



STRATEGIC MARKETING PLAN

MARCH 2022



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ABOUT GOLDEN SHOVEL AGENCY

Golden Shovel Agency (GSA) brings creative energy to the work of economic development. As a full-service communications firm, we work exclusively with economic development organizations and those with a mission to bring investment to their region. With over a decade of experience, we are thought-leaders, strategists and innovators who help communities to reach their full potential.

Whether the goal is to attract and support great businesses or great talent, we are specialists in your world: We've helped more than 240 communities across North America to shape and tell their stories in order to strengthen the vitality of their regional economies. This depth of experience allows us to identify trends and best practices that are being used by communications throughout the country and the world. Throughout this strategic document we make recommendations based on this high level of expertise.

Our core services include strategic planning, branding, marketing, strategy, web development, and online communications. More than that, we are a true partner to our clients.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Develop losco, Inc. stands at a crossroads. In one direction lies the challenging opportunity to become a true community leader, a visionary group that can bring the entire community together for economic growth. On the other, there is a familiar pathway - one marked by well intentions with little results. There is no in between.

The community, as demonstrated by survey responses, has a strong desire for strategic leadership and collaboration - a role that can be filled by Develop losco, Inc. Community members sense the potential for the county but realize that the potential cannot be reached unless a group of leaders steps into the breach and begins to pull all of the pieces together.

Community members have put out the call for leaders. So the question becomes, will Develop losco, Inc. rise to that challenge? Do organization leaders accept that mandate? If so, this marketing blueprint can be used as a launchpad for what's possible.

Through survey responses, research and an analysis of existing print and digital materials, we present the situation as it is today, what the community would like to see, and what role Develop losco, Inc. can play in bringing about that reality. We also present strategic recommendations for how to get started and programs that can be completed over the long-term to drive lasting change for the betterment of the entire community.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS: DEVELOP IOSCO

- Develop Iosco (DI) should become the collaborative community leader the region needs to further its economic development goals:
 - Establish a clear vision for who you are
 - Engage leaders and groups through roundtable discussions
 - Create press releases to highlight the collaborative work you do
 - Continue to generate strategies that will lead to economic growth
- Change the Develop Iosco name:
 - Respondents did not indicate that a name change was necessary
 - Use the reboot process to gain more media coverage and to establish DI as a leader with a clear directive
- Develop and implement a marketing campaign directed towards your target audiences (see plan within this document):
- Identify concrete opportunities that can be marketed and begin by directing energy & investment towards specific projects:
 - A specific win like attracting a new developer, securing a broadband grant, or recruiting a medical specialist will show the community that DI is an effective community leader that produces results
 - Announce your successes, however small, through press releases, social media and your website
- Become a source for community information and maintain a community calendar and resource area on the website.
- Focus on key areas identified by the community which include:
 - Job creation
 - Working with Connect Michigan
 - Housing development
 - Expanding broadband
 - Promoting travel and tourism to entire county and region
 - Assisting property owners with maintenance
 - Expanding adult retraining or upskilling
 - Securing funding opportunities
 - Business retention
 - Help retain youth

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS: MARKETING

In addition to the above marketing efforts specific to Develop Iosco, GSA recommends the following:

- Develop a regional economic development website to serve as a hub for data, information, the “why”, resources and to promote key opportunities per industry
- Work with partners to create a marketing campaign to turn tourists into residents
- Leverage news-worthy events, company news and announcements to reach target audiences
- Create community press releases for the marketing project and all stakeholder engagement sessions
- Create individual press releases and profiles for each of the stakeholders
- Create content for each community that EVERY community should share to create reciprocal content generation
- Leverage the search terms that larger economic development websites are using for SEO purposes
- Use video to present what life is like in Iosco County
- Use video to showcase the businesses currently growing and thriving in the county
- Use video to highlight Spaceport opportunities
- Pay for digital ads to ensure a larger audience sees the content, video and social media posts you are publishing
- Develop relationships with media outlets and maintain a distribution list (send press releases and announcements to these individuals)
- Create content that targets the business strength of your communities
- Adopt a progressive, hopeful, and resourceful tone
- Encourage community leaders to brag about region opportunities
- Focus on unique strengths in the business community, such as the larger percentage of women-owned businesses
- Diligently follow the recommended content plan

PROJECT PURPOSE AND GOALS

RATIONAL AND PROCESS FOR STRATEGIC MARKETING PLAN

Economic conditions and a series of events have created an opportunity for Develop losco, Inc. (Develop losco or DI) to rebrand the organization and the community along with it. To create economic opportunity, operate and grow, the county (and DI) must proactively establish measures that will create jobs, attract investment and redevelopment opportunities.

Develop losco, Inc. has engaged with Golden Shovel Agency and taken significant steps towards positioning itself for economic growth, community brand building and outreach. The following stated goals establish the introductory part of the path forward:

- Assess the Develop losco brand to determine if the name or brand needs to be changed
- Understand the role that the community would like Develop losco to play in the community
- Determine what opportunities exist within the county
- Identify ways Develop losco can help to maximize opportunities for the county
- Determine the best ways to market Develop losco and the county

Community leadership must be engaged in the most important and pressing priorities. This Comprehensive Marketing Strategy will provide the DI and community members with an objective plan and measurement tool to examine results.

SPECIFIC PROJECT GOALS

Identify Client Baseline (SWOT):

- Where are we today (current reach - web traffic, social media followers, etc.).
- Survey community members to determine community:

Strengths

Weaknesses

Opportunities

Threats

How Develop losco is perceived within the community

The role the community wants Develop losco to play

Create personas based on the groups we want to reach (Target Audience):

- What messages need to be conveyed to each group?
- What does each group care about?
- How can the county meet the needs of the group?
- Determine which platforms can be utilized to reach each group (print ads, LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube, specific publications, etc.).
- Create messaging and ads tailored to each group.
- Develop a process for tracking and evaluating ad results.

Identify ways Develop losco can lead:

- What role should Develop losco play in the community?
- What are the immediate issues losco can work to solve?

Propose a vision for where the county is going:

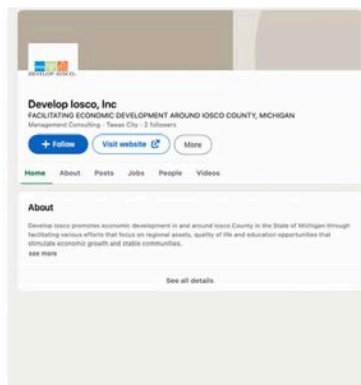
- What does the region look like five, ten years from now?
- How do we use marketing and advertising to convey and bring about that future image?
- Create a list of media sources that we want to see this future-focused message.

WHERE ARE WE TODAY?

Develop losco, Inc.'s (DI) website currently attracts only one visitor per month through organic search results (see SEO appendix). In other words, if someone is not specifically typing in the web page or visiting the page from an established link, they are not searching for or finding the website. On social media, DI has a profile on Facebook and LinkedIn. We did not find one on Twitter or Instagram.

The Facebook profile has 95 followers and appears to be the most active with regular postings. This platform is a good way to communicate with DI's internal audience in particular.

The LinkedIn profile has two followers and there have been no postings.



SWOT ANALYSIS

Iosco County is uniquely situated, surrounded by natural beauty and recreational opportunities that attract tourists from throughout the region and the state. These same assets can be put to use to attract workers and investment to the county. Yet, because the county has traditionally been a summer destination investment has been lacking, there is a lack of services and opportunities, particularly for young people. The specific strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats have been identified through a combination of community survey responses and research.

