

WRIGHT COUNTY



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

2018-2019 MARKETING PLAN



SECTION 1: SITUATION ANALYSIS

Wright County, Iowa is overflowing with potential. Now is a critical time to capitalize on that potential by executing the necessary marketing innovation to deliver on the growth opportunities we have been given. With the arrival of Prestage Foods of Iowa, the growth of existing businesses, and the construction of residential developments, Wright County is in an unprecedented and unique position to attract new businesses and area residents never seen before. Increasing our efforts to market Wright County to area residents, existing businesses, potential partners, and prospective workforce will assist this county to embrace change and understand why it's necessary to remain vital. We need to engage, grow, and inspire at a higher level.

SECTION 2: TARGET AUDIENCES

- Business and Industry Leaders
- Local Economic Development Organizations
- Local Chambers of Commerce
- City Councils
- County Board of Supervisors
- Utilities
- Regional Economic Development Organizations
- Community Colleges Leadership
- Iowa Economic Development Authority
- Legislators
- Media
- Boards of Education
- Service and Civic Organizations
- Wright County Residents
- External Business and Industry Targets
- Site Selector Organizations

SECTION 3: GOALS

The 2018-19 marketing plan encompasses the following main goals:

- Increase engagement with all communities of Wright County.
- Develop and build relationships with local area businesses and residents.
- Grow our pipeline of site selectors and outside leads for business location and expansion projects.
- Enhance Wright County's overall presence and visibility to our target audiences within the county, our region, and across the globe.

To address those goals, we have categorized efforts into four Initiatives:

- Initiative 1: Public Relations and Advocacy

- Initiative 2: Product Development and Target Marketing
- Initiative 3: Workforce Development and Quality of Life Enhancements
- Initiative 4: Leadership Development

SECTION 4: ACTION ITEMS

INITIATIVE I: PUBLIC RELATIONS & ADVOCACY

Engage the community, foster partnerships, encourage fundraising, and build workforce.

Action Item 1.1 - Implement an all-encompassing WCED social media strategy.

Strategies to Accomplish - Platforms

- *Facebook: Post daily*
 - *Use: The Hub*
 - *Most versatile social media platform for our purposes*
 - *Repost relevant content from news and business sources*
 - *Share WCED and partner press releases, newsletter articles, and other original content*
 - *Cross-post with all other WCED-utilized platforms*
- *Instagram: At least one post per week, more depending on WCED_IA tagged photos*
 - *Use: The fun one*
 - *Ongoing photo scavenger hunt involving area businesses and locations*
 - *First person to guess the business correctly gets a small gift and have their attributed photo featured in our marketing materials*
 - *Monthly photo contest for the best photo from around the county*
 - *Winner gets a small gift and have their attributed photo featured in our marketing materials*
 - *Investigate effective hashtags (#wcedia or #rightplacewrightcounty or something else) on all posts. Encourage tagging for followers*
- *Twitter: At least one post per week, and retweet as relevant*
 - *Use: Links and short commentary, most likely place "big fish" will see us*
 - *Links to news and opportunities*
 - *Retweet to engage site selectors and big publications*
 - *Local news articles*

Action Item 1.2 - Develop a monthly e-newsletter that highlights positive Wright County efforts and business success stories and distribute it extensively within the County and region-wide.

Strategies to Accomplish -

- *Constant Contact:*
 - *Use: Build and Maintain Contact Database*

- *City and County contacts, interested citizens, social/charity groups, business owners, post to social media*
 - *Need contacts from Director, city and county*
 - *Leverage Karen Weld and other community members*
- *Update in real time as businesses open and close*
- *Design: 1 page, 5 sections*
 - *Business Spotlight*
 - *Available Service/Program*
 - *Upcoming Community and Business Events*
 - *Anniversaries/Milestones*
 - *Picture from around the county*

Action Item 1.3 - Develop a regular media contact program focused on media outlets, including news releases, highlighting positive Wright County growth efforts.

