

A 'P'rescription to achieve community excellence

Business experts tell us that the basics of marketing begin with the four "P's": Product, Price, Place (referred to as distribution), and Promotion. Creating a successful mix of these elements helps companies meet consumer needs and corporate objectives.

Throughout the five years of Team Punta Gorda's existence, we've learned about these and the many other "P's" of community excellence. Our "Product" is the community of greater Punta Gorda but it could just as easily be Port Charlotte, Englewood, Charlotte County, or any other locale.

It all begins with "Planning." In our case we sponsored the development of the Citizens' Master Plan 2005 that represented the community's vision of a new and improved greater Punta Gorda. Both the city and Charlotte County have extensive planning processes in place to guide change.

Our governmental leaders will tell you about the "Price" of improving a community. It takes both public and private investment to implement change.

With all of the funding requests (and there's no shortage of ideas) it takes a lot of "Prioritizing" to achieve results. While some projects may be thought of as being independent, we contend that all projects are related to one another, sort of like building blocks. The addition of a bicycle path,

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for example, is a wonderful quality-of-life element in a community. That same bicycle path can become a part of a larger plan that interconnects sections of a community making it a perfect candidate to become known as bicycle-friendly as is the case in Punta Gorda.

To achieve amazing results takes the hard work of a lot of "People." Our citizens have "Passion" for revitalization and this wonderful journey on which we've embarked.

It's not just Team Punta Gorda alone that contributed to this revitalization but many private and public entities working in "Partnership" to make things happen. Collaboration is definitely a key to success!

As projects come on line and residents become inspired, it's critically important that we "Participate" in the change management process. Rather than sitting on the sidelines, join in the fun. While striving for community excellence is energizing and very rewarding, it also requires "Persistence" and "Patience," especially when the pace of change seems to be like swimming upstream.

An important goal of community excellence is to create a sense of "Place," where people feel at home and embrace the vision. In Punta Gorda we celebrate

our history and the eclectic feel of our city. Our heritage is the foundation upon which we layer the enhancements that you see unfolding.

Having achieved significant results, it's time for us to "Promote" what we've done. It's time to shout out "Punta Gorda — It's happening on the Harbor" and invite everyone to come and see for themselves. We want to bring in visitors from outside Charlotte County to see our community — to stay here, shop here, dine here, play here, boat here, fish here, bicycle here, establish a business here, and who knows — maybe even move here.

Why not join TEAM in this exciting process by attending our volunteer orientation on Jan. 16, 2010, at the Lashley Marina Community Room. The meeting begins at 10 a.m., and will be very informative. For more information contact us at team@teampuntagorda.org or 941-637-TEAM. Find more information about TEAM at www.team-puntagorda.org. TEAM is honored to have been selected as the Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce 2009 Non-Profit Business of the Year.