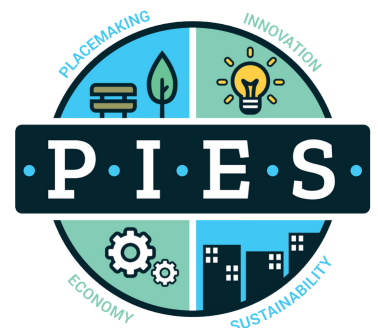


BUSINESS READINESS FOR DESTINATION EVENTS

A Placemaking Report



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CA Message FROM THE CEO



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Whether your region is hosting an international sports competition, a cultural festival, a large convention, or another event that draws a significant number of visitors, the strategies presented here will help you build an effective framework for business engagement and community coordination.

Destination events offer opportunities for local businesses to attract new customers, strengthen brand visibility, and showcase their capabilities to wider audiences. However, maximizing these benefits requires coordinated efforts to address the operational, financial, and logistical challenges that come with increased visitor activity.

While public agencies and event organizers typically manage large-scale logistics such as venue and transportation planning, this Chamber-centric framework focuses on supporting the business community, helping them expand operations, prepare for higher customer volumes, and capitalize on marketing opportunities.

Implementation will require local customization.

Contact lists, resource directories, and partnership templates included in the guide must be populated with community-specific information. Differences in public safety agencies, municipal departments, utility providers, and business support organizations across communities mean that one-size-fits-all solutions are impractical. *Adapting this guide to your context is essential for success.*

The economic and reputational benefits of destination event management can provide lasting advantages for the business community. Your investment in comprehensive preparation is both strategically sound and economically beneficial. Good luck!



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1: INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

When major events come to a community, they bring unprecedented opportunities for local businesses to expand their reach, increase revenue, and showcase their services to new audiences. Whether hosting an international sporting event, state fair, cultural festival, or convention, the influx of visitors creates both opportunities and challenges that require coordinated preparation and strategic planning.

This guidebook serves as a comprehensive resource for chambers of commerce and their member businesses to prepare effectively for major events. The framework presented here can be adapted for any type of destination event, from multi-day conferences to month-long celebrations. The goal is to equip the local business community with the knowledge, resources, and organizational structure needed to maximize economic benefits while maintaining operational excellence.

The guidebook complements broader state or regional organizing efforts by focusing specifically on local business needs and opportunities. Rather than duplicating existing logistical planning, this guide addresses the challenges that businesses face when preparing for increased visitor volume, extended operating requirements, and the need to serve diverse customer bases.

Success during major events requires more than individual business preparation. It demands coordinated community effort, shared resources, and strategic alignment between the chamber of commerce, local businesses, municipal governments, and public organizations. This collaborative approach ensures that the entire business community benefits from the event while presenting visitors with a cohesive, welcoming experience.

2: LEADERSHIP AND COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

The chamber of commerce can play a central role in organizing community-wide business preparation efforts. This responsibility extends beyond simple coordination to include convening stakeholders for strategic planning, resource allocation. Effective preparation requires establishing specialized committees that can focus on specific aspects of event readiness while maintaining overall coordination and communication.

Core Planning Committee Structure

Business Readiness and Operations Committee

This committee addresses the fundamental operational challenges that businesses face during major events. The primary focus centers on ensuring operational continuity while accommodating increased demand and extended service requirements. Committee members work directly with businesses to assess their individual needs and develop customized preparation plans.

The committee conducts comprehensive surveys to understand specific business concerns, capacity limitations, and resource requirements. These surveys inform the development of practical preparation tools, including operational checklists, staffing guides, and supply chain management resources. The committee also coordinates with utility providers and emergency services to ensure that increased business activity does not overwhelm local infrastructure.

Marketing and Branding Committee

As marketing is a globally recognized core function of chambers of commerce, it is the natural lead for this effort. Community-wide marketing efforts require coordination to present a unified, professional image to visitors while avoiding conflicting messages or competitive tensions between businesses. This Chamber committee develops overarching marketing strategies that benefit all participating businesses while allowing individual enterprises to maintain their identities.

The committee creates co-branded marketing materials that businesses can customize for their specific needs. This includes developing a community event logo or badge that participating businesses can display, designing template materials for social media campaigns, and coordinating with event organizers to ensure local business information is included in official visitor communications.

However, it should be noted that if the Chamber is not responsible for tourism and visitation as an organization, its marketing role may need to be focused on its network of business leadership due to funding considerations.

Visitor Experience Committee

The quality of visitor interactions directly impacts both immediate sales and long-term reputation building for the entire community. This committee focuses on ensuring that all customer-facing staff throughout the business community are prepared to provide exceptional service to diverse visitor populations.

Training programs developed by this committee address cultural sensitivity, basic foreign language skills, and knowledge of local attractions and services. The committee also creates standardized informational materials that businesses can use to help visitors navigate the community and take advantage of local offerings.

