

Marketing activity outline

Elsternwick Village is a unique and diverse shopping strip, featuring well-established traders alongside newer arrivals in a beautiful, historic setting.

The Elsternwick Mainstreet Committee's (EMC) purpose is "to promote, market and manage Elsternwick Mainstreet on behalf of the businesses therein".

An annual levy is charged to Elsternwick Traders to assist the EMC in this purpose.

With new property developments, Elsternwick is attracting a young, mobile and socially engaged audience and our activity needs to adapt if we're going to attract these people to our precinct.

This document outlines the importance of undertaking marketing activities to promote the precinct, raise awareness to new audiences and, ultimately, bring people to the precinct and keep them coming back. It includes activities completed so far and plans for future marketing activities towards this goal.

What we've done so far

The EMC has carried out a range of marketing activities to promote the area and encourage people to visit the shopping precinct.

Included in this regular marketing activity has been content creation for and management of Elsternwick Village's social media, keeping customers informed and tapping into their networks, regular committee meetings, and working with Elsternwick's Mainstreet Coordinator Andrea Turner to plan and deliver core marketing and compliance activity.

To better position Elsternwick Village as a modern, progressive shopping precinct engaged with the local community, a major rebrand was undertaken. This incorporates the vibrant green colour for which Elsternwick Village has become renowned, and has contributed to forging a memorable brand for the shopping precinct. The new brand is used across letterheads, business cards, promotional documents, bin and pole surrounds, and street decorations.

Additionally, the Elsternwick Village website has undergone a rebuild, which incorporates the new branding, a comprehensive trader directory, and improved functions to help the shopping precinct perform better in search engines and SEO. This will dramatically increase our ability to reach new customers searching for both Elsternwick Village, and the products and services offered by our traders, bringing more traffic to the precinct and benefiting the traders. By sharing local stories about the area and our traders, we will encourage people to explore Elsternwick Village and share their own stories.

The new website design will be fully responsive for mobile and tablet devices, meaning it is easy for customers to use on the street and find traders' details on the go. The new website will be rolled out in the coming weeks.

The EMC ran two new major events in 2016, including a Family Fun Day in November and a Christmas Twilight Festival and street activations in the week leading up to Christmas. Thousands of people attended these events and festivities on offer. Consequently, shoppers spent time in Elsternwick Village to complete their Christmas shopping and visit cafes and restaurants in the area. During these events, thousands of branded Elsternwick Village balloons were handed out to shoppers, which brought colour to the streets and acted as "walking advertisements" that promoted the precinct.

The EMC has carried out additional activities throughout the year, including:

- Email marketing to the public – keeping customers up to date about what's happening, trader offers and specials, and keeping Elsternwick Village front of mind
- Communicating updates to traders via regular email newsletters. An email marketing program has been set up to create and distribute these newsletters. This makes it easier for traders to get involved with our campaigns and events to bring more customers into their stores
- Creating a branded template for a printed traders newsletter to communicate updates, in addition to digital communications
- Annual General Meetings, which are well attended by businesses, providing traders with an avenue to engage with the actions and plans of the committee to make sure we're best supporting their needs
- Cardboard collection service every Tuesday for businesses
- A Mother's Day competition with prizes supplied by local businesses was successful in bringing new and returning customers to stores for their Mother's Day shopping
- The unveiling of our new branding – an evening event for traders to get everyone involved and invested in the new direction and help Elsternwick Village grow
- Running an online competition for Christmas to encourage people to consider Elsternwick Village as a destination for Christmas shopping
- Street activations for Easter and Christmas celebrations, with roving musicians and street performers, attracted thousands of people to the precinct who enjoyed the festivities while carrying out their shopping and enjoying our rich food offering
- Building successful social media platforms, including Facebook and Instagram, to showcase local businesses, reach a new audience and attract them to the precinct
- Installation of fairy lights above shop awnings to create ambience at night, making the space more attractive and encouraging shoppers to spend more time in the precinct
- Design and development of collateral including promotional t-shirts, caps, water bottles, balloons and shopping bags. The great take up of these materials brings colour and life to the precinct and helps promote the Elsternwick Village brand beyond our advertising reach
- Installation of new Christmas decorations across the precinct to make the area look more attractive as a shopping destination over this busy retail period
- EMC funded seminars for traders to attend at the Glen Eira City Council to build their skills and improve their effectiveness, ultimately bringing more people to their stores and benefitting all retailers in the strip.

Plans for 2017 and beyond

Building on our initial successes, the EMC plans to continue the marketing activities throughout 2017 and into the future to ensure the shopping precinct is adequately promoted and to attract more shoppers to the area.

Since engaging the services of marketing agency Assemblo, Elsternwick Village has benefitted in numerous ways, including offering traders and the public more informed and professional communication, having access to a team of marketing experts, and assisting to draw record crowds to Elsternwick's Family Fun Day and Christmas events.

As such, we see the value of continuing to employ Assemblo's expertise in 2017 and beyond to further benefit Elsternwick Village.

