



# Most Creative Marketing Strategy 2024

Powhatan County Parks and Recreation

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**Award Nomination: Most Creative Marketing Strategy, 2024**

**Nominee: Community Matters Mobile Information Hub**

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## **Introduction**

The Community Matters Mobile Information Hub represents a groundbreaking approach to community engagement and information dissemination in Powhatan County. Designed to address long-standing challenges related to awareness and accessibility of local resources, it exemplifies creativity in marketing through its innovative distribution method, resource utilization, design, unique positioning, and measurable community return on investment.

## **Background and Challenge**

Community Matters is a program of Powhatan County Social Services Department, developed by Jayne Lloyd, to provide community connection, lifelong learning, and enrichment for adults 55 plus. The program partnered with Powhatan Parks and Recreation in 2023 and is operated out of the Parks and Recreation Department, and provides over 160 programs, serving up to 3,000 participants per year.

The program working extensively with older adults in Powhatan County revealed a persistent barrier: many residents struggle to know what opportunities, events, organizations, and resources are available locally. New residents and visitors face even greater difficulty due to the lack of a centralized information hub. For years, Powhatan has lacked a dedicated community center that would serve as a go-to place for county-wide programming, activities, and critical information.

Recognizing this gap, and while advocacy continues for a permanent Community Center, Jayne explored how to leverage existing resources immediately to provide a tangible, centralized location for community information. The solution arose in the form of a self-serve outreach trailer, mobile and adaptable, bringing community knowledge where people naturally gather.

## **Method of Distribution**

The mobile trailer model is a brilliant tactic that breaks free from traditional static marketing. Rather than expecting residents to visit a fixed location, the Community Matters trailer travels to where the community is – during recreation program hours, local events, and popular gatherings like the Field of Honor in June 2024.

This pop-up, self-serve format addresses issues faced by residents who lack reliable online access or are overwhelmed by digital information overload. By physically bringing printed community information into the open, the trailer serves as an accessible and tangible reminder that residents can revisit at their leisure.



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Its availability at Parks and Recreation facilities and community events ensures a wide reach across demographic and geographic divides within Powhatan County. This distribution strategy capitalizes on natural community foot traffic rather than relying on passive outreach alone.

### **Use of Resources**

Financial creativity was central to the trailer's success. Rather than a costly build-out, the campaign relied heavily on strategic partnerships and donor generosity. Decor, lighting, plexiglass literature holders, and paint were all furnished by community donors passionate about increasing awareness and connectivity.

The partnership with the Parks and Recreation Department provided an ideal home base for the trailer, culminating in a ribbon-cutting event that added excitement and visibility, complete with speeches from leaders like the Assistant County Administrator and community-focused activities such as free grilled hot dogs and outdoor pickleball that drove attendance of over 60 people.

This efficient use of in-kind donations and existing community infrastructure minimized expenses while maximizing impact, demonstrating fiscal responsibility and community buy-in.

### **Method of Design**

Design-wise, the trailer transforms a utilitarian space into a welcoming, informative hub. Donor-supplied decor and lighting create an inviting environment that encourages residents to stop, browse, and engage without feeling overwhelmed.

The inclusion of plexiglass holders for brochures and flyers organizes the wealth of information in an accessible way, allowing visitors to easily take what interests them. Its self-serve nature respects visitors' autonomy, inviting them to explore on their own schedule.

The design also thoughtfully reflects the identity and values of Powhatan, featuring signifiers and colors that resonate locally and communicate a shared community spirit. This trendy design increases the trailer's appeal and draws attention, further amplifying the message that community matters.

### **Return on Investment**

The measurable return on investment for the Community Matters Information Hub is significant, though qualitative as well as quantitative. By serving as a centralized information point, it streamlines the community's marketing efforts, unifying disparate events, resources, and organizations into a single, discoverable platform — reducing confusion and increasing participation.

Since its launch and ribbon-cutting, usage peaked at major events like the Field of Honor, where the trailer reached hundreds. Initial feedback from residents suggests the presence of a physical outreach point is highly appreciated, especially among older adults and new residents unfamiliar with local digital channels.



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This elevated awareness translates into increased engagement with county programs and local organizations, ultimately fostering a stronger, more connected community. The community's enthusiasm about plans to continue and expand trailer use is itself a testament to its value.

### **Uniqueness**

What sets the Community Matters Mobile Information Hub apart from other marketing efforts is its blending of mobility, self-service convenience, and physical presence in a predominantly digital marketing age. While many communities rely exclusively on websites, social media, or mailed newsletters, Powhatan chose an innovative middle ground—combining face-to-face access with curated information hubs.

This approach acknowledges diverse needs and abilities within the community, embracing inclusivity and accessibility in marketing distribution. The trailer is not just mobile marketing — it is a mobile community center in miniature, filling a critical void while sparking momentum for a permanent facility.

Its creative, resource-savvy execution, combined with thoughtful design and strategic event placement, makes it a shining example of how targeted, innovative marketing can foster community cohesion and awareness.

### **Conclusion**

The Community Matters Mobile Information Hub is a pioneering marketing strategy that meets the community where they are, uses resources intelligently, engages users with thoughtful design, delivers strong return on investment through enhanced awareness and participation, and stands apart in its unique approach to addressing information accessibility challenges.

By uniting partners, donors, and residents in a creative solution, the trailer not only markets Powhatan's resources but also embodies the message that truly — Community Matters.

For these reasons, the Community Matters Mobile Information Hub is an outstanding candidate for the Most Creative Marketing Strategy Award.



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**BEFORE:**



**AFTER:**





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