Safety, Security and Accessibility Committee

Major events create safety challenges that individual businesses cannot address alone. This committee works closely with local law enforcement, fire departments, and emergency services to develop comprehensive safety protocols that protect both visitors and local residents.

The committee develops emergency response procedures that businesses can implement quickly and effectively. These procedures include evacuation plans, communication protocols, and coordination with public safety agencies. The committee also ensures that accessibility requirements are understood and implemented throughout the business community.

Local Events and Engagement Committee

Community-generated events and activities can significantly enhance the visitor experience while driving additional business to local enterprises. This committee plans and coordinates local events that complement the main event while showcasing the character of the community.

These activities might include street festivals, cultural showcases, themed markets, or special business promotions. The committee manages the permitting process for these events and coordinates scheduling to avoid conflicts while maximizing participation opportunities for businesses.

Liaison and Integration Committee

Effective communication between local business preparation efforts and broader event organizing is essential for success. This committee serves as the primary connection point between the chamber of commerce and state or regional event organizers.

Committee members attend coordination meetings with event planners, ensuring that local business interests are represented in overall planning decisions. They also serve as the conduit for information flowing from event organizers to local businesses, providing regular updates on schedules, visitor projections, and logistical changes that might affect business operations.

Committee Coordination and Communication

While each committee has specific responsibilities, success requires regular communication and coordination between all groups. Monthly coordination meetings ensure that committee efforts remain aligned and that resources are used efficiently. These meetings also provide opportunities to identify and address potential conflicts or gaps in preparation efforts.

The chamber of commerce executive leadership maintains oversight of all committee activities while delegating operational responsibilities to committee chairs. This structure allows for focused expertise while maintaining strategic coherence across all preparation efforts.

3: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

Major events create significant workforce challenges that extend beyond simple staffing increases. Businesses must prepare for extended operating hours, higher customer volumes, and the need to serve diverse populations with varying expectations and communication needs. Additionally, the competitive environment for quality workers becomes more intense as all businesses in the community simultaneously increase their staffing requirements.

Successful workforce management during major events requires long-term planning, comprehensive training programs, and innovative approaches to recruitment and retention. Businesses that begin workforce preparation well in advance of the event are more likely to secure quality employees and provide consistent service throughout the event period.

Strategic Workforce Planning

Demand Analysis and Forecasting

Accurate workforce planning begins with realistic projections of increased business volume during the event period. Historical data from similar events, consultation with event organizers about expected visitor numbers, and analysis of past busy periods can

inform these projections. However, businesses should also consider that visitor spending patterns may differ significantly from typical customer behavior.

International visitors, convention attendees, and event participants often have different schedule preferences, spending habits, and service expectations than regular customers. These differences may require not just more staff, but staff with different skills and availability patterns. For example, businesses may need employees who can work during typically slow periods or who have experience serving international customers.

Recruitment Strategies and Timeline

Effective recruitment for major events should begin at least six months before the event, with some positions requiring even earlier planning. The recruitment process should focus on identifying candidates who not only have the necessary technical skills but also demonstrate flexibility, cultural sensitivity, and strong customer service orientation.

Partnerships with local educational institutions, workforce development agencies, and community organizations can provide access to potential employees who may not be reached through traditional recruitment channels. Community colleges, vocational schools, and high schools often have students seeking part-time or temporary employment opportunities that align well with event staffing needs.

Training and Development Programs

Comprehensive training programs are essential for ensuring that all employees, both regular and temporary, can provide excellent service during the event period. Training should address not only job-specific skills but also cultural awareness, basic communication in common visitor languages, and knowledge of local attractions and services.

Customer service training takes on particular importance during major events, as employees will interact with visitors who may be unfamiliar with local customs, stressed from travel, or excited about the event experience. Training programs should include role-playing exercises that simulate these interactions and provide employees with strategies for handling challenging situations.

Retention and Motivation Strategies

Retaining quality employees throughout the event period requires proactive management and competitive compensation packages. The tight labor market during major events means that employees have multiple options, making retention strategies particularly important.

Recognition programs, performance bonuses, and flexible scheduling options can help maintain employee satisfaction during demanding periods. Additionally, creating a sense of community pride and involvement in the event can motivate employees to provide exceptional service even during stressful periods.

Operational Workforce Management

Scheduling and Coordination

Complex scheduling becomes necessary when businesses extend their operating hours and increase staff levels simultaneously. Effective scheduling systems must account for peak demand periods, employee availability, and the need to maintain consistent service quality throughout all operating hours.

Technology solutions can streamline scheduling processes, but they must be implemented and tested well before the event period. Staff communication systems also become more important when managing larger teams, particularly when employees may be working irregular schedules or in unfamiliar roles.

Cross-Training and Flexibility

Cross-training employees for multiple roles provides operational flexibility during unpredictable event periods. Employees who can handle different responsibilities can be deployed where they are most needed, reducing the impact of unexpected absences or demand fluctuations.

