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## Overview

**Purpose:** This comprehensive document aims to establish a consistent and effective standard operating procedure for Heart of Biddeford's marketing, communications, and advertising efforts across various channels. As the city of Biddeford evolves, Heart of Biddeford remains committed to fostering a welcoming and inclusive community that focuses on serving the people and businesses in the downtown area, ensuring the revitalization of Main Street as a central aspect of its mission. By maintaining clear and consistent communication of the organization's role, objectives, events, and initiatives, Heart of Biddeford seeks to increase interest, engagement, and support in the form of donations and volunteer work.

This document is designed to ensure uniformity across all communication channels employed by Heart of Biddeford, providing an accessible template for new members joining the organization who may be involved in marketing and communications.

**How to Use:** This document is organized into sections, each addressing a distinct marketing channel employed by Heart of Biddeford. Within each section, you will find:

1. **Channel Purpose and Overview:** An explanation of the channel's purpose, its significance within the organization, and best practices for using it effectively.
2. **Links to Valuable Resources:** Access to essential resources such as content calendars, brand guidelines, templates, and examples of past successful campaigns.
3. **Step-by-step Instructions:** Detailed instructions for managing the channel, often categorized into pre-event, during-event, and post-event tasks, as well as monthly, weekly, and daily activities.
4. **Roles and Responsibilities:** Identification of the individuals or teams responsible for overseeing and implementing day-to-day activities related to the channel, including points of contact for collaboration and escalation.
5. **Performance Measurement and Improvement:** Guidelines for tracking key performance indicators (KPIs) and evaluating the effectiveness of communication efforts, with a focus on continuous improvement and adapting to evolving organizational needs.

By following this document, Heart of Biddeford staff and volunteers can ensure that all marketing and communications efforts align with the organization's mission, engage the target audience effectively, and contribute to the ongoing success of the organization's initiatives. This approach ensures the organization's communication strategies adhere to the highest standards and best practices in nonprofit communications.

## Brand Guidelines, Tone & Voice

**Purpose:** Maintaining a consistent brand identity across all communication channels helps the community recognize Heart of Biddeford and understand its values. A cohesive visual identity allows the community to quickly identify any communication related to or representing Heart of Biddeford.

**Overview:** This section provides an overview of Heart of Biddeford's communication style and visual identity. It also includes links to essential resources such as logos and visual brand guidelines.

Heart of Biddeford's Mission Statement (June 2019) should always be central in all communication methods, encompassing speech, writing, and behavior.

### Helpful Resources:

- [Heart of Biddeford Logos](#)
- Heart of Biddeford [2023 Brand Guidelines](#) (draft)
- Mission Statement: *Powered by the strength of community involvement, Heart of Biddeford fosters a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable downtown for residents, businesses, and visitors.*

### Bringing It To Life:

Our Behavior Is...	Our Personality Is...
Enthusiastic	Friendly
Open	Approachable
Straight-forward	Inclusive
Educational	Knowledgeable

As an organization, we want to ensure we come across as friendly and approachable. We are a peer leader in the community, **not** a municipal entity. Heart of Biddeford is a cheerleader for Biddeford and we're proud of our city, its citizens + our own accomplishments, at the same time we are pragmatic and don't gloss over inequity or problems within our community (when relevant + necessary). We are excited to educate people on our community and our own good works.

Heart of Biddeford is for the entire community, with a mandate to support the downtown. And while Heart of Biddeford has its finger on the pulse of all that is happening in our community,

we're not particularly hip or trendy and we don't use jargon that may be too "of-the-moment" or alienating to segments of our community / audience.

Best Practices for Integrating DEI and Representing Heart of Biddeford in Tone and Voice:

1. **Use inclusive language:** Choose words and phrases that are respectful and considerate of all members of the community, regardless of their backgrounds and identities.
2. **Avoid jargon and trendy language:** Ensure the communication is accessible and understandable to a diverse audience by refraining from using language that might alienate or confuse certain segments.
3. **Emphasize empathy and understanding:** Demonstrate genuine care and concern for the community and its individual members, showing that Heart of Biddeford is committed to addressing issues and fostering positive change.
4. **Celebrate diversity:** Highlight the unique qualities, achievements, and perspectives of the diverse members of the community to create a sense of belonging and unity.
5. **Encourage open dialogue:** Foster an environment that welcomes feedback, questions, and conversations, enabling the community to learn from one another and grow together.
6. **Be equitable and fair:** Treat everyone with equal respect and fairness, regardless of their background, beliefs, or opinions.
7. **Be transparent:** Communicate openly and honestly about Heart of Biddeford's initiatives, goals, and progress, showing accountability and building trust with the community.
8. **Be adaptable and flexible:** Recognize that community needs may change over time, and be willing to adjust Heart of Biddeford's approach or strategies to better serve the diverse community.