MARKETING SWOT ANALYSIS

Known tourist destination
People enjoy living there
Positive experiences associated with the county
Low cost of living
Abundant outdoor recreation
Attractive to retirees

Relatively unknown out of state
No press coverage outside the area
Population decline
Not enough jobs to keep young people in town
Lack of services
Lack of housing

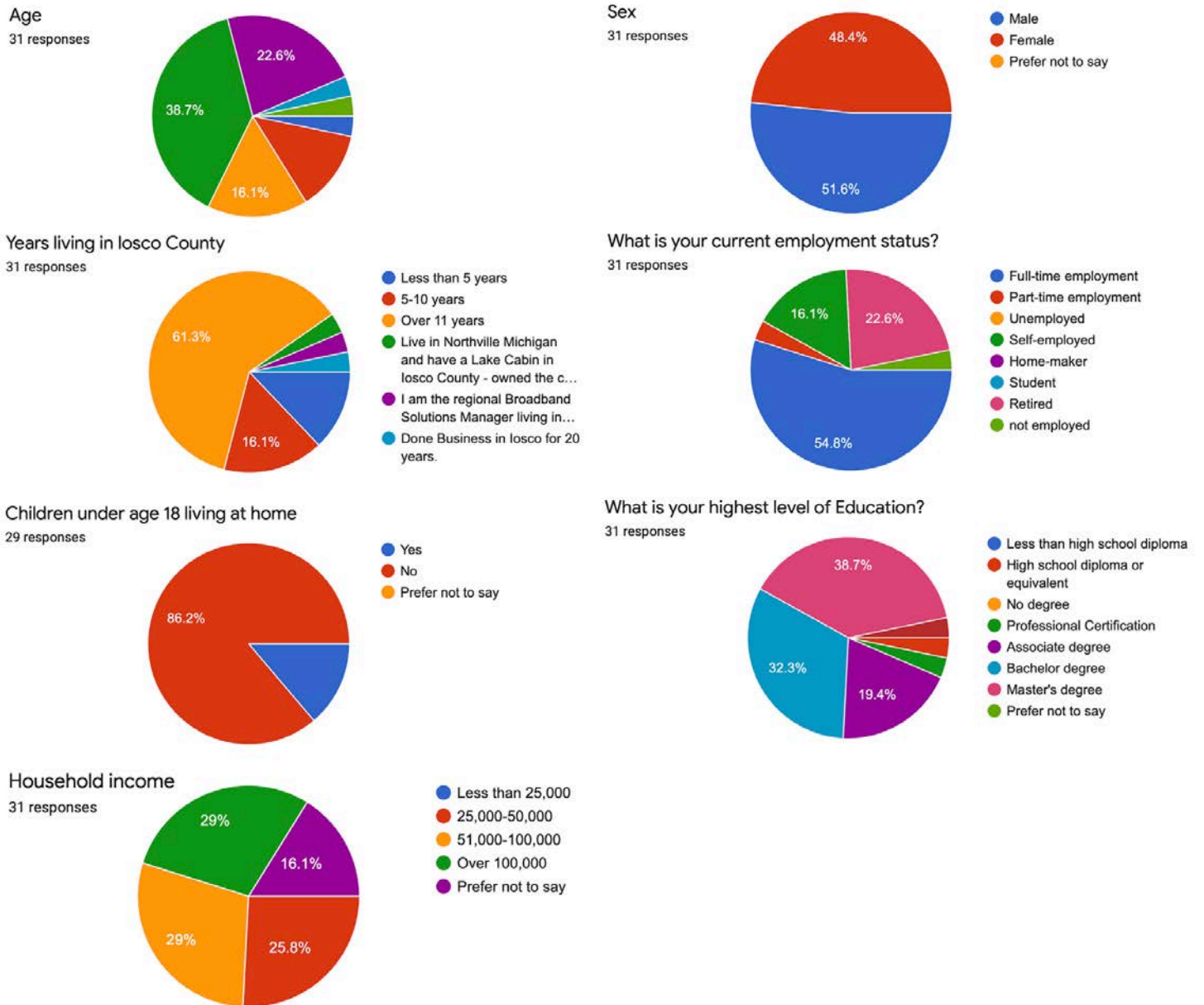
Spaceport investment
Gypsum industry expansion
Redevelopment opportunities
Turn tourists into residents
Community looking for collaborative leadership
Low cost of doing business attractive to companies

Lack of regional planning and strategy = no results
Aging population
Young people moving away due to lack of jobs & housing
Community & leadership silos
No reputation at all
Stagnant growth
Blight

SURVEY RESULTS

The Develop Iosco, Inc. (DI) survey was available to respondents from January 25th to February 28th, 2022. It was promoted through the DI website and social media channels, through the local paper, and with direct email requests to participants identified by DI leadership. In total, 31 people responded to the survey.

Demographically, survey respondents are predominantly caucasian, over the age of 45, have lived in the county for over five years and do not have children living at home. There was a good mix of males and females participating, educational attainment levels, employment status, and household income - providing a plurality of perspectives. Our recommendation would be to create an outreach plan to obtain younger and minority participants, should DI choose to complete a survey in the future.



RESPONSES TO SURVEY QUESTIONS

What is Iosco County known for?

The majority of participants referenced the area's natural beauty, specifically mentioning assets such as: the Lake Huron shoreline, hunting, fishing, woods, beautiful land, water sports, the Iosco Exploration Trail, golfing, pontoon boating, ATV trails, Tawas Point State park, Corsair Ski Trails, Au Sable River, beaches and national forests.

"Iosco County is known for its beautiful outdoors. We have many beaches, forests, rivers and wildlife," said one participant.

What makes Iosco County unique compared to other counties in Michigan?

The combination of natural assets and recreational opportunities along with the friendly and down to earth people, make Iosco County stand out in the eyes of participants.

As one participant put it, "Our small town feel, beautiful natural resources and great amenities..." Another responded, "As a place to live - We get to live in the area that the rest of our state comes to recreate. We enjoy the natural resources that our county offers 365 rather than an occasional weekend, week or day here and there when they get time off from work in the city. We also offer one of the largest airport facilities in the state with acres of land available for use/development all supported by road and rail access and with our Lake Huron frontage, could support ship access."

What resources are available to residents in Iosco County?

Survey respondents were divided in their responses related to available services falling into one of three categories: we don't have services, we have summer and tourism-related services, or we have plenty of services.

Those in the first category provided comments such as, "Limited shopping i.e. groceries and gas; have to drive 30 minutes to get to a shopping district."

Those in the second category provided comments such as, "Recreational opportunities, slower lifestyle" and "Hospitals, Lake Cabin rentals, food establishments - everything that is summer related up North."

Responses in the third category were more detailed and included a wide variety of resources such as:

- Broadband is available for most
- Good cell coverage
- Connect Michigan
- Food Pantries
- Pregnancy Center
- Resources for families in need or in crisis
- Coats for Kids
- Northeast Michigan Children's Assessment Center
- FISH
- EMS Service with Hospital
- Stellar 911 Service
- NEMCSA
- Trillium
- Mi Works
- Banking
- Senior Care
- Senior Housing
- Adult Care Facilities
- Special Needs Facilities
- County Airport
- Lake Huron
- IET
- Alpena Community College
- Good schools
- Chamber of commerce
- MSU extension
- Libraries
- DHS
- NEMSCA

- Homeless shelter
- Aging services

What resources are available to help businesses in Iosco County? Please include any resources you know of for entrepreneurs.

Responses were divided into two categories: those who were not aware of resources and those who provided a list. The answers to this question demonstrate that developing or promoting resources for small businesses should be a key priority for DI and other economic development organizations.

Responses include, "I haven't found any coordinated resources for my small business to help with funding or hiring." "No collaborative resources." And, "Therein lies the issue - not one resource dedicated solely to job creation."

The combined responses include the following services:

- Hale Area Association
- Tawas Chamber of Commerce
- Oscoda Chamber of Commerce
- Connected Nation
- Banks
- Employee recruitment services
- SBDC
- County Revolving Loan Fund
- MSU Extension
- Former WAFB
- County airport
- EDC
- Connect Michigan
- MEDC

Those who did provide resources often caveated their response by saying, "The EDC and local chambers, but usually very limited or do not exist at all."

What do you wish could be changed about Iosco County?

Overall, respondents want to see more investment, progressive policies and opportunities that will attract young people and make it possible for those who grow up in the county to either stay or return - "More opportunities from young people to allow them to stay in their home community." They recommend doing the following to make that possible, "To bring younger families to our area we lack in job opportunities. Broadband connections are an issue in rural areas for work from home positions." And, "Build more family housing and childcare."

Other responses were focused on attracting new businesses to the county so they wouldn't have to leave. "Better medical care locally so that trips to Saginaw can be avoided." And, "I would love to see some clothing stores in our area. I have to leave our county to buy clothes unless I get them from Walmart."

There were also requests for grocery stores like Aldi.

Still, there is tension between these two points of view as demonstrated by one response, "I do not want to see much change about Iosco County from a way of life concept. I like the small town/up north or rural atmosphere. However, it would be good to ensure our residents have adequate housing, decent paying jobs, and some additional restaurant and shopping opportunities to make the residents feel compelled to shop/eat local. Make the County a destination to live, but not make it so desirable that we cannot control the growth."

What do you repeatedly hear that needs to be fixed in Iosco County?

