

your  
**local store**  
marketing  
guide



*Strengthening brand awareness through strong community relationships.*

# Table of Contents

<b>i</b>	<b>SECTION I – INTRODUCTION</b>	
	How to use this Local Store Marketing Guide	2
<b>6</b>	<b>SECTION II – LOCAL STORE MARKETING</b>	
	About Local Store Marketing (LSM)	3
	Six steps to LSM planning	4
	Customer profiles	5
	Four types of C-store formats	6
<b>f</b>	<b>SECTION III – CREATING A LOCAL STORE MARKETING PLAN</b>	
	Creating a LSM plan	7
	Putting a plan together	8
	Promoting it	10
<b>💡</b>	<b>SECTION IV – LOCAL STORE MARKETING IDEAS</b>	
	Community business cross promotions	11
	Event marketing / store events	13
	Event checklist	16
	Stadium / sports sponsorships	17
	Charitable / community promotions	18
<b>📅</b>	<b>SECTION V – MONTHLY MARKETING &amp; SALES PROMOTION IDEAS</b>	
	Calendar of holidays and important events	21
<b>📝</b>	<b>SECTION VI – NEXT STEPS</b>	
	Measurement and tracking	25
	CHS support	25
	Notes	26



## Local Store Marketing Introduction

As a Cenex® Marketer, you have a comprehensive, local store marketing system designed to help you boost store traffic, increase sales and improve customer loyalty, all while capitalizing on the power of the Cenex brand.

From this Local Store Marketing Guide, to flexible templates at Cenex Ad Builder and the 50/50 Cenex Ad Share funding program, it's never been easier to create cost-effective, timely campaigns and sales promotions for your store.



### **How to use this Local Store Marketing Guide**

This Local Store Marketing Guide includes important information and tools to help you develop your own local store marketing programs that will help drive traffic and increase sales. It also shares local store marketing strategies, tips and ideas along with examples of how they can impact your business. Best of all, many are quick and simple to implement, so they fit your hectic schedule.

***Marketing is made up of many things that all work together and support each other.***

## 6 Local Store Marketing

### About Local Store Marketing (LSM)

Local store marketing is grassroots marketing in your own neighborhood, targeted to your community. It is about getting out and getting to know the community around your store. You can strengthen your store name and the Cenex® brand through awareness-building and educational efforts that help you make friends and build relationships, especially within a one- to five-mile radius of your business.

LSM is an extension of “traditional marketing.” Contrary to popular belief, it’s not just about giving something away or posting a sign that targets a few people with a select product. LSM means getting in tune with your customers and your community — it’s about serving your community while thanking your loyal customers.

This Guide will help get you thinking of other ways to give back to the community in which your business resides. In some instances, a product offer or discount is necessary; however, with the right tools and the right methods you will see a return on your investment.

### Why do I need Local Store Marketing?

LSM is one of the most cost-effective and proven tools to achieve long-term customer loyalty in your community. Unlike the temporary sales spikes that advertising and couponing can bring, LSM helps create a loyal customer base that drives long-term, ongoing sales. The best part of LSM is your return on investment; it can drive sales and repeat traffic, while creating the kind of loyalty and brand awareness that can reduce your need for other forms of advertising expenditures.

Local store marketing is known to:

- Build brand awareness and strengthen your store’s image within the community
- Increase customer loyalty, strengthening relationships with regular customers and increasing the frequency of their visits
- Draw new customers into your store, boosting traffic counts
- Develop involvement and recognition within the local community

Keep in mind:

- Every community is unique, as are its people
- Well-executed LSM programs will return significantly increased profits for a relatively small expense
- In today’s business environment, LSM can be more effective and targeted than television, radio and print
- LSM requires constant creativity and continued commitment
- LSM makes your store stand out as unique (if you do something different than everyone else, people will remember you)

**The consumer expectation is:**

***Give me what I want,  
how I want it, when  
I want it, at a fair  
price, and make me  
feel special, or I’ll  
buy from someone  
who will.***

## Know your market and customers

Figuring out which people have the strongest likelihood of becoming and remaining your customer (by identifying common characteristics within the group) will help you better define your strategy. Knowing your customer base and who you are trying to target will help you create an effective marketing plan.

Defining your target market before developing your marketing plan will ensure your marketing dollars are best spent. Before you invest any time or money in a promotion, ask yourself:

1. Who are the potential customers? What are their ages and income levels and when do they shop? Why would they shop at your location versus your competitors'?
2. How many competitors are there in your market? What are their strengths and weaknesses?
3. What are your desired outcomes of the promotion? Increase traffic? Increased sales? Push through a specific product?
4. If your goal is product based, what are your competitors' products priced at?

