

# An Evaluation Report: 2007 and 2008

## Marketing Snapshot

The pilot and ongoing project— **13 evaluations**



### Snapshot Background

In 2007, Neighbors in the Strip, a chamber-of-commerce-like organization, announced the offering of a free and brief business consult called a Marketing Snapshot to the first 4 businesses to sign up. Participants in this pilot included Roland's Seafood Grill, Spaghetti Warehouse, Collage and Schoolhouse Yoga.

Pleased with the results of the pilot, the URA's Mainstreets Pittsburgh program funded 11 additional Snapshots for 2008 in two city districts. Through January 2009, 16 additional businesses have participated, bringing the total number of Snapshots to twenty. Thirteen of these have completed evaluations. *(NOTE: not all of the 13 were part of the URA funding program; some were private clients)*

Randy Strothman provided the 4-step Snapshot services to these businesses, with the key deliverable a **customized 12-15 page report with analysis and recommendations** for each business. This document summarizes the evaluations of these participants.

### Executive Summary

Key findings in the participant evaluations of the pilot and ongoing project include:

- All participants rated their Overall Satisfaction with the Snapshot as "very satisfied."
- All participants have started to implement or will implement Snapshot recommendations.
- The biggest obstacles to pursuing marketing improvements are 1. "time to pursue it" and 2. "costs."
- An objective, 3rd party "eye" seemed to be one of the most valuable features of Snapshot
- The perceived value of Snapshot ranged from \$150-\$2,000... although businesses found it difficult to estimate this.
- The average time investment to produce each customized Snapshot was 17 hours, including 2 meetings

#### 20 Marketing Snapshots for:

- Spaghetti Warehouse
- Easter Seals Business Services
- Roland's Seafood Grill
- Collage Gifts
- Schoolhouse Yoga
- Pittsburgh Popcorn
- Eiseltown Flowers
- Master Remodelers
- Second Homes at Deep Creek
- Washington Consulting Group
- Mullaney's Harp & Fiddle
- Pittsburgh Water Limo
- 'Burgh Bits and Bites
- Outlaw Studios
- Penn Avenue Pottery
- Strip District Meats
- 31st Street Lofts
- The Park House
- Two Louie's Market
- Neighbors in the Strip

### Participant Responses: Part 1, Quantitative

SATISFACTION Ratings with elements of the program	very	somewhat	somewhat	very
	satisfied	satisfied	unsatisfied	unsatisfied
	(++)	(+)	(-)	(--)
Step 1: the value of answering the initial 11 questions, pre-meeting	12	1		
Step 2: your 1st 1- hour meeting with Randy to discuss your marketing	13			
Step 3: your multi-page Marketing Snapshot report document	13			
Step 4: your 2nd meeting with Randy to wrap up the Snapshot process	11	2		
5. The usefulness of the info handouts provided during the process	12	1		
6. The quality and usefulness of the recommendations in the report	13			
7. Randy's style and approach to the Snapshot process	12	1		
8. Your Snapshot's potential to improve the marketing of your business	13			
9. Your overall rating of the value of the project for your business	13			
<b>Totals</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>% of total responses</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>4%</b>		

10. Have you started to **implement** any of the Snapshot recommendations? 10 yes 2 no
11. Will you be implementing any of the recommendations in the **future**? 13 yes \_\_\_ no
12. What are your biggest **obstacles** to implementing the recommendations? (ranked by the biggest obstacle)

#1, #1 #1, #1, #1, #1, #1, #1, #2, #2, #2, #2, #3	<b>My time to pursue it</b>
#1, #1, #1, #1, #1, #1, #1, #1, #2, #2	<b>The cost</b>
#3, #5	My confusion about choices
#4, #4	My lack of knowledge
#3	Other: training employees to take on the responsibility
#5	(written in) "Getting everyone on board"

## Participant Responses: Part 2, Qualitative

13. What were the **most valuable** part(s) of Snapshot for your business?

Collage: "An objective eye. Examples of other businesses' ads. Suggestions to strengthen our identity"

Schoolhouse Yoga: "Randy's suggestions about making the website 'friendlier' to new students. The importance of creating a sense of 'community' at the school. The need to develop a consistent brand. Also, the need to determine how effective our current advertising is."

Roland's Grill: "Identifying how 'outsiders' see us."

Spaghetti Warehouse: "The 'Recommendations & Opportunities' (section of the report)"

Washington CG: "The ideas on how to increase business opportunities in the nonprofit sector... The ideas on how to get newspaper coverage about my business. The positive reinforcement about what I am doing already."

Easter Seals: "...Understanding how the organization presented itself to the outside world. We get caught up in our day-to-day and don't realize how others view us. It was a good opportunity to get Randy's perception."

Pgh. Popcorn: "It was really nice to have someone brainstorm with us and then put it all into one concise document."