This flexibility also benefits employee development and job satisfaction, as workers gain new skills and have opportunities to take on additional responsibilities. However, cross-training requires additional time and resources during the preparation period, making early planning essential.

Performance Management and Support

Managing performance during high-stress, high-volume periods requires clear expectations, regular feedback, and adequate support systems. Supervisors need training on how to maintain team morale and address performance issues quickly and effectively.

Support systems might include employee assistance programs, stress management resources, and clear protocols for handling difficult customer situations. These support systems not only help maintain service quality but also contribute to employee retention and satisfaction.

4: INVENTORY PLANNING AND SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

Inventory management during major events requires balancing the opportunity to increase sales with the risks of over-investment in stock that may not sell or under-investment that results in missed opportunities. The challenge becomes more complex when considering that visitor preferences may differ significantly from regular customer patterns, and that supply chain disruptions during event periods can impact restocking capabilities.

Successful inventory planning begins with thorough analysis of expected demand patterns, careful supplier relationship management, and development of flexible systems that can adapt to changing conditions throughout the event period. Businesses must also consider the financial implications of increased inventory investment and plan accordingly for cash flow management.

Demand Forecasting and Product Planning

Analyzing Visitor Demographics and Preferences

Understanding the specific characteristics of expected visitors provides crucial insights for inventory planning. International visitors may seek different products than domestic tourists, while convention attendees may have different needs than leisure travelers. Age demographics, cultural backgrounds, and the specific nature of the event all influence purchasing patterns.

Research into visitor preferences should include consultation with event organizers, analysis of similar events in comparable communities, and consideration of seasonal factors that might influence demand. This research should inform decisions about both the quantity and types of products to stock.

Historical Data Analysis and Projections

Businesses should analyze their own historical data from busy periods, holiday seasons, or previous events to establish baseline projections for increased demand. However, major events often create demand patterns that exceed typical busy periods, requiring careful adjustment of historical projections.

Industry data and consultation with other businesses that have experienced similar events can provide additional perspective on realistic demand projections. Trade associations and industry publications often provide guidance on inventory planning for special events.

Product Mix Optimization

Major events may create opportunities to offer special products, limited editions, or event-themed merchandise that appeal specifically to visitors. These products can generate higher margins and create value propositions that differentiate businesses from competitors.

However, special product offerings require additional planning time and may involve minimum order quantities that increase financial risk. Businesses should carefully evaluate the potential return on investment for special products versus increased quantities of proven sellers.

Supply Chain Management and Vendor Relations

Supplier Relationship Development

Strong relationships with suppliers become particularly important during major events when many businesses in the region may be placing larger orders simultaneously. Early communication with suppliers about event plans and projected needs can help ensure priority treatment and availability of products.

Businesses should identify backup suppliers for critical products and establish relationships with these alternative sources well before the event period. This preparation provides security against supply disruptions and may offer negotiating leverage with primary suppliers.

Logistics and Delivery Coordination

Increased traffic, road closures, and delivery restrictions during major events can significantly impact supply chain operations. Businesses should work with suppliers to adjust delivery schedules, identify alternative delivery routes, and plan for potential delays.

Storage capacity limitations may require more frequent deliveries or creative solutions for temporary storage. Coordination with neighboring businesses or shared storage facilities can provide cost-effective solutions for businesses that lack adequate storage space.

Quality Control and Product Management

Higher inventory volumes and accelerated turnover during major events can strain quality control systems. Businesses should establish clear procedures for inspecting incoming merchandise, monitoring product freshness, and managing inventory rotation.

Point-of-sale systems and inventory tracking software become more important when managing larger volumes and more complex product mixes. These systems should be tested and optimized before the event period to ensure they can handle increased transaction volumes efficiently.

Financial Planning and Risk Management

Working Capital Requirements

Increased inventory investment requires careful financial planning to ensure adequate working capital throughout the event period. Businesses should calculate not only the cost of additional inventory but also the timing of cash flows and the impact on other operational expenses.

Credit line arrangements or alternative financing options should be explored and established before inventory orders are placed. Suppliers may offer extended payment terms for large orders, but businesses should evaluate the total cost of these arrangements including any interest or fees.

Insurance and Risk Protection

Higher inventory values increase the financial risk from theft, damage, or other losses. Businesses should review their insurance coverage and consider temporary increases in coverage limits during the event period.

Risk management strategies should also include security measures for stored inventory, particularly for high-value items or products that may be attractive to thieves. Coordination with local law enforcement and security services can provide additional protection during high-risk periods.

5: CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Elevating customer service standards matter. Major events bring together diverse populations with varying expectations, cultural backgrounds, and service preferences. The quality of customer service provided during these events not only impacts immediate sales but also influences long-term reputation and potential for repeat business. Excellence in customer service during major events requires preparation that goes beyond normal training programs to address the challenges of serving diverse visitor populations.

Customer service excellence during major events also presents opportunities for businesses to differentiate themselves from competitors and create memorable

experiences that generate positive word-of-mouth marketing. The investment in superior customer service preparation often pays dividends that extend well beyond the event period itself.

