

HARQUIN

Herald

HARQUIN creative group
629 FIFTH AVENUE
PELHAM, NEW YORK 10803
(914) 738-9620

Winter 2006
fbruck@harquin.com
www.harquin.com

A Website, a WiFi District, and an Information Kiosk Welcome You to Downtown New Rochelle by Kathy Gilwit

Take a cleverly-designed, user-friendly website... transmitted via a state of the art wifi network...in public view 24-7 at a strategically-located kiosk, and you've got a winning recipe for a visible downtown.

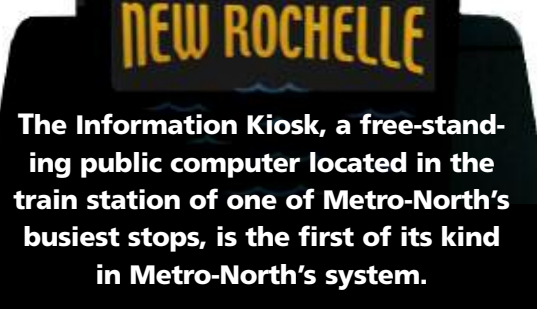
After languishing nearly two decades in economic ignominy, the City of New Rochelle is beginning to relish the resurgence of its downtown, spurred on by an active Business Improvement District headed up by **Executive Director Ralph DiBart**. Harquin has long partnered with the BID, creating all the marketing materials and a brand identity for events, guides and more. While the separate ideas of a BID website and a corresponding information kiosk surfaced at different times, it was the creation of a WiFi downtown that melded the concepts together.

This winning trio of services is now up and running in New Rochelle and Harquin was at the center of it all, providing the expertise and consistency of branding for every facet of the entire creative process, proving that a whole is truly greater than the sum of its parts.



The Website: User AND Manager Friendly

"Before the Launch of the WiFi and Kiosk we had the vision, but questionable economic justification to support the functionality we wanted the site to have, like a search function, database and advertising program," explained Harquin Creative Director, Sherry Bruck. "We wanted a website that people would find and use on a regular basis, giving BID businesses greater ROI. Plus it's one thing to put up a website, and quite another to maintain it as timely and viable." To that end, Harquin created a custom designed back end admin tool to manage pages—editing events, and adding and deleting articles without using code. Harquin retains creative oversight for imagery and ad designs and handles upgrades in phases to amortize the expense. "Our goal was always more than just getting a website up," Bruck pointed out. "It's to make the BID site 'the place to go' to find out all news, events, places to eat and more in Downtown New Rochelle."



The Information Kiosk, a free-standing public computer located in the train station of one of Metro-North's busiest stops, is the first of its kind in Metro-North's system.

Getting Families Downtown with Saturday Morning Events

The launch of the website, WiFi and kiosk coincided perfectly with the BID's kickoff of "Family Saturdays" program of activities jointly sponsored by the **City of New Rochelle Parks and Recreation Department, New Rochelle Public Library** and **City School District**.

This collaboration is proving the key to getting bigger and diverse attendance at planned events, with the BID providing all the marketing and promotional tools like backpack tags that get distributed to all school districts. Featuring international mini-fests, performers, craft workshops, films and much more, the BID Family Saturdays is proving



extremely successful in bringing families to the Downtown every Saturday morning—from all parts of New Rochelle, which had long been a challenge.

Bruck applauds DiBart for knowing the importance of maintaining image consistency. "Not everyone understands how to manage the brand," Bruck explained. "Many people mistakenly believe that the logo is the brand. But the logo is just the beginning.

Every piece of communication and event is part of the brand relationship." The BID website, as a fluid communication tool, exhibits the same high quality as the BID's other materials. As parents realize they can trust the site for timely information, they will utilize it more regularly. This increased traffic will give businesses who advertise on the website a greater return, directly attributable to the BID's investment in branding. The relationship is synergistic, and all parts important. ■



Photographing the Changing Downtown

Sherry Bruck spends many an hour in the downtown photographing New Rochelle's metamorphosis as it unfolds. "It's important for me to document the city's transformation, as I feel that this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," she said. "The face of New Rochelle is changing forever and will never be the same." Her photo inventory provides both a comprehensive visual history as well as a ready stock of images for the BID's marketing materials, which adds to its visual presence. "New Rochelle is rebounding after years of a negative image and bad PR; proving naysayers wrong starts with visual proof of change," she pointed out. This Downtown facelift will indeed lift the faces of the City's residents! ■

The Launch of the Free WiFi District in Downtown New Rochelle

In August of 2006, New Rochelle officially launched the BID's Free Wifi Network. It's the first free comprehensive wireless network in the lower Hudson Valley, covering more than a 20 block downtown area encompassing the city's library, transportation hub, outdoor recreation areas and business district.

Charles A. Gargano, Chairman of Empire State Development Corporation, whose funds helped enable the launch, said, "By being the first major WiFi district in this region, New Rochelle may well serve as a model for other wireless communities that are now on the drawing board."

With the BID website acting as the default site on log-in, users receive a wealth of information about downtown New Rochelle: businesses and retailers, upcoming events, restaurants, entertainment, professional services, hotels, housing, office and retail space, transportation, directions and parking. Now the website isn't merely existing anonymously in cyberspace—it has a purpose. ■



BID Advertising Program Small Cost, Big Opportunity

As part of the BID's commitment to Downtown businesses an online advertising program was created in partnership with Harquin. For a nominal fee, high-quality ads will be designed and posted on the internet. Harquin's role is to ensure the ads are designed to fit into the brand and vision for the Downtown and not a hodgepodge of inconsistent imagery and styles. ■