P.A. Pottery: "Talking honestly with Randy and his input. Seeing facts on paper that could be appropriately utilized."

Outlaw Studios: "Because I agree with the analysis and the recommendations, I cannot pinpoint one part that is more valuable than another."

Burgh Bts & Bites: "Randy's overall knowledge is very valuable"

Strip Meats: "I did not think that I spent much on advertising. After we totalled all of it I was amazed how much could have gone to better use."



31st St. Lofts: "The prioritization of what needed done."  
 Two Louies: "The suggestions were the most valuable portion of the Snapshot. However, I found the whole process to be helpful as it made me focus on the marketing aspect of our business, which I may not have had time to do otherwise. It was a fresh outside observation of how we are perceived."



**14. What was the least valuable part(s) of Snapshot for your business?**

Collage: "It was all worthwhile"  
 Washington CG: "It was all valuable"  
 Easter Seals: "Although there are many ideas listed in Snapshot, we will be limited in dollars that we can use."  
 Pgh. Popcorn: "Nothing really. It was all very valuable."  
 Outlaw Studios: "Same as above—but I should point out that I was very impressed with the thoroughness of the questionnaire/interview portion of the process"  
 Strip Meats: "Nothing"  
 31st St. Lofts: "That it was too broad... it's easier to implement 2 things instead of a lot"  
 Two Louies: "I found it all to be valuable."

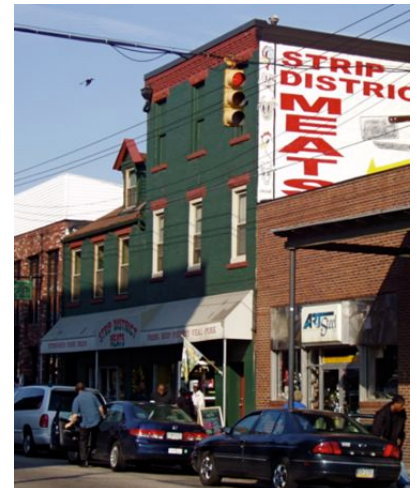
**15. What you would add, change or improve?**

Collage: "Perhaps an even more critical perspective. Look at my endeavors and critique them (postcards, ads, image). Make it more personal"  
 Washington CG: "Nothing"  
 Easter Seals: "I thought it was good as presented."  
 Pgh. Popcorn: "Nothing, really"  
 Outlaw Studios: "Honestly, it's a very fair bang for the buck and no improvements are necessary."  
 Strip Meats: "Nothing"  
 31st St. Lofts: "Nothing. We got more than our money's worth!!"  
 Two Louies: "I thought the process was fine."



**16. What dollar value would you place on this Snapshot process?**

Collage: "\$500... (but) it would be very hard to put a dollar value on it."  
 Yoga: "\$500... (but) I have no idea!"  
 Roland's: "\$150"  
 Spaghetti: "\$750"  
 Washington CG: "\$1,000-1,200"  
 Easter Seals: "I'm really not sure what this service would cost, but I'd have to guess it would be pricey. The Snapshot process would be worth every cent."  
 Pgh. Popcorn: "350"  
 P.A. Pottery: "Priceless!"  
 Outlaw Studios: "800-1,000 seems reasonable, especially considering Randy's expertise and the time involved."  
 Strip Meats: "\$2,000"



31st St. Lofts: "200"  
Two Louies: "500"

**Additional comments:**

Collage: "Overall this was a very valuable tool."  
*also, in an e-mail:* "Thank you, I did receive the report and it is very impressive. It's so nice to find someone who actually listens when I speak :)"



Neighbors in the Strip board

Yoga: "Thanks again!" *also, in an e-mail:* "I just wanted to thank you again for meeting with me and for all the great suggestions you provided"

Washington CG: "This is an extremely efficient process"

Easter Seals: "I was very impressed with Randy's grasp of our situation and his ability to focus in on the organization. He helped us gain a lot of insight."

Pgh. Popcorn: "Thank you!"

P.A. Pottery: "This has been challenging overall personally, since it means taking a leadership role at Penn Avenue Pottery..."  
*also in an email:* "Randy: We had a very productive meeting at Penn Avenue Pottery this morning. I want to let you know that the work you put into our profile has been instrumental in guiding us forward. Everyone seems to agree with the need to make some changes both cosmetically and philosophically about who we are and what we need to do about it. One major change is bringing on a fifth partner on an interim basis. Thanks again, Randy. You have indeed been the catalyst for all of this. Gary"



Outlaw Studios: "The most impressive part of the process is that Randy takes time to listen and understand during the questionnaire and interview process."

Burgh Bts & Bites: "It was a pleasure getting to know Randy. I appreciate his comments and will be implementing many of his suggestions."

31st St. Lofts: "Thanks for getting us into the process! It was great fun for Art too!"

Two Louies: "I greatly appreciate all of Randy's help and very much enjoy working with him. Thanks!"