By integrating Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) principles (see next section) into Heart of Biddeford's tone and voice, the organization can create a welcoming and supportive atmosphere for all members of the community. This approach reinforces the organization's commitment to fostering a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable downtown and helps build strong relationships with residents, businesses, and visitors.

## Responsibilities

- **Tone and Voice Consistency:** All team members in all communication channels (email, social media, print materials, website, events, etc.)
- **Brand Guidelines Adherence:** Design team and content creators for visual materials, including social media, print materials, and website
- **DEI Integration:** DEI Committee to provide guidance, with collaboration from all team members in applying DEI principles across all communication platforms
- **Oversight:** Delilah, with support from the Strategic Comms Committee and DEI Committee

By adhering to these best practices and taking responsibility for their implementation, Heart of Biddeford can ensure consistent brand identity and inclusive communication approach that resonates with the diverse community it serves.

## DEI Implementation

**Purpose:** Emphasizing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) is essential for Heart of Biddeford, as it serves a diverse and rapidly diversifying community. Ensuring that language and outreach are accessible to as many community members as possible is crucial for fulfilling the organization's mandate.

**Overview:** DEI principles should be integrated into marketing materials and communication channels whenever possible. By adopting ethical storytelling practices and promoting accessibility, Heart of Biddeford can create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for everyone.

### Helpful Resources:

- [Complete HoB DEI deck](#)

## Best Practices for DEI Implementation

1. **Diversify outreach efforts:** Utilize a variety of platforms, such as print, social media, websites, email, and in-person events, to engage with a broader audience. Collaborate with community partners to reach underrepresented groups.

Recommendations for outreach to underrepresented groups in Biddeford:

- Partner with local organizations that specifically serve or represent underrepresented communities, such as cultural centers, community centers, and advocacy groups.

- Attend community events organized by underrepresented groups and engage in conversations to better understand their needs and interests.
- Create targeted marketing materials that address the specific concerns and aspirations of underrepresented communities.
- Offer translation services or materials in multiple languages to accommodate diverse language preferences.

2. **Ensure accessibility:** Make websites and digital platforms compatible with screen readers and accessible to those who speak other languages. Provide content in multiple languages and prioritize plain language to exclude jargon or technical terms.

3. **Use inclusive language:** Adopt language that acknowledges diversity, conveys respect, is sensitive to differences, and promotes equal opportunities, as defined by the Linguistics Society of America.

4. **Include alt-text for images:** Add alt-text to photos and graphics posted online to enhance accessibility for users with visual impairments.

5. **Prioritize accessibility at events:** Offer directions to venues via public transportation and include contact information for accessibility accommodations on outreach materials.

6. **Focus on ethical storytelling:** Highlight the diversity of the community through truthful and respectful stories. Avoid virtue signaling or exploitative content that may negatively impact individuals or organizations.

7. **Obtain consent for photography:** Before taking photos, ask community members for their consent to be photographed and for their images to be shared on social media platforms.

## Responsibilities

- **DEI Outreach and Initiatives:** Delilah, with support from the DEI Committee and collaboration from other team members
- **Digital Platform Accessibility:** Office Manager, with oversight from Delilah and consultation from the Strategic Comms Committee
- **Event Accessibility:** Event organizers and coordinators, with guidance from the DEI Committee

By incorporating these best practices into DEI implementation, Heart of Biddeford can create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for all community members. This approach helps the organization fulfill its commitment to fostering a vibrant, diverse, and sustainable downtown area.



## WEBSITE

**Purpose:** The website serves as the central information hub for Heart of Biddeford, displaying our mission and purpose. It provides a platform for community members to share events, job listings, and open commercial spaces and facilitates donations to support our work. The website caters to locals, visitors, and prospective new residents and business owners.

**Overview:** To maintain an effective and engaging website, it is essential to adhere to SEO (Search Engine Optimization) best practices, implement DEI (Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion) principles, maintain a consistent brand identity, and establish a smooth process for updates and additions.

