



Boyne City Farmer's Market Rapid Market Assessment

August 29, 2007

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**Michigan Farmers Market Association
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**Boyne City Farmer's Market
Rapid Market Assessment
Wednesday, August 29, 2007**

Market Hours: May-October
Wednesday & Saturday 8 am -1 pm

Location: Old City Park
Corner of North Park & River Streets

Market Staff: Hugh Conklin, Jennifer Lewis

Market Day Comments: Wednesday before Labor Day
Cool, cloudy gray day
Threatened rain 8-10
Poured rain & windy 10-12

Age of Market: Open since 1979

Fees: \$10/day; Season rate of \$40/5ft²

Vendors: 30

Market Sales Estimate: \$7,267

Market Attendance Estimate: 630

RMA Team: Lucy Hartlove, farmers market shopper; Dru Montri, Michigan Farmers Market Association; Pam Montri, farmers market shopper; Wendy Wieland, Northern Lakes Economics Alliance

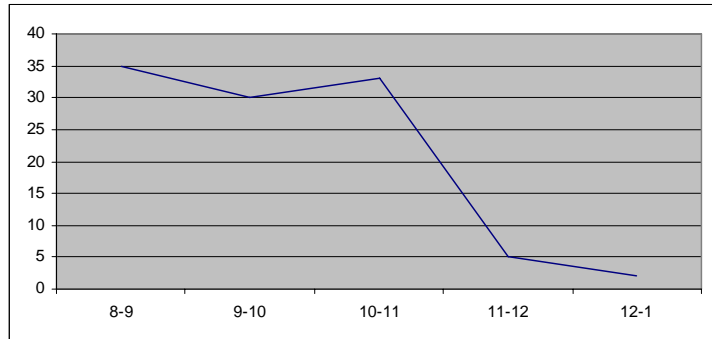
Introduction:

Boyne City Farmer's Market is located at Old City Park in downtown Boyne City. The market is producer only and supplies produce from a 30-mile radius of Boyne City. It sells produce such as fruits and vegetables, maple syrup and honey, dried flowers, nursery stock and crafts. The market is sponsored by the Boyne City Main Street program.

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I. Estimated Attendance: 630 Adults

1st Hour (8-9) count =	35
2nd Hour (9-10:) count =	30
3rd Hour (10-11) count =	33
4th Hour (11-12) count =	5
5th Hour (12-1) count =	2
Total	105



Estimated of total market customers = 630

Comments: Team members counted the numbers of adults entering the market for ten minutes of each hour. The total number of adult customers counted was multiplied by six to estimate total market attendance. Attendance for this day's market started off strong, but tapered off dramatically as the day progressed. The opposite is typically true of farmers markets, which leads one to believe that other forces were playing a part. The weather on the day of this market was gloomy in the morning and progressed to a full storm by 11 a.m., when attendance started to drop significantly. The attendance pattern of this day's market may not be typical of a standard market day.

Attendance by entrance and hour

Time	River St.		Park St.		Downtown		Total:	
8-9	27	40%	6	22%	2	18%	35	33%
9-10	12	18%	11	41%	7	64%	30	29%
10-11	23	34%	8	30%	2	18%	33	31%
11-12	3	4%	2	7%	0	0%	5	5%
12-1	2	3%	0	0%	0	0%	2	2%
Total	67		27		11		105	

Comments: The River Street Entrance was by far the most used, accounting for nearly 2/3 of the customers entering the market.

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Question 1: Are you a?

	<u>8:00- 10:00</u>		<u>10:00- 12:45</u>		<u>Total/ Percentage</u>	
Seasonal resident	42	32%	16	31%	58	31%
Year round resident	82	62%	22	42%	104	56%
Visitor	9	7%	14	27%	23	12%
Total	133	72%	52	28%	185	

Comments: Boyne City is located on the Boyne River, near Lake Charlevoix and has direct access to Lake Michigan. Because of its proximity to water, Boyne City is a prime tourist destination in the warmer months and has a large population of seasonal residents (those having alternative residences in the area for recreation). While over half (56%) of those attending were permanent residents, nearly 1/3 of the customers were seasonal residents, which is a substantial portion. Only 12% of those attending were visitors to the area. Note that during the late morning, when the weather turned bad, year-round resident shoppers dropped off more sharply relative to seasonal residents and visitors.

Suggestion: Since Boyne City is such a draw for seasonal residents and visitors, the market may wish to use tourism communication tools as a part of its promotional strategy.

Question 2: How often do you shop at downtown businesses or restaurants when you come to this market?

	<u>8:00- 10:00</u>		<u>10:00- 12:45</u>		<u>Total Percentage</u>	
Never	11	9%	9	18%	20	11%
Occasionally	52	42%	16	31%	68	39%
Often	40	33%	16	31%	56	32%
Always	20	16%	10	20%	30	17%
Total	123	71%	51	29%	174	

Comments: The two most popular answers were "occasionally" and "often."

