



A BUSINESS GUIDE TO **FALL & WINTER**

FOR DOWNTOWN MARIETTA, OH

2020-2021

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

GREETINGS!

The holiday season is upon us and the spirit of gratitude, peace, joy, and merriment can be felt by folks across our community and beyond. The heart of Marietta, as you know, is downtown, and every year we create an incredible holiday experience to be enjoyed by locals and tourists alike.

Especially for small business owners in downtown Marietta, the holiday season can also be stressful, chaotic, and full of intense pressure to ensure enough revenue is generated to carry through the first quarter of the next year. Between marketing and sales, inventory management and customer service demands, diversified revenue streams and operational management, event participation and merchandising, and much more, small business owners carry a heavy load through the season.

This **Guide to Fall & Winter for Downtown Businesses** is intended to be a comprehensive resource that includes tips, events, and relevant information for the holiday season in downtown Marietta. This guide is the first we've produced and our goal is simple: we want to communicate all the things we feel you need to know in one place; a place that doesn't get lost in a sea of emails or swiped away in a sea of social media notifications. The information in this guide is dynamic in that it requires your active response: read the material, communicate your participation by indicated deadlines, and utilize the resources provided to strengthen your business as you decide.

Downtown Marietta is growing year after year as a true destination for holiday shopping and Marietta Main Street leads the way in producing a beautifully-decorated, well-celebrated season with over two dozen events, attractions, and efforts.

If we all work together, not only for the sake of our own businesses, but for the sake of our neighbors and friends in our district, we can maximize our economic impact and year after year have a highly successful holiday season!

If you have any questions about this guide or the information within it, please do not hesitate to reach out. Cheers to a great holiday season!



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CHECKLIST: IS YOUR BUSINESS READY FOR THE HOLIDAYS?

Regardless of what type of business you own, you can use this checklist as a guide for your holiday preparations and ensure a successful holiday season!

MOOD AND ATMOSPHERE

- Product Displays:** Are you properly and prominently featuring seasonal products, services, & gifts? Is it easy for customers to find holiday-themed products?
- Decorations:** Could you add decorative pieces inside & outside your business to celebrate the season, on walls, furniture, displays, windows, etc.?
- Lights:** Would adding a string of lights bring your holiday decorations to life?
- Overhead Music:** Are you providing the full experience by playing themed overhead music? Are you providing variety so that overhead music won't drive your staff crazy during the season?
- Window Displays:** Have you decorated your window displays to match the season? Are you using your displays to promote products that will sell well during the holidays?
- Staff Attire:** Have you spruced up your staff's attire so that they look more festive and fun? Could you add a necklace, pin, or hat to infuse their outfits with more holiday spirit?
- Scents:** Could you use holiday aromas to fill your business with warm and rich seasonal scents?
- Holiday Inclusivity:** Are you representing a variety of holidays in the season? Do you have decorations that represent Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa, etc?

PROMOTIONS AND MARKETING

- Website:** Does your website highlight your holiday specials? Are your holiday hours prominently posted? Does your website direct folks to spend their money with your business?
- Blog:** If you have an active blog, do you have holiday posts created and scheduled to post?
- Email:** Do your upcoming email campaigns include holiday promotions and events?
- Social Media:** Are your holiday posts scheduled out? Have you changed your feature photos to seasonal images or graphics that highlight your holiday promotions? Have you updated your business hours on social media? Are special events included in your Event Feed on Facebook?
- In-Business Signs:** Have you styled your in-business signs? Does your content feature holiday specials and promotions? Do you have a plan to display interior signage effectively?
- Advertisements:** Have you sent all of your holiday ads to print and radio advertisers? Are your online ads holiday related? Do you know yet what special promotions and offers you'll have?
- On-Hold Messaging:** Have you updated your hold message to include holiday greetings? Does your holiday on-hold message include your seasonal hours and mention your promotions?

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CHECKLIST CONT.

STAFF AND OPERATIONS

- Hours & Schedule:** Have you adjusted your hours for the holidays? Have you properly notified staff and customers of the change?
- Staff:** Do you have enough staff to provide the help you need? Do you need to add hours to staff schedules? Do you need to hire and train additional help?
- Inventory:** Do you have enough inventory to cover the holiday rush? Does your inventory match the sales of last year? Do you have a plan for what to do if you run out of a product?
- Gift Cards:** Are you prepared to sell more gift cards than usual? Do you have extra stock of cards? Is your staff trained to sell gift cards and certificates? Are they trained to redeem them?
- Emergency Situations:** Have you run through retail emergency situations -- like how to change receipt paper rolls, where to get change, where to get extra bags, what to do if an employee doesn't show up -- with your entire staff?
- Check-Out Lines:** Do you have a plan for managing long check-out lines? Do you have a way to set up extra check-out lines or mobile check-outs if lines become too long?
- Wrapping and Boxes:** Are you offering special holiday packaging, boxes, bags, or gift wrapping? Are you stocked with enough?
- Giving Back:** Is your business focused on philanthropy for the holidays? Are you promoting your cause throughout your business and allowing customers and/or clients a way to give back through your organization? Fun Fact: Marietta Main Street is a 501c3 nonprofit, charitable organization!