In 2020, we conducted an upgrade that included:

- Installation and configuration of top-rated plugins (Electronic forms, donation & surveys, event calendar, directory, social media sharing, SEO, slideshows/video gallery, etc.).
- Installation of a new premium, mobile-responsive theme with customization to match our brand, image optimization, and addition of icons as needed for a visually appealing website.

### Helpful Resources

- [Brand guidelines](#)
- [DEI protocols](#)
- [General Guide to website best practices](#)

### Step-By-Step Instructions

1. **NEW CONTENT:** Write clearly and kindly in Heart of Biddeford's voice when creating content for the website. Ensure grammatical accuracy using tools like Grammarly, and adhere to SEO and DEI guidelines. Provide links to more technical or advanced information when applicable, and create tiered content for inclusivity and SEO value. Stick to natural language while avoiding excessive technical terms, focusing on accessible narratives and information.
2. **COMMUNITY SUBMISSIONS + EVENTS:** Community members, organizations, and businesses can submit events, jobs, and property for sale or lease via the website's "Add Listing" tab. Office Manager has a process for adding local Facebook events to Heart of Biddeford's Facebook page, which will automatically populate the website under "Upcoming local events."
3. **SEO IMPLEMENTATION:** Follow the latest SEO best practices, focusing on backlinks, keywords, and helpfulness. Use tools like [Google Keyword Planner](#) and [Google Search Console](#) to plan keyword usage. Avoid keyword cannibalization and implement primary and secondary keywords effectively throughout the content. Aim to increase user



interaction and engagement for better SEO performance. Stay updated with current SEO practices using resources like Backlinko and SEMrush.

**Backlinks:** Seek links from earned media, registries, high-authority organizations, local businesses, and other organizations we collaborate with or help. Request links from partners when necessary or offer to write press releases for their websites.

**Keywords:** Choose one primary “short tail” keyword and 1-3 secondary “long tail” keywords. Use Google Keyword Planner and Google Search Console data to identify relevant keywords. Optimize content by strategically placing primary and secondary keywords in H1 titles, H2 subheaders, H3 sub subheaders, and the body text.

**Helpfulness:** Encourage longer site visits, more page visits, and increased user interaction to enhance the site’s SEO value. Create engaging content, such as listicles or helpful resources, to attract and retain users. Strive to make content more informative and engaging for the audience, catering to their needs and interests.

1. **CONSISTENT BRANDING:** Ensure that all content and visuals on the website align with Heart of Biddeford’s brand guidelines. This includes maintaining a consistent tone and voice, using appropriate fonts and colors, and integrating the organization’s logo and other visual elements seamlessly.
2. **USER EXPERIENCE:** Prioritize user experience by ensuring the website is easy to navigate, loads quickly, and is mobile-responsive. Regularly test the website on various devices and browsers to identify and fix any issues that may arise.
3. **CONTENT UPDATES:** Regularly review and update the website content to ensure it remains current, accurate, and engaging. This includes updating event listings, job postings, and property listings as needed. Schedule periodic content audits to identify areas that need improvement or updates.
7. **ANALYTICS AND PERFORMANCE:** Monitor website analytics using tools like Google Analytics to track user behavior, engagement, and overall website performance. Use this data to make informed decisions about content updates, website improvements, and SEO strategies. Continuously strive to optimize the website’s performance and user experience based on the insights gained from these analytics.
8. **ACCESSIBILITY:** Ensure the website meets accessibility standards to cater to all users, including those with disabilities. Implement features like alt text for images, keyboard navigation, and screen reader compatibility to make the website more inclusive and user-friendly.
9. **SECURITY AND BACKUPS:** Keep the website secure by regularly updating plugins, themes, and other software components. Implement security measures such as SSL certificates, strong passwords, and two-factor authentication. Schedule regular website

backups to protect the site's data and ensure a swift recovery in case of any issues.

10. **COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION:** Encourage open communication and collaboration among team members responsible for managing the website. Share updates, challenges, and successes, and work together to ensure the website remains an effective and engaging resource for the community.

### **Responsibilities:**

- Day-to-day management: Office Manager
- Oversight: Delilah; consultation from the Strategic Communications Committee

By following these guidelines and best practices, Heart of Biddeford can maintain an effective, engaging, and user-friendly website that serves as a valuable resource for the community, visitors, and potential new residents and business owners. Regularly reviewing and updating the website, implementing SEO and DEI strategies, and ensuring consistent branding will contribute to the organization's overall success and positive impact on the community.

