

GLEBE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA - AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

2018 IDA AWARD SUBMISSION

Category: Marketing and Communications



OVERVIEW:

While long known as one of Ottawa's most established and well-respected downtown neighbourhoods, the Glebe faced increasing competition from other downtown districts, suburban shopping areas and classic malls. Several years of ongoing construction in the area and the resulting perceived traffic congestion and reduced parking was a potential deterrent to visitation.

Leading up to 2017, the Glebe neighbourhood had seen significant changes to its product mix, including new and unique merchants, award-winning restaurants and increased events and programming. In addition, the long-awaited completion of the Lansdowne area to the south of the neighbourhood — featuring a park, recreational facilities and the new TD Place stadium (home of professional football, hockey and soccer teams and regular concerts/events) — provided an opportunity to heighten awareness of the neighbourhood and drive new and repeat visitation.

The shift in the Glebe's retail mix, event programming and the completion of the new Lansdowne area thereby offered the Glebe Business Improvement Area (Glebe BIA) a timely opportunity to re-position the neighbourhood as the place to visit while encouraging all to "Get it in the Glebe".

APPROACH:

Through a partnership with the City of Ottawa, the Glebe BIA commissioned Environics Research Group to conduct the largest research project to date. Based on primary and secondary research, the Glebe BIA reviewed their current competitive environment, tackled assumptions about their target market and uncovered factors impacting visitation to the neighbourhood. The study confirmed that the Glebe was most popular among those that lived and worked in proximity to the area, but was also attractive to those living in adjacent neighbourhoods showing similar lifestyle characteristics. Families and couples remained a key market but the research also showed that Glebe visitors included urban youth, likely due to the Glebe's proximity to three universities. Specific niche markets (e.g., Foodies, cyclists) also were drawn to the Glebe. Traffic and a perceived lack of parking were the primary negative perceptions of the Glebe.

Findings from the research study formed the basis of a messaging strategy focusing on why a person should frequent the Glebe — the surprising diversity of products, and services and entertainment, many of which unique in Ottawa, all within a relatively small geographic footprint. Unifying all communications under an overarching theme of "Get it in the Glebe", a new online presence was created — capturing the area in its entirety for the first time — along with an advertising showcasing all the Glebe had to offer.

Website

The Glebe BIA website (intheglebe.ca) was enhanced to provide one-stop access to Glebe BIA related information, including:

- an easy-to-search list of merchants, organized by category;
- current merchant promotions;
- commuter information (by car, public transit or by bicycle);
- an upcoming event calendar;
- an active blog telling the Glebe's story; and,
- links to social media hubs.

Glebe BIA stakeholders were all encouraged to contribute content, thereby keeping the relevant and timely.

Advertising

Objectives for the campaign were to:

- create top-of-mind awareness for the Glebe;
- encourage new and repeat visitation to the Glebe;
- drive interaction between visitors and Glebe merchants;
- drive traffic to the Glebe BIA website; and,
- digitally capture, engage and track visitors to the Glebe.

Advertising focused on the depth and breadth of the Glebe merchant/partner offerings using a "by the numbers" approach that reinforced the key message: no-matter what a person may need, want or desire, they could always "Get it in the Glebe".

The campaign tone was informative and quirky yet sophisticated — reflecting the character of the neighbourhood. Imagery focused on the diversity of the product mix without featuring a specific merchant.

Media channels included:

- Geo-Fencing:
Geo-fencing targeted visitors to neighbourhoods with similar profiles to the Glebe and/or attendees at large scale events at Lansdowne via their smart phones. Mobile ads lead visitors to promotional offers from participating Glebe merchants on the intheglebe.ca site. Geo-fencing was also used to develop a retargeting database.

- **Social Media (Facebook, Twitter and YouTube):**
Social Media targeted lifestyle factors highlighted in the research as Glebe compatible. All channels showcased a series of videos highlighting products/services that folks could “get in the Glebe”. Users were encouraged to visit the intheGLEBE.ca website to learn more.
- **Out of Home:**
Video networks in offices/residential buildings within Glebe-adjacent neighbourhoods again showed short videos encouraging the viewer to “get it in the Glebe.” Call to action was the intheGLEBE.ca website.
- **Print and Web Display Advertising:**
Focusing on local publications and network/media sites targeted to residents of the Glebe and nearby areas, print and web ads focused again on the by-the-numbers messaging and a reminder to “Get it in the Glebe”. Paid native content was developed for local publications to provide additional context for the Glebe story. Call to action was the intheGLEBE.ca website.

INNOVATION:

The “Get it in the Glebe” awareness campaign the Glebe for the first time, using a strong research platform while working directly with its membership to fund and execute an overall awareness campaign for the entire neighbourhood. The program also marked the first effort between the traditional BIA and the newly constructed Lansdowne area.

REPLICATION:

The “by the numbers” approach could readily be adapted by other BIAs to highlight their breadth of product.

REPRESENTATION:

Creative presented a variety of product categories sought out by visitors to the Glebe, yet did not focus on a specific merchant/product. The creative was subsequently more representational, allowing anyone to imagine themselves getting it “in the Glebe” no matter what their requirement.

SUSTAINABILITY:

“Get it in the Glebe” is flexible allowing it to be used for diverse applications over upcoming years. Plans are already in place to evolve the execution during 2018 to leverage awareness built during the original campaign, while telling more of the Glebe’s compelling message and highlighting new and exciting Glebe merchants and experiences.

EXECUTION:

The Glebe BIA worked with a research company, a local Web design firm and their advertising agency of record to execute this campaign.

A key channel, the BIA’s merchant membership, was included at regular stages of the project to capture strategic buy-in and garner support. Merchants were provided with the tools needed to promote the campaign to their own promotional channels, thereby stretching the campaign budget even further.

OUTCOME:

The 2017 “Get it in the Glebe” campaign ran from January 9 to March 5, 2017. During this period advertising results surpassed all expectations:

- Geo-Fencing Impressions: 986,060
- Geo-Fencing Clicks: 7,027
- YouTube: Video Views – 94,959
- Social Media: Impressions – 3,898,002
- Facebook Interactions: Engagements – 1,509
- Web Display Banners: Impressions – 12,182,095
- Web Display Clicks: 30,950

Total impressions: 17 million
intheGLEBE.ca unique site visits: 60,731