



#DTJax Twitter Promoter Program

2015 IDA Downtown Achievement Awards Submission: Marketing and Communications

Downtown Vision, Inc. (DVI) is the Business Improvement District for Downtown Jacksonville, Fla. Our marketing efforts focus on programming and promoting Downtown Jacksonville (**#DTJax**) as an exciting place to live, work and play.

Downtown Jacksonville is home to 49,000 employees, 4,000 residents, 94 restaurants, 26 bars and clubs, and 15 cultural and entertainment venues. Annually, there are 5,200+ major events taking place Downtown and 10 million+ visits.

THE CHALLENGE: DEBUNKING MISPERCEPTIONS

DVI's goal was to generate authentic conversations on social media from community thought leaders to address outdated misperceptions about **#DTJax**. Our primary focus was the misperception that there's nothing to do Downtown. In reality, Downtown boasts 94 restaurants, 26 bars and clubs, and 15 cultural and entertainment venues. Together, these venues offer more than 100 events weekly. Another common misperception is that Downtown isn't accessible. In reality, there are 44,000+ public parking spaces Downtown, street parking is free on nights and weekends, and Downtown has a walk score of 89, where most errands can be done on foot. A third major misperception is that Downtown isn't safe or clean. In reality, Downtown is one of the safest neighborhoods in Jacksonville, with DVI's Downtown Ambassadors monitoring Downtown seven days a week.

THE SOLUTION: #DTJAX TWITTER PROMOTER PROGRAM

The **#DTJax** Twitter Promoter Program leveraged the most influential Twitter users in Jacksonville to turn the tide on inaccurate perceptions about Downtown while boosting top-of-mind awareness of Downtown as an ideal destination to play. As a bonus, the program grew **#DTJax** brand equity and **@DTJax** social media followers. DVI staff and its marketing committee acted as the program coordinator, and 14 of the most influential local Twitter users participated. In addition, Downtown partners—venue managers and business owners—provided incentives for the 14 Twitter Promoters to encourage them to spend time Downtown and have material for their **#DTJax** tweets. The program cost no money to implement, aside from staff time.

EXECUTION

The program brought together **@DTJax**'s most influential Twitter followers and Downtown partners to promote Downtown via the social-media hashtag **#DTJax**. Here's how:

1. From existing **@DTJax** Twitter followers, choose top candidates for Twitter Promoters based on: Klout and Moz scores, interests and community involvement.
2. Host introductory meeting to educate Promoters on misperceptions. Give overview of program: tweet about Downtown authentically—in their own words—using the hashtag **#DTJax**. Bonus: Each promoter received a **#DTJax** shirt.
3. Solicit donations of event invites, gift certificates, etc. from Downtown partners to encourage the Promoters to spend more time Downtown and have material for tweets.
4. Maintain a dialogue with Promoters throughout the program to solicit feedback.
5. Monitor **#DTJax** hashtag use by Promoters as well as hashtag reach and impressions.
6. Host a conclusion event to thank the Promoters and partners, encourage continued **#DTJax** use, and celebrate success!

REPRESENTATION

DVI's social media program primarily involved the collaboration of **@DTJax**'s most influential Twitter followers and Downtown partners—event organizers, cultural venue managers, bar and restaurant owners—who generously donated incentives to encourage the Promoters to spend more time Downtown and tweet about their experiences. Across the 20-week-long program, all parties involved included: DVI and its marketing committee as the program coordinator, 14 participating Twitter Promoters, 16 Downtown partners and 40+ incentives offered by those partners.

OUTCOME

The program's accomplishments:

- **#DTJax**'s reach averaged **169,632** people weekly and averaged **485,473** impressions weekly.
- **#DTJax** gained **8,738,514** total impressions through **5,566** tweets.
- **19**-minute average per Downtown mention compared to **56** minutes prior to program.
- **21:1** average ratio of mentions positive to those negative compared to **8:1** prior to program.
- Tweets increased from **35%** to **65%** on Social Mention's passion level over the course of the program. The passion scale tracks the likelihood that individuals will talk about a topic repeatedly.
- DVI's **@DTJax** Twitter handle gained **3,700** new followers, a **49%** increase since the start of the program. **@DTJax** has grown exponentially since then.
- The promoter program helped dispel misperceptions about Downtown, spotlighting great events and destinations Downtown.
- Most importantly, the program built invaluable brand equity for Downtown.

INNOVATION

Our Promoter Program costs no money to execute—aside from staff time—while building brand equity and gaining followers with a strong Downtown affinity. The program delivered a modern, grassroots approach, leveraging the influential power of social media to tackle one of our toughest challenges: misperceptions about Downtown Jacksonville. The fresh idea also invigorated our partners, who, by participation in the program, received increased promotion that further supported their organization/entity and, ultimately, Downtown as a whole. Also, the program organically generated a wealth of earned media for Downtown Jacksonville as the Promoters incorporated **#DTJax** in various television, radio and magazine interviews.

REPLICATION

So far, our Promoter Program has been shared with Toronto, Raleigh and Chicago BIDs as well as with local cultural organizations. Thanks to its cost-free, high-return results, these groups were thrilled with the program, as it can be easily replicated by organizations with Twitter accounts, strong partners, and staff time available to coordinate incentives and monitor results.

SUSTAINABILITY

Following the conclusion of the Promoter Program, DVI hosted **#ChatDTJax** "tweet chats" on various Downtown topics—parking, the riverfront, park programming and community vision—to keep the Twitter momentum going. DVI expanded **#DTJax** T-shirts to include tote bags, tank tops and stickers for sale and giveaways to generate additional awareness of the hashtag—as well as revenue for the BID that can help us further our marketing goals. DVI incorporated **#DTJax** into its marketing collateral and online communications to encourage continued hashtag use. And, of course, DVI continues to use and monitor **#DTJax** across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Today, **#DTJax** reaches 399,467 unique Twitter users with 1.3 million+ impressions monthly. One year later, DVI's Twitter handle, **@DTJax**, now boasts more than 22,000 followers.