

FRA Award Submission

Category: MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS/CREATIVE PARTNERSHIPS
Submission: HALLANDALE BEACH FOOD AND GROOVE FESTIVAL HOW EVENTS BRAND A CITY



Description:

Festivals provide a way for every city to produce a unique brand: a theme that becomes embedded in the identity of the locale. For the past three years, the Hallandale Beach Community Redevelopment Agency has partnered with the South Beach Food and Wine Festival (SOBEWFF) to produce a larger-than-life event in a city of only 4.6 square miles. The event is designed to showcase our biggest asset: restaurants that represent five continents of culture and cuisine. With over 1,000 attendees on February 26 (our largest turnout to date), the festival was a celebration of the City's culinary entrepreneurs, diversity, and resilience.

Innovation - How the project used new ideas to solve problems or to carry out the project or program*

Festivals are not new; however, they make their mark in economic development when they become key innovative drivers for commercial activity, the local economy, and tourism by becoming an integral part of a city's brand identity. What made the Hallandale Food & Groove Festival unique was the unusual nature of a partnership between a large, popular international brand (the South Beach Food and Wine Festival) and a small, South Florida city. In 2019, the Hallandale Beach's Executive Director, Dr. Jeremy Earle saw an opportunity and seized upon it. He recognized that the internationally-renown South Beach festival in Miami could be replicated on an alternative scale in Hallandale Beach, a much smaller destination that lies between the two hubs of Fort Lauderdale and Miami. Dr. Earle approached the South Beach organization with a proposition: The CRA would provide the venue, the restaurants, and the attendees while they would provide the marketing power of a global brand. The South Beach Food and Wine Festival's name brand recognition as a household name and presence on major social media channels provided aggregate marketing power to Hallandale Beach's restaurants. It enabled them to leverage a global brand to promote their chefs, menus, and cuisine. Together, both SOBEWFF and the CRA would establish an event that delivered the excitement and prestige of the former to the home-grown culture of the latter.



Community Impact - How the project improved economic, social, design, cultural assets of the community.

The Hallandale Food and Groove Festival became a home-grown phenomenon. An integral part of the HBCRA's economic development related programming was the approval of an Arts and Culture in Public Places initiative, that was designed to support art and cultural activities (including the culinary arts) incentivize the local economy, and create brand awareness and a cultural identity for the City of Hallandale Beach. In its first year, the event sold out to 500 ticket-paying attendees. In its second year, 2021 and during the pandemic, a more cautious atmosphere still saw a sold out crowd of 500 ticket-paying attendees. However, this year's 2022 festival the CRA was pleased to see a sell-out crowd of over 1,000 attendees – double that of the previous years. The event was customized to focus on the chefs and menus of 25 participating local restaurants. It provided visibility for one of Hallandale Beach's biggest economic assets: restaurants, coffee shops, bakeries, and bars. For their participation and costs incurred for providing food and labor at the festival, each restaurant was reimbursed \$2,000 by the CRA. The event went a step further to host a contest for the local chefs, handing out 1st, 2nd, and 3rd cash prizes. The public awareness created by the event and the social media that promoted it, helped participants learn all about the City's restaurant culture and how it is a convenient destination for foodies and tourists alike. The design of the event was consistent with these objectives. Our restaurants were represented at the festival in a wide, open outdoor setting where attendees could go table to table, meeting local chefs and sampling their cuisine. This experience was complemented with live music, street entertainers, and several famous hosts.

Funding - How the project leveraged funding and in-kind assistance.

Direct funding for the Hallandale Food and Groove Festival was paid for by the HBCRA; however, the CRA was able to leverage the powerful marketing resources of the South Beach organization (promotional coverage, event design, social media, celebrity chefs, and much more). The venue owner, Gulfstream Park, also contributed resources to the event in terms of personnel and logistical services. The City of Hallandale Beach and the HBCRA partnered to provide numerous services to ensure that the evening was safe and successful these included police, emergency services, parks services, and at least 30 volunteers.



Problem Solving – How the project used problem-solving to address unique local issues*

The chief problem-solving endeavor of the Hallandale Food and Groove Festival revolved the need to create a distinct kind of brand awareness and tourist destination for Hallandale Beach. While South Florida has many beachfront cities that offer entertainment and attractions, Hallandale Beach has been seeking to concentrate one of its greatest assets, an international array of restaurants, into a branded event. The Hallandale Food and Groove Festival embodies this very notion and ties itself to the excitement of the South Beach brand.



On another level, the pandemic also presented some critical challenges: 1) how to convene well over 1,000 attendees, personnel, and businesses safely into a large outdoor space at a time when the pandemic was still quite active; and 2) how to get people, many of whom have been locked in their homes for over a year in quarantine, to embrace the opportunity to attend the event. The first was a challenge of public safety while the second was a challenge of overcoming the lethargy of economic shutdown and encouraging consumers to come out and support our neighborhood restaurants. This event provided the psychological uplift in confidence for locals as well as commercial activity and awareness for our businesses. Hallandale Beach Community Redevelopment Agency looks forward to producing an even bigger and better even in 2023 with a new themes, contests, and features.

Applicability to Other Communities –Why this project or program could be transferred to other communities.

Communities have a very useful economic tool at their disposal when it comes to the creation of special events; especially those which become tied to the identity of the region by capitalizing on its specialized assets. For Hallandale Beach, those assets were its restaurants, the subtropical environment, and the open-air venue of Gulfstream Park, which is already a destination for many South Floridians who come for the horse races, casinos, and shopping mall. Yet, many cities have different assets that are historical, geographical (natural features, ecotourism, scenic beauty, etc.), or based on a concentration of specific industries. Each city must determine how to create an event based upon the unique combination of these assets.



Other Things to Tell the Judges –

Hallandale Beach Community Redevelopment Agency looks forward to producing an even bigger and better even in 2023 with a new themes, contests, and features.