Survey responses include the following:

- EMS services
- Skill building opportunities
- Living wage jobs
- Children recreational opportunities in Hale and Whittemore
- Home owner programs to fix properties
- Education programs to help businesses
- Cooperation within the whole county
- Affordable housing (need more of it)
- Too many silos between communities
- Nobody from downstate knows what existed in Iosco County
- More drug rehab services
- More childcare options
- Middle-income housing

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- More manufacturing jobs
- More involvement from community - volunteers for boards or events are hard to find
- More medical specialists
- Better broadband
- County services
- Blight
- Communication
- 911 ambulance service

What resources are lacking to fix the issues in Iosco County?

Responses centered around two key issues - a lack of leadership and investment/funding.

"Leadership" and "Communication, finding the correct contacts to help with situations or education. Whether for new businesses or development or lake shore properties shoreline help."

As for investment, respondents said, "Investors with money" and "Not enough taxes to fund services and infrastructure." Another expanded upon both by saying, "Funding without additional taxation, expertise or knowledge in the subject, county wide plan for the immediate and extended future. Promotion and marketing."

What issues or problems need to be immediately addressed in Iosco County?

Responses included:

- Too many run down/blighted buildings in the county
- Lack of housing
- Childcare
- Broadband
- Zoning flexibility
- County-wide law enforcement presence
- Affordable transportation
- Plans for growing the population back to year 2000 level

One respondent provided a specific suggestion to help with funding, "The County Board needs to engage with the people of the county in order to be able to pass a millage in 2022."

Who should address those issues or problems as identified?

Respondents left general comments such as, "Everyone" and "That's the \$100,000 question." Others provided specifics, such as:

- MSHDA
- Private sector/businesses
- County and local governments with education and business partners
- Chamber of Commerce
- Board of Commissioners
- EDC
- Develop Iosco
- County Board, Township and City Boards
- Health Department
- Community members
- Volunteers
- Government officials

How can Develop Iosco help to address or solve those problems?

'Communicate' was a common theme. Respondents see DI as being able to "Convene leaders; identify funding; encourage prioritization." Specific recommendations include:

- Communicate
- By doing surveys such as this
- Developing a more pertinent funding program for existing businesses
- Bring all parties to the table
- Create jobs
- Bring together partnerships in Iosco, Michigan and the federal government
- Attract new businesses
- Provide trainings
- Collect the data and define the problem

How is Iosco County changing?

One concern that has been echoed throughout survey responses is the aging demographic and lack of opportunities for young families. This was reiterated through statements like, "Getting older, middle class and living wage jobs have diminished." And, "More a retirement area instead of school age families." Or, as another put it, "Unfortunately, we're getting older and are lacking the ability to keep our younger generation here."

Others expressed concerns for the business community, stating, "We are losing small businesses." And, "Stagnant. Small business regression."

There were also responses about too much blight, rising housing costs due to the purchase of vacation homes and the ever present lack of cooperation between municipalities. "Municipalities looking out for themselves and not for the County as a whole."

What new opportunities have you heard about in Iosco County in the past five years?

The biggest opportunity respondents see relates to the new Spaceport and the potential investment that it could attract. Responses included:

- Spaceport opportunities
- Development at the former Air Force base
- Space X
- Kalitta expansions
- Condo developments
- Small business openings
- Expansion of the gypsum industry
- Medical and recreational marijuana facilities
- New housing in Oscoda
- Some manufacturing growth
- Investments in trail system

What economic development opportunities has Iosco County missed or not pursued?

Respondents focused on the lack of coordinated efforts in their responses, stating, "Iosco doesn't have a voice at the table representing itself to MEDC or interested investors. No organized approach to economic development. All volunteer/ad hoc" and "Need to have an overall strategic plan to promote what IC offers compared to other counties." And, "No promotion or marketing. No established means to entice development and no plan to help put development in the right locations."

Some specific recommendations include:

- I think with our American Rescue Plan money, we should address issues of poverty and child care resources. I have not heard of any townships or cities in our county working toward that end.
- Developing a plan to increase broadband
- Using the IRESA to offer adult training in some of the skilled professions that we are seeing such a need for: Electrician, plumbing, construction, large machine operation, diesel mechanics, group child care ...
- There was an opportunity for a 4-year college to establish at WAFB that was not pursued
- Solar and Wind power generation
- The potential of a cruise line stopping in East Tawas. Agri business has been under-recognized.
- More downstate people moving to Iosco while working from home.

What opportunity would you recommend that Develop Iosco Inc. pursue on behalf of the community?

Respondents want to see DI become a source of information and to advocate for economic development in the region.

Comments include "Expand and update your Business Toolkit and be a one-stop resource for those looking to develop in the area" and "Economic growth plan that increases revenues for all parties." Another suggested, "Collaboration among communities and the development of a comprehensive plan as a guide for desired results. Helps the promotion and marketing concept and drives inquiries to the right place."

Some specific recommendations include:

- Bringing jobs
- Working with Connect Michigan
- Housing
- Expanding broadband
- Promote travel and tourism to entire county
- Assist property owners with maintenance
- Adult retraining or upskilling

- Funding opportunities
- Business retention
- Help retain youth

One respondent offered a strong idea for attracting tourism, "A coordinated 'Visit Iosco County' campaign - through an art installation throughout the community. Similar to what Chicago did with cow statues, we could identify a symbol of Iosco County and have artists/community members decorate them and have them located throughout the county to encourage tourism and business patronage."

What assets does Iosco County have that are ignored or underused?

Iosco County has a lot to offer. As one respondent said, "Iosco has it all: waterways, beaches, farms, industry and a great quality of life, which is envied by many. The County has a large capacity to grow in the tourism, industrial, agricultural and medical services industries."

Respondents said:

- Beaches
- Trails
- Huron National Forest
- Corsair Ski Trails
- Small towns are overlooked
- High school students and newly graduated youth
- County airport
- HS auditorium
- Bayou in Oscoda is used for a drain rather than recreation
- Abandoned or unused buildings
- Available lots
- Idea, skills and input of young adults
- Lake Huron
- Tawas Bay

What should Iosco County be known for?

Respondents want to see a focus on natural assets, but for more than tourism. One person said, "Tourism but also a place where people can work in a beautiful country setting" and "A picturesque Lake Huron shoreline community that's a great place to live and work."

Other suggestions include:

- Good place to raise a family
- Good schools
- Good hospital with healthcare for all
- Excellent recreation opportunities
- Low cost of living
- Access to natural resources
- All of the fun of West Michigan without the traffic and crowds
- Welcoming and friendly people
- Clean water and clean air
- All-American
- Being a leader on the northeast side of the state

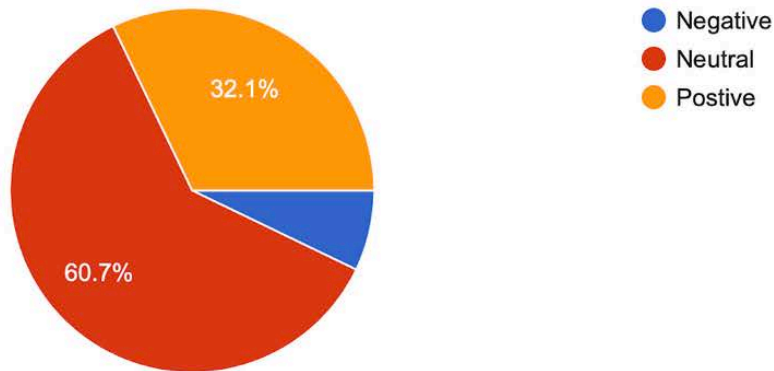
Why are people moving to Iosco County?

Retirement topped the list for why people may be moving to the area. Many respondents seemed unaware of new people moving to the county or what their motivations were. Those who did respond said:

- Jobs at the former Air Force Base
- Remote work (come for a month or forever!)
- Low cost of living
- Good schools
- Slower pace
- Retirement
- To escape the city/metro areas
- Quality of life
- Sell homes at a higher price elsewhere and purchase a more affordable home here
- Affordable and beautiful alternative for retirees

When Iosco County is represented in the news media, please rate how positively the community is represented?

28 responses



What events attract positive attention to Iosco County?

