

BID Bulletin

Riverside Downtown Business Improvement District



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The next RDP monthly luncheon will be Tuesday, September 26th at the Hyatt Place Riverside at 3500 Market Street with Just Pastries catering.

Cherie Crutcher will provide an update on Riverside Community Hospital.

The cost of the luncheon is \$20 with reservation by Friday prior to the meeting, or \$22 at the door.

Please call the RDP Office at (951) 781-7335 for reservations.

Reservations not cancelled by the prior Friday will be charged.

The meeting is sponsored by



Fall Event Update

Riverside Art and Music Festival



The Riverside Downtown Partnership (RDP) and the Riverside Arts Council (RAC) are once again partnering on the second annual Riverside Art and Music Festival. The event is scheduled for Saturday, September 9th from 4 pm to 10 pm.

The event celebrates arts and music in Riverside and features local artists and arts group offering demonstrations, workshops, and sales. There will also be performances on the stage located at the intersection of Ninth and Orange. Cultural groups will perform from 4 pm to 6:30 pm and then Inland Empire favorite bands will play until 10 pm. Top Shelf Brass Band plays at 7 pm, Kiki Diago at 8 pm, and then Quita Penas, who recently played at Coachella, will play at 9 pm.

The art and cultural exhibits will be on Orange from University to just before Ninth, and on Ninth from Lemon to Main Street. Look for local artists such as Cosme Cordova, Dave Warner, Jim Behrman, and Nick Bahula. Also exhibiting will be local arts organizations such as the Riverside Community Arts Association, Division 9 Gallery, Riverside Art Museum, and On Pointe Dance studio. There will also be Chalk Art at Ninth and Main featuring local artists who will demonstrate chalk art to young aspiring artists.

Restaurants and retailers are encouraged to be open for festival attendees. RDP will have an information table and businesses can have flyers and other material at the

table. For more information, visit www.riversideartandmusicfestival.com

Riverside Citywide Day of Service

This event in honor of Riverside's First Responders will take place on Monday, September 11th at City Hall, starting at 8:30 am with ceremonial music provided by the UCR Pipe Band. The official ceremony will start at 9:11 am with Presentation of the Colors by the Riverside Police & Fire Honor Guard, then a presentation by Mayor William "Rusty" Bailey. The event will close with the National Anthem / God Bless America presented by La Sierra University, Dept. of Music.

Riverside Mariachi Festival

The annual festival will take place on Saturday, September 23rd from 9 am to 8:30 pm at Historic Fairmount Park. The festival celebrates Hispanic culture and features fabulous music, mariachi and ballet folklórico acts from all over Southern California. Attendees can enjoy delicious cultural foods, shop among the many vendors and view the community art displays.

For information about how to become involved in the 2017 Mariachi Festival as a vendor or sponsor, please call 951.826.5303

And in October look for:

Riverside's Got Talent – the Sixth Edition

The Kiwanis Club of Uptown Riverside will host its 6th Annual Talent Show on November 5, 2017 at the Riverside Municipal Auditorium. Live auditions will be held beginning October 2, 2017. Audition Applications may be submitted online and all local talent is invited to apply. One of last year's winners, C.J. Wright, is now appearing on Broadway in "Motown, The Musical". Visit www.kiwanisuptownriverside.com/riversidesgot-talent/ or call 951-682-9590 for more information.

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Downtown Riverside Fashion District's Fall Show

The event will take place on Thursday, October 5th at 6 pm in the City Hall Breezeway on Main Street. Fashion meets a local cause as the Riverside Downtown Partnership partners with The Pink Ribbon Place, a program of Riverside Community Health Foundation, to kick off National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The show will feature unique fashions and accessories available from retailers in downtown Riverside and from The Pink Ribbon Place's Pink Ribbon Thrift shop. Following the show will be a candlelight vigil to honor those who have been impacted by breast cancer in our community.

Long Night of Arts and Innovation

The bi-annual celebration of arts and innovation will take place on Thursday, October 12, 2017 from 5 pm to midnight. This year's event will be bigger and better, showcasing the best STEM and creative arts projects from California Baptist University, California State University, San Bernardino; La Sierra University; Riverside Community College District;

Downtown BID Renewal for 2018

Each year the Riverside Downtown Partnership (RDP) submits a report to City Council for the renewal of the Riverside Downtown Parking and Business Improvement District (Downtown BID) for the upcoming calendar year. The report outlines the planned activities to be funded by the assessment on all businesses within the boundaries, equal to 100% of the annual business tax levied by the City of Riverside. City Council sets a date for a public hearing to review the report and approve the continuation of the Business Improvement levy. The City collects the levy on behalf of the Downtown BID and provides up to \$100,000 of matching money annually for improvements downtown.

