

2019 WINE WALK IMPACT

The Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership hosted its fourth annual wine walk event on June 21, 2019. 398 individuals purchased admission to the event choosing from three ticket options: Sweet, Dry, or Designated Driver. Each ticket allowed them to choose ten samples out of 15 total tasting options at the individual participating business locations. As a follow-up to the event, 71 attendees provided additional data and feedback on their activities over the course of the evening.

VISITOR PROFILE

In total, 400 individuals purchased tickets to the event, with a waiting list of 50 individuals, although all ticketed persons attended. The event attracted visitors from a large geographic area – 80 percent were from Fond du Lac or surrounding towns (a greater share than previous years), 10 percent are from the surrounding trade area, and 10 percent were visitors to the community. Visitor origins included individuals from the Madison, Milwaukee and Fox Valley markets, with the greatest traffic from Milwaukee suburbs.

Visitors reported a positive experience at the event, with 100 percent likely or certain to participate in the future. As with prior years, Facebook and word of mouth drove the bulk of attendance, although several indicated that they specifically seek out the event as part of an annual tradition. The average visitor was 43 years of age, although there were roughly equal numbers of participants among each 10-year age group from 20 through 65. Based on purchase data, one-fifth of tickets were purchased by groups (although many of the individuals likely also attended together), and 87% of attendees were female.

The wine walk introduced many customers to new businesses. Based on survey data, wine walk participants visited an average of 4 new businesses each (all attendees visited at least one new business). As an additional measure of downtown exposure, attendees reported an average of 5,000 steps over the course of the evening. Additionally, tabs collected at individual businesses indicated that most businesses saw nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ of all attendees, with the average business collecting 281 tabs over the course of the evening.

BUSINESS PROFILE

In total, 15 businesses offered wine to taste as part of the event. As a follow up to the event, 8 businesses provided data and feedback on their experience during the evening.

Businesses overall were pleased with the impact of the event, with all respondents likely to certain to participate in the future. Eighty-eight percent of respondents indicated additional foot traffic during the event, and two-thirds indicated an increase in sales as a result of the event (average of 40% among those seeing a boost). Note that several participating businesses indicated that they are not typically open these hours, so all customer traffic represented an increase.

SPENDING

Based on a survey of 71 attendees, 85 percent of participants spent money downtown in addition to the price of admission to the event (down slightly from 2018). This included the 85 percent dining downtown during the event (up by 10% from last year) as well as other purchases made during the walk. Half of those eating dinner did so following the event, while one quarter ate during the course of the event and the remainder before. Of those that made purchases in beyond the event ticket, the average participant spent \$51 (increase of 10%). The average spending per attendee (including those who purchased nothing) was \$43. There was no difference in spending by residential location, although out of town visitors were slightly more likely to eat dinner downtown during the evening, and individuals between the age of 30 and 50 spent one third more as much over the course of the evening as participants under 30 or over age 50. The level of spending was consistent with prior years.

IMPACT

Total spending as part of the event included \$27,200 in direct spending downtown.