Tourism-related activities appear to be what generates the most interest in Iosco County. Respondents had a lot of positive things to say about festivals, events and outdoor recreation. Specific responses include:

- Perchville winter celebration
- Marathon
- Family Fun Fair
- Art on the Beach
- Paul Bunyan Days
- Rotary concerts
- Fishing tournaments
- Boat races (past)
- IC Summer Fair
- Blues on the Bay
- Tuesday Dancing in the Street
- AuSable Canoe Race
- Whittemore Speedway
- Iosco County Fair
- Tawas Farmers Market
- Wine Uncorked Festival

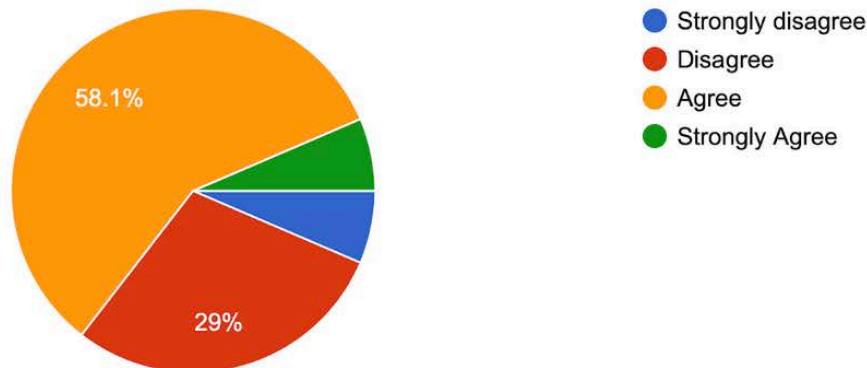
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- Tawas Days
- Fourth of July activities
- Balloon Festival
- Mud Jam
- Huron Shores Festival

One participant provided a more detailed answer - "Besides the local newspaper and radio station, there is not much attention brought on to Iosco County from outside of the County itself. From a media perspective, Iosco is located in a media desert from a Regional or State perspective. The only time Iosco is portrayed in the TV media is when something goes wrong. I would not necessarily call it an event, but the general recreational opportunities the area provides is the main attraction for all four seasons. The summer is the key season for the County's economy and is driven by Lake Huron, the Au Sable River, and the National Forest. There are small town events that help capitalize or promote the economies at this time like the Canoe Marathon, Sidewalk Sales, July 4th holiday, etc. Spring, Fall and Winter are dependent on seasonal activities like hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, X Country Skiing, and other community events."

Is it easy to find information about activities and events occurring in the community?

31 responses



What could be done better to advertise losco County events?

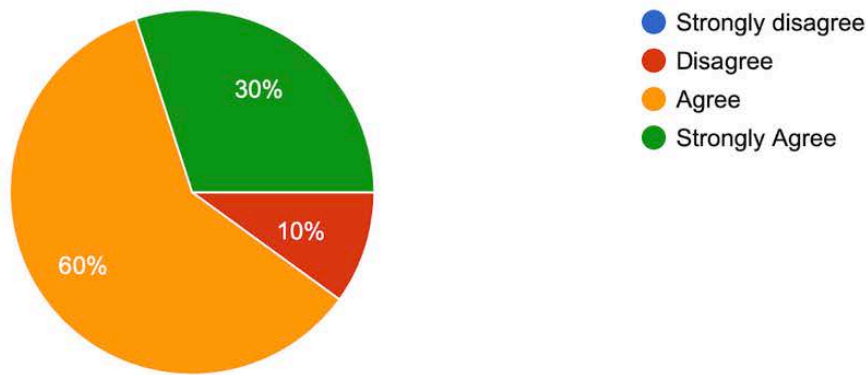
The general consensus among respondents was to have a strong web presence, social media, community calendar, and to obtain downstate media coverage.

Specific recommendations include, "Have one place to find it - now have to go to each community's individual website or Facebook page; or happen to see it in the weekly newspaper" and "one website that has all event listings. Now you either have to go to each community's chamber of commerce website or happen to see an ad/article in the newspaper." Another recommended to send newsletters out to residents and to take out big signs on US 23.

Survey respondents also touched on the need for collaboration among all community organizations saying, "Follow Bay Future and other ED Groups" and "Get an advertising consultant to answer the question "How do you reach such a diverse population in age, backgrounds, economic disparities and social interactions?"

I have to leave losco County to take advantage of services, purchase products, or patronize businesses I prefer.

30 responses



Are you aware of Develop Iosco?

Over 90% of respondents are aware of the organization.

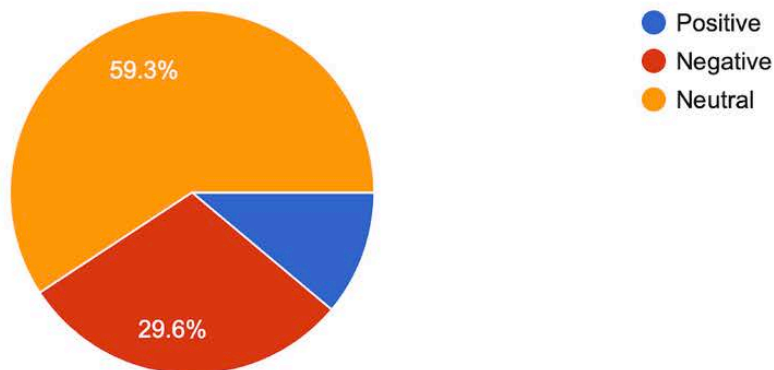
What is the purpose of Develop Iosco?

Some respondents were unsure because the mission has changed over the years and they don't know what DI has done in the past. Those that did provide ideas, said the following:

- Economic development
- A forum to promote the economic development of Iosco
- To attract new businesses to the area, and help the ones that are already established
- To promote our area for development and focus on the assets we have to offer
- Bring together local government, business, financial institutions and other community leaders to brainstorm ideas in order to improve the business climate
- To facilitate discussion between business leaders, community officials, and residents about improving quality of life through business development
- To listen to us and to educate us so as a team we can develop Iosco County
- Improve life for all
- Help businesses to grow
- To assist in the responsible development of the county
- To create awareness of Iosco differentiators promote them with metrics/results reporting on the back end

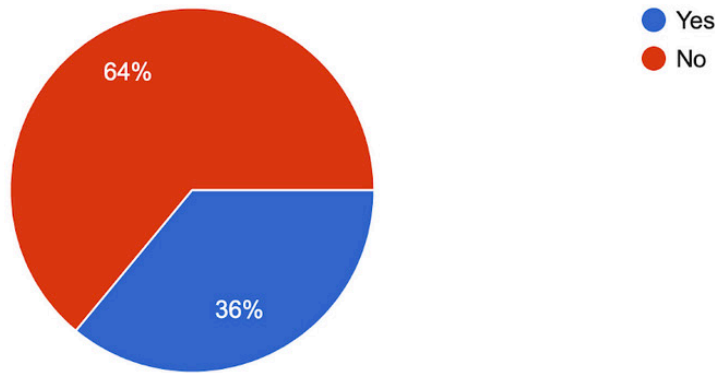
When you hear others mention Develop Iosco, is it generally...

27 responses



Should Develop losco consider a name change to better reflect their mission?

25 responses



If yes, what name suggestions would you recommend?

The majority of respondents do not believe the name should be changed. Those who do offered specific recommendations that include:

- Invest losco: losco County’s Economic Development Organization
- losco Economic Development Council
- losco County Economic Development Organization
- losco Economic Development Agency
- Invest losco

Final comments from survey respondents:

“Continue efforts to develop in losco County and work with municipal entities and losco county departments to work together on programs and goals. Help to better educate the community.”

“Get the schools and youth involved as they are our future.”

“Here to help in developing a strategy that brings positive revenue growth to all businesses going forward. At the end of the day - Did we help, assist, create awareness and provide an increase in revenues year over year. Top 10 Event Marketing is an idea to explore - Say we have 15-20 golf courses - Hit all of them and stack rank a top 10 score - if you golf all of them - you have a choice to play your personal one at a discounted/reduced or free rate. Top 10 restaurants, Bars, Camping locations, hiking trails, Canoe rentals, Rivers, ATV trails, etc.....”

"I answered "neutral" to my response when I heard the name. I have been minimally involved and I know that the group has not really been able to gain traction for various reasons in the last few years. I do think the name is great and has so much opportunity to be developed and embraced in a more positive manner so that is why I don't think it needs to be changed. Just relaunched with increased awareness. My undergrad education is in Public Relations and Marketing. I grew up in Tawas and returned here 7 years ago so I think that I offer a fresh perspective. I'm happy to help as needed."

"I can't emphasize the desire to have a comprehensive plan or at a minimum collaboration among local governments, the county, and economic development related organizations to determine what our goals are. We need to determine what we want and how we want it. We cannot maintain shooting from the hip or addressing it as it arises. We also need to look for real time solutions to our issues and how we can resolve them. Only Iosco County is going to fix Iosco County issues and so we need to figure that out to make our County more vibrant and appealing. DI has a strong future as long as we don't get in the way of ourselves and that includes the County as a whole. We are a great community and county and we have the ability to make our County a desirable place to live, work, and play. We just need to work together and implement the strategy!"