RDP has administered the Downtown BID since its establishment in 1986. RDP works with the City and with other organizations to best utilize available resources and to work towards the effective implementation of programs and activities funded by the Downtown BID in six specific areas, parking, beautification, music in public areas, public events,

University of California, Riverside; Alvord (AUSD); Jurupa (JUSD); Riverside (RUSD) school districts, and many private schools.

The 2017 event will also feature the most innovative technologies deployed by companies like Bourns Inc., Siemens, SolarMax Technologies, and the fire and police departments of the city of Riverside. Other highlights will include performances, contests for students, and exhibits and demonstrations. For more information visit www.longnightriverside.com

Riverside Zombie Crawl

The annual celebration of all things Zombie will be held on Saturday, October 21st from 2 pm to 6 pm on Main St between University and the City Hall Breezeway. DJ Albert Figueroa will MC the event and provide suitably spooky music while attendees enjoy Zombie themed carnival games, Halloween crafts, face painting and balloon art, followed by a costume contest for all ages. 

promotion of business activities, and security.

This year, the renewal process was moved ahead due to the RDP Board not meeting in September. The RDP Board of Directors approved the annual report outlining the planned 2018 activities for the Riverside Downtown Parking and Business Improvement District (Downtown BID) at its August 9th meeting. The report was submitted to City Council and it is expected that it will be formally received at the September 29th Council meeting with the Public Hearing set for October 24th.

The report has been posted for public viewing on the RDP website, www.RiversideDowntown.org The City will send out a notice to all downtown businesses advising of the date of the public hearing. The October Bid Bulletin will include a summary of the report's contents. If you have any questions regarding the BID renewal process or the report, please contact Janice Penner at the RDP office at 951-781-7339. 

RDP Welcomes New Businesses to Downtown

- Cellphone World • Gissou Mokri (Property Rental) • G-Mack's Collectibles (Antiques)
- Hot Box Smoke Shop • Law Office of Erin L Kirkpatrick • Mikan Apparel
- Nooks & Crannies (Antiques) • Patricia Miller and Stephanie Gutierrez (Property Rental)
- Petties Counseling Services • Sadhana House (Sporting)

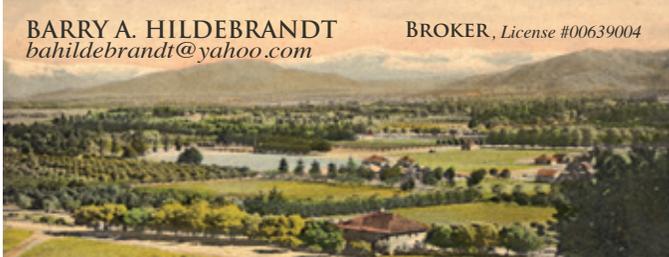
WATER

Watering restrictions have been lifted.

For more info visit:
BlueRiverside.com



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COUNCIL CORNER

Ward One Council Update

Contributed by Councilman Mike Gardner

Notice of 2017 Festival of Lights Business Meeting

Are you a downtown business impacted by the Festival of Lights event? The City is holding a meeting for downtown businesses to share information and get input. All downtown businesses are welcome to attend and I encourage you to do so.

When: Thursday, September 28, 2017 from 4 pm to 6:30 pm

Where: The Showcase at the Fox Entertainment Plaza, 3635 Market Street

If you have questions please call (951) 826-5663 to speak to one of the FOL City staff.

Streetplus Safety Patrol Contact Information

The Safety Patrols started on August 14th. To contact them, phone their hotline at 951-314-3802. You can also call their Program Manager, Bill Grace, at 951-314-2695 or



Clean + Safe + Friendly

email him at bgrace@streetplus.net. Their office is located at 3737 Main Street (Cal Tower) Suite 107.

Mike Gardner



Ward Two Council Update

Contributed by Councilman Andy Melendrez

Welcome Back to School!

It is with great pleasure that I welcome back all the students, parents and faculty from the Riverside Unified School District! Ward 2 is the proud home and location for the following five schools: Emerson Elementary, Castle View Elementary, Highland Elementary, Longfellow Elementary, John W. North High and Riverside, Stem Academy and Lincoln High School.

UCR will be welcoming new and returning Highlanders as their school year kicks off. This fall we have the following sports competing from now into early December: Women's Cross Country, Men's Cross Country, Women's Soccer, Men's Soccer and Women's Volleyball, Men's and Women's Golf. For more information on dates and events for UCR Athletics or to become a member of the Athletics Association, be sure to check out the Highlander's Athletics website, <http://www.gohighlanders.com>.

