



The Smart Circle's Referral Marketing Program Drives Sales and Increases Revenue for North Harbor Club Restaurant & Bar

SITUATION

The North Harbor Club Restaurant & Bar is located in Davidson, North Carolina at Davidson Landing (from I-77, exit 30). The restaurant's world class dining, which is complemented by the waterfront ambience of Lake Norman is available to patrons for lunch, dinner and Sunday brunch. The North Harbor Club's fine cuisine, which uses fresh ingredients and the perfect touch of the facility's executive chef, has been "Best Beckoning Lunch Spot" by the *Charlotte Observer*, "Best Waterfront Dining" by *Charlotte the City Magazine* and was featured in the patio dining section of *Charlotte Taste Flavor Bytes*.

CHALLENGE

Since it's created in February 2003, the restaurant has experienced a steady stream of traffic, including approximately 13,500 patrons per month. Despite this consistent customer base, Ron Blazek, general manager of North Harbor Club Restaurant & Bar needed a way to build stronger off-season business during the winter. Prior to teaming up with The Smart Circle (<http://www.smartcircleinternational.com/>), the restaurant utilized various marketing methods such as newsletters and e-mails and advertised in local print publications, however, none of these efforts created the direct contact to local customers, revenue or targeted brand awareness they desired.

STRATEGY

North Harbor Club partnered with The Smart Circle, the worldwide leader in person-to-person advertising, in an effort to enhance brand loyalty and significantly increase restaurant traffic during off-peak seasons. The Smart Circle was in charge of developing a strategic marketing plan that would accomplish these goals and position North Harbor Club as one of the premier dining locales in the market.

- ◆ North Harbor Club worked closely with The Smart Circle to create the parameters of the special consumer offers
- ◆ The Smart Circle was called upon to serve as a strategic sounding board during the review and approval processes of the marketing campaign
- ◆ Professional collateral materials were developed and produced by The Smart Circle to correlate with the offer to be provided by North Harbor Club Restaurant & Bar
- ◆ The Smart Circle conducted a training session with staff and in-market sales team in preparation for the launch of the campaign
- ◆ Within one month, sales teams began traveling to meet face-to-face with prospective and current customers to market the special North Harbor offers

RESULTS

After the campaign was introduced to the market, North Harbor Club Restaurant & Bar experienced a 14 percent increase in off-season sales alone. The facility also saw Smart Circle Cards being redeemed at the restaurant the same day the promotion was introduced to the community.

“Within weeks we had guests calling the restaurant asking when the next edition of the cards was going on sale!”

-- Ron Blazek, general manager North Harbor Club Restaurant & Bar