"Clearly, Iosco County is our little piece of heaven on earth. It's beautiful and caring but we have an issue with retaining people here. While one of our three children still resides in Iosco, our two older boys have since moved out of the area and the state to better pursue their professions. Simply put, we need more jobs..."

"Need places to go things to do."

"Bringing together all the communities to one table that represent the best interests of Iosco County... of course Middle East peace may be easier - but Iosco county needs to represent itself like the Tri-Cities, Grand Rapids etc as a destination area - what's good for Oscoda, Tawas, East Tawas etc. is good for all of Iosco County."

"Getting representation from all levels of government within the County would benefit all of us. Cooperation is definitely the key!"

"Stay super focused on each project, keep it simple, celebrate the small successes and know that DI's legacy will remain long after we are gone."

"Look at the history here over the past ten years and make new goals. Study development plans in similar and very successful counties. Maybe even outside MI. Do not reinvent the wheel!"

"Iosco County has a treasure chest of talented/skilled/experienced residents which are not utilized.....and this includes young people. This is a strong untapped resource."

SURVEY ANALYSIS

Iosco County has a wealth of natural resources that are true assets for the residents who call the community home and for attracting new residents and businesses to the area. By and large, survey respondents felt that these assets were not being leveraged and, due to a lack of coordinated communication, promoted. In other words, Iosco County is an incredible place to live and work but few people realize it.

Simultaneously, there is a clear issue in Iosco County - a lack of jobs and housing that would help to keep young people in the community, or make it possible for them to come home after obtaining their education. The 'graying' of the community is a deep concern for community members and one they hope Develop Iosco, Inc. can address.

Ultimately, survey respondents presented a variety of challenges that should be addressed, including:

- Developing housing
- Creating jobs
- Attracting investment/new businesses
- Expanding broadband
- Supporting existing businesses
- Workforce development

But, the primary need the community sees is for leadership. In nearly all of the question responses, there was at least one comment focused around the need for bringing people and organizations together, improving communication, developing strategic plans and leading. "Bring all parties to the table and start a team approach instead of a silo approach. Each community is working in their own way to resolve the same issues. That needs to change. What works in Tawas should work in Oscoda and vice versa. Stop competing against each other and start working together for the betterment of the residents."

Other comments include the following:

"Bringing together all the communities to one table that represent the best interests of Iosco County... of course Middle East peace may be easier - but Iosco county needs to represent itself like the Tri-Cities, Grand Rapids etc as a destination area - what's good for Oscoda, Tawas, East Tawas etc. is good for all of Iosco County."

"Create more progressive policies to encourage new business, road improvements, and cooperation between community leaders"

"I haven't found any coordinated resources for my small business to help with funding or hiring." "No collaborative resources." And, "Therein lies the issue - not one resource dedicated solely to job creation."

"Too many silos between communities."

"It seems that the cooperation between municipalities is getting worse and worse. Municipalities looking out for themselves and not for the County as a whole."

"What resources are lacking to fix the issues in Iosco County is communication between entities, townships and cities that don't work together."

"Create/develop a strategy that creates awareness of what we have to offer from a recreational perspective."

"Provide strategic pathways for forward advancement."

"Create a database of information aligned with the needs of Iosco County."

"Help with talent acquisition and retention, business development, and the startup process."

TARGET AUDIENCES

Internal Audiences

- Elected officials
- Chamber of Commerce (staff and members)
- Education community
- Students
- Media (local newspapers, bloggers, etc.)
- Community leaders
- Business community
- Workforce
- Residents
- Healthcare leaders

External Audiences

- Workforce
- Commercial developers (medical office and retail)
- Business owners and managers
- State economic development agency
- Education community (for talent recruitment)
- Tourists
- Housing developers
- Site selection consultants
- Retirees
- Media
- Former residents

CORE MESSAGE: IOSCO COUNTY

Iosco County, Michigan: Live and Invest Where Everyone Comes to Play

Iosco County, Michigan: Endless Opportunities Up North

Iosco County, Michigan: Settle Down in Nature's Playground

Iosco County, Michigan: An Affordable & Supportive Community for Your Business

Iosco County, Michigan Has the Workforce Your Business Needs to Grow

CORE MESSAGE: DEVELOP IOSCO

Develop Iosco: An Economic Development Organization for Our County

Develop Iosco: Bringing Community Together for Economic Growth

Develop Iosco: An Economic Development Leader for Our County

Develop Iosco: A Strategic Approach to Economic Growth

AUDIENCE + MESSAGE

Internal Audiences

- Elected officials and community leaders

Develop Iosco is bringing leaders together to develop and implement strategic growth plans. We are your partner in success and invite you to become part of something bigger than any one of us. We can accomplish more together!

- Chamber of Commerce and the business community

Local businesses will grow as a result of Develop Iosco's success. As we recruit development, businesses and workers to our community, all businesses will benefit. An investment in this mission is an investment in yourself. Together, we can grow Iosco County's economy!

- Education community

We need your help as a collaborative partner. As an education organization (or educator) you can help us to prepare the next generation of workers for in-demand jobs while also helping local companies to connect with graduating talent.

- Workforce

There are opportunities for career growth in Iosco County. Our world-class employers are looking for you. Come to Iosco County to work where you'll have immediate access to year-round outdoor recreation.

- Students

Intern for losco companies now to get a head start on your career. Stay here to work and grow your career in a community that's safe, friendly, full of outdoor recreation, and where your friends and family already live!

- Residents

losco County offers many benefits for residents. Follow us to stay informed and get involved. You can play an important role in growing losco County.

- Media (local newspapers, bloggers, etc.)

Stay in touch with DI to learn about the latest events, reports and growth opportunities.

- Healthcare leaders

Expand in losco County. Our growing retirement community is in need of further healthcare services.

External Audiences

- Workforce

There are opportunities for career growth in losco County. Our world-class employers are looking for you. Come to losco County to work where you'll have immediate access to year-round outdoor recreation.

- Housing developers

losco County is a tourist destination with incredible recreation opportunities. Now, more people want to make it their permanent home. Our shortage of housing is your opportunity to profit.

- Commercial developers (medical office and retail)

Our growing population, especially retirees, is in need of additional healthcare and commercial services close to home. Built here to tap into losco County's growing market.

- Site selection consultants, business owners and managers

losco County has a history of manufacturing excellence. Our workforce is ready to work for manufacturing, distribution and aerospace companies looking to grow in the U.S. Plus, we have affordable land for development, particularly at the old Air Force base. Our cost of doing business is also low, as is our cost of living!

- Retirees

Make your summer playground your permanent home. Move to losco County to enjoy the best of your retirement. Our cost of living is low and the pace is slower than nearby metropolitan areas.

- State economic development agency

losco County has opportunity. We need your assistance and coverage to bring attention to our area.

- Media

losco County is one of the most popular summer destinations in the region. Cover our events, why tourists are flocking to losco County and the opportunities we have here.

- Education community (for talent recruitment)

We have opportunities for student interns, summer workers and long-term employment.

- Former residents

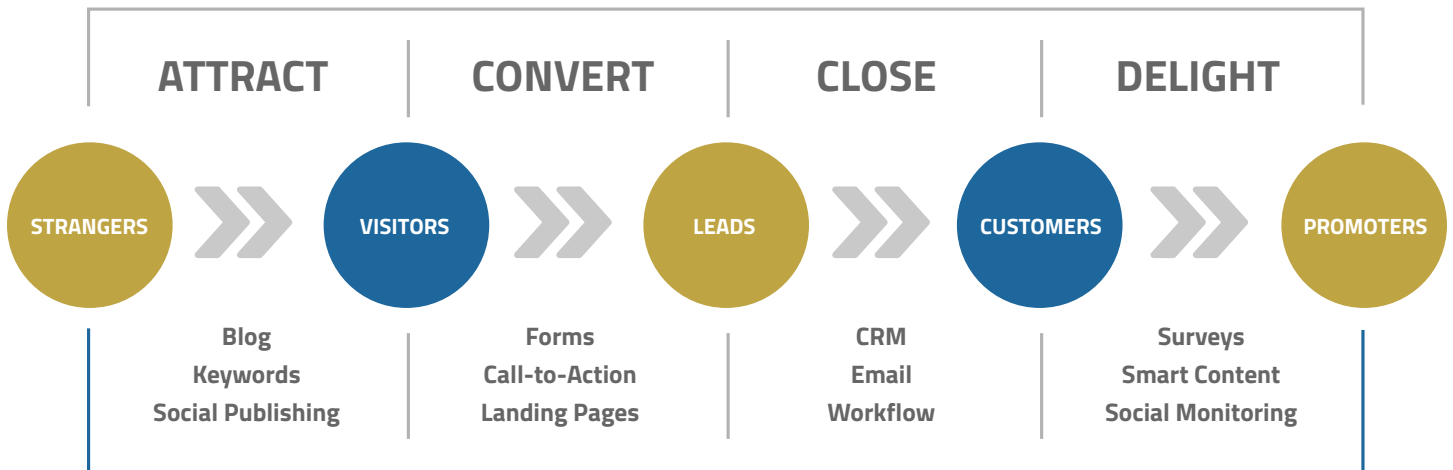
Move home to losco County and raise your family where the cost of living is low, the community is safe and slow paced, and you have immediate access to year-round outdoor fun.

