

PROJECT REPORT - CHRISTMAS CRAWL 2013

1. OVERVIEW

Thirty independent businesses in the town each contributed to a prize fund. Shoppers needed to visit all of them to collect a sticker from each. Completed maps were entered into a prize draw.

2. DETAIL OF WHAT TOOK PLACE

This was done as part of a national scheme, albeit with a variation to the entry requirements, as a result the design of the publicity materials was available for free. Only independent businesses could take part, but they could be shops cafés or restaurants. Thirty businesses were recruited, who each contributed a minimum of £40 value to the Prize Pot, in a mix of cash and vouchers. Their location was marked on a map, together with their name and contact details - this work was done as an in-kind donation by MM&B Studios.

Copies of the map were available for free in the shops, the tourist information centre and other venues including the Buxton campus of the University of Derby, accommodation providers, restaurants and hairdressers / nail boutiques. It was available for download from the Visit Buxton website. Posters were put up around the town, and the crawl was covered by local media.

Crawlers had to visit each business to collect a sticker on their map, and their completed maps were entered into a draw - first prize was £1,000 worth of cash and vouchers, second prize £200 of cash and vouchers and third prize was a 'Spa Day' donated by the University of Derby Buxton.

The prizes were awarded at an event in The Green Man Gallery, which was attended by more than 50 people including the local businesses, media and stakeholders. The University of Derby catering students provided and served the refreshments.

3. ASSESSMENT AGAINST AIMS AND SUCCESS CRITERIA

The aim of the project was to support independent businesses by:

1. introducing potential new customers to their stores
2. specific publicity by advertising their names and locations
3. general publicity about why independent stores are good for the local economy
4. start to stimulate environment for introduction of shop local loyalty scheme
5. team building for organisers, with view to introducing a shop local scheme in Spring

The measurable success criteria of the project were as follows:

- 30 participating businesses - This was achieved
- Good local press and social media coverage ó This was achieved with coverage in the Buxton Advertiser, Pure Buxton and Visit Peak District & Derbyshire website. High Peak Radio did not take part in this years promotion.
- More than 50 completed entries - This was not achieved, the actual number of completed entries received was 24. One reason for this was a local business being closed in the New Year due to illness . Some retailers applied a sticker to up to 80 maps.

In the future documentation of guidance for retailers and support staff together with a set of terms and conditions will hopefully assist with supporting , promoting and increasing the number of participants .

Quote from the 2013 winner Lyndsay Jones:

"I do try to use local businesses when I can and one thing the crawl has done is introduce me to some I'd not used before. For example, I used to walk past Minibugs on the way to the hairdressers and think that I must go in when I was looking for presents for the grandchildren etc then wouldn't remember when the time came! But, having been in on the 1st crawl, I've been getting things ever since! I've also found a new computer repairer, another local shoe shop and so on. I feel that, if we don't use our local traders, we have ourselves to blame if we lose them."

4. ANY FURTHER BENEFITS

There are a number of retailers who have been meeting and networking since working together on this project. This group are sharing their best practices and providing support to each other during these difficult economic times. It is hoped that this group of retailers will work together again on similar projects.

5. COSTS

The project was allocated a budget of £50 for printing posters and stickers. In the event this cost was rolled up with the main printing bill and paid by HPBC.

Other costs included £25.50 on map location stickers, £19.99 for printing of invitations to the prize presentation evening and £3.59 presentation bags, total of £49.08.

There was a surplus of £40 from retail sponsorship giving an outstanding balance of £9.08. The organisers of this project are happy to cover this outstanding balance meaning that this project did not require any financial support from the Buxton Town Team.

6. LEARNING POINTS FOR THE FUTURE

- Check that businesses will actually be open throughout the period.
- Consider specifying a minimum number of businesses to be visited rather than all thirty - say 25.
- Consider allowing more businesses to take part, with a lower number to be visited, but specifying how many need to be from each area.
- Ensure that more traders are involved in the organising of the project, this year although there were a number of traders met to discuss the project, the work was actually carried out by only 2 traders.
- Put clearer instructions on the map on how to take part and also ensure that all business taking part are given a set of clear and precise instructions on what their involvement is.

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