



## **Downtown Chico Business Association**

*Economic Development/Tourism/ Placemaking Events*

The Downtown Chico Business Association is a strong marketing and advocacy organization that supports a downtown environment that will flourish and prosper into the future. We strive to cultivate downtown into a consistently *safe, clean, and friendly* community center for everyone to enjoy. With its variety of unique businesses and fabulous dining establishments, our top priority is to ensure that everyone has a good experience in Downtown Chico, night or day, and that they will return to shop, dine, play and stay.

The Downtown Chico Business Association produces events that create social life in public spaces, contributing fundamentally to the quality of life and culture in Chico. DCBA is committed to creating events that encourage and facilitate civic engagement and community interaction, the outcome of which encourages people to feel a sense of ownership and connectedness to Chico. Our events have become an anticipated part of the “Chico Experience”. People travel from all over the region to attend our more than 60 events annually in Downtown Chico.

There was a time not too long ago when economic development was considered by many a subject with little or no intersection with downtown management and placemaking. That sentiment is gone. Today, both the downtown management and traditional economic development world agree—placemaking – creating a sense of place is an essential aspect of a competitive community economic development strategy.

Our goals include:

- 1) Improve downtown experience for customers, employees and visitors through improved safety and appearance
- 2) Increase profile of DT as a premier regional destination to attract a quality visitor, customer, tenant and resident base
- 3) Organize, sustain and support signature events, activities, art and music in the Downtown District
- 4) Enhance overall economic activity in downtown. Increase occupancies by identifying gaps in the types of businesses located DT
- 5) Attract businesses and private investment, including residential development

We are working to articulate our goals, prioritize ongoing, current and future initiatives, and formulize a Marketing & Media Plan that integrates robust digital marketing strategies. We currently have a separate digital marketing plan defining transformation needed and making the case for investment and changes, moving to an integrated digital plan which is part of our overall marketing plan.

The DCBA is using digital media effectively and we are getting great results from our search, email and social media marketing. At the same time, we are missing opportunities for better targeting and optimization.

The marketing objectives are divided into three primary channels, each of which has a distinct purpose, but functions in tandem with the others to achieve the organization's overall objectives. The three channels are: Member Outreach & Communication; Community Events & Promotions, and Advertising & Public Relations.

*A snapshot of recent successes and ongoing initiatives.*

- \$408,155 in annual revenues
- 425 members
- A well-designed and efficient website -- [www.downtownchico.com](http://www.downtownchico.com) – designed to help grow downtown businesses by marketing to both visitors and locals, and amplify the message of our members - with free micro sites to all members – includes Google Text Ads, Google Remarketing, Video and is sustained by website sponsors -
- Two large-scale fundraising events -- Taste of Chico and Thursday Night Market (six months) – are produced each year to generate a combined 76% of the organization's annual operating budget
- Six successful placemaking promotional events are produced annually -- Slice of Chico Sidewalk Sale, Art & Wine Walk, Harvest Sidewalk Sale, Treat Street, Christmas Preview and Restaurant Week
- The DCBA Actively creates *sense of place* with "gifts to the community" events, such as Friday Night Concerts and Community Tree Lighting
- Collaborative advertising campaigns promoting Downtown Chico on behalf of the membership are developed and executed – example: EBC/Restaurant Week and The Great Race

The DCBA's marketing budget is very limited, so the marketing program must be efficient and highly targeted. Our marketing focus has been to concentrate first and foremost on refining current marketing activities to maximize effectiveness and return, while utilizing as much as possible existing staff, resources and budget dollars. We certainly welcome support and are interested in partnering with Explore Butte County in a partner/sponsor capacity in advertising messaging.

Finally, the board and staff and promotional committee are continually open to new marketing ideas and activities that meet the needs of the organization and its members and keep the Downtown Chico brand fresh and energized.