MAINTENANCE & CARE

- Data & Metrics:** Do you know what stats you need to track to monitor the growth of your business? Foot traffic? Average sales per transaction? Conversion rate? Peak revenue days and hours? Are you prepared to track these stats during high traffic? How will you know you are successful?
- Customer & Client Loyalty:** How do you plan to deepen your relationship with existing customers and clients during the holiday season? How can you show loyal customers they're appreciated?
- Strategic Goals & Actions:** Do you have specific goals or benchmarks you'd like to achieve this holiday season? Have you communicated those to staff? How will you achieve those goals?
- First-Time Customers & Clients:** How will you turn a first-time customer or client into a loyal one? What information do you need from first-timers to keep them connected to your business?
- Storefront & Facade Decor:** What is your daily, weekly, and monthly storefront and facade care plan? Do you need to wash windows? Setup sidewalk signs? Sweep sidewalks? Clean trash?
- Merchandising:** How do you plan to update product and service displays for the season? What inventory needs to be upfront and what inventory do you need to group with others?
- Community & Relationships:** How do you plan to work in partnership with fellow business owners this holiday season? Can you coordinate promotions? Can you participate in similar events?

Excerpts & references taken from Main Street America. Article linked [here](#).

FINDINGS & STATS

- ✔ According to the [National Retail Federation](#), **holiday sales represent about 20 percent of annual retail sales each year**, with some retailers like hobby, toy, and games stores totaling 30 percent of sales. Of those sales, online represented nearly 15 percent in 2019.
- ✔ A [Google survey](#) found:
 - **more than a third of U.S. shoppers who normally shop in store for Black Friday say they won't this year**. And half of U.S. shoppers say the pandemic will affect how they'll shop for the holidays this year.
 - nearly **75% of shoppers who plan to shop this season said they will shop online more** for the holidays than they did in previous seasons, and a similar number said they would first browse for gift ideas online and not in-store
 - 66% of shoppers said **they plan to shop more at local small businesses**
 - 47% of planned shoppers said **they'll use options to buy online, pickup in store/curbside pickup**
 - 70% of shoppers said **they intend to plan their shopping earlier** to avoid crowds
 - 80% of planned **shoppers will consolidate their shopping to make fewer trips** than they did in previous years
- ✔ [Radial](#), a leading omnichannel commerce company, surveyed 1,000+ consumers across the United States to determine their holiday shopping plans. Highlights of their survey results include:
 - 60% of consumers, while having a desire for in-store shopping, suggest **they will use e-commerce to a much greater degree** than in previous years because of safety concerns and increased familiarity with online ordering
 - 39% of **shoppers plan to start shopping for the holidays in October into early November**
 - The majority of consumers surveyed plan to spend the same as last year on holiday gifts, meaning **retailers should expect similar or higher order volumes** as previous years
 - 63% of shoppers say they are slightly or very much **more likely to purchase from a retailer they know was following COVID-19 safety precautions** in-store

3 FALL EVENTS

Mark your calendars for our fall events in downtown Marietta. Event descriptions can be found below. Make sure to check your your email inbox to learn more about each event, how to participate, and participation deadlines!

OCTOBER FIRST FRIDAY

10/2, 5 P.M. TO 9 P.M.

We'll be rockin' through the decades with lots of fun at the Armory including decade-themed photo booths, live rock music, activities for kiddos, and much more in downtown shops! Stay open late from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. and host themed specials, promotions, and events.

FALL SHOP HOP

10/17, 11 A.M. TO 4 P.M.

It's fall y'all and small businesses in downtown Marietta are decked out in seasonal style. Join us downtown for sidewalk sales, fun promotions, special events and more. Shoppers will be entered to win the Fall Haul Basket, full of downtown goodies like gift cards from participating businesses, Main Street swag, and more! The more purchases you make downtown, the more chances you get entered to win. The Fall Haul Basket winner will be announced on Monday, October 19th on Marietta Main Street's Facebook Page.

