Gillett Consumer Survey Results

In order to better understand the conditions and concerns of consumers in Gillett, a survey was undertaken to collect comprehensive consumer information about when, where and why respondents shop.* The survey also explored consumer preferences and characteristics.

This summary is based on a consumer survey completed approximately 2 years ago. The original surveys are no longer available. This section presents the summary data still available.

Gillett, Wisconsin

When, Where, and Why They Shop

This portion of the survey explores how often and for what reason respondents visit, or do not visit, downtown Gillett, what hours they shop, and the distance from home they are willing to travel to shop.

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- According to respondents, the most typical shopping times for non-grocery items are:
  - Monday – Friday between 2:00pm and 5:00 pm
  - Saturday before 5:00 pm

  Given the shopping hours reported, it is likely much of non-grocery shopping occurs outside of downtown where stores are open later and on weekends. These findings indicate the importance of extended hours of operation and matching actual store hours with consumer behavior.

- If extended hours were offered, respondents said they would be most likely to shop for non-grocery items during these extended hours:
  - Friday after 7:00 pm
  - Sunday afternoon

  If shopping is occurring outside of downtown due to limited hours of operation, the above times may provide opportunities for extending business hours with the assurance of at least some customer base.

- The survey found dinner is the most popular meal to eat out with approximately 36 percent of respondents eating dinner out at least once a week. Lunch trails only slightly with 34 percent of respondents eating lunch out once a week. Breakfast garnered only 22 percent of responses.

- The survey also explores the average cost of meals when dining out.
  - 28 percent said they spend $5.00 to $9.99 once a week
  - 4.5 percent said they spend $10.00 - $14.99 once a week
  - 2 percent of respondents said they spend more than $15.00 once a week

- When asked about movie going habits, 10.5 percent of respondents said they go to a movie theater at least once a month. On the other hand, approximately 29 percent of respondents rent movies for home viewing at least once a month

- The following chart shows the percent attendance (for the last 12 months) of local community festivals and events. Overwhelmingly the most popular events are the 4th of July Celebration and the County Fair.

Event Attendance

Response	Frequency	Percent
4th of July	132	71.74
Spring into Gillett	28	15.22
County Fair	137	74.46
Christmas in the Park	98	53.26
Other	28	15.22
None	17	9.24
Missing	5	2.72

- Respondents were asked if they came to downtown Gillett during a typical week to do the following; the responses were:
  - Passing through – 50%
  - Non-grocery Retail – 45%
  - Dinning Out – 30%
  - Work – 28%
  - Personal Care / Professional Services – 14%

- When visiting downtown, 82 percent of respondents parked on the street, and 55 percent said they are able to park near the entry of their destination.

- Respondents were asked how far they live from work. The responses were:
  - Under 5 minutes – 18%
  - 5-10 minutes – 8%
  - 11-15 minutes – 5%
  - 16- 20 min – 5%
  - More than 20 min – 11%
  - Work at home or retired – 39%

- Respondents were also asked how far they live from downtown Gillett:
  - Under 5 minutes – 49%
  - 5 to 10 minutes – 24%
  - 11-15 minutes – 9%
  - 16 - 20 minuets – 3%
  - More than 20 min – 1%
  - Live in Downtown – 9%

  Based on the above two sets of responses, approximately 85% of respondents live within 20 minutes of downtown, and, only 36% live within 20 minutes of work. This suggests that many area residents and respondents commute out of Gillett to work. It may be helpful for local businesses to study the consumer behaviors of the commuter market and develop operating strategies, products and services more consistent with the busy lifestyles of commuters.

- When respondents were asked where they do most of their non-grocery shopping, the results were as follows:
  - 22 percent shop in Gillett
  - 43 percent shop in Shawano
  - 42 percent shop at the Shawano WalMart
  - 12.5 percent shop in Oconto Falls

- Using the above data we see only 22% of respondents said they shop in Gillett, but 85% of people live within 20 minutes of downtown. This discrepancy can most likely be attributed to the fact that people are shopping near their place of work where they most likely have convenience, and possibly better selection (as we have said it appears many residents commute out of Gillett for work). In other words, the availability of regional shopping competition needs to be considered when examining local demand and supply conditions by business type.

- Respondents were then asked to identify the reason they chose to shop the above locations instead of downtown Gillett; overwhelming the responses dealt with better selection and price.

What Consumers Want

Information gathered in this section of the survey focuses on the types of stores and services respondents would like to see locate in downtown Gillett. It also examines consumer's feelings about housing and amenities in downtown Gillett.

- Respondents were asked to list four business types they would like to see locate downtown. Overwhelmingly the response included the following:
  - pharmacy
  - car wash
  - bakery
  - fast food restaurants

- The graph below shows which community assets consumers would like to see developed in Gillett. The most popular answers were a youth center and a senior citizen center.