## EMAIL NEWSLETTER

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of our newsletter is to engage with our "downtown fans" on a weekly basis, keeping local events and downtown businesses top of mind. The newsletter is designed not to overwhelm subscribers and often contains links to more in-depth resources and information, usually on our own website.

### **Overview:**

The newsletter typically goes out around noon on Mondays and may include key information from the City, local organizations, public health, or other city or state agencies relevant to subscribers. It may also feature leasing opportunities or job openings. While we highlight a variety of partners and local businesses, not every event, business, or announcement is included every time they reach out for inclusion due to the scope of the newsletter and the breadth of downtown offerings.

### **Helpful Resources**

- [Brand Guidelines](#)
- [DEI Protocols](#)
- [HOB Social Media Content Calendar 2023](#)

## Step-By-Step Instructions

### Weekly

1. **SUBMISSIONS:** Set a deadline for submissions each week (e.g., early Monday morning). Throughout the week, review submissions from partner organizations and businesses and choose a top few to populate into the Mailchimp template. Otherwise, add events to Facebook, which will automatically populate HOB's website. The newsletter links to the website events each week.

2. **DECISION TREE:** Develop a decision tree for prioritizing content to be included in the newsletter. Consider factors such as relevance, timeliness, spreading out opportunities to many organizations, and alignment with organizational goals.

3. **CAMPAIGN NAMING:** Give each campaign a name that reflects the contents (e.g., Winterfest Update, Fun Things To Do This Weekend, Get Ready for Restaurant Week, etc.) to increase open rates and provide context when the newsletter is shared on social media platforms.

However, the Business Newsletter will be named the same each week, with a changing subject line.

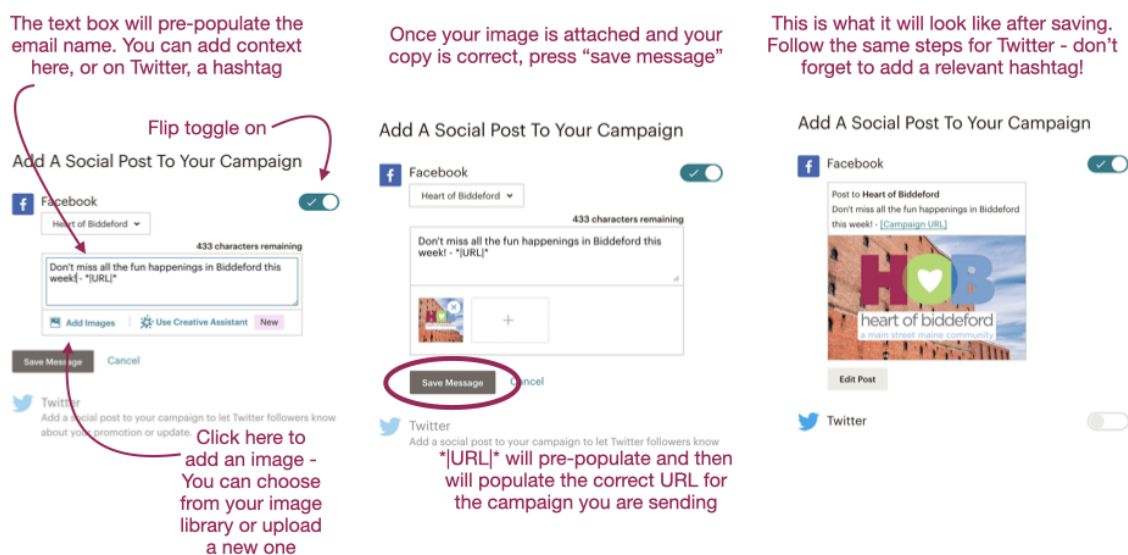
4. **MAILCHIMP TEMPLATE:** Use the Mailchimp template to create the newsletter, ensuring consistency with the organization's brand guidelines and DEI protocols.

5. **SOCIAL POST MODULES:** Add context and imagery to social post modules in Mailchimp. The context and imagery should encourage followers to click through to read and/or share the newsletter with their friends and connections.

6. **SCHEDULING:** The email can be sent immediately or scheduled to be sent at a later time, either later that day or on a future date.