MARKETING CAMPAIGN: PROCESS & TOOLS

Golden Shovel’s expert team of marketing professionals has taken a deep dive into your community to identify key strengths and opportunities. The following marketing strategy is based on our findings during the research and development phase. Components within the marketing strategy include messaging ideas, campaign concepts, deployment strategies, and a roadmap to follow.

BUYER’S JOURNEY

GSA’s process matches your buyer’s journey with the sales process to turn strangers into visitors, leads and eventually - customers (investors, new businesses and jobs).



ATTRACTION PHASE

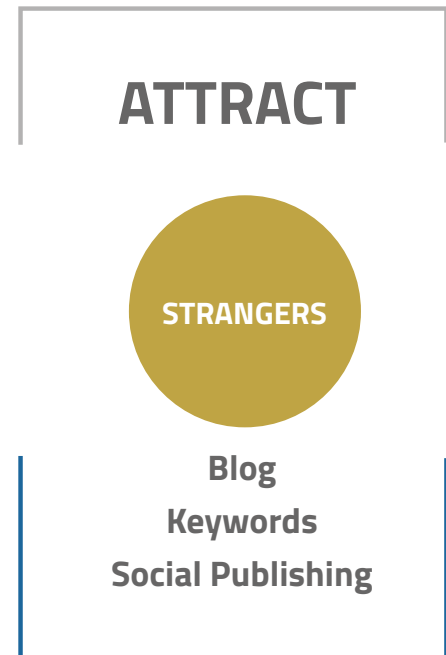
How We Attract Businesses, Investors and Workers

Our objective is to attract investors within your target industries using valuable content that establishes you as a resource and advisor with whom they want to engage.

Attraction Strategies

Lead generation and inbound marketing strategies that attract your target audience are tied to content creation and development. This includes developing:

- Search Engine Optimization (SEO)
- Success stories
- Video testimonials
- Content offers
- Guides
- Testimonials
- How-To articles
- Social media posts
- Influencer engagement
- Paid Ads
- Google
- Facebook
- LinkedIn



SEO Is a Powerful Attraction Tool

An SEO strategy should also be implemented to improve Develop Iosco's website ranking in an organic search, making it easier for people to find you online.

Develop Iosco, Inc. (DI) has a clear opportunity to become the leader that brings the community together it lacks in brand recognition. Community members appear to be unaware of the organization, as demonstrated by an SEO report showing one click per month coming through an organic search. Quite simply - people aren't searching for or finding the organization. This was further emphasized by community comments that include:

"No one knows about Develop Iosco - couldn't find a website."

"I was a part of Develop Iosco for a number of years and we could never get moving forward. I hope this new group can do what so many before could not."

GSA has compared DI's website with the state economic development website (MiPlace), and nearby economic development organizations like Arenac County, Bay County Economic Development and Greater Grand Rapids. The attached SEO report goes into detail regarding their search volume and SEO terms that are frequently being used to access their site.

Golden Shovel recommends that DI develop an SEO strategy that includes creating more pages on the website and writing ongoing SEO content. Below are a few of the keywords we recommend, based on this research:

- Oscoda Chamber of Commerce (all of the ones in the area)
- Tawas Chamber of Commerce
- Marketing plan
- Foundation repair grants
- Home repair grants Michigan
- Michigan historical sites
- Michigan Main Street program
- IT job training and placement
- Job training and placement
- Michigan demographics
- Demographics of Michigan
- Michigan demographics by city
- Cost of living (for each city)

STRATEGIC MARKETING PLAN

We also recommend answering questions, something that can easily be done through an FAQ page. Recommend questions include:

- What region is Michigan in?
- What is the cost of living in Michigan?
- What is the cost of living near the beach?
- Where can I find demographic information on Michigan?
- Where can I find help for my business?
- How do I get money for my business?
- How can I get grants to repair my home or property?

Social Posts

DI should develop a clear social media strategy that includes posting on each social media platform three times a week. Social media posts should be relevant to what the target audience cares about and engaging with either graphics or video.

Social media tips include:

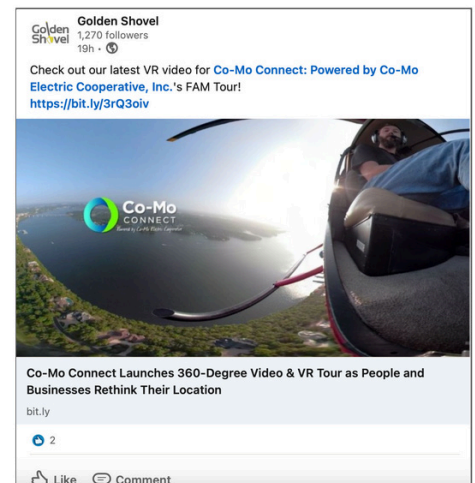
- Post pictures with no-to-little text on them. The more text on an image, the less likely people will be to click.
- Create messages that are short and to the point. Do not use a sentence when one or two words will convey the same message.
- Include a call to action, such as: "Call Now" or "View the Calendar" or "RSVP."
- Use #hashtags that are relevant to the organization and the topic.

Paid Ads

DI should take out paid ads to promote the organization and the opportunities available within Iosco County. Given the limited brand recognition the organization has, paid ads are the fastest and best way to expose the organization to a broader audience - both internally and externally.

Internal ads should focus on the key aspects of:

- Collaboration
- Leadership
- Engagement
- Strategy



External ads should focus on the benefits of locating and investing in Iosco County, such as:

- Low cost of living
- Low cost of doing business
- Strong tourism market
- Strong housing demand
- Need for additional services

Lead Generation through Content Offers (Resource)

Develop Iosco can position itself as a leader within the community - someone who brings organizations, leaders and residents together. Positioning the organization in this way will require DI to gather data, share insights and create strategic reports and recommendations. This strategy can be one of those documents. When uploaded to a landing page, it can serve as a lead generation tool where people need to enter their information to be emailed a copy. Once they submit the request, their information will be maintained in the DI database for future engagement.

Example of a lead generation landing page:

UNDERSTANDING CURRENT WORKFORCE SHORTAGES

HOW TO SOLVE WORKFORCE SHORTAGES IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Workforce shortages are a primary concern for businesses and economic developers throughout the country. For economic developers, this creates a clear and urgent challenge - **find workers to support existing businesses or risk them going elsewhere**. The same is true for business attraction. Economic developers seeking new investment must have a workforce attraction strategy that supports that growth.

Be aggressive with workforce attraction or someone else will be.

In the game of workforce attraction, there will be clear winners and clear losers. Some communities will grow their populations while others may see their populations decline. **Get on the winning side** - for yourself and your community.

This whitepaper will give you the baseline information you need to understand the workforce shortage issues, and to create a plan to address them in your community. We will also share best practices that economic developers throughout the country have been using to strengthen and grow their workforce. Learn from them, develop a plan, and start implementing. Your local businesses and community are counting on you.

GET YOUR COPY HERE

First Name*

Last Name*

Email*

Country*

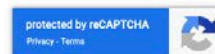
Please Select

Organization Name*

Job title

Phone number

Golden Shovel Agency needs the contact information you provide to us to contact you about our products and services. You may unsubscribe from these communications at any time. For information on how to unsubscribe, as well as our privacy practices and commitment to protecting your privacy, please review our Privacy Policy.



Submit

CONVERSION PHASE

How We Engage “Visitors” and Encourage Them to Take the Next Step

Present site visitors with insights and solutions that align with their pain points and goals. This makes them more likely to contact Develop Iosco and become a lead.

Engagement Strategies

Communicate in a way that makes people want to build long-term relationships with you. In other words - engagement strategies make it more valuable to work with Develop Iosco and regional economic development groups.

