

CLIENT

Alyssa Anders, Owner and General Manager, Art Bar

Art Bar of Hastings, Located at 647 W 2nd Street, Hastings, Nebraska, 68901.

Slogans: *Coffee, Beer, Good Vibes | Work Hard & Be Nice | Damn Good Coffee*

[Website](#), [Facebook](#) page, [Twitter](#) page, [Instagram](#) page

SITUATION ANALYSIS

While a well-known coffee and beer establishment within the Hastings area, Art Bar could do more to bring in out-of-town business and expand its brand into the digital space. The shop does have a website and social media accounts, but it doesn't do much advertising besides word-of-mouth and through social media. There isn't a dedicated social media role, it's more of a group effort between Ms. Anders and whomever is on staff at the time. She does utilize her resources, though, by capturing Art Bar moments in real-time, as depicted in the images in this report. *All images were taken from the Art Bar Instagram page.*

With that being said, Ms. Anders and Art Bar have plenty of opportunities to run promotions and grow the brand by establishing best practices and other protocols. Additionally, the business can take further advantage of the existing swag, events, and ambiance.

What already sets this local shop apart from others is the brand of Art Bar itself. It's not an in-and-out cup of joe like one would grab at Starbucks or Scooters. Art Bar is a place to *stay for a while*. It's a local study spot for Hastings College students. It's a concert venue for local artists where attendees can enjoy a beer on tap. More than anything, it's a landmark in downtown Hastings for all patrons to enjoy.



Times have been tough in the COVID-19 era, especially for local shops like this one. In order to overcome these obstacles, as well as proliferate an already-solid brand, Art Bar needs to expand its marketing strategy beyond Instagram posts and word-of-mouth. It needs to become a pioneer in digital marketing.

OBJECTIVE

After reviewing Art Bar's day-to-day operations and online presence (website, Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook pages), it's clear that more can be done to bring in business in times of crisis. The purpose of this IMC plan is to generate a marketing strategy for ownership and management to implement; a marketing strategy that includes new online content, paid advertisements, promotions, a streamed concert series, and a branding boost that includes existing graphic lockups.

We want to do this because Art Bar has the chance to be a legendary brand, one that's looked upon as an example for other startup venues in small-town Nebraska. Ms. Anders started Art Bar after years of working for Starbucks with the intention of having an amazing brand that *is* local but *feels* global. We can't achieve that if we aren't willing to think outside the box and provide the best experience possible for customers. This goes double for a local business that needs every drop of revenue possible during a viral pandemic.

Challenge – Art Bar is looking to expand its brand recognition to boost sales despite quarantines and lockdowns.

Opportunity – take advantage of stay-at-home orders by incentivizing consumers to purchase from Art Bar and engage with online content, that which we can grow once the pandemic ceases.

Objectives – (1) To establish a new online presence for Art Bar by building a WordPress blog site. (2) To boost sales beyond the Hastings area by airing radio and TV ads on local Tri-City stations. (3) To host an inaugural concert series that will be livestreamed due to COVID-19 restrictions. (4) To promote existing Art Bar swag by implementing best practices and graphic templates into existing social media channels.

IMC STRATEGY

Audience

Key publics: There are multiple target audiences for this branding overhaul, because there are a variety of demographics that patronize Art Bar. Based on the information that Ms. Anders has provided me, the most consistent customers are Hastings College students, ages 18-24. The next most-consistent would be Hastings College staff and faculty, with a wide-age range of 28-70. For the purposes of simplicity, we'll chunk them into 28-42, 43-55, and 55+.

After that, it's local Hastings residents, mainly older millennials and younger generations. This goes for both regular business hours as well as events.



This does change over the summer, however, as most students are not on-campus, shifting the demographics to Hastings College staff and other Hastings locals.

Action steps: After engaging with our message, we want folks of each of these demographics to choose Art Bar to get their coffee/beer over other establishments in the area. Additionally, we want them to feel inclined to book events and purchase merchandise, increasing revenue.

Messaging

The key message that is being conveyed here is that Art Bar is **the place to be**, even when we can't physically be there. It will be the **place to be** once we can, again.

It's not just about the coffee, it's about the entire experience that is Art Bar. It's the calm atmosphere you enjoy while you write your history paper. It's your favorite t-shirt you wear while lounging around on Sunday afternoon. It's what starts your Monday with a hot pour-over and what concludes your week with a concert on Friday.