Lincoln Park Neighborhood Group:

Thank you to the Lincoln Park Neighborhood Group and the Riverside Community Health Foundation for putting on the Annual Lincoln Park National Night Out event. Thanks to donations from various groups and individuals they were able to distribute over 80 backpacks to youth in the community. The National Night Out event is a community-wide crime prevention program that is sponsored locally by the Riverside Police Department and our local businesses/communities.

Riverside Arts Academy and Harmony Project:

Riverside Arts Academy began the Summer of 2017 with a BANG! On July 3, we experienced the highest number of registrations, soaring past 600 participants enrolled that

quarter! The Riverside Arts Academy hosts a variety of classes such as structured music, dance, and visual arts at the Cesar Chavez Community Center and at Community Centers throughout Riverside.

The Harmony Project under the tutelage and guidance of the Director and world-renowned pianist Alpin Hong has also seen amazing growth. The youth orchestra has performed throughout Riverside and will be providing a special performance at the City Council Meeting on September 19th. On Wednesday October 18th The Art of Giving Gala comes to the Cesar Chavez Community Center once again. The event begins at 6:00 PM and tickets are \$25 and all donations are welcome. To donate your instruments, become a member or to volunteer, visit www.riversideartsacademy.com or call 951-826-2441.

Local Business Spotlight:

The Canyon Springs Shopping Center has an array of wonderful businesses and restaurants to choose from and it will now have the Hobby Lobby added to that list. Thank you to all who joined us for the Grand Opening Celebration on August 28th. The 55,000 square-foot store at 2663 Canyon Springs Parkway was the home of Walmart until it moved to an even larger building down the street. The Oklahoma City retail chain specializes in arts and crafts and home decor. The Riverside store will be its 42nd in the state. The business hours will be 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday through Saturday. For more information visit: www.hobbylobby.com.

Andy Melendrez



Things Retailers Should Never Say

by Shari Waters

We all know that a positive tone and language are highly important when it comes to good customer service, but many retailers still use phrases that may give the wrong image and negatively impact our customers' shopping experience.

The following phrases used in a customer service setting can kill a sale and possibly lose a customer. Here are some sayings retailers should avoid.

I Don't Know

Customers don't expect retailers to know everything, but when it comes to answering a product question or other inquiry, they do expect the salesperson to be confident enough in their knowledge of the business to provide an answer.

Better: "That's a good question. Let me find out for you."

All Sales Are Final

Your shop's policy may not allow returns on clearance merchandise or other items. It's fine to let the customer know this, but retailers need to be flexible and allow a return or exchange against company policy if it comes down keeping a customer.

Better: "Let us know if you're not satisfied and we'll make it right."

Calm Down

There may not be a more infuriating phrase in customer service than this one. If a customer has reached a boiling point and is ranting away, the best thing to say is nothing. Let the customer finish. Once he or she has gotten everything out, they will begin to feel better and may be more receptive to a solution.

Better: "I apologize."

Did You See Any?

If a customer asks for a particular item you carry, chances are he/she already looked for it and didn't see it. This could mean it's out of stock or possibly still in the stock room. Even if they haven't looked for it yet, the best customer service would be to either take them to the product or go get it for them.

Better: "Yes, we stock that. I'll go see if we have any."

We're Closed

At the end of the day, the last thing a closing-shift employee wants to do is allow a shopper in after hours. Before turning away a potential sale, keep in mind that either the customer doesn't know the store hours or possibly the customer's doesn't know what time it is. Neither is a reason to be abrupt.

Better: "We close at ___ o'clock and reopen at _ o'clock. Is there something I can quickly help you with now?"

Will That Be All?

Not many customers would find anything negative about this phrase. However, not only is it overused but the retailer is passing up a sales opportunity.

Better: "Did you see our ___ that goes with this?" or "Have you tried ___?"

It's Over There

We've all heard this bad customer service phrase used by the busy or indifferent sales clerk. Sometimes they may point in the general direction. Other times they don't even lift their head to acknowledge the shopper. Make sure all store staff knows using this phrase is a big no-no.

Better: "Follow me, I'll show you right where it is."

I Can't Do That

This is another negative customer service phrase that should be banned from all store staff. Either empower the employees or train them to take issues to a supervisor or store management.

Better: "What I can do is ___."

That's Not My Department

It may be true, but it is also definitely something a customer doesn't want to hear. Retailers should train their staff to be familiar with all areas of the store operations or at least understand who to contact for help in various departments.