- Create landing pages for each opportunity (housing development, redevelopment, industry-specific opportunities, etc.)
- Provide resources after someone fills out a contact form
- Newsletter sign-up for access to insider information and news
- Registration page for insider update webinars and meetings
- Sign up for in-person or virtual events



STRATEGIC MARKETING PLAN

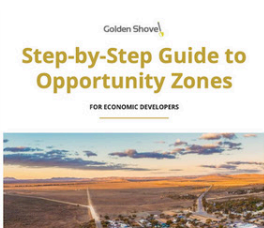
Examples of Conversion Tools

Landing Pages for Each Industry

TARGETED SECTORS: GROWING INDUSTRY IN EAST KENTUCKY

<p>AEROSPACE</p> <p>Certified AERReady Region! The nine counties of One East Kentucky have been designated as an AERReady Region by two national consulting firms. Tucson Atlantic Consulting along with...</p>	<p>AUTOMOTIVE</p> <p>Skilled Labor, Industry Clusters and Best In-Class Training all make the One East Kentucky region a prime location for Metalworking industries. Whether your company serves th...</p>
<p>ENERGY</p> <p>East Kentucky: Energy Leader! The Appalachian Region of East Kentucky has long been a provider of energy resources for the United States. Our history of coa...</p>	<p>FOOD BEVERAGE AGRICULTURE</p> <p>The Food & Beverage Sector is Growing in Eastern Kentucky! Recent Announcements On July 30, 2015, Alltech broke ground on Dueling Barrels Brewing & Distilling in downtown Pikeville, Kentucky...</p>
<p>HEALTHCARE</p> <p>Healthcare Cluster in East Kentucky Healthcare is the fastest...</p>	<p>TECHNOLOGY & CALL CENTERS</p> <p>Gigabyte Service in East Kentucky Connectivity and technology are...</p>

Guides that Visitors Download after Filling out Form



Golden Shovel
Step-by-Step Guide to Opportunity Zones
FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPERS

DOWNLOAD YOUR FREE GUIDE!

The latest updates by the IRS and Treasury Department have strengthened the Opportunity Zone Tax Incentives. NOW is the time to put together a prospectus and marketing plan to build awareness for your community projects.

If you are interested in learning best practices and building a successful Opportunity Zone

First name*

Last name*

Email*

Registration for Webinars

SMALL BUSINESS IS BIG ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

TUESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2020 @ 1:00 PM, CST

Economic development organizations have changed to make small businesses their biggest priority. COVID-19 revealed that local businesses are the real economy that sustains community success. Small businesses also create 425% more new jobs than big businesses. Speakers will cover effective tools and strategies that you can use to make sure you're implementing the best BR&E, entrepreneurship, and local business assistance.

Join us with Anatalio Ubalde (GIS Planning), Sandy Pratt (Underpinned), and Mark Hays (SizeUp) on Tuesday, January 26, at 1:00 PM, CST. This webinar event is free to join, but registration is required.

		
Anatalio Ubalde, Managing Director & Co-Founder GISPlanning	Sandy Pratt, Vice President Underpinned	Mark Hays, Director of LBI Sales SizeUp

First name*

Last name*

Email*

Phone number

Country*

Company name*

Job Title

Newsletter Sign-Up

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You may unsubscribe at any time.

First Name

Last Name

Email

SUBSCRIBE

NURTURING PHASE

Strategies We Recommend

GSA recommends using automated tools to track leads when possible. Solutions like HubSpot, for example, can gather visitor information when they fill out a lead capture form (sign up for your email list, download a guide, etc.). These visitors can be put into an automatic sales funnel that sends them emails until they reach out and take the next step.

Other lead tracking tools include Lead Forensics which can be added to the website in order to track visitors using a public IP address.

Questions

- Who at Develop Iosco should receive emails from site visitors?
- What happens after someone submits their email? What is the process for following up?
- How are leads tracked?

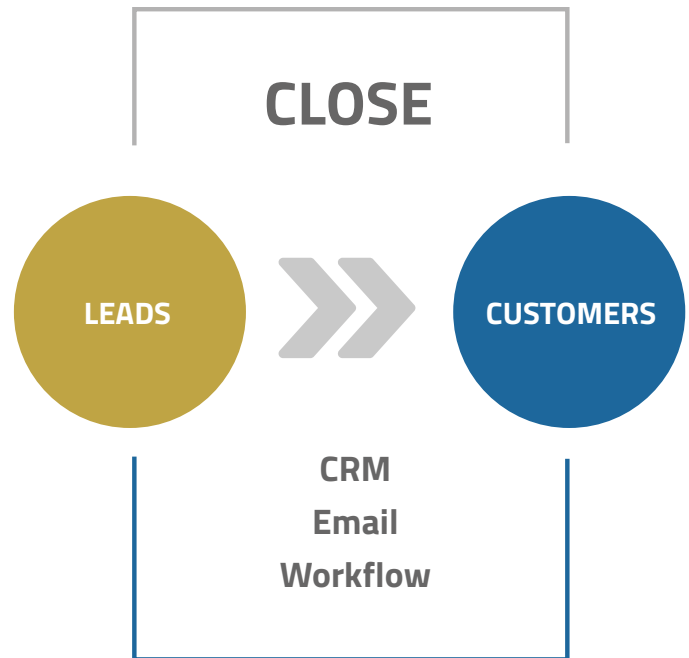
Tools to Help with Lead Nurturing

HubSpot

NAME	EMAIL	CONTACT OWNI	STATE	ASSOCIATED CC	LAST ACTIVITY D	CREATE DATE	COUNTRY	LIFECYC
Judy	judy@...	Kris Hassett (khasset)	New York	Partnership	-	Today at 1:36 PM	United States of Amer...	Lead
Marlene	marlene@k...	Kris Hassett (khasset)	New York	Media Inc.	-	Today at 12:29 PM	United States of Amer...	Lead
Tandee	twhite2@e...	John Marshall (jmar)	Arkansas	En	-	Today at 10:34 AM	-	Lead
Jasen	jasen.jones@e...	Matt Lamb (mlamb@)	Missouri	AM	-	Today at 9:50 AM	United States of Amer...	Lead
Dustin	dustin7850@...	Deactivated User (c...	Iowa	-	-	Today at 9:46 AM	United States of Amer...	Lead

Lead Forensics

The screenshot shows the Lead Forensics interface for Great River Energy. On the left, there is a 'Company Information' section with details like '12300 Elm Creek Boulevard', 'Maple Grove, Minnesota 55369', and 'United States'. Below this is a 'VISITOR' section showing a visit from Google on Feb 4, 2021. On the right, there is a 'MY CONTACTS' list with names like Lori Buffington, Lyndon Anderson, Jennifer Howell, Rona Stewart, and Koepke Michelle, each with an 'ADD' button. A notification at the bottom states: 'Looks like you do not have a Lead Score model selected. Update your model in the settings dialog.'



THE CAMPAIGN: NEXT STEPS

The above process and tools can be utilized by DI together or independently. Prior to implementing any of them, we recommend these next steps.

- Solidify Messaging
 - Develop Iosco County Target audiences
- Recruit Brand Ambassadors
 - Share promotional strategy with ambassadors and stakeholders
 - Develop video testimonials
 - Develop virtual FAM tours
- Update Website Content
 - Include message specific to target audiences
 - Include calls to action that tell people what steps to take next
- Develop Sector Landing Page
 - Highlight assets
 - Tell the story
 - Give them a reason to take the next steps
- Create SEO Content Based on Popular Search Terms
 - Tie into popular topics
 - Let users find you in an organic search
- Create and Publish Industry Success Stories
 - Post in industry-specific LinkedIn groups
 - Promote on social media
 - Engage local media channels
- Create and Publish Case Studies, Strategic Plans and Thought Leadership Documents
 - Use lead capture forms to generate leads

STRATEGIC MARKETING PLAN

- Run a Paid Ad Campaign to Drive Traffic to Landing Page
 - Google
 - LinkedIn (site selectors and executives)
 - Facebook (small business owners and workforce)
 - Twitter (everyone)
 - YouTube
 - Print ads as relevant (site selectors, industry specific)
- Connect with Influencers
 - Send success stories to industry leaders
 - Engage influencers to share content
- Use Automated Tools to Nurture Leads
 - Create workflows in a program like Hubspot
 - Stay connected with leads until they take action
 - Email newsletters
- Celebrate Successes
 - Promote success using press releases, social media posts and media outlets

ENGAGE STRATEGIC PARTNERS

Per the community survey there is a desire for Develop Iosco to take a leadership position within the county by bringing stakeholders together for the purpose of improving the economy and creating opportunities within the county. Siloed, a marketing campaign to raise awareness of local opportunities is unlikely to succeed. With the support and collaboration of partners, DI can make a larger impact.