Cultural Competency and Communication

Visitors from different cultural backgrounds may have varying expectations about service levels, communication styles, and business interactions. What constitutes excellent service in one culture may be perceived differently in another, making cultural awareness essential for customer service success.

Training programs should address common cultural differences in communication styles, personal space preferences, tipping expectations, and business customs. However, training should also emphasize treating each customer as an individual rather than making assumptions based on perceived cultural background.

Language Support and Communication Strategies

While not all businesses can provide multilingual staff, there are practical strategies for improving communication with visitors who speak different languages. Basic phrase training for common interactions, visual communication aids, and translation technology can bridge communication gaps effectively.

Clear, simple signage and visual displays can communicate important information without relying on complex language skills. Price displays, product information, and service options should be designed to be easily understood by visitors with limited English proficiency.

Technology Solutions for Communication

Modern technology provides numerous tools for improving communication with diverse customer populations. Translation apps, multilingual point-of-sale systems, and digital menu boards can enhance the customer experience while reducing stress for both customers and employees.

However, technology solutions should supplement rather than replace human interaction and cultural sensitivity. The most effective approach combines technological tools with well-trained, culturally aware staff who can provide personalized service.

Service Delivery and Operational Excellence

Managing Increased Volume and Wait Times

Higher customer volumes during major events can lead to longer wait times and increased stress for both customers and employees. Effective queue management,

clear communication about wait times, and creative solutions for entertaining customers during waits can maintain satisfaction levels even during busy periods.

Streamlining service processes and identifying bottlenecks before the event period allows businesses to optimize their operations for higher volumes. This might include redesigning service workflows, implementing technology solutions, or adjusting staffing patterns to match demand patterns.

Personalization and Memorable Experiences

Despite higher volumes, businesses that can maintain personalized service and create memorable experiences will stand out from competitors. This might involve remembering customer preferences, providing recommendations for local attractions, or offering small gestures that acknowledge the special nature of the customer's visit.

Training staff to identify opportunities for creating memorable moments can turn routine transactions into positive experiences that customers will remember and share with others. These experiences often have more impact on customer satisfaction than basic service efficiency.

Problem Resolution and Service Recovery

Higher volumes and more complex customer needs during major events increase the likelihood of service problems. Staff training should include specific procedures for handling complaints, resolving problems quickly, and recovering from service failures.

Empowering front-line employees to resolve common problems without supervisor approval can improve both customer satisfaction and operational efficiency. However, this empowerment requires clear guidelines and training to ensure consistent application of policies.

Building Long-Term Customer Relationships

Destination events are an opportunity to capture customer information and preferences. Major events provide opportunities to connect with potential long-term customers who might not otherwise discover local businesses. Systems for capturing customer contact information, preferences, and feedback can support ongoing relationship building after the event concludes.

However, information collection should be done respectfully and with clear communication about how the information will be used. Customers should receive immediate value in exchange for providing their information, such as special offers or useful local information.

Follow-Up and Relationship Maintenance

Post-event follow-up communications can help maintain connections with new customers and encourage future visits or purchases. These communications should provide value to recipients rather than being purely promotional, such as updates about new products, local events, or seasonal offerings.

Social media platforms provide cost-effective methods for maintaining ongoing relationships with customers who have returned to their home locations. Businesses can share updates about their operations, local community news, and special offers for returning visitors.

6: MARKETING AND COMMUNITY BRANDING

If the chamber of commerce is the designated tourism organization, it will play an essential role in coordinating marketing efforts that benefit the entire business community during major events. This leadership position requires balancing individual business interests with community-wide objectives while presenting a cohesive, attractive image to visitors. Effective marketing coordination can amplify the impact of individual business marketing efforts while ensuring that the community presents a unified, professional appearance.

Marketing coordination also involves working closely with event organizers, tourism boards, and media outlets to ensure that local business information is integrated into broader promotional efforts. This integration maximizes exposure for local businesses while minimizing marketing costs for individual enterprises.

Developing Unified Marketing Strategies

Community Brand Development

Creating a cohesive community brand for the event period helps visitors understand what makes the local business community special while providing individual businesses with marketing tools they can customize for their specific needs. This brand should reflect the character of the community while appealing to the demographics of expected visitors.

The community brand should include visual elements such as logos, color schemes, and design templates that businesses can incorporate into their individual marketing materials. However, the brand should be flexible enough to accommodate different business types and marketing approaches while maintaining visual consistency.

Coordinated Messaging and Communication

Developing key messages that highlight the community's strengths and attractions ensures that all marketing communications reinforce the same themes. These messages should emphasize what makes the community special while addressing the practical needs and interests of visitors.

Message coordination should include guidelines for social media communications, press releases, and customer interactions. This coordination helps prevent conflicting information and ensures that all businesses are promoting the same community events and attractions.

