GENERATE STURGIS and other Successful Community Teams

Presenter: Mike Wilson, Sturgis, MI  csmmichael11@gmail.com
About Me..

- Former Small Business Owner
- Former City Commissioner
- Retired Military Leader
- Experienced Team Builder/Team Leader
- Proud Supporter of my Community
- Regional Coordinator for Michigan Veteran Affairs Agency
- Deputy Commandant of Howe Military Academy
- Former Leader of Generate Sturgis
About Sturgis

• Population: 11,000
• 3 miles from Indiana Border
• Great Downtown (less than 10% empty stores)
• Many restaurant choices
• Millions spent on the downtown in the last 36 months
In The Beginning

- MSU-E Creating Entrepreneurial Communities Grant
- Image Design, and Logo
- Bricks and Mortar Incubator?
- DBA Survey
- Lots of Tours (Spark, Innovation 1, Southwest Michigan First etc.)
- We needed a leader and we needed a marketer.
- Inspired by Grand Rapids 5 X 5
Great Ideas

Fostering entrepreneurial growth & economic development in the Sturgis Community

What is Generate Sturgis?

Generate Sturgis was established in 2011, with the mission to help new and existing entrepreneurs grow ideas into businesses, which helps create jobs, services, wealth and stability for the extended community.

The core committee is a collaboration of various local government and business representatives and state agencies working to develop an entrepreneurial culture within the City of Sturgis and surrounding areas.

In 2012, the Generate Sturgis Committee established two initiatives in order to enhance an entrepreneurial culture. The first is Coffee Chats and the second is Business Idea Contests. Each of these initiatives will allow a unique opportunity for the citizens of this community to explore their entrepreneurial spirit.

Sturgis Improvement Association
Our Mission
Generate Sturgis creates a positive community culture that embraces, supports, and nurtures entrepreneurs.
Lessons Learned, Now What?

- Conducted Strategic Planning
- GS is a “resource pool or resource provider” nothing else.
- Determined need for Focus Groups (Startups, Low Growth, Rapid Growth or Expansion)
- Design plan around what we learn in focus groups
  - Entrepreneurs need mentors
  - Need for networking at all levels and within all levels
  - Entrepreneurs don’t know what they don’t know
- Three ideas evolved from Planning
Three Programs
The Way Ahead

• GS Continues Projects
  • Patent, Copyright, Trademark Seminar
  • BIZCON
  • Sturgis 24/7

• Change Focus – Continue to promote small business, but highlight what’s good in Sturgis, arts, recreation, health services, fitness, parks etc.
Tips for Community Teams

• Know your capacity to serve
• Building a team of people not positions
• Someone lead the team!
• Make sure you have doers!
• Focus Groups (need to know what you don’t know)
• CEC!!
• MSU-E First Impressions Tool
• Increased social interaction and networking opportunities
Questions?