Strategies for Partner Engagement

It is critical that regional partners and stakeholders engage in activities designed to promote the region and amplify good news. We recommend implementing the following:

- **Create a Database of Strategic Partners:** This could include community governments, educational institutions, charitable organizations, media outlets, and influencers.
- **Designate a Singular Point of Contact:** There should be one point of contact within the organization (could be a standard email address like submit@ where partners can send news and announcements. Press releases, announcements and articles about a new development, investment, company creating jobs, etc. should be sent to this email address who can then distribute the news to local partners.
- **Share the News:** Once partners have received an email with a link to the press release, article, etc. they should quickly share the link on their own social media channels with a message about celebrating the success of the region. For example, "Business Expands in Iosco County" or "10 New Jobs Being Created in Iosco County"
- **Update Social Media Profiles:** Partners should update their organization's (and personal) social media profiles with the chosen messaging. This ensures that all organizations are repeating a similar pro-growth message.
- **Link to Each Other:** Partner organizations should link to each other on their websites. Creating a partner page is an excellent way to do this.
- **Create Regional Awards:** Establishing regional awards is an excellent way to call attention to key projects and community leaders. These awards can be promoted through all partner organization websites and press releases shared with media outlets. For example, "Top Educational Program in Iosco County" or "Best Small Business in Iosco County." Nominations can be shared on social media. Partners can share on their own profiles and ask their constituents to vote, or the decision on winners could be made internally.

PROMOTE EVENTS

These are opportunities to build awareness and expose a larger audience to Iosco County.

Possible events include:

- Perchville winter celebration
- Family Fun Fair
- Paul Bunyan Days
- Fishing tournaments
- IC Summer Fair
- Tuesday Dancing in the Street
- Whittemore Speedway
- Tawas Farmers Market
- Tawas Days
- Balloon Festival
- Huron Shores Festival
- Marathon
- Art on the Beach
- Rotary concerts
- Boat races (past)
- Blues on the Bay
- AuSable Canoe Race
- Iosco County Fair
- Wine Uncorked Festival
- Fourth of July activities
- Mud Jam

DIGITAL MARKETING

A comprehensive digital marketing campaign can successfully brand Iosco County as an excellent place to live and do business, instead of a summer destination only.

Each digital campaign should include the following:

- Infographics created to visually highlight key assets and the facts behind them
- LinkedIn Pulse articles that describes opportunities, using business interviews to tell the story
- Weekly Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter posts linking back to the Pulse article
- Instagram posts of pictures of the assets and business who were interviewed, linking to the website
- Short YouTube videos created to highlight each aspect of what makes Iosco County a great place to live and do business

If Iosco County partners and business are amiable to speak on a webinar, hosting a webinar to discuss what they do, why they enjoy Iosco County and the opportunities that exist for continued business growth.

LinkedIn

To expound on the digital marketing components, and where primary resources should be allocated, LinkedIn is the most notable digital marketing tool to be used for targeted digital marketing. A LinkedIn campaign can narrow down demographic data in the following forms: location, job title, industry, company size, and more; because of this, LinkedIn is a great resource for targeting specific decision makers in the Businesses that the marketing strategy is trying to attract.

The following advertisements should be considered for a LinkedIn Campaign:

- Boosting the online prospectus to the various Businesses represented.
- Creating stories around the community's' unique selling points.
- Visual ads such as videos.
- Direct messages to targeted individuals.

LinkedIn also provides a large focus around tracking success rates for the campaigns, providing a real ROI focus for the community to see, you can track items such as impression rates, views on the post, and who has directly engaged with the posts.

LEAD GENERATION

The easiest way to track these leads are through integrated website tools. We recommend Lead Forensics and regularly integrate their suite into the websites Golden Shovel builds. When the majority of marketing activities include a digital presence, a detailed level of tracking is necessary to understand who is visiting the Develop Iosco websites from campaigns. Doing so also creates a method for capturing leads which can be contacted by staff and/or volunteers.

Specific marketing and lead generation should also follow trade shows and economic development activities, with targeted social media posts focusing on the specific target audience. This information should direct the target audience back to the website or a landing page (through a story or campaign) and be tracked through a program such as Lead Forensics or other lead tracking software.

If the budget is lacking to pay for third-party tools like Lead Forensics, there are still options for capturing lead data through campaigns. As referenced in the Marketing Campaign: Process & Tools section, a landing page with a form capture can also be used to capture information. The key is to have an offer that's valuable enough for people to share their email address.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

With all branding and marketing initiatives, a Public Relations component is crucial. The creation of a media packet with local, regional and national media channels should be customized to Develop Iosco's target audiences and businesses. The media packet should include key success stories and information that can be easily picked up by local and state newspapers and regional publications.

A robust PR program will consist of showcasing economic development successes, such as business expansions and new business recruitment, while also focusing on the attraction of FDI (foreign direct investment). Creation of a media kit, along with a list of media pitches to a select group of media outlets, will provide the PR necessary for brand recognition.

NATIONAL PUBLICATIONS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Forbes

Forbes Magazine, which reports on business, personal finance, tech, and lifestyle, has 36 international print editions which make for a culturally diverse audience.

The Wall Street Journal

Producing both a print newspaper and a print magazine makes The Wall Street Journal another great outlet choice.

The Economist

The Economist is considered to be one of the most trusted news outlets; as voted on by [both liberals and conservatives](#).

Entrepreneur

While it appears The Economist has a little over three readers per copy, Entrepreneur Magazine claims 4.89 readers per copy – making this publication especially compelling.

The New York Times

If you want your story to be read by the President of the United States, The New York Times is the outlet to pitch.

PUBLICATIONS AND PROMOTIONAL CHANNELS

- [Iosco County News-Herald](#)
- [Iosco Voice](#)
- [Second Wave](#)
- Michigan State University channels
- Alpena Community College channels
- [Michigan Economic Development Corporation](#) channels
- [Bridge Michigan](#)
- [Community Economic Development Association of Michigan](#)
- [MiBiz](#)
- [Michigan and Detroit Business News](#)
- [Grand Rapids Business Journal](#)
- [Detroit News](#)
- [Detroit Free Press](#)

RADIO

- WKJC, FM 104.7
- WIOS, AM 1480
- HITS, FM 103.3

CONTENT STRATEGY

See Appendix C for full content strategy. Recommendations center around creating content that will highlight the key points that Develop Iosco and the county should be known for. Highlighting these points through the lens of storytelling is powerful and more believable than sharing facts.

Develop Iosco should be known for:

- Leader within the community
- A resource for local businesses, residents and partners
- A collaborator
- Source for data
- Strategic partner
- Driver behind investment attraction and job creation

Iosco County should be known for:

- Low cost of doing business (low taxes, low real estate costs and affordable wages)
- Talent and educational resources
- Strong manufacturing ecosystem
- Spaceport opportunities
- Tourism destination
- Incredible quality of life with abundant outdoor recreation, vibrant downtowns, and a growing restaurant scene
- Excellent place to retire
- Strong demand for local businesses
- Strong housing demand

WEBSITE TRAFFIC

See attached PDF.

Recommendations to Increase Website Traffic

- Continue to regularly publish content. Any delays in the publishing process should be reduced to ensure monthly publishing. A common delay is from people who are not able to commit to success story interviews. Therefore, stories should be chosen with people who are able to commit to being interviewed.
- Feature a community calendar on the website and use it to post information about DI's work and what partners are doing. Include festival and event information as well (this is an SEO tactic) and will position DI as a resource.
- Find business announcements that occur within an acceptable radius and consider tapping into metro areas or other contiguous communities that may offer newsworthy events to gain additional visitors.
- Review quarterly reports to find local stories that can be repurposed into social media traffic. For example, if a local story gains favorable traction, that story should be repurposed into social media postings for up to 4-6 weeks.
- Engage community social media ambassadors who will "like" and "share" content. Ask community influencers to also share the content. Are elected officials engaged? Are businesses posting job listings on social media accounts? Are people from Iosco County telling their stories and sharing successes on social media channels? Continue to encourage engagement.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

SEO report and SEO competitor research.

APPENDIX B

Website review.

APPENDIX C

12-month content plan.

APPENDIX E

Best practices document with recommendations based on successful programs managed by other communities.

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