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Question 3: How much have you / will you spend at the farmers market today?

	<u>8:00- 10:00</u>		<u>10:00- 12:45</u>		<u>Total</u> <u>Percentage</u>	
\$0	8	6%	7	14%	15	8%
\$10	43	33%	18	37%	61	34%
\$20	48	37%	15	31%	63	35%
\$30	15	11%	2	4%	17	9%
\$40	8	6%	3	6%	11	6%
\$50	8	6%	3	6%	11	6%
\$60	0	0%	1	2%	1	1%
\$70	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
\$80	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
\$90	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
100	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
More	1	1%	0	0%	1	1%
Total	131	73%	49	27%	180	
Mean			\$19.61			
Median			\$20			
Mode			\$20			

Comments: The mean or average expenditure of shoppers was \$19.61. The median was \$20, meaning that half the shoppers spent less than \$20 and half spent more than \$20. More shoppers spent \$20 than any other single amount.

Question 4: How many people are you shopping for today including yourself?

	<u>8:00- 10:00</u>		<u>10:00- 12:45</u>		<u>Total/Percentage</u>	
1	67	51%	23	46%	90	49%
2	51	39%	18	36%	69	38%
3	12	9%	4	8%	16	9%
4	2	2%	5	10%	7	4%
5	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
6+	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	132		50		182	
Mean			1.7			
Median			2			
Mode			1			

Comments: The mean or average number of people each customer was shopping for was 1.7, with the median or middle 2, and the mode or most common one person. Customers who reported shopping for themselves only accounted for nearly half of the market, a surprisingly high proportion.

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Suggestion: With 2/3 of market customers shopping for one or two people, the market and its vendors may wish to consider how to best serve this customer segment.

Question 5: What one change would you recommend to improve the market?

	<u>8:00- 10:00</u>	<u>10:00- 12:45</u>	<u>Total/Percentage</u>
Location	1 1%	0 0%	1 1%
Product Variety	2 2%	12 23%	14 8%
Market layout	7 6%	4 8%	11 6%
Parking	9 7%	2 4%	11 6%
No changes	91 73%	29 56%	120 68%
Other	15 12%	5 10%	20 11%
Total	125	52	177

Comments: A surprisingly large number of people (68%) said that they would not change anything about the market. Because the market is 28 years old, it has established itself as a staple in the community and has adapted to what does and does not work for the customers. During the later time slot, 23 percent of the customers said that they would like a wider product variety. This could be because a large portion of the products were bought by customers earlier in the day or possibly because more of the later shoppers were seasonal residents and tourists, who were looking for more prepared and unusual foods. The market may wish to conduct further customer surveys to determine what people responding in the "other" category wanted, as that made up the second largest percentage of responses at 11 percent.

Estimated Market Day Sales

A conservative estimate of total market sales for the day is developed by dividing the estimated total number of adult customers (630) by the mean number of people customers were shopping for (1.7) and multiplying by the mean customer expenditure (\$19.61). This method very conservatively estimates total market sales for the day at \$7,267.

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I. Constructive Comments/Observations

Physical Site

What Team members appreciated about the physical site

Access:

- ❖ Good location in downtown park
- ❖ Appears to be sufficient parking for Wednesday crowd
- ❖ Great! Perhaps even too accessible
- ❖ Access to market is good
- ❖ Adequate parking today
- ❖ Right downtown

Flow of people and traffic:

- ❖ Market allows for leisurely shopping
- ❖ High car traffic
- ❖ High visibility
- ❖ Good flow through the market
- ❖ Sufficient today; could be an issue on the weekends

Liability Issues:

- ❖ Did not notice any dogs/pets at the market
- ❖ Eggs are kept refrigerated in cooler
- ❖ Display for the eggs are blown out-great idea for no food safety issues
- ❖ Love the caution signs in the middle of streets and crosswalks

Organization of market:

- ❖ Easy access to vendors right off sidewalk
- ❖ Current set-up works to delineate crafters/food vendors
- ❖ Produce vendors seem to be happy with stall placement
- ❖ Produce and crafts are separated

Access to electricity:

- ❖ Plug at gazebo but no vendors appeared to be require electricity
- ❖ One in gazebo
- ❖ None

Other:

- ❖ ½ time market manager
- ❖ Written vendor rules
- ❖ Dedicated market manager dealing with conditions and vendors

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Improvements and Questions

Access:

- ❖ Greater visibility from business area in downtown
- ❖ Can enter and exit market from all directions
- ❖ Regular customers don't always "shop"

Flow of people and traffic:

- ❖ Sidewalks could become congested on River St. when cars pull in too close-use curbs
- ❖ Large spaces between some vendors in park, could break the flow of the market
- ❖ Traffic could be snarled on busier days
- ❖ Larger area between street and the stalls
- ❖ Parking is a problem at times

Liability Issues:

- ❖ Parking on River St.: Could be a problem with the extreme proximity to sidewalk and vendors
- ❖ Cars drive up very close to vendor stands and park
- ❖ An "accident waiting to happen"
- ❖ Parking on River St. could be a hazard-no curb or barrier
- ❖ Needs curbs in parking on River St.