Most Wanted Community Assets

Response	Frequency	Percent
City Walking & Nature Path	50	27.17
Lakeside or Riverside Park	29	15.76
Senior Citizen Center	82	44.57
Public Parking Lot	12	6.52
Nicolet Rec Trail	43	23.37
Youth Center	100	54.35
Golf Course	5	2.72
City Park	29	15.76
None of these	8	4.35
Other	14	7.61
Missing	21	11.41

- Respondents were asked if they would consider living downtown; 61 percent said they would not, 29 percent said they did live downtown or they had an interest in living downtown. Those who had an interest in living downtown were asked what type of housing they would like to live in. The most popular choice was a privately owned, single family home, with two to three bedrooms. *Please refer to pages seven through nine in the Condensed Item Analysis Report for more details on preferred styles of downtown homes.*

Consumer Market Information

This portion of the survey provides information about the make up of Gillett's consumer market. Details include demographic information, lifestyle data and recreational activities.

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The results of this survey may be skewed due to the following; just over 50 percent of the survey respondents reported being over the age of 55, but, according to 2006 ESRI demographic data, only 26.2 percent of residents in Gillett are over the age of 55. It is important to consider the effect this discrepancy may have had on the data presented.

- Respondents were asked which leisure activities their household participates in. The responses garnered at least a thirty-five percent response rate include:
  - Traveling
  - Computer and Internet
  - Cooking
  - Fishing
  - Gardening
  - Listening to music
  - Reading for pleasure
  - Crafts

  Some of these activities can be supported by independent downtown niche businesses (existing or new businesses). For a full listing of activities noted by respondents, please refer to page eleven in the Condensed Item Analysis Report.

- The respondents were asked to identify the types of books and magazines commonly read in their household. The following are the books and magazines garnered at least a 20 percent response rate.
  - Cooking, food and wine
  - Health, mind and body
  - Mystery and Thriller
  - Home and garden
  - News
  - Outdoor and nature
  - Religion and spirituality

  Again, the activities associated with these topics can be supported by independent downtown niche businesses (existing or new businesses). For a full listing of books and periodicals please refer to page fifteen in the Condensed Item Analysis Report

- The following table summarizes the radio stations most listened to by respondents. Those garnering the highest response rate were WOCO 107.1 and the “Other” category.

Radio listening

Response	Frequency	Percent
WOWN 99.3	30	16.30
WTCH 960	30	16.30
WNCY 100.3	32	17.39
WPNE 89.3	8	4.35
WOCO 107.1	49	26.63
WLST 95.1	3	1.63
WHYB 103.7	4	2.17
Other	59	32.07
None	6	3.26
Missing	32	17.39

- The following table summarizes the publications that are most read by respondents. The Times Herald and the Green Bay Press Gazette are by far the most read.

Newspaper reading

Response	Frequency	Percent
Times Herald	121	65.76
Bonus	31	16.85
Evening Leader	9	4.89
Sunday Penny Saver	12	6.52
The Reminder	7	3.80
Green Bay Press Gazette	85	46.20
Other	7	3.80
None	2	1.09
Missing	37	20.11

The above two questions on media can be used to target marketing messages at particular media outlets in order to reach the most consumers. It may be important to further explore the “other” category in the radio station preference question because it received an unusually high response rate.

Considerations

Using the information gathered from the consumer survey, a number of considerations emerge which should be accounted for in downtown Gillett's business development efforts.

- Explore the possibility of extending downtown business hours (consistent among businesses); Friday after 7:00 pm and Sunday afternoons are possible times for extended hours.

- Develop strategies to capture travelers who pass through downtown, but do not normally stop.

- Recognize the importance of the commuter market especially those out-commuters who may work and shop in the Shawano area. Develop strategies to appeal to the lifestyles of both outbound and inbound commuters.

- Using the data provided by the survey on consumer preferences, attitudes and potential business mix gaps, it may be possible for Gillett to begin to formulate strategies for business recruitment that address and fit those preferences and gaps (note the information in this survey is not sufficient to draw any concrete conclusions and is not a substitute for a feasibility study and business plan). Nevertheless, potential gaps in downtown Gillett include:
    - Pharmacy
    - Car wash
    - Bakery
    - Fast food restaurants
    - Additional lifestyle retail categories including cooking, traveling, health, computers and outdoor

Information from the consumer survey results can be married to the results of the business operators survey in order to identify potential disconnects between consumer needs and business resources. For example, consumer responses dealing with desired extended hours can be matched with business responses to the perceived need and potential for extending business hours.

These considerations are a reflection of those who responded to the survey and not necessarily the entire community population. Accordingly, they should be used to stimulate thinking and supplement the insight of local business and economic development leaders.