Cross-Promotion and Partnership Marketing

Encouraging businesses to promote each other's services and products creates a more comprehensive visitor experience while building stronger community relationships. Partnership marketing can include package deals, referral programs, and coordinated promotional events.

The chamber can facilitate these partnerships by organizing networking events, providing communication platforms, and developing template agreements that businesses can use to formalize their collaborative efforts.

Marketing Tools and Resource Development

Shared Marketing Materials and Templates

Developing professional marketing materials that businesses can customize reduces individual marketing costs while ensuring consistent quality and messaging. These materials should include social media templates, print advertisements, signage options, and digital marketing assets.

Templates should be designed to accommodate different business types and marketing budgets while maintaining the overall community brand consistency. Professional design services coordinated through the chamber can be more cost-effective than individual businesses hiring separate designers.

Digital Marketing Coordination

Coordinating digital marketing efforts can improve search engine visibility and social media reach for all participating businesses. This might include collaborative social media campaigns, shared content creation, and coordinated online advertising efforts.

Website integration and directory services can help visitors find local businesses while providing businesses with improved online visibility. Mobile-friendly resources become particularly important as many visitors will be accessing information on their phones while traveling.

Public Relations and Media Outreach

Coordinated public relations efforts can generate media coverage that benefits all businesses while presenting the community as a unified, attractive destination. Media outreach should focus on community stories, special events, and the overall visitor experience.

Training business owners and managers on media interactions ensures that they can effectively represent the community when opportunities arise. This training should cover key messages, interview techniques, and protocols for coordinating with chamber communications efforts.

Measuring Marketing Effectiveness

Tracking and Analytics

Establishing systems for measuring marketing effectiveness allows the community to understand which strategies are most successful and make adjustments throughout the event period. This might include website analytics, social media engagement metrics, and customer feedback surveys.

Businesses should be encouraged to track their own marketing results and share aggregate data with the chamber to improve overall understanding of what marketing approaches are most effective for different types of businesses.

Customer Feedback and Satisfaction Measurement

Gathering customer feedback about marketing effectiveness and overall community experience provides valuable insights for future events and ongoing business development. Feedback collection should be systematic but not burdensome for either businesses or customers.

Post-event analysis of marketing effectiveness should include recommendations for future events and ongoing marketing coordination. This analysis helps justify the investment in coordinated marketing efforts and provides guidance for continuous improvement.

7: MUNICIPAL AND PUBLIC ORGANIZATION PARTNERSHIPS

Successful major event preparation requires seamless coordination between private businesses and public organizations including municipal governments, law enforcement, emergency services, and infrastructure providers. These partnerships are essential for addressing the complex challenges that arise when communities experience significant increases in visitor volume and economic activity.

Public organizations bring resources, regulatory authority, and community-wide perspective that individual businesses cannot provide. However, they also have obligations to serve all community members and may have priorities that differ from business interests. Effective partnerships require understanding these different perspectives and finding solutions that serve both public and private interests.

Municipal Government Collaboration

Planning and Zoning Considerations

Municipal planning departments play crucial roles in ensuring that business preparation efforts comply with local regulations while supporting economic development objectives. Early engagement with planning staff can identify potential regulatory barriers and develop solutions that allow businesses to adapt their operations for major events.

Zoning requirements may need temporary modifications to accommodate increased parking needs, expanded outdoor seating, or temporary signage. The permitting process for these modifications should be streamlined and clearly communicated to businesses well in advance of the event period.

Infrastructure and Public Services Coordination

Municipal services including water, sewer, solid waste, and street maintenance face increased demands during major events. Coordination between businesses and municipal service providers can help identify potential problems and develop solutions that maintain service quality for both visitors and residents.

Street closures, traffic management, and parking restrictions can significantly impact business operations and customer access. Early coordination with municipal transportation departments allows businesses to plan alternative arrangements and communicate changes to customers effectively.

Economic Development and Business Support

Municipal economic development offices often have resources and expertise that can support business preparation efforts. These resources might include small business loans, technical assistance programs, or connections to regional development organizations.

Tax policies and fee structures may also impact business preparation decisions. Understanding how increased business activity might affect tax obligations and identifying any available incentives or fee reductions can help businesses make informed financial decisions.

Law Enforcement and Public Safety Partnerships

Security Planning and Crime Prevention

Increased visitor volumes and extended business hours can create new security challenges that require coordination between businesses and law enforcement agencies. Security planning should address both property protection and personal safety for employees and customers.

Community policing programs and business watch groups can provide ongoing security support that extends beyond the event period. These programs also help build relationships between businesses and law enforcement that can benefit the community long term.

Emergency Response and Crisis Management

Emergency response planning becomes more complex during major events when increased populations and business activity can overwhelm normal response capabilities. Businesses should understand their roles in emergency response plans and have procedures for coordinating with public safety agencies.

Communication systems for emergency situations should be tested and clearly understood by all business employees. These systems should include procedures for contacting emergency services, evacuating customers, and providing assistance to emergency responders when needed.