Strategies to Accomplish –

- *Constant Contact:*
 - *Build and Maintain a Media Contact list*
 - *Existing contacts and “Wishlist” from Director*
 - *Marketing Specialist conduct contact collection project*
 - *Marketing Specialist and Director should develop strong partnerships with media*
- *Content development*
 - *Always be looking for positive aspects of projects*
 - *Get ahead of projects that may have more backlash and start messaging early*
 - *Joint Press Releases: work with companies for content.*
- *Goal of at least 1 News Release a month to local and industry media if content is worthy*

Action Item 1.4 – Establish and grow relationships with community members, volunteers, workforce, neighboring counties, development groups, and potential investors to build Marketing Fund

Strategies to Accomplish -

- *Visits to existing businesses, philanthropic individuals and groups*
- *Engage in-person with area businesses, social media shoutouts, volunteering to events, attending community functions in spare time*
- *Partner with neighboring counties to make the best use of resources*
- *Small Sponsorships of events to build recognition*
- *Content Marketing such as social media posts and articles about helpful programs or activities*

- *Marketing Specialist will establish a list of charitable organizations and individuals in the community who may want to support the Marketing Fund*
- *Engage with workforce agencies and job boards to make sure Wright County jobs are seen widely*
- *Update and publish Wright County Business Directory. Smaller print run than usual and PDF email publishing, with updateable online database developed and maintained, put on county website.*

Action Item 1.4 Develop collaborative relationships with city administrators, city councils, and community economic development agencies throughout Wright County.

Strategies to Accomplish –

- *Attend regularly scheduled meetings as often as possible*
- *Provide assistance and information as deemed necessary*
- *Collaborate on projects and provide expertise as requested*

Action Item 1.5 - Most people and businesses learn about Wright County by performing online searches. An interactive and progressive website is a key to the organization’s success. WCED has developed the foundation for a new, modernized website that highlights Wright County. This website can focus on strengths, location, assets, news stories, investor and business features, and properties in a format that can be updated regularly by WCED staff, along with providing the editing and updates necessary for all governmental departments of Wright County.

Strategies to Accomplish -

- *Establish a process for regular website additions and changes*
- *Determine triage for new material so most time-sensitive or critical items post first*
- *Departments QC content before WCED posts*
- *Marketing Specialist will investigate and implement principles of Search Engine Optimization (SEO) as they make sense and are feasible for Wright County*
- *GIS, Census, economic data, drone footage, meeting streaming, video, studies should all be evaluated as potential website content*

Action Item 1.6 – Leverage the attention of innovative projects to win local and national awards to gain the attention of potential partners and legitimacy with existing residents and businesses.

Strategies to Accomplish -

- *Director will identify potential awards and provide content to Marketing Specialist*
- *We should go for at least 1-2 awards, when applicable, this year.*
- *Marketing Specialist will craft persuasive and stylish applications and written statements, package appealingly and deliver in a timely manner*
- *Utilize award applications as part of media outreach and connection-building efforts*

INITIATIVE II: PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT & TARGET MARKETING

Action Item 2.1 - Assure that all Wright County data is current in LOIS database.

Strategies to Accomplish -

- *Determine a comprehensive list of available buildings appropriate for LOIS*
- *Director and Marketing Specialist will work together to update data*
- *Marketing Specialist will conduct regular updates, as well as updates based on changes in data*

Action Item 2.2 – Assure that all Wright County business data is current in Synchronist

Strategies to Accomplish -

- *Director and Marketing Specialist work together to update data*
- *Marketing Specialist will conduct regular updates, as well as updates based on changes in data*
- *Complete Synchronist surveys by September 2018*

Action Item 2.3 – Develop and finalize a new logo for WCED to be utilized on marketing materials.

Action Item 2.4 - Develop marketing materials and online content that focus on targeted industry groups to support sales and follow-up efforts.

Action Item 2.5 - Attend three trade shows each year within targeted industries utilizing partner resources when appropriate.