Tactics

This overhaul is about more than just a social media post. It's about flooding the market and crushing the competition as well. Other notable coffee shops in Hastings like Baristas and Blue Moon haven't nearly the presence as Art Bar does, and we intend to amplify that with this campaign.

PR: We're going to utilize generic messaging, unique selling propositions, as well as affective messaging strategies in order to sell the public further on Art Bar. The ads that we run as well as the merchandise and promotions that we'll sell won't say "we're better than the competition," but rather remind the consumer that Art Bar has a very distinct brand, *implying* that it's superior, boosting sales.

As far as social media goes, we'll be implementing more of a professional brand by carrying out a strategy that is calculated, rather than the occasional off-the-cuff Instagram post. Additionally, we'll start a TikTok account that will allow for a new method of engagement with Art Bar fans of all generations.

Advertising: Alluding back to the general messaging point from earlier, the plan is to run spot-advertisements on local TV and radio stations. They will highlight the products that is Art Bar – the coffee, the cool t-shirts, the way you feel when you're there. These ads will be read by Ms. Anders, her staff, and willing Art Bar patrons to make the experience feel more authentic. These ads will also promote the aforementioned concert series in an effort to boost awareness of the events.

EXECUTION

We're going to attack this "branding boost" from multiple fronts, starting with Ms. Anders'/Art Bar's social media presence. We'll also look at graphic design, advertising, and the concert series.

Social Media – we'll be putting together a social media plan and brand book that includes best practices, goals, and other materials. The team can create or enhance existing pages on Twitter, Facebook, and TikTok to push content onto multiple platforms that share the same branding. This is important because it's one thing to promote a store on social media – it's an entirely different matter to *be a brand*.

We'll implement the specific Art Bar typefaces and develop a brand guide that has proper hex codes and lockups to be used on all-things Art Bar. Consistency is key. People recognize the Starbucks logo/color scheme from a mile away, why can't that be Art Bar as well?

Additionally, it would be pertinent to bring in Hastings College students as Brand Ambassadors for Art Bar. They'd be incentivized with free and discounted Art Bar merchandise to promote the shop on their social media accounts. This could eventually grow into a paid position if successful. Each year, Hastings College hosts New Student Days (NSD) the weekend before classes start. We could utilize the ambassadors to encourage students at NSD to get their beverages from Art Bar when available.

Blog – While people are stuck at home, why not allow them to participate in the coffee shop talk? We will create a WordPress blog that emulates that of The Ministry of Magic's *Daily Prophet* from the Harry Potter series. This publication will be interactive, as it will include news and updates, increasing brand awareness of the coffee shop. Plus, it will be a form of dynamic advertising that uses customer participation to market the coffee shop. Plus, it's something that can be continued once the Pandemic winds down.



Graphic Design – Art Bar is known for its swag, and now is a great time to capitalize on it. We are going to run a t-shirt promotion through the end of the year that will hopefully boost sales and profits heading into 2021. The idea is to get people to get as many shirts as possible, so we'll first run a "buy-one, get one 50-percent off" in October. In November, we'll run a "buy-two, get one 50-percent off." And in December, we'll run a "buy two, get one free" to really encourage folks to stuff those stockings with Art Bar tees.

Concert Series – Over the past few years, Art Bar has become a nice small-concert venue for Hastings. That's why we are going to set up a Twitch account and schedule five local artists and two non-local artists to stream a concert from Art Bar to viewers at home (Alyssa has two recurring out-of-town acts that know her fondly, [Rascal Martinez](#) and [SHOCKEY](#)).

The goal is to get as many folks as possible viewing the stream, so it will be free to viewers for the local artists. As for the out-of-towners, there will be a paywall for the stream (price TBD).



But, in order to not lose out on the revenue from the free viewings, there will be a Patreon link within the Twitch streams that will encourage viewers to donate to both the artists playing as well as Art Bar itself.

Those that donate 25 dollars will be entered into a raffle to win free coffee for a month. Those that donate 50 dollars will be entered into a raffle for free coffee for a month and two free shirts. Finally, those that donate over 100 dollars will be entered to win free coffee for a year and two free shirts.

With this IMC plan in place, Ms. Anders and the team are hopeful that we can improve on the already-strong brand that is Art Bar. We'll be able to turn this small-town coffee shop into a powerhouse of PR, a concert venue that is immune to viruses, and a t-shirt factory that has beer on tap.