Traffic Management and Crowd Control

Traffic management during major events requires coordination between law enforcement, municipal transportation departments, and businesses to ensure that increased volumes do not create safety hazards or prevent emergency vehicle access.

Crowd control measures may be necessary in commercial areas that experience high visitor concentrations. Businesses should understand their responsibilities for managing crowds on their property and coordinating with public safety agencies for area-wide crowd management.

Utility and Infrastructure Partnerships

Electrical and Communication Services

Increased business activity and extended operating hours can strain electrical systems and communication networks. Early coordination with utility providers can identify potential capacity issues and arrange for temporary service upgrades if needed.

Backup power systems and communication redundancy become more important during major events when service interruptions can have greater financial impact. Businesses should understand their options for backup services and the procedures for requesting emergency repairs.

Water and Waste Management Services

Higher customer volumes can significantly increase water usage and waste generation, potentially straining municipal systems. Coordination with utility providers can help identify businesses that may need temporary service upgrades or additional waste collection services.

Recycling and waste management programs may need modification during major events to handle increased volumes and different types of waste. Businesses should understand any changes to normal collection schedules and procedures for handling unusual waste streams.

Regional and State Organization Coordination

Tourism and Convention Bureaus

Regional tourism organizations often have resources and expertise that can support local business marketing efforts. These organizations may also have established relationships with event organizers that can provide local businesses with access to visitor information and promotional opportunities.

Coordination with tourism organizations should include sharing information about local business capabilities and special offerings that might be of interest to visitors. This coordination can help ensure that local businesses are included in regional promotional efforts.

Economic and Tourism Organizations

State and regional tourism and economic development organizations may have resources available to support business preparation for major events. These resources might include training programs, financing assistance, or technical support for marketing and operations.

Long-term economic development benefits from major events require coordination between local businesses and regional development organizations to identify opportunities for ongoing business growth and community development.

8: IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE AND BEST PRACTICES

Successful preparation for major events requires careful timeline management that allows adequate time for planning, implementation, and adjustment of strategies. The complexity of coordinating multiple businesses, public organizations, and community resources demands a structured approach that begins well in advance of the event period.

The timeline should accommodate the different preparation requirements of various business types while ensuring that community-wide coordination efforts are completed early enough to be effective. Flexibility within the timeline is essential to accommodate changes in event details, visitor projections, or community circumstances.

Twelve-Month Preparation Phase

Strategic Planning and Committee Formation

The initial preparation phase focuses on establishing the organizational structure and strategic framework that will guide all subsequent preparation efforts. This includes forming committees, identifying key stakeholders, and developing the overall coordination approach that will be used throughout the preparation period.

Committee formation should include clear definitions of roles and responsibilities, regular meeting schedules, and communication protocols that ensure effective coordination between different groups. Leadership selection for each committee should consider both expertise and time availability throughout the preparation period.

Initial Business Assessment and Outreach

Comprehensive assessment of business community needs and capabilities provides the foundation for all subsequent planning efforts. This assessment should include

surveys, individual business consultations, and analysis of community business capacity and diversity.

The assessment should identify businesses that may need additional support, those with particular expertise or resources that can benefit the broader community, and any gaps in business services that might affect visitor experience. This information guides resource allocation and partnership development efforts.

Partnership Development and Resource Identification

Establishing partnerships with municipal governments, public organizations, and regional agencies requires early engagement and careful relationship building. These partnerships should include clear agreements about roles, responsibilities, and resource sharing arrangements.

Resource identification should include both internal community resources and external support that may be available from state agencies, industry organizations, or event sponsors. Early identification of resources allows for better planning and coordination of support services.

Six-Month Preparation Phase

Detailed Planning and Resource Allocation

The six-month phase focuses on developing detailed plans for all aspects of business preparation while beginning implementation of strategies that require longer lead times. This includes workforce recruitment, inventory planning, and infrastructure improvements.

Resource allocation decisions should be based on the business assessment conducted during the twelve-month phase, with priority given to areas where support will have the greatest impact on overall community success. Coordination between different resource allocation decisions ensures efficient use of available resources.

Training Program Development and Launch

Comprehensive training programs require significant development time and should be launched early enough to accommodate multiple training sessions and make-up opportunities for business employees. Training should address both technical skills and the soft skills needed for excellent customer service.

Training programs should be designed to accommodate different learning styles and schedules while maintaining consistent quality and content. Partnerships with

educational institutions and training organizations can provide expertise and resources that individual businesses might not have access to independently.

Marketing Strategy Implementation

Marketing strategy implementation should begin early enough to build awareness and generate interest before the event period begins. This includes developing marketing materials, launching digital campaigns, and beginning public relations efforts.

Coordination with event organizers and regional marketing efforts ensures that local business marketing is integrated with broader promotional activities. This coordination can significantly improve the effectiveness of local marketing investments while avoiding conflicting messages.