Action Item 2.6 – Conduct primary sector retention visits locally with visits at the corporate level when appropriate

Action Item 2.7 – Determine possible sites throughout the county for engaging the State of Iowa’s Certified Site Program

Action Item 2.8 - Utilize and support local resources to attract and grow local technology businesses. Provide guidance to support start-up tech businesses that require assistance to local, metro and state resources.

Action Item 2.9 – Aid communities and non-profits with development of marketing materials as time and resources allow.

Action Item 2.10 – Maintain a welcoming first impression for WCED and Wright County by providing a well-organized, clean, and effective office space for economic development operations.

Action Item 2.11 – Manage and coordinate our Revolving Loan Program to assist in business development throughout Wright County

INITIATIVE III: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & QUALITY OF LIFE ENHANCEMENTS

Action Item 3.1- Update Wright County’s Laborshed on a bi-annual basis to determine the makeup of Wright County’s workforce

Action Item 3.2 – Design specialized Laborshed reports on an industry-specific basis to assist local businesses in workforce recruitment

Action Item 3.3- Identify ways to attract new workers and expand the capabilities of existing workers in Wright County.

Action Item 3.4 – Partner with support agencies to provide resources, informational sessions and training opportunities to local businesses.

Action 3.5 – Provide support and partnering assistance to ICCC Career Academy and local K-12 educational institutions.

Action Item 3.6– Provide support to address Quality of Life issues facing communities within Wright County, i.e. housing, recreational, educational and entertainment needs.

INITIATIVE IV: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Action Item 4.1 – Investigate developing a Wright County Leadership Program with appropriate community leaders/chamber directors

Action Item 4.2 - Host periodic Economic Development 101 seminars for newly elected officials from Wright County as needed (mayors/city council, county offices, and state legislators).

SECTION 5: MARKETING COSTS FOR FY 2018-19

The last marketing plan that can be found in WCED's records dates back to 2014-2015. While a significant amount of projected marketing efforts in our plan have no cost associated with the designated Action Items, an effective marketing plan does have costs associated with it. Every attempt will be made to partner with programs, agencies, and resources. The costs listed below are what we believe to be actual costs for this next year.

Initiative I: Public Relations & Advocacy

Boosting key Facebook Posts/Ads	\$ 600.00
Contact Email Plus Package	\$ 600.00

Initiative II: Product Development and Target Marketing

Promotional Brochures/Postage	\$ 1,800.00
Wright County Business Directory Updates	\$ 2,600.00
Promotional Marketing Materials	\$ 1,200.00
Sponsorships	\$ 1,000.00
Retention Visits	\$ 2,000.00
Industry Specific Trade Shows	\$ 6,000.00
Site Selector Visits	\$ 2,000.00
Prospective Client Visits	\$ 1,000.00

Initiative III: Workforce Development & Quality of Life Enhancements

Provide Informational Session & Training Opportunities	\$ 500.00
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Initiative IV: Leadership Development

Host Economic Development 101 Seminars	<u>\$ 500.00</u>
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TOTAL	\$19,800.00
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SECTION 6: INVESTOR BENEFITS

There is a lot of competition among rural Iowa Counties that strive to continue their support of local businesses, while attracting new businesses and the necessary workforce to their respective areas. It is more important now than ever before to create and maintain a viable economic development organization to serve the entire Wright County area, and assist local communities and development groups.

While we are grateful for the financial support of Wright County, those funds are limited to basic operational costs. All our marketing efforts rely on the financial support of business and industry, as well as local government entities.

If you live and work in Wright County, you have a stake in the future here. Supporting a thriving economic development organization requires commitment. We would respectfully ask that you commit to our efforts by becoming an investor in our organization.

Member (\$250-\$499)

- Listing of your business on the WCED website
- “Hotlink” to your business website
- Inclusion on WCED Annual Report Investor List

Partner (\$500-\$999)

- All of Level 1, plus:
- Promotion of your business at trade shows

Leader (\$1000 and up)

- All of Level 2, plus:
- Listing of your business on WCED Promotional Materials
- Special feature of your business on the WCED Website

Thank you in advance for considering financial support to the future of Wright County!

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