## Six Steps to LSM Planning

### 1. Determine objectives

Ask yourself; what do you want to do? Familiarize yourself with your community (where is the nearest competitor, what is your target customer, what are your competitors' strengths / weaknesses). Align your objectives with your customer base and type of store.

### 2. Establish a strategy

Every great promotion has a plan of how all the details will come together and be successful. Use the Marketing Planning Guide to help map out your LSM ideas to align with the nationwide Cenex® objectives.

### 3. Develop supporting materials

Plan ahead and allow enough time to order and receive marketing materials. Don't forget to use Cenex Ad Builder to create a wide range of advertising materials and in-store signage. Check out Cenex Shop for promotional materials and giveaways!

### 4. Implement the strategy

Now is the time to manage all the details and follow through to ensure your promotion is successful. Educate your entire team so everyone is involved and excited; this is what the customer sees — if your staff is fired up about the promotion, your customers will be, too.

### 5. Track and evaluate

How do you know if your promotion was effective? Consistent tracking from promotion to promotion will help identify which LSM strategies are most effective. Whenever possible, remember to solicit feedback from your customers and staff about the promotion.

### 6. Log results

Did it work and if not, why? It's important to know what works and doesn't work. Results from past promotions provide valuable information that will help you plan future promotions.

## 6 Local Store Marketing

Below are five key customer groups of convenience stores; which group is your primary customer base? If you are going outside your main customer base to target new customers, what group are you targeting?

### Convenience store customer profiles

Your promotions should match not only the type of customer you are trying to reach, but also the format of your location. Each store format attracts a different type of customer and will have a big impact on the type of LSM you choose to participate in — for instance, it may not be worth the effort to direct people to a “Retail Store” location by sending out coupons for a late night pizza special.

Marketing, especially LSM, is part science, part research and part intuition. Once you understand your local market and the customers that live in it, you will understand what their purchasing behavior is like and what motivates them to change that behavior.

### The market is always changing

When you take the time to research and understand your community, you will realize that the market is always changing. A promotion that you ran six months ago may not be as effective today. That’s why measuring and tracking your marketing efforts is a vital step in the marketing process. When you see that the effectiveness of a campaign is fading, you may need to dial it up a notch. Be sure to listen to your

customers and employees — did something change in the market that is out of your control?

It could be as simple as the timing of the promotion. If you’re targeting school kids and parents, a promotion could have very different results while school is in session versus when school is out for the summer. Keep your finger on the pulse of your neighborhood and community so you can stay on top of some of the predictable (and uncontrollable) market changes. Equally as important, you need to keep analyzing the type of customer you are targeting and adjusting your LSM efforts to fit your target audience. Just because a promotion works for one group doesn’t mean that it will be a winner with a different target.

### Indulger

- Not impressed by traditional c-stores, “They’re full of irrelevant products, like silk roses”
- Tend to purchase fewer items when they shop
- On-the-go and reward themselves for their chores
- Traditionally not loyal to a single c-store
- Self-indulgent, buy more candy, specialty coffee
- Trendy and enjoy gourmet
- Less likely to have children
- More urban or suburban
- Age Range 30-50

### Speedster

- Purchase items from various c-stores less often and buy less when they shop
- Want to spend as little time as possible in c-stores
- Often pays at the pump, without visiting the store
- Buy newspapers and soft-drinks / water more often
- Traditionally not loyal to a single c-store
- See themselves as busy workers
- More urban
- Skews to younger adults (20-35)

### Supplementer

- Frequents the same few c-stores often and purchases many items
- Visits between trips to the grocery store for staples such as milk, bread, etc.
- Plans c-store visits, not indulgent
- Prefers to frequent American-owned companies
- Prefers drive through, when available
- More suburban, rural
- Skews slightly older (35-45), many have children

### Lifestyler

- Frequent the same couple c-stores more often and regularly purchase multiple items
- Buy more food items (donuts, sandwiches, chips, etc.) as meals
- May visit the store during a break from work
- Tend to be smokers and coffee drinkers
- Indulgent and impulsive buyers
- C-stores are more a central part of lifestyle
- Small town, suburban
- Attracted to “Americana”

### Long Distance Driver

- Frequent highway / freeway stations with easy on / off access
- Attracted to well-known fuel brands
- Look for fast food chains, meals on the go
- Re-fuels with gas / diesel, snacks and beverages
- Uses the store for restroom stops
- Drivers look for rest stop amenities and ample parking for the rig
- Room to stretch and pet-friendly areas a plus
- Attracted to “Americana”
- Truck Drivers, Road-trippers
- More brand loyal than location-loyal, unless then drive a regular route

## Four types of C-store formats:

### Neighborhood Store

- The neighborhood store is located in the heart of the community, with most customers living within a few blocks of the store.
- Customers make frequent visits between trips to the grocery store; they consider their neighborhood c-store an important source and an integral part of the community.