Three-Month Preparation Phase

Final Preparations and System Testing

The three-month phase focuses on completing all preparation activities and conducting comprehensive testing of systems and procedures. This includes testing point-of-sale systems, communication protocols, and emergency procedures.

System testing should include stress testing under simulated high-volume conditions to identify potential problems before they occur during the actual event. Backup systems and contingency plans should also be tested to ensure they function properly when needed.

Staff Training Completion and Evaluation

All staff training should be completed during this phase, with additional time allocated for advanced training for key employees and supervisors. Training evaluation should ensure that all employees have achieved the necessary competency levels for their roles.

Ongoing training support should be established for the event period to address any issues that arise and provide refresher training as needed. This support is particularly important for businesses that have hired large numbers of temporary employees.

Final Coordination and Communication

Final coordination efforts should ensure that all businesses understand their roles and responsibilities and have access to all necessary resources and support.

Communication systems should be tested and contact information verified for all key participants.

Emergency communication procedures should be clearly established and tested to ensure rapid response capability during the event period. This includes procedures for communicating with businesses, customers, and public safety agencies as needed.

Event Period Management

Daily Operations and Monitoring

During the event period, daily monitoring and support become essential for maintaining service quality and addressing problems quickly. This includes regular check-ins with businesses, monitoring of customer feedback, and coordination with public safety agencies.

Flexibility in operations and resource allocation allows for rapid response to changing conditions or unexpected challenges. Daily briefings and communication updates help ensure that all businesses have current information about conditions and any necessary adjustments to plans.

Problem Resolution and Continuous Improvement

Rapid problem resolution during the event period prevents small issues from becoming major problems that could affect the overall visitor experience. This requires clear escalation procedures and authority for making necessary decisions quickly.

Continuous monitoring of operations and customer feedback provides opportunities for immediate improvements and identifies lessons learned that can benefit future events. Documentation of both successes and challenges provides valuable information for future planning efforts.

Post-Event Evaluation and Follow-Up

Comprehensive Performance Analysis

Post-event analysis should include quantitative measures of business performance, customer satisfaction surveys, and qualitative assessments of what worked well and what could be improved. This analysis should involve all stakeholders including businesses, public organizations, and community leaders.

The analysis should identify best practices that can be applied to future events and ongoing business development efforts. It should also identify areas where additional support or different approaches might be more effective in future situations.

Relationship Maintenance and Future Planning

The relationships and partnerships developed during event preparation often provide ongoing benefits that extend well beyond the event period. Maintaining these relationships requires ongoing communication and continued collaboration on community development efforts.

Future planning should build on the experiences and relationships developed during the event preparation process. This includes maintaining committee structures that proved effective and continuing partnerships that provide ongoing community benefits.

The success of major event preparation ultimately depends on the quality of planning, the strength of community partnerships, and the commitment of businesses to work together for mutual benefit. Communities that approach major events with comprehensive preparation, strong coordination, and a commitment to excellence position themselves not only for immediate success but also for long-term economic development and community building benefits that extend far beyond any single event.

There is a part for everyone in the community to play when it comes to planning major community events. Globally recognized for its core functions to convene, facilitate, and connect, the chamber of commerce is a powerful asset in the preparing businesses for major destination events in the community.

APPENDIX: SAMPLE CHECKLISTS

1. Strategic Readiness

Task	Notes / Examples	✓
Define business goals for the event	Increased sales, visibility, community engagement	☐
Identify opportunities related to the event	Partnerships, packages, pop-ups	☐
Assess potential disruptions	Traffic, road closures, delivery delays	☐
Engage with local authorities and the Chamber	Attend readiness workshops, share plans	☐
Review local regulations	Permits, hours, signage, compliance	☐

2. Infrastructure & Operations

Task	Notes / Examples	✓
Audit your physical space	Accessibility, signage, lighting	☐
Check utilities and backup systems	Power, Wi-Fi, refrigeration	☐
Prepare for high foot traffic	Queue management, seating, flow	☐
Enhance accessibility	Multilingual signs, ADA compliance	☐
Plan for deliveries and logistics	Adjust vendor schedules	☐

3. Staffing & Training

Task	Notes / Examples	✓
Forecast staffing needs	Surge scheduling, cross-training	☐
Provide cultural awareness training	Hospitality basics, key phrases	☐
Emergency and safety briefings	Evacuation routes, protocols	☐
Identify point persons	Assign leads for key roles	☐
Staff wellness	Breaks, hydration, fatigue prevention	☐

4. Communications & Customer Experience

Task	Notes / Examples	✓
Develop multilingual materials	English + Spanish + key visitor languages	☐
Create event themed promotions	Discounts, special menus, contests	☐
Promote your business early	Through Chamber campaigns	☐
Use digital tools	Google/Yelp updates, Chamber directory	☐
Offer clear visitor info	Transportation, accessibility, hours	☐

