, and other infrastructure that improves the quality of life in the district.

#### **Before and After Project Photos:**

If applicable, include before and after shots of improvement projects, renovations, or events setup to showcase the district's development over time.

# Signature Dishes and Local Products: Highlight local cuisine,

signature dishes from restaurants, and unique products from shops.
Remember, the goal is to build a diverse and dynamic library that

represents the full spectrum of experiences your district offers.

Regularly update your photo library to include new businesses, events, and changes in the landscape. Ensure you have the necessary permissions for commercial use of the photos, and consider organizing photo walks or contests to engage the community in contributing to this valuable asset.

**Community Events and Festivals:** Cover a variety of events, from farmers' markets to holiday parades, cultural festivals to art shows. Capture crowds, vendor stalls, and special performances.

**Historic Landmarks and Architecture:** Include photos of historic buildings, landmarks, and significant architectural details that define the character of your district.



## **SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY**



Implementing a social media strategy that utilizes monthly themes and daily post suggestions is a highly effective way to create a robust and coherent messaging platform for any organization. By organizing content around specific themes for each month, the organization can ensure that its messaging is not only relevant and engaging but also varied and comprehensive, covering all aspects of its mission, events, and community involvement. Daily post suggestions within these themes further streamline content creation, providing a clear roadmap for what to share each day, from highlighting local businesses and community stories to promoting events and initiatives. This approach

enables the organization to take advantage of prescheduling tools, allowing for the bulk organization and automatic publication of content. Such efficiency in planning and executing social media strategy maximizes the use of limited resources, ensuring a consistent and impactful online presence without the need for daily, hands-on management. This not only saves time but also allows for strategic allocation of human and financial resources towards other critical areas of the organization's operation, enhancing overall productivity and effectiveness in achieving its goals.



### **BRAND IMPLEMETATION SCORECARD**

| BRANDSCORE MAINSTREET   | POINT            | YOUR SCORE | TO DO |                 |
|---|------------------|------------|-------|-----------------|
| 1. Do You Have A Defined Typeface?                                  | 5 points         |            |       |                 |
| 2. Do You Have A Color Palette?                                     | 5 points         |            |       |                 |
| 3. Do You Have An Organization Logo?                                | 5 points         |            |       |                 |
| 4. Do You Have An Destination Logo?                                 | 5 points         |            |       | Coldwater       |
| 5. Do Your Committes Have Logos?                                    | 2 points         |            |       | DOWNTOWN        |
| 6. Do You Have A Styleguide?  | 5 points         |            |       |                 |
| 7. Do You Have An Org Branded Presentation Template?                | 2 points         |            |       | 3555011         |
| 8. Do You Have An Org Branded Business Card, Letterhead & Envelope? | 2 points/ 6 max  |            |       |                 |
| 9. Is Your Org Logo On Your Website?                                | 5 points         |            |       |                 |
| 10. Do You Have An Org Brochure?                                    | 5 points         |            |       |                 |
| 11. Is Your Org Logo Your Facebook Profile?                         | 3 points         |            |       |                 |
| 12. Is Your Logo Your Instagram Profile?                            | 3 points         |            |       |                 |
| 13. Do You Know What Twitter Is For?                                | 3 points         |            |       |                 |
| 14. Do You Have A Traditional Or Electronic Newsletter?             | 2 points         |            |       |                 |
| 15. Do You Have A Uniform Hashtag?                                  | 2 points         |            | 0     | <b>数。據至</b> 耳。三 |
| 16. Do Our Events Amplify Our Brand?                                | 5 points/ 20 max |            |       | THE THE RES     |
| 17. Does Your Gateway Include Your Logo?                            | 5 points         |            | 4     |                 |
| 18. Your Street Banners Feature Your Destination Brand.             | 3 points         |            |       | - N H B         |
| 19. Do You Make Your Volunteers Feel Part Of The Brand?             | 5 points         |            |       |                 |
| 20. Do You Address Parking With Your Brand?                         | 5 points         |            |       |                 |
| 21. Is There Logo Apparel?  | 2 points         |            |       |                 |
| 22. Member Or Investor Benefits                                     | 2 points         |            |       |                 |
|   |                  |            |       |                 |

The Brand Score Self-Scoring Matrix is an invaluable tool for organizations aiming to evaluate the effectiveness of their brand implementation and identify areas for improvement. By providing a structured framework for self-assessment, this matrix allows organizations to rate their performance across various branding dimensions such as visibility, consistency, engagement, differentiation, and audience perception. Each category is scored based on predefined criteria, helping to pinpoint strengths and highlight weaknesses in the brand's current implementation strategy. This introspective analysis not only reveals how well the brand aligns with its intended

identity and values but also uncovers "low-hanging fruit" – areas where small, manageable changes could lead to significant improvements in brand perception and effectiveness. By focusing on these opportunities, organizations can strategically allocate resources and efforts to enhance their brand's impact and resonance with their target audience. The Brand Score Self-Scoring Matrix thus serves as a roadmap for continuous brand refinement, guiding organizations towards more cohesive, impactful brand experiences that drive engagement and loyalty.

