

Category 118: Event Marketing

Municipal Association Hometown Legislative Action Day 2018

The Municipal Association of SC represents the state's 271 cities and towns. Every February, the Association hosts Hometown Legislative Action Day to bring mayors, councilmembers and city staff to the State House for a day of briefings and legislative visits.

Over the years, the event had become a little stale and very similar to every other legislative event that other associations were doing. We wanted to add something to our event that would set it apart from others. And what better way to showcase the state's cities and towns than to feature great food and craft beer from around the state! Our goal was to turn out more members to the conference and more legislators to our reception.

The reception was a huge success — both anecdotally and by numbers. We had at least 50 legislators and staff members attend. The whole menu got rave reviews from attendees.

Marketing collateral

Monthly member magazine, Uptown

The December issue of our monthly member magazine introduced the [luncheon speaker and the event](#). The distribution of this issue aligned with the mailing and posting online of the meeting materials to give local officials lots of information about the meeting. [This article](#) promoted one of the many informative sessions and reinforced the event registration deadline.

After the meeting, the March issue featured a [comprehensive article](#) reporting on how Hometown Legislative Action Day put legislators and state agency directors in front of local officials to bring state perspectives to issues important to local governments.

Legislative reception invitations

In the past, the Association sent legislators a typical 5-by-7-inch card that resembled many other similar invitations. Not this year. Instead we created a custom invitation using plastic plates and printed inserts for the initial delivery. Then the day before the event, the Association sent legislators a reminder card in the traditional 5-by-7-inch format.

Legislative reception

Usually, our legislative reception is held in one of the ballrooms at the hotel where the meeting took place. This year, we opted to hold the reception in the atrium of the hotel giving it a much more open and inviting feel. We strung café lights to encourage a festive outdoor look. The craft beer bar was located just beyond the registration table, and it looked like a traditional pub with stations for each brewery. Brewery staff was on hand to discuss the various styles of beer and why a particular city was chosen as the base of operation.

All of the reception signage featured fun graphics that reflected the look and feel of the event.

The menu was nothing like typical hotel reception food. The hotel staff worked with us to feature South Carolina specialties — three kinds of SC BBQ, deviled eggs, boiled peanut hummus, fried green tomatoes with Clemson blue cheese, shrimp and grits, pecan tarts and peach cobbler.