5. Safety & Security

Task	Notes / Examples	✓
Review emergency procedures	Fire exits, first aid, safety zones	☐
Coordinate with law enforcement / Chamber	Attend safety briefings	☐
Install security cameras / lighting	Enhance visibility and deterrence	☐
Cyber readiness	Protect Wi-Fi and POS systems	☐
Insurance checkup	Event coverage and liability	☐

6. Community & Partnerships

Task	Notes / Examples	✓
Partner with nearby businesses	Joint promotions or 'Fan Trails'	☐
Join Chamber or city programs	Visitor hubs and promotions	☐
Engage volunteers	Local school or nonprofit support	☐
Support sustainability	Recycling, reusable products	☐
Be a good neighbor	Coordinate with residents and peers	☐

7. Financial & Risk Management

Task	Notes / Examples	✓
Set an event budget	Staffing, marketing, contingencies	☐
Track ROI and KPIs	Sales, traffic, engagement metrics	☐
Review vendor contracts	Delivery times, cancellation clauses	☐
Plan for variable demand	Inventory, supplier flexibility	☐
Backup payment systems	Cash and digital redundancy	☐

8. Post-Event Evaluation

Task	Notes / Examples	✓
Hold a team debrief	Review outcomes and lessons learned	☐
Thank staff and partners	Recognize contributions	☐
Collect customer feedback	Online surveys, Chamber forms	☐
Share results with the Chamber	Help refine future readiness plans	☐
Plan for legacy opportunities	Sustain partnerships and visibility	☐

APPENDIX: SAMPLE TOOLS & TEMPLATES

Staff Briefing Template

Date: _____ Shift / Location: _____

Supervisor: _____ Team Lead: _____

Key Topics:

- **Operational Focus Today:** (e.g., game day traffic expected, special events nearby)
- **Safety Reminders:** exits, first aid, crowd management, reporting protocol.
- **Customer Service Notes:** expected languages, VIP visitors, courtesy reminders.
- **Promotions / Specials:** discounts, themed offers, or Chamber spotlight features.

[illegible]

Event Communication Plan

Audience	Key Message	Channel	Frequency	Responsible Person
Employees	Safety, staffing, etc.	Email / Briefings	Daily	Manager
Customers	Promotions, hours, etc.	Social Media	Twice weekly	Marketing

Daily Operations Tracker

[illegible]

Visitor Feedback Form

Business Name: _____ Date: _____

1. How did you hear about us?

☐ Walk-by ☐ Chamber Website ☐ Social Media ☐ Hotel

☐ Other _____

2. How would you rate your experience? (circle) 1 2 3 4 5 (1 = Poor, 5 = Excellent)

3. What did you like most about your visit?

4. How can we improve?

5. Country of Origin / Favorite Team: _____

6. May we contact you for follow-up? ☐ Yes ☐ No Email: _____

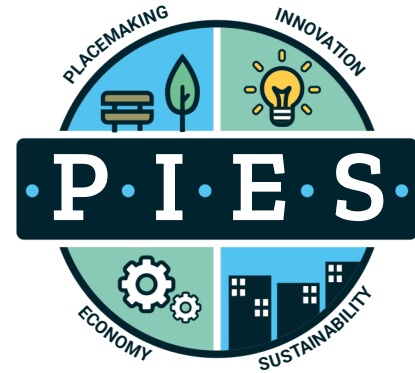
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A Strategy for Business Growth & Resilience

Business-driven retention programs prioritize the needs of existing businesses, leveraging their insights to shape policies that drive long-term success.

The Greater Federal Way Chamber's retention program is guided by the PIES framework—Placemaking, Innovation, Economy, and Sustainability. Our focused strategy supports business success while shaping a vibrant, resilient regional economy.



PLACEMAKING

Creating a Business-Friendly Climate



- Infrastructure development: transportation, utilities, childcare, and broadband access
- Intentional location planning for strategic commercial districts
- Quality of life enhancements to attract and retain talent

INNOVATION

Adapting to Market Changes



- Cross-industry collaboration to share knowledge
- Supporting start-ups and entrepreneurship
- Investment in emerging technologies

ECONOMY

Driving Strategic Decision Making



- Analysis of market trends and labor force data
- Identification of high-growth industries
- Assessment of business needs and challenges

SUSTAINABILITY

Ensuring Economic Resilience



- Circular economy practices emphasizing reuse and recycle-ability
- Local supply chain development for economic resilience
- Workforce training programs for employment stability

The Greater Federal Way Chamber network of local expertise, business connections, and strategic vision uniquely positions us to lead this business-centered economic initiative within the Federal Way growth hub.

When businesses have access to the right resources, infrastructure, and support networks, they expand, create jobs, and reinvest in the community—strengthening the local economy from within.

The PIES advantage is designed to help existing businesses thrive in driving job creation, long-term stability, and community prosperity.

By focusing on retention as a foundation for growth, the Chamber is working to ensure a stable and prosperous business environment for years to come.

For more on business growth at the chamber, visit federalwaychamber.com

 GREATER FEDERAL WAY
Chamber of Commerce

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