Assemblo is a full-service marketing agency based in Melbourne. The agency incorporates a team of marketing experts that offers web development, design, copywriting, event management, strategy, social media management, print services and more. Additionally, they have access to a broad network of suppliers including printers, event hire businesses, performers and entertainers, promotional staff, accounting and business advisory services, balloon traders and more. Assemblo has worked cooperatively and closely with the committee to meet business goals and marketing objectives.

Upcoming activities

Planned activities for the immediate future include:

- Developing a detailed marketing calendar to capture key events and seasonal dates to match marketing activities. Stronger planning will allow us to take advantage of retail seasons and create more opportunities for working closely with retailers
- Allocating budgets to key calendar periods and setting targets for activities
- Updating a complete database of traders in Elsternwick Village. This involves visiting each store, capturing updated information and handing out a printed newsletter
- Launching the new Elsternwick Village website. Aside from being a marketing hub, the site will provide traders with a strong online presence through the trader directory, especially if they don't have an existing website, and make it easy for customers to find their details and contact them
- Identifying gaps in the services offered by existing traders and using this information to approach new traders with a strong business case for coming to the area. In turn, this will improve the overall offering of Elsternwick Village and lead to more feet on the street.

Marketing maintenance

It's important to keep customers engaged through regular marketing activities and to keep Elsternwick Village's digital presence up to date and relevant. This will ensure that customers frequent these platforms, and make it easier for customers to find traders and access our village.

General marketing maintenance work includes:

- Regularly updating information on the website to ensure the site is accurate and useful to customers. E.g. adding new businesses as they move into the precinct, publishing news and announcements related to the area etc.
- Monitoring and managing social media platforms, keeping them up to date and responding to customer enquiries through these channels. Timely responses and frequent content will encourage shoppers to engage with the brand, increasing the frequency in which they see posts and generate a positive sentiment between customers and Elsternwick Village
- Keeping trader listings detailed and up to date to ensure the website is always the best source of trader details for our customers
- Creating original content for the Elsternwick Village website, social media and email newsletters, and amplifying the content via social media advertising. This will encourage shoppers to return to the site and follow our social media and email channels to stay abreast of what's happening in Elsternwick Village, ultimately bringing them back to the street again and again. This content will also help new potential customers find out about Elsternwick Village and what's on offer in the precinct
- Additional digital marketing and brand advertising to build awareness and boost online databases, making it easy to reach connected shoppers and keep them coming back to the street through regular updates
- Promoting trader offers and promotions on the website and trader pages to bring shoppers into their stores and Elsternwick Village
- Creating and distributing monthly email newsletters to the customer email database to keep them abreast of the latest news, events and compelling promotions in the precinct
- Monitoring mentions of Elsternwick Village in the press and online to identify opportunities to engage directly with customers, gather direct feedback and raise the profile of the area.

Seasonal campaign activity

Seasonal campaigns incorporate activities to meet the targets and objectives set in the marketing calendar/plan to bring new people to the street and make it easier to engage with existing customers. This includes:

- Designing and printing marketing collateral to promote our offering and what's happening in the Elsternwick Village
- Brand advertising across print, press, digital and PR to reach a broader audience
- Running competitions to build the customer database and attract new shoppers
- Creating content based on seasonality to support other campaigns and tap into what our shoppers are actively looking for and interested in reading about
- Planning, promoting and running key events during major retail periods to bring new and existing customers to the precinct
- Facilitating and running the Christmas campaign to capitalise on this key retail period
- Marketing to support major retail categories represented in Elsternwick Village, bringing people to the village who are looking for products and services in these categories
- Leveraging networks and opportunities from other parties to increase the overall reach and effectiveness of marketing activity means that our advertising dollars will go further.

Keeping traders up to date

It is important to keep traders in Elsternwick Village informed about promotional and seasonal activities taking place in the precinct on a regular basis. This will be done in a number of ways, including:

- Creating a quarterly newsletter
- Providing an online mechanism for traders to notify the EMC about changes to their listings, specials and news
- Sending out monthly email newsletters to the traders database
- Holding an Annual General Meeting.

Strategy and reporting

Employing a strategy will ensure all marketing activities undertaken will meet business objectives, while regular reporting will show transparency and improve visibility of the results of all activity. Specifically, reporting will cover:

- Monthly committee meetings to discuss marketing and evaluate campaigns against proposed ROI targets
- Identifying opportunities for marketing and topical news (e.g. PR, distress advertising opportunities, tracking Elsternwick Village in the press)
- Securing sponsorships and other collaborations
- Identifying categories of business in which Elsternwick Village is lacking, and working to attract these businesses to the precinct.
- Website analytics to improve usability and inform future content creation to help attract people to the precinct
- Search tracking to review what people are searching on the website and ensure appropriate traders come up in these searches

In summary

With the mix of our existing audiences and the introduction of a new, younger and socially engaged audience we're aiming to marry digital and traditional marketing to bring more people to Elsternwick Village. By keeping traders updated and involved, we can ensure we're bringing value to our members and provide the best support we can for the entire precinct.