Better: "I'll be happy to get you to the person who knows more about that department."

We're Out of That

It's inevitable that a store will run out of a product and customers know this. Unless you let the customer know if and when it will be restocked, they will probably go buy it elsewhere. Be proactive and offer to contact the customer when it's back on the shelf. Don't ask them to call you.

Better: "That item is currently out of stock but will be back in on ___. Can I get your name/number and call you when it comes in?"

It's Against Our Policy

In today's competitive market, retailers can't afford to be inflexible. It is important to have store policies but it's more important to keep a customer satisfied. Use this phrase only when you feel a policy is being abused.

Better: "Our policy is ___ but we want to make this right. This is what I can do..."

I'm New Here

For some reason, many new staff members think this customer service phrase let's them off the hook. The customer doesn't care if you're new. He/she only wants to deal with someone who knows what they're doing and can get the result they want.

Better: "Please bear with me and I'll get you the help you need."

Hold On

This customer service phrase, and all of its variations, should be non-existent. There is a much softer way to say essentially the same thing without infuriating the customer.

Better: "Are you able to hold for a moment?"

I'm Busy Right Now

Have you ever said, or heard, the following? "If it weren't for customers, I could get some work done." If you are in retail, chances are you've at least thought it. The truth is, without customers retailers wouldn't have a job.

Better: "I'd be happy to help you."

You're Wrong

No, customers are not always right but retailers should never tell them they are wrong. Never. The best course of action is to simply assume the blame.

Better: "I think there has been a misunderstanding."

Source: <http://www.thebalance.com>



How to Make Your Small Business More Successful

by Susan Ward

Business Success Is a Work in Progress

Feeling like you're treading water with your small business and not making progress towards your goals?

Or are you having trouble choosing business goals to work towards this year in the first place? We all want to be successful owners of profitable small businesses, but how do you get there from where you are?

If you want your small business to be more profitable than ever before, here are some suggestions for how to make it happen. And remember; building a successful business is a marathon, not a sprint!

1) Focus on Customer Service

According to a survey conducted by American Express, 78% of consumers have cancelled or not made an intended purchase due to poor customer service. Other studies have shown that it takes several positive customer experiences to make up for one negative one.

Given that loyal customers are much easier to sell to, make good customer service a priority. Examine your current customer service and make the changes that need to be made to ensure that your small business is providing service superior to that of your competitors, whether it be investing in staff training, revamping your return policy, or basic improvements such as responding promptly to voice mail or email from customers.

2) Build Word of Mouth for Your Business

Whether you operate your business in a small community or in a large urban center, word of mouth is more important than ever for business. Most consumers turn to the net to search for reviews of businesses before deciding where to shop, so building a good reputation is vital to the success of your business.

How do you get positive word of mouth? By providing good, professional service, building and monitoring your local (and online) reputation, and gaining publicity by giving back to your community by supporting/sponsoring local organizations and charities.

3) Expand Your Marketing Efforts

Effective marketing is key to increasing your sales, but you don't have to break the bank to promote your business. There are many inexpensive ways to market your products and services, including:

- Creating and using a promotion kit.
- Sending out promotions with your invoices.
- Joining professional and/or business organizations.
- Involving the newspapers in your grand openings, moves, or charity events.
- Giving free workshops or classes related to your products/services.
- Developing business partnerships and doing cross-promotion with complementary businesses.
- Joining professional and/or business organizations.
- Cold calling (yes it can still work!).
- Advertising your business on your vehicle with a vehicle wrap.

4) Build Your Online Presence with a Business Website and Social Media

I always feel like I'm shouting into the wind when I write this, but your small business really needs a website. I know, I know – you don't have time. But creating a professional looking website can be quick and easy nowadays and your small business needs to be in the online space; Surveys indicate that more than 70 percent of consumers research purchases online before buying in a store .

A simple website that describes who you are, what you do, and how to contact you will suffice for many small businesses. At a minimum, your site should contain:

- Your logo
- Your business name
- A summary of what you do - your products and services
- Your contact information
- Your address, including a Google Map link
- Your mission, e.g. "We make the best pizza in town...."
- Testimonials from customers

Depending on your target market, social media can be a great way to promote your business.

5) Cut Your Business Costs

Despite government claims of "low inflation", business costs for everything from office space to vehicle expenses seem to be always on the rise, so keeping expenses in check is a crucial task for business owners.

