

AUSTRIA

Local development

Location

Enns

Programming period

2014 – 2020

Priority

P6 – Social inclusion and local development

Measure

M19 – CLLD/LEADER

Funding (EUR)

Total budget 126 176.00

RDP support 50 470.00

Private 75 706.00

Project duration

2016 – 2019

Project promoter

Tourismus und Stadtmarketing Enns GmbH

Contact

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Website

www.popupstores.at

An innovative concept to revitalise the city centre of an Austrian town by offering flexible rental options to pop up shops.

Summary

"Enns Tourism and City Marketing Ltd" (Tourismus- & Stadtmarketing Enns GmbH) developed a pop-up shop concept for the town centre of Enns, Upper Austria. It aims to make use of vacant sales space on a temporary basis, providing new businesses with an opportunity to launch new ideas with minimum risk, to test out the location and to attract new customers. The anticipated upturn will, it is hoped, attract more new businesses and customers to the town centre.



Results

9 pop-up stores let out on a long-term basis

5 new businesses set up, no longer operating within the project framework

There are now fewer vacant retail spaces in the town centre

Customer traffic has increased by 43 percent on "Linzer Straße" promenade

No further closures / departures of local businesses so far

The project has raised the profile of the town of Enns

Increased marketing and promotional activities

Property owners are increasingly willing to invest

Both business owners and customers show greater satisfaction

Increased number of micro-events within the shopping precinct (by new and existing business owners alike)

Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ In order for a project of this nature to succeed, it is incumbent on tenants, property owners and the municipal government to work closely together.
- ❑ Making use of professional marketing strategies and having a creative, open-minded outlook is indispensable.
- ❑ It is also necessary to have a framework set up to support the effort of revitalizing an entire area of a town, as well as regular events to keep the project going.
- ❑ Another crucial element for success is to provide customers with a variety of selected offers and to have digital infrastructure in place.

Context

Enns is a small town in Upper Austria. The nearby capital Linz with its large sales areas and shopping centres has left a visible mark: the amount of vacant retail space in downtown Enns is ever-increasing while customer traffic is dwindling. Existing businesses are leaving and rental prices are set too high. Many properties are old and in need of renovation, but due to a lack of perspective for the future, their owners are reluctant to invest. The range of services and products is poor and the customers' needs and expectations can hardly be met, which in turn leaves them no other option but to visit bigger shopping centres.

Many communities and small towns are currently facing a similar situation. Due to clustered sales space set up in peripheral locations, small businesses and shops situated in town centres are increasingly losing out. On the one hand, customers enjoy the extensive range of products available at large-scale shopping malls but are on the other hand lamenting the increasing loss of traditional local retailers.

In order to eliminate this disparity, it is essential to create innovative and tailor-made revitalization schemes that help to once again attract businesses and to minimize vacant space.

Objectives

The objectives of the project were to:

- revitalize the unwelcoming environment of semi-abandoned shopping precincts by introducing pop-up shops;
- increase the number of visitors by offering a frequently changing range of services and products;
- increase the number of customers for all local businesses;
- prevent further delocalisation of businesses;
- promote the establishment of new businesses;
- encourage long-term tenancies.

Activities

The concept is to provide possible tenants with a choice of two rental options: A. a short-term use option for several days and B. a long-term use option for approximately 1 to 6 months.

The features and benefits of these two options are illustrated below.

Short-term use option:

- Duration: several days
- Creates diversity within the shopping precinct and increases footfall
- Gives the feeling of an event-like setup all year round and attracts the attention of the media
- Revitalizes the district

Long-term use option:

- Duration: 1 to 6 months
- Permanently increases numbers of customers
- Encourages businesses to permanently establish themselves on site
- Allows for experimentation with new business ideas

The combination of these two variants is particularly suitable because the town centre of Enns features a relatively large number of different-sized properties within in a small area, offering numerous possibilities for a wide variety of business concepts.

The system is designed in such a way that it can be set up quickly and flexibly, regardless of room size or layout, creating a 'room within a room'. This makes it possible to adjust the setting to the needs of the tenant, without having to undertake alterations to the existing structure of the property, thus avoiding extra costs for the landlord.

In order to implement the project on the ground, the following activities were carried out by the project team:

- Conducting a conceptual analysis and opinion poll among local citizens.
- Providing ongoing support for both landlords and tenants.
- Providing a consistent interior shop design in order to create brand recognition (using a modular design system consisting of coloured partition walls that can be adapted to different room settings).
- Ensuring an equally consistent *exterior* shop design.
- Creating and implementing a detailed and comprehensive marketing strategy.
- Overseeing the operational and administrative management of associated events (such as themed markets).

Main Results

The project has already been fully implemented. In addition to the website at www.popupstores.at and its presence on social media ([facebook](#)), several new businesses and business ideas have already been established, including an architecture firm, a local organic food store, a photo studio, and a women's fashion boutique.

Word is getting around and the project is becoming well-known. Excursions groups, from all over Austria and beyond, are regularly visiting the shops and there are many ideas about how to take the concept forward. Above all, the idea of being able to rent business space for no more than a few days, weeks, or months is brand-new and offers newcomers a chance to start off their business with little risk involved.

The following results have already been achieved:

- 9 pop-up stores let out on a long-term basis.
- 5 new businesses set up, no longer operating within the project framework.
- There are now fewer vacant retail spaces in the town centre.
- Customer traffic has increased by 43 percent on "Linzer Straße" promenade.
- No further closures / departures of local businesses so far.



- The project has raised the profile of the town of Enns.
- Increased marketing and promotional activities.
- Property owners are increasingly willing to invest.
- Both business owners and customers show greater satisfaction.
- Increased number of micro-events within the shopping precinct (by new and existing business owners alike).
- Existing businesses and new shops mutually stimulate each other by assisting and working together with one another.

Key lessons

In order for a project of this nature to succeed, it is incumbent on tenants, property owners and the municipal government to work closely together. Only when all parties involved are able to cooperate with one another is it possible for the project to get ahead.

Furthermore, making use of professional marketing strategies and having a creative, open-minded outlook is indispensable.

It is also necessary to have a framework set up to support the effort of revitalizing an entire area of town, as well as regular events to keep the project going.

Another crucial element for success is to provide customers with a variety of selected offers and to have digital infrastructure in place.



Additional sources of information

www.facebook.com/popupstorens/