

DOWNTOWN BUSINESS TIPS

JULY, 2011

BED PACKETS FOR NGCSU RESIDENCE HALL STUDENTS

Each year, the Residence Life Office at North Georgia College & State University puts together bed packets for all residents to receive at Fall semester move-in. These packets contain information, discounts, coupons, and give-away items from various campus organizations & departments as well as local businesses. There are 1346 total residents (446 males, 888 females). Please submit an accurate number of items/flyers for the population you want to reach.

If you choose to participate-

- let us know how many items you have included
- let us know what populations you want the infor-

mation to reach

- **have items in the Residence Life Office no later than noon on July 29th.**

These items must be received in the Residence Life Office (Barnes Hall 112) no later than noon on July 29th in order to be included.

More Information

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HERITAGE RETAILING, [CAROLE SUMMERS MORRIS](#) AND [CURT COTTLE](#)

What is Heritage Retailing?

Heritage retailing is finding and packaging the locally made and grown assets of your community or region, and making it as easy as possible for both residents and visitors to purchase local products. Usually, these goods are local crafts, foods, and music that reflect the history and/or culture of your community. There will always be a need for a variety of goods and a variety of price points for consumers, whether they're locals shopping for gifts or items for themselves or visitors seeking a vacation experience.

How to Capture the Visitor Dollar?

As already mentioned, shopping is one of the most important activities on a tourist's agenda. After meals and lodging, visitors to an area spend the most money on souvenirs (t-shirts, hats, and other items featuring the name of the place they are visiting); crafts (to use and display as well as holiday items); and local food products (usually value-added products, such as jams, jellies, local honey, salsa, etc.) that are packaged to be stored, packed, and shipped. If your community already has a shop that specializes in "buy local" – then you are ahead of the game. In many communities, we find that there isn't a convenient place for a visitor to find all of these items. This is not only critical to the success of such efforts, but also allows you to market sites in your community where people can watch various items being made. Great examples of successful heritage retailing exist throughout the nation. Some of these efforts are very strategic while others are "off the cuff" efforts that have taken off. No matter whether they were planned or not – heritage retailing is a great way to increase the economic impact of purchasing and producing, while keeping sales revenues in your local community, re-

gion, or state. Many states and regions have strategies to help communities cultivate the regional products and market them to visitors. Thus, linkages are important to a successful heritage retailing program.

The majority of art, craft, clothing, and home décor purchases are unplanned. Therefore these items must be located in places that visitors will be easily able to find. Ideally, that is on Main Street, but don't assume that if you put it there they will come. Cross collaboration with local attractions, hotels, and restaurants will help ensure that visitors will know where to find these items. Offering adequate shipping and packing resources can mean the difference in ringing the cash register. Working with local businesses on this service is a great way to make sure that your community is not missing a sale! Invite local interested retail outlets to attend a workshop on providing a higher level of shipping and packing. Pool resources to purchase bubble wrap and boxes and buy in bulk for several stores. Do you already have a shop that does this well? Use it as a "trainer" for others in the district. Another great way to encourage buying local is to develop a "trail" or map that shows the studios, farms, and shops in your area where a visitor can purchase heritage products, while possibly meeting the producer as well. Adding an element of place and the opportunity to meet the artist or maker gives the product an "emotional value" that cannot be conveyed by just an item on a shelf. These are great opportunities to get tourists to explore the community and to cultivate an appreciation for the history and culture of your town, county, parish, or region.

[FULL ARTICLE](#)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

[August 5](#)

[First Friday Night Concert Series](#)

Kurt Thomas

6:30 PM, Hancock Park

Every First Friday

May - October

[Dahlonega Farmers & Artists Market!](#)

Every Tuesday & Saturday

May 7 - October 29,

7 am-3pm, Hancock Park

[Appalachian Jam](#)

Every Saturday

April 23 - October 8,

2-5 PM,

Gold Museum Lawn

[FIND US ON FACEBOOK!](#)

“DAHLONEGA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (MAIN STREET)”

MOBILE APPS FOR RETAILERS: A QUICK LOOK, [RICK SEGAL](#)