Keeping track of expenses is time consuming and tedious, so wherever possible use technology to make the job as easy as possible. For example, there are a number of mobile apps for expense tracking, including some of the newer cloud-based accounting applications that allow you to automatically add expense information into your accounting system by snapping pictures of receipts with your mobile device.

Annually or semi-annually review your major costs, such as office space, business insurance, staffing, and vehicle expenses. If you are in an area with abundant available commercial space, think about relocating, or if you don't need a storefront convert to a home-based business.

Review your major supply costs regularly and always look for discounts or ways to pool supply purchases with other businesses to save money. Make reducing expenses part of your job description, and involve your employees.

6) Go Mobile

If you do nothing else mobile-wise this year, you need to make sure that your online presence, including your business website, is mobile friendly, as ever-increasing numbers of people are surfing and searching with their phones – even when they're at home.

But there are two other trends that your small business could really profit from. The first is mobile marketing. There's a whole range of mobile-specific strategies you could be using to reach your target market with great effect, from text message advertising and mobile display ads through having an app designed for your own business.

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The second is mobile payment systems. The choices for your small business are really expanding as Apple Pay and Google Wallet join the field previously dominated by Square and PayPal. Using phones to pay is a significant convenience to customers but your small business could also realize considerable savings from being able to use a mobile POS system.

7) Use the Cloud

There is no doubt that Cloud computing has leveled the playing field for startup businesses, but the serious advantages that using the cloud provides for “ordinary” established businesses is not always discussed.

Cost savings and access from anywhere are the biggest advantages to moving some of your business processes to the cloud. If, for instance, your business changes from a desktop small business accounting program to a cloud-based accounting application, you would no longer have to install desktop software (saving IT costs for installation, backups, etc.) and you can access your business accounts from anywhere, including from mobile devices (in fact, most small business accounting software vendors have moved to the cloud and no longer offer desktop software).

There are some disadvantages to cloud computing too, of course, but if you haven't starting using cloud storage and/or applications yet, make this the year that you at least investigate its potential.

8) Find and Keep the Right Employees

Attracting and retaining the right employees is one of the most important things you can do with your business. While hiring and training employees every other week might be business as usual for a fast-food restaurant, most successful businesses rely on hiring quality staff and keeping them for the long term..

9) Update Your Business Plan

You did make a business plan before starting your business, right? Right? A business plan is vital for startup businesses for

many reasons, including testing the viability of your business idea and securing debt or equity financing.

If you haven't made a business plan it is not too late. Successful established businesses update their business plan annually to review accomplishments (or lack thereof) and decide on new goals or directions.

The financial health of your business is summarized by the income statement, the cash flow projection and the balance sheet, which are contained in the financial section of the business plan. From these you can determine ways to make your business more profitable by increasing sales and/or reducing losses or cutting expenses. If you want your business to be more successful you need a plan for how to get there.

10) Wealth Is Useless Without Health

No one goes to the grave wishing they had spent more time in the office. Too many business owners sacrifice their mental and physical health, family relationships, and friends in pursuit of their business goals.

Don't be one of them - find an acceptable level of work-life balance. Getting enough sleep, taking time for family and friends, and getting regular exercise will help you stay healthy and allow you and your business to prosper over the long term.

Make This Your Best Year Ever

If there's one thing I want you to take away from this article, it's this; success is not a given. If you want your small business to be more successful this year, you need to make the necessary changes to bring that about.

That work may be as simple as investing in a new tool or as difficult as changing your thinking about some of your business processes. But you haven't brought your business this far to just let it stagnate, have you? Here's to your best year ever!

Source: <http://www.thebalance.com>



Business Spotlight: Tower of Pizza

Tower of Pizza was established in 1981 after a year of hardship. Transforming the previous copy shop into a restaurant pizza parlor was a very daunting task indeed.

I am the original owner and continue to own and operate Tower of Pizza, and I make sure that every ingredient is of high quality. The ingredients were originally handpicked for my own personal consumption. That led to my motto that the foods that my customers receive must be of the same high quality foods I consume at my own establishment.

Tower of Pizza supplied Riverside and Rubidoux School Districts for ten years, stretching from 1991 to 2001, at the amazing rate of 500 pizzas every day. Our delicious pizzas are still created using the original bakery ovens from 1960, which is quite a rarity. The County of Riverside Health Department also considers Tower of Pizza to be one of the cleanest restaurants. I pride myself on providing a clean environment with high quality ingredients and very high



standards.

So stop by and enjoy any of the delicious items offered here at Tower of Pizza located at 3948 University Ave or give me a call at (951)781-0200 to place a carryout order. Hope to see you soon!



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Press deadline is the 15th of each month prior to publication.

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