BOOS & BOOZE TOUR OF SPIRITS

10/24 TO 10/31

It's time to get spooky in downtown Marietta with our week-long Tour of Spirits bar crawl! Participating bars + restaurants will offer special themed cocktails and retailers will offer themed pop-up perks exclusive to ticket holders. Tickets are \$20 each, which includes the event guide, a Halloween Treat Bag full of goodies, discounted drink specials, and pop-up perks.

HARMAR TRUNK OR TREAT

10/31, 6 P.M. TO 8 P.M.

Join us on Saturday, October 31st from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. for Main Street West's Trunk or Treat! Streets will be closed for kiddos to safely walk from stop to stop for treats and lots of fun.

NOVEMBER FIRST FRIDAY

11/6, 5 P.M. TO 9 P.M.

Join us during this First Friday to kick off a downtown-wide food drive and help feed our community in gratitude for all the support downtown receives year-round.



PROVIDED BY MARIETTA MAIN STREET

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WINTER EVENTS

Mark your calendars for our winter events in downtown Marietta. Event descriptions can be found below. Make sure to check your your email inbox to learn more about each event, how to participate, and participation deadlines!

LIGHT UP DOWNTOWN

11/14, 9 A.M. TO 12 P.M.

It's time to deck the halls downtown! Join alongside groups of volunteers as we officially install the holiday decorations for the upcoming Merry-etta holiday season!

CITY OF MARIETTA TREE LIGHTING

11/14, 7 P.M.

Join us for the City of Marietta's official tree lighting! The City's brand new Christmas Tree was first installed downtown in 2018 and it lit up the entire block. With thousands of lights, the vibrancy of our Christmas Tree nearly matches the vibrancy of downtown during the season.

SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY

11/28, ALL DAY

Small Business Saturday was founded in 2010 by American Express to help small businesses see more customers. Ten years later, the day continues to rally shoppers nationwide to support local small businesses on the Saturday after Thanksgiving.

MERRY-ETTA CHRISTMAS PARADE

TBD: 11/28, 6 P.M.

Our annual evening holiday parade will include floats, dance routines, carolers, and much more, all complete with festive Christmas lights and illuminated floats. As usual, Santa Claus will make his appearance in the parade at the very end! We average 70 to 80 floats featuring local businesses, organizations, civic and interest groups, and more. We estimate a typical attendance of 3-4k on downtown sidewalks along the parade route. **EVENT UNCONFIRMED.**

HOLIDAY TREE WALK OPENING

12/1, 7 P.M.

Find beautifully-decorated live trees lining the walkway to the gazebo in East Muskingum Park, each sponsored by a local business, organization, or family. Enjoy this attraction the whole month of December!



4 WINTER EVENTS CONT.

DECEMBER FIRST FRIDAY

12/4, 5 P.M. TO 11 P.M.

It's the most wonderful time of the year and downtown businesses will be open extra late until 11 p.m.! Holiday carolers will travel around, hot chocolate shops will be featured, and exclusive discounts and in-store specials will be highlighted for Moonlight Madness only.

SANTA HOUSE

VARIED DATES + TIMES

We are happy to bring a Santa House to downtown Marietta every Tuesday, Saturday, and Sunday during the month of December at various locations. Snap your own photo with Santa and enjoy refreshments before headed out to downtown shops and restaurants!

HOLIDAY LOFT TOURS

12/12, 2 P.M. TO 6 P.M.

This one-day-only, self-guided, exclusive event allows participants to tour upper-floor businesses and residences in Historic Downtown Marietta. If you've ever been curious about what lies above our first-floor storefronts, this is the perfect opportunity to sneak a peek!



5 NEW YEAR EVENTS

Mark your calendars for our new year events in downtown Marietta. Event descriptions can be found below. Make sure to check your your email inbox to learn more about each event, how to participate, and participation deadlines!

FRIYAY! FOR THE NEW YEAR

1/8, 5 P.M. TO 9 P.M.

Head downtown for this First Friday event on the second Friday of January featuring downtown shops open late with inventory clear outs, sales, and more. It's the new year! Let's kick last year out in style with lots of local love as we move into 2021!

DECOR TAKEDOWN

1/9, 9 A.M. TO 12 P.M.

We need all hands on deck to help us take down the holiday decorations, including the wreaths, garlands, and tags on downtown lamp posts, and store them away inside the Armory until next season.

MARIETTA ICE FESTIVAL

1/16, 2 P.M. TO 7 P.M.

Grab a friend, travel in for the day, and strap on your walking shoes to shop in downtown stores, dine in a downtown restaurant, and adore the various sculptures on display throughout our historic district. This event is rain or shine. This event is free and open to all, including kiddos!

