



LD-27

Education on city living

The “City Living, DC Style!” campaign is an effort by the city of Washington, D.C. (572,000), to educate area residents about the realities of living in Washington. The campaign is designed to counter many myths concerning the city, such as that when Congress closes down for the day, so does the city. The city hopes to encourage those who rent their homes in the city to purchase homes, those who live in the suburbs to move into the city, and all area residents about the many ways in which Washington can enhance their lives.

Implementation notes

Leadership/staffing The City Living, DC Style! campaign is led by a representative of the city’s office of the deputy mayor for planning and economic development; the DC Marketing Center (which attracts new businesses to the city); and the TCI Companies, a national meeting and event marketing firm headquartered in Washington.

Budget/funding Last year’s budget for the campaign was \$62,000, which included all of the campaign’s marketing and outreach activities, as well as the City Living, DC Style! expo. These funds were provided by the city’s budget as well as by the expo’s sponsors and exhibitors.

Timeline The campaign began in February 2003 and its main event, the City Living, DC Style! expo, took place over a two-day weekend in October 2003. The expo is scheduled to be repeated on September 17–19, 2004.

Program description Campaign planners began by conducting extensive research to identify appropriate target groups. They decided to focus their efforts on current renters both inside and outside the city, commuters into the city, professionals of all ages, and empty nesters. The message was that the city offers many attractive, affordable houses and incentives for purchasing homes, and plenty of ways to enhance residents’ lifestyles, including entertainment, shopping, recreation, and transportation. The campaign emphasized homeownership, in particular, because homeowners play an important role in enhancing

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the quality of life in their communities. The campaign began with a kickoff event in a downtown park featuring a live band. At subway stations and community events, campaign staff distributed materials highlighting the campaign's themes. They also organized workshops on home buying that were open to the public.

The highlight of the campaign was the City Living, DC Style! expo, which was advertised on television, the radio, and the subway, as well as in the free newspaper distributed to all subway riders. The expo featured 80 vendors, including mortgage companies, insurance companies, realtors, developers, and banks as well as theaters, stores, and galleries. The expo was free to the public although participants were asked to register in advance or at the door. The expo included sessions on purchasing a home, transportation, selecting a neighborhood to live in, and arts and cultural destinations. The expo's booklet described many incentive programs for home buyers, as well as the many lifestyle amenities that Washington offers.

Results The expo attracted 7,000 participants, including more than 4,000 renters. At least half planned to move within the next year, and almost 1,000 planned to purchase a home in the district.