### Commuter Store

- The commuter store is located on heavily traveled streets or intersections.
- Customers frequent this store, passing on their way to and from work, school, errands, etc.
- Easy in / out access is important.

### Highway Store

- The highway store is located just off the interstate or busy highway.
- Customers frequent this store for rest-stops and to re-fuel with gas / diesel and food as they pass by or on their way out of town.

### Retail Store

- The retail store is located within or nearby popular shopping districts.
- Customers frequent these stores as part of their shopping and errands.
- The lunch menu is traditionally the highest volume time of day.



**Remember: Pay attention to what your customers and employees are telling you.**



## Creating a Local Store Marketing Plan

Marketing plans are very similar to a road map; imagine going on vacation to a new city and trying to find your way around without GPS or a map. You will find some of the places you would like to see but will probably get lost along the way, spend way too much time wandering around and get really frustrated. Your marketing plan is basically your road map to implementing a marketing idea and measuring its success. Without a plan in place, you risk wasting time and money, two of the most precious resources when operating a business.

By introducing LSM tactics one at a time, you can gauge each one's effectiveness. Remember, LSM is a long-term strategy and should be treated as such. Tracking and measuring is important; in some instances, you might not see instant results, but the community relations and sustained sales you generate will make it all worthwhile.

**Important tip: Your marketing plan is never finished. Keep revising and updating it because the market is always changing.**



### Consistency is everything

CHS has a wide variety of corporate initiatives to help build the Cenex® brand from a national perspective. Cenex brand and product campaigns create brand awareness and enhance consumer perception for the entire Cenex store network. They also help set a foundation for your local store marketing initiatives and targeted marketing tactics.

It's important to leverage the corporate marketing initiatives whenever possible — it's far easier to work in conjunction with the national marketing plan and tailor some strategies to speak direct to your community versus investing in creating an entire campaign yourself. For instance, CHS promotes gift cards during the holiday

season because they are a great option for everyone on your customers' shopping lists. Putting up gift card signage and pump toppers doesn't necessarily mean the gift cards are going to sell themselves. In conjunction with the corporate campaign, why not implement a variety of LSM initiatives to complement the overall gift card effort and drive additional sales at your locations? One easy option would be to provide a drop-off site for a local toy drive for children in need; when people stop in your store to drop off a toy, they will see the gift card signage on display — and your cashiers can use suggestive selling to encourage them to purchase some gift cards. (It's important to ask for the sale!) For more LSM ideas, check out pages 11-20.

LSM is your time to think outside the box to help benefit your local community and help drive additional sales. When you partner with a bigger initiative that takes little or no effort by your employees (such as being a drop-off site), you've just increased your store traffic by doing virtually nothing — now capitalize on that traffic and dial it up another notch!



*It's important to leverage the corporate marketing initiatives whenever possible — it's far easier to work in conjunction with the national marketing plan and tailor some strategies to speak direct to your community versus investing in creating an entire campaign yourself.*



## Putting a plan together

Make sure your plan has a defined purpose and states your overall objective, target and tactics. Once you've determined that a specific LSM idea is reasonable, it's time to zone in on how this concept is going to be accomplished.

The **objective** refers to what you wish to accomplish and how your business will benefit. The objective could be to increase sales, increase visibility, increase profits, etc. Be sure to set a clear, specific objective that is measurable.

Next is the **target** audience. Who, in particular, do you want to hit with your promotion? Defining your target market helps you define your overall strategy.

Finally, determine your **tactics**. This is where your price points and promotional items come into play. Brainstorm ideas about what you could offer your target audience, and be sure to consider the "value" expected by that type of customer.

You should be able to achieve your desired results as long as you follow your marketing plan and make sure your employees are aware of the plan. The best way to achieve your forecast is to make it happen; the key is to "push" the plan on your target through promotional items, flyers, suggestive selling, etc.

## Putting a plan together (an example)

### Objective

The overall objective is to increase store traffic Monday - Friday during the mid-day throughout the month of December.