Responsibilities:

- Office Manager and Delilah



By following these guidelines and best practices, Heart of Biddeford can create an engaging and informative email newsletter that keeps the community informed and connected. Regularly reviewing and updating the newsletter content, prioritizing submissions, and ensuring consistency with the organization's brand and DEI protocols will contribute to the organization's overall success and positive impact on the community.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

**Purpose:** To communicate with our existing community and reach new audiences, grow awareness around Heart of Biddeford activities, increase participation (attendance and volunteers), and encourage donations to Heart of Biddeford through fundraisers, raffles, etc.

**Overview:** Social media is our primary method of communication with a large portion of our audience. It is essential to maintain an "always-on" approach, understanding that each channel has its unique formats, audience, and best practices. Refer to our content strategy and overarching communications strategy documents for guidance.

Current social media channels include [Facebook](#) (most active), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

### Helpful Resources:

- [Brand Guidelines](#)
- [HoB Communications Strategy](#)
- [DEI Protocols](#)
- Canva Templates
- [HoB Social Media Content Calendar 2023](#)
- [HoB Content Strategy 2022 Draft](#)
- Decision Tree (for sharing, see email as well)

## Step-By-Step Instructions

### Content Creation and Posting Guidelines

1. **MONTHLY:** Create and schedule posts for all channels, referring to the content calendar, brand guidelines, DEI protocols, and submitted materials. Use Canva templates for consistency. Schedule posts using the Heart of Biddeford Hootsuite account.

Larger events are listed in the content calendar, and campaigns for those events should be at least planned two months in advance.

2. **WEEKLY:** Add any time-sensitive content to the content calendar or schedule it immediately.

3. **DAILY:** Monitor HoB tags, mentions, and messages. Reply to comments and messages as necessary, and escalate any concerns to the Director. Share relevant content from partner organizations and regram Instagram Stories as appropriate.

## Boosts/Ads

1. **PLAN:** Develop a campaign-specific strategy for large campaigns funded by grants, including objectives, audience, and KPIs.
2. **EXECUTE:** Ads are primarily Delilah's responsibility but may be delegated to Office Manager.

### **Responsibilities:**

- Day-to-Day: Office Manager (currently), Americorps (particularly related to smaller events and volunteer recruitment and appreciation).
- Ads: Delilah (primarily) may delegate to Office Manager
- Oversight: Delilah and Strategic Communications Committee

By adhering to these guidelines and nonprofit best practices, Heart of Biddeford can create a consistent and engaging social media presence that fosters community connection and supports the organization's mission. Regularly reviewing and updating social media content, staying informed on platform-specific best practices, and ensuring alignment with the organization's brand and DEI protocols will contribute to the organization's overall success and positive impact on the community.

# GOOGLE

## Purpose:

Google is the primary way people search for and find information on the internet. Maintaining a strong presence on Google is crucial for keeping our ranking high, staying on the first page of search results related to Biddeford or our events and activities, and keeping our Google page populated with up-to-date information.

## Overview:

Our Google presence consists of two main components: Google Ads and Google My Business. As a non-profit, Google offers us a certain amount of free advertising through Google Ads, provided we meet specific requirements. Google My Business enables us to add information about our organization, including office hours, FAQs, images, and content posts about upcoming events and activities.

## Helpful Resources:

- [Google Ad Grants Welcome Video](#)
- [Google Ad Grants Program Policies](#)
- [Social Media Content Calendar 2023](#) (includes events)
- [Brand Guidelines](#)

## Step-By-Step Instructions

### GOOGLE ADS

1. **Maintain a high ad clickthrough rate (CTR)** to retain our free Ad Grant status. Direct most of our budget to ads for our name or identity, such as a Google Lead ad for the keyword "Heart of Biddeford."
2. **Run ad campaigns for three main topics:** fundraisers (e.g., "Giving Tuesday donation"), Heart of Biddeford's existence on related searches/keywords (e.g., "Maine non-profit"), and specific events that don't already rank well (e.g., advertising Winterfest with "Southern Maine winter event").
3. **For specific events and fundraisers**, run short campaigns of 2-8 weeks, depending on the context, before the event/fundraising opportunity. Use the Google Keyword Planner tool to determine relevant keywords.
4. **Quarterly:** Review metrics for the core Heart of Biddeford "brand" campaign and make changes as needed. Update the campaign every 6-12 months to keep it fresh.