Organization of Market:

- ❖ It may create a greater appeal if farm vendors/produce were lined up on Park St.-that way all those cars would see produce
- ❖ This separation helps the "us against them" sentiment
- ❖ Possibly mix of vendors-drawing from both groups to purchase from one another
- ❖ Sometimes the sidewalk isn't a wide enough space for all of the customers

Access to electricity, phone line:

- ❖ No phone line-would be necessary for debit/credit/EBT transactions
- ❖ Didn't see any phone
- ❖ Plug at gazebo as well as water
- ❖ No pay phone

Other:

- ❖ Market manager needs to be more involved in problem solving between vendors and making market more visible or enjoyable
- ❖ The manager needs to be at the market each day it is open-early to avoid problems
- ❖ Market manager should advertise the market and set up special events

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Atmosphere

What team members appreciate about the market atmosphere

Market feel:

- ❖ Good feel among customers
- ❖ Local customers use it for socialization, enjoy market
- ❖ Good energy

Shopper Demographics:

- ❖ Mainly older
- ❖ Both seasonal and local residents seem to use the market
- ❖ A lot of older females and couples
- ❖ Mostly Caucasian
- ❖ Few customers
- ❖ Seems to be a great mix (diverse for this area of Michigan)
- ❖ Predominately white women- older and mothers with children, a few older couples as well

Interactions, Conversations:

- ❖ The market is a place where residents can interact- see friends and old friends
- ❖ Customers friendly, interested in survey, "We love this market"
- ❖ Most vendors are friendly to customers and converse with them
- ❖ Everyone seems to use the market as a social place

Educational or Entertainment Activities:

- ❖ None on day of assessment

Improvements and Questions

Market feel:

- ❖ There are obvious hard feeling between produce and craft vendors- shoppers also grumble about the mix
- ❖ "Suspicious" fell amongst some vendors
- ❖ Conflict between crafters and farmers
- ❖ Both groups openly voice opinions
- ❖ "Extra" activities could be implemented

Shopper Demographics:

- ❖ Advertise to get more shoppers
- ❖ Possibly draw in younger families

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Interactions Conversations:

- ❖ Draw attention and space to promote interactions such as picnic tables
- ❖ Because of my location (at the end of the craft section) saw many customers turn back around when they saw all crafts
- ❖ Using back area to promote market picnic area to draw families to market

Educational/Entertainment Activities:

- ❖ Some could certainly be added
- ❖ Perhaps music (live or recorded)
- ❖ Could add music, entertainment or activities in the gazebo.
- ❖ Could consider children's events or educational tents- involve master gardeners
- ❖ Use gazebo; local talent at Sat. Market

Vendors and Products

What team members appreciate about vendors and products

Product Mix:

- ❖ Good mix of produce
- ❖ Nice variety

Product Quality:

- ❖ Overall good
- ❖ Good

Signs:

- ❖ Noticed sandwich board signs on streets nearest the lake (Lake St.?)
- ❖ Sandwich boards
- ❖ Banners were beautiful-they may replace?

Display:

- ❖ Flowers added nice color at ends and center of the market
- ❖ Nice

Customer Service:

- ❖ As always, service was vendor specific
- ❖ Some very friendly vendors (Kathy and Debi willing to talk about farms and product)
- ❖ Customers who are regulars talk to vendors
- ❖ Vendors seem to be friendly and helpful

Food Safety:

- ❖ Sampling is limited
- ❖ The inspector comes around periodically

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Improvements and Questions

Product Mix:

- ❖ Could add meat, cheese, more prepared foods for over the lunch period
- ❖ Red meat/fish
- ❖ More flower vendors
- ❖ Baked goods and cheese on Wednesday
- ❖ Need a coffee vendor

Product Quality:

- ❖ Presentation/display can impact perception of quality, so improved display could improve quality
- ❖ More vendors for a larger variety

Signs:

- ❖ More signs uptown
- ❖ Didn't see any directions to the market
- ❖ Increase signs promoting market-banners, signs in town, signs on day of market to catch attention of traffic on Park St.

Display:

- ❖ Produce/product displayed on angle-use of height in displays
- ❖ Table cloths
- ❖ Clearly priced items
- ❖ Vendors need to have the prices on each item or group so customers don't have to ask

Customer Service:

- ❖ Vendors could promote one another
- ❖ More friendly conversation/greeting customers

Food Safety:

- ❖ No hand washing station/area

Other:

- ❖ Suggest reducing market hours to 8 a.m.-noon, as most vendors leave around noon