By the time you are reading this article which was written 6-10 days ago, everything that I am writing about might have changed. Of course I am exaggerating a little bit but that is how fast the world of mobile commerce, also known as m-commerce, changes. Just when you think you have a handle on the subject, something new is introduced. Let me give you the current and accepted concepts that are changing the face of retailing via our smart phones. First (and the application I love) is texting. When we see an ad for specials or tips and we type in a number in response, 30 seconds later we have that special or tip. This allows instant advertising. What we, the consumer, have done is opted in to a retailer's email list. Anyone who works in retail knows the challenges of enticing people to sign up for email lists. Texting allows us to sign up customers without them actually being in the store--and the best part, the open rate is 97%. Second application is the QR codes (similar to bar codes) scanning which allows customers to use their smart phones as a check-out device. This will give you information about the product and, in some cases, where else it can be purchased. I have tried this a few times and at first I felt like I was a spy, but when I looked around, I saw three other people doing the same thing

with their smart phones. Third application is the use of coupons and the use of coupon services, a two for one feature. The first way of couponing is simply sending an email to your list and the customer can print the coupon if they wish or just bring in their smart phone and the coupon can be scanned at check-out. The other application is these coupon services, such as Groupon, Coupon Cabin, and literally thousands of others. The confusing part about some of these services is that not all of their coupons will work and will give you their percentage of success rate. There is a major shift in the customer's way of doing business and that is before they walk into the store, or even while they're in the store, they check to see what coupons are available. The next big trend falls into the category of So-Lo which is the abbreviation for Social Media Local. As the name implies, it is pinpointed local marketing. Some of the leaders in the field are Foursquare, Gowalla and Facebook Places. As Foursquare advertising states, "Foursquare gives you and your friends new ways to explore your city." It enables a retailer to pinpoint when their customers are in their area. These services give you and your friends new ways to explore your city and surroundings and another way to stay in touch. This allows savvy marketers to know

when their customers are in their local area. here are other services that provide messages/signals that are sent when you are in a specific area which allows retailers to send text messages when you are in their marketing area. An example would be a restaurant that you have opted into for their notification service, but you don't live in the area and visit infrequently. Anytime you are in their area, you will get text messages about what's happening at the restaurant. The other part, and the reason for its popularity, is that it will inform you, and any of your buddies, who are in the area. Just as Gmail lets us know who's online, these services will tell us when friends are in the area, and that's a wonderful opportunity for marketers to capitalize on. It's important to realize that the majority of companies that are playing in this arena are less than five years old. The majority of these companies are run by a very young, creative, tech-savvy group who look at the world very differently than the traditional marketer. That's why I'm hearing the term "stop the world I want to get off", from seasoned, traditional marketers. My advice to all is fasten your seatbelts. There will be updates on this topic because I see change happening in the next few hours.

FREE TOOLS YOU CAN USE - GOOGLE ALERTS, [RON E. SIMMONS](#)

Google Alerts is defined on the Google network website as "monitoring the internet for interesting new content." (Check it out at <http://www.google.com/alerts>.) So, what exactly does "interesting new content" mean to you? To me, this would be any mention of my name, my business, or even my competitors' names. I am reminded of a conversation with a client who confidently told me that "we're not on the web because we keep a low profile." With that, the gauntlet of challenge was thrown. Within a few keystrokes and seconds, I was able to show the client twelve customer ratings on the Internet which addressed their business by name and joyfully, nine were good!! Nine were good. What about the other three? Not so good. Now that was "interesting content" to my friend. Google is scanning the Internet constantly, noticing everything, and filing it away. **Google Alerts** is a tool that is provided for your free use by Google, allowing you to use Google to search for key words, terms, phrases, etc. and to receive whatever it finds as a clickable link with a short description in your email account. You can choose to read it, answer it if need be, or just delete and ignore. But YOU have the power of knowing that "interesting content" relative to you is there and to respond to it in a timely way. The Google Alerts homepage gives these examples of uses for **Google Alerts**: monitoring a developing news story, keeping current on a competitor or industry, getting the latest on a celebrity or event or keeping tabs on your favorite sports teams. What would the clever business owner add to that list- a business name? valuable employee or owner's names? product lines or lines of competing businesses names? Engage that wonderful entrepreneurial imagination and use Google for "monitoring the internet for interesting new content." For help with this or other business opportunities, please contact the [Gainesville SBDC](#).



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The "Downtown Business Tips" newsletter is intended to provide merchants with monthly information about improving their business's position in the market! Please send your comments & suggestions to Rebecca Shirley.

Use our website www.dahlongegadda.org for business resources.

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