## GOOGLE MY BUSINESS

1. **Weekly:** Share a "newsy" post, ideally one that is or will be shared on Facebook or Instagram. Include images with a recommended ratio of 4:3 (1200 pixels x 900 pixels) and keep important content centered, as Google crops images. This helps with our local SEO.
2. **Quarterly:** Review and update FAQs, add photos to the listing, and ensure basic business information, including office hours and holiday hours, is up-to-date.

By following these guidelines and nonprofit best practices, Heart of Biddeford can maintain a strong presence on Google, which will help increase visibility, support the organization's mission, and foster community engagement. Regularly reviewing and updating our Google Ads and Google My Business information will ensure we remain relevant and easily discoverable by our target audience.



## EARNED MEDIA

**Purpose:** The purpose of earned media is to gain exposure for Heart of Biddeford and our initiatives through press coverage, interviews, and other forms of unpaid publicity. This helps to build our reputation, create public awareness, and foster community engagement.

**Responsibilities:** Currently, Delilah handles most of the earned media activities.

### Helpful Resources:

- [Press Release Templates](#)
- [local and regional media outlets](#)
- [Free Websites to post Press Releases to](#)

### Step-By-Step Instructions:

#### Press Releases

1. Update and adapt press release templates as needed for each event or announcement.
2. Include an exciting header, key details, and quotes from Heart of Biddeford and at least one other key partner.
3. Ideally, send the first press release at least four weeks in advance. For more substantial coverage and regional channels, send at least two weeks prior. Local press may accept releases closer to the event.

#### Timeline

1. Follow up with media outlets after sending press releases to ensure they have received the information and to answer any questions.

#### Story Pitches & Incoming Requests

1. Respond to requests for information, quotes, photos, or connections to business owners.
2. Provide links to relevant photos or existing press releases when requested.
3. Pitch story ideas to media outlets to gain additional coverage for Heart of Biddeford initiatives and events.

By following these guidelines and nonprofit best practices, Heart of Biddeford can effectively utilize Earned Media marketing strategies to increase visibility, support the organization's mission, and foster community engagement. Regularly reviewing and updating press releases, story pitches, and promotional materials will ensure we remain relevant and easily discoverable by our target audience.

## OUT OF HOME

**Purpose:** Out of Home marketing is any promotional activity that occurs outside the home or on marketing platforms. This includes banners, kiosks, lightpost banners, maps, and posters. Out of Home marketing helps to create visibility for Heart of Biddeford and our initiatives within the community.

### Responsibilities

Heart of Biddeford staff and volunteers are responsible for Out of Home marketing efforts.

### Helpful Resources:

- [Brand Guidelines](#)
- [DEI Protocols](#)

### Overview

Out of Home marketing materials include banners, kiosks, lightpost banners, maps, and posters.

## Step-By-Step Instructions

### Banners and Lightpost Banners

1. Design banners according to brand guidelines and event requirements.
2. Coordinate with the city or relevant organizations for banner placement and installation.

### Kiosks

1. Determine what materials should be displayed on kiosks.
2. Regularly update kiosk content to keep it fresh and relevant.

### Maps and Posters

1. Design maps and posters according to brand guidelines and event requirements.
2. Distribute maps and posters to relevant locations within the community.

By following these guidelines and nonprofit best practices, Heart of Biddeford can effectively utilize Out-of-Home marketing strategies to increase visibility, support the organization's mission, and foster community engagement. Regularly reviewing and updating ?

## EVENTS

**Purpose:** Events help engage with our core community of Biddeford residents and downtown businesses while making new connections with people who may not be aware of Heart of Biddeford or the activities in our downtown. Events serve as key fundraising opportunities and promote community involvement.

**Overview:** Key events include River Jam, WinterFest, and others. The timeline and instructions may vary based on the size, scope, and funding of the event. Each event may have its own existing materials, and in the case of River Jam, its own website and social media channels that should follow the same basic guidelines laid out in the rest of this document, including DEI protocols.

Events are generally managed by the Promotions Committee within Heart of Biddeford.

### Helpful Resources:

- Brand guidelines and [DEI protocols](#)
- [HoB Social Media Content Calendar 2023](#)
- Previous marketing materials (if available)

## Step-By-Step Instructions

### 5 MONTHS PRIOR TO EVENT

1. **Promotions Committee creates** a promotional packet for potential sponsors, partners, artists, and vendors, defining the exposure they will receive based on their involvement and commitment. This packet will guide the communications plan and event planning.
2. **Share calls for participation** on HoB social media, website, or email channels, following protocols for those channels.

