

Insider

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By Kim Burger

The 2009 Cedar Falls/Waterloo Visitor Guides have arrived, and boy, are we proud of them! The 64-page publication is packed with pictures, dates and details about events, attractions and other pertinent information for community visitors. Everything has been attractively displayed by graphic designer, Courtney Towlerton, from the Courier. Sheila Kerns and her special project sales staff at the Courier sold the advertising and we are extremely pleased to report that 93 local businesses and organizations have chosen to partner with us on the project. We intend to do our very best to get every one of the 85,000 gorgeous guides in the hands of visitors which we anticipate will lead them into the doors of our partners.

Most successful projects are the result of collaboration and the visitor guide is a shining example. The Waterloo and Cedar Falls Visitors Bureaus are long-time partners, sharing resources to purchase advertising, attend trade shows and produce this piece, now in its 10th year of joint publication.

A couple of years ago the bureaus added another important partner to the mix and began working with the Courier to sell the advertisements and design and print the publication. This relationship allows each organization – the bureaus, the Courier, and our advertisers - to concentrate on what we do best. The Courier already arranges advertisements for many of our partners, who further benefit by the promotion they receive through our distribution efforts, which are intensified since we no longer pay to produce the guides. The money we used to spend on printing and design is now used for additional advertisement and trade shows. It's a great arrangement that we believe is a benefit to the most important people in the entire equation, our visitors.

Both bureaus work regularly with the University of Northern Iowa in a number of areas including promotion of facilities and events and engaging in students in internships and special projects. The metro map in this year's guide is an excellent new example. The map located in the guide is the work of Nathan Hauser, a young student artist and our newest project partner, and we are very pleased.

Welcome Centers located around the state are already distributing the guides and on-line versions are being prepared and uploaded. Delivery of the balance of the print order is currently taking place so we'll be bringing them around to local information centers and hotels in the next week. Watch for them and pick up a copy. Better yet, stop in at the Visitor Center and browse the brochure racks and learn what else is available throughout the rest of the state.