### 3 MONTHS PRIOR TO EVENT

1. **Promotions Committee assesses** planning, outreach, and commitments to define the scope of the communications strategy. This may include the event itself as a whole, the number of sponsors, sponsorship levels, artists and their importance in the lineup, vendors, and specific event activities.
2. **Review the promotions packet** and account for promised exposure. For example, a silver level sponsor receives two social media mentions on X number of channels; bronze sponsors get one mention. With five silver level sponsors and four bronze level sponsors, this results in 14 social media mentions to be planned and scheduled over the next 12 weeks, in addition to the event promotion itself.
3. **The promotions packet guides** what other communication materials need to mention sponsors, vendors, and artists. The promotions committee must share this information with the appropriate person in the HoB office or on the communications committee as

early as possible so that content can be added to the social media and email marketing calendars, as well as any printed materials.

## Marketing Communications Timeline for Events

Timelines for branded materials depend on the scope and size of the event and must be determined in collaboration with the appropriate person on the Promotions Committee. Consider including calls for volunteers in the communications planning.

Annual branded materials, if any, should be identified and located (physically or digitally). Establish a timeline for material distribution, whether it's at the event, a specific number of days before the event, or throughout the promotion period.

General rule: After accounting for all assets and promotional obligations, work backward from the event day to spread out and diversify promotions.

### Example Event Communication Timeline

- 9 weeks before the event: Press release published
- 6 weeks before the event: Promotional video published, weekly event ads include sponsor logos as per the event promotions packet, etc.

**Event Promotions:** Spread out and diversify messages and promotional materials. Focus primarily on digital channels unless there's a contract with local radio or TV stations. Follow channel protocols and best practices.

For example, alternate between sponsor messages with images and short videos of event activities. Or, use Thursdays to promote specific family-friendly aspects of River Jam for several months leading up to the event. Fridays could be for promotion of the bands.

Day-of-event promotions should prioritize attracting attendees, emphasizing activities and artists over vendors and sponsors. Use DEI protocols to reach a diverse audience. Consider directions via public transport, website accessibility and language options, alt-text for images and graphics, and clear contact information for accessibility accommodations. Be strategic with social media posts to highlight the most valuable aspects of the event based on the target audience.

### Post Event

- **1-2 weeks post-event:** Utilize owned media channels for recaps and thank sponsors as outlined in the Promotions Packet.
- **Within one month post-event:** Promotions Committee reviews metrics (website visits, social media shares, newsletter open rate, etc.) and evaluates event performance. Write a brief summary (up to one page) to serve as a reference and set benchmarks for future events.

**Responsibilities:**

- Delilah and Promotions Committee leads, share event details with the Communications Committee.
- Office Manager and Americorps handle digital communications.
- Delilah manages press relations.

## Appendix - Miscellaneous Information

This appendix contains additional information and considerations that don't quite fit into other sections of the document.

### **Voice/Personality/Behavior Guidelines:**

1. Provide information and seek positive engagement.
2. Post about a broad range of topics and holidays to communicate that Biddeford is for everyone (e.g., Kwanzaa, Christmas, and Hanukkah).
3. Avoid "click-bait" content and refrain from posting articles or topics solely for generating controversy.
4. Assume positive intent from community posts and respond genuinely. Block posts or users if necessary, after offering to meet and talk with local users who seem aggrieved but unable to communicate effectively through social media.
5. Convey enthusiasm, invitation, seriousness about positive community development, non-judgment, and no sense of superiority in the voice/personality.
6. Seek to understand and meet needs or refer people to proper sources.

### **Sharing Content on Social Media:**

1. Not all submitted content will be shared, as it could lead to excessive daily posts.
2. There is no official policy for sharing content, but generally, we share content from organizations we're partnered with or ones we'd like to partner with more closely. This is typically a one-post offer.
3. In some cases, we may co-sponsor an initiative and post more extensively about it.
4. We avoid over-emphasizing any one aspect of the downtown or one business, and actively seek ways to promote the under-appreciated aspects of the downtown.

These guidelines can be fine-tuned and adapted to better align with Heart of Biddeford's overall strategy and objectives