### Target

We are going to target supplementers and soccer moms (customer types) by becoming a drop-off site for Toys for Tots. Several mid-day promotional offers will be offered for anyone who drops off a toy; a free 16 oz. regular coffee plus 1/2 off a bakery item or \$1.00 off a roller grill item (no coupon necessary).

### Tactics

Due to the store location being in a retail neighborhood, this is a prime opportunity to reach middle-aged women who are running errands and wanting to do something good for their community and young children.

We're going to push the message via radio and in-store signage (posters and pump toppers), a press release has been sent to the local paper as well.

Partnered with local coffee vendor to donate regular roast coffee for the promotion.

Contact Toys for Tots to be added to the master "drop-off list" that is published in a wide variety of locations for additional exposure.

## Creating a Local Store Marketing Plan

### Spreading the word

Once your LSM strategy is in place and you are well into your marketing plan, what next? You know what you want to accomplish and how you are hoping to reach those goals, so now it's time to plan the specifics on communicating the message to your target.

For best results, use a variety of different vehicles to ensure your target audience receives your message at key times. In the holiday toy drive example outlined on the previous page, the promotion is announced through radio spots, in-store signage, Toys for Tots website and a press release. This is a good mix of both audio (radio) and written vehicles that will help reach the target market from multiple angles.

Listed to the right are four key avenues for local store marketing.



### Advertising

This is the mass media method of marketing communications and provides exposure to the largest audience at the lowest cost per impression. Mass advertising has a wide reach, targeting thousands of people. Advertising costs vary depending on the mediums used (print, outdoor, television, radio and even online advertising) and their reach, as well as how often or long your message appears (frequency).

### Direct marketing

Direct marketing allows you to reach out to targeted consumers through mailings (direct mail), coupons and online marketing. When executed correctly, direct marketing can be extremely effective. It allows for a targeted marketing approach to specific consumers to create valuable lasting relationships.

### Public relations (PR)

Public relations is promoting goodwill between a company and the public. An effective public relations program consists of regular and consistent contact with the editorial community. Get to know your local newspaper representatives; regular contact with the editors keeps them informed about your business, products, services and events — keeping your business in the news and your brand top-of-mind with customers.



### Sales promotion

Sales promotion refers to purchase incentives that you provide to your customers, ranging from offering free goods or services, coupons and vouchers, gifts and prizes, discounts, samples, financial incentives, charitable promotions and any other value-add over and above your standard product or services. Sales promotions are generally short-lived and are intended to provide consumers with that last “push” to buy.

Regardless of the size of your business, you should continually look at ways to create additional value for your customers. Customers appreciate and will often pay premium prices for real value and service.

## Promoting it!

No matter what event you choose, make sure to spread the word in your community.

### Public relations:

Community interest stories are ideal for local media — like newspaper and radio stations — who will likely help you promote your event at no cost.

- Assemble a contact list of local editors and writers. Contact them directly to tell them about your promotion and how it benefits the community.
- Submit a pre-event / promotion press release.
- Submit a post-event / promotion release — along with a photo from your event, results of the promotion, interesting anecdotes about your experience, etc. Make sure to thank the community for helping make your project a success!

### Advertising:

Take PR initiatives to the next level with paid advertising. Spread the word with print, direct mail and radio advertising.

*Regardless of the size of your business, you should continually look at ways to create additional value for your customers.*

### Benefiting organizations:

Working closely with the organization you're supporting helps ensure a smooth promotion and opens up more channels for promotion of your event. Ask the organization what opportunities exist to communicate to their existing customers — they might be willing to promote your campaign through their newsletter, website, email campaigns, retail signage, etc.

### Point-of-purchase:

Educate customers and encourage them to get involved, too. Pump toppers and signage are great starters. Employees talking with customers and using suggestive selling can be the most effective way to get customers involved.



### Your company communications:

Don't forget to put your own communications to use. Update your media with pertinent information on your campaign.

- Receipt tapes
- Message or reader board
- Website
- Newsletter
- Email / text marketing
- Sales flyers / circulars

*Visit Cenex® Ad Builder for advertising, communication and point-of-purchase templates.*

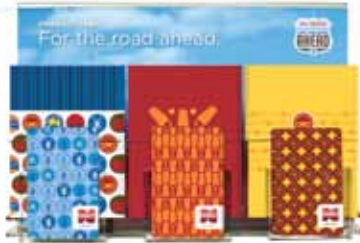


## Lightbulb Local Store Marketing Ideas

LSM is about knowing your community and learning what will work in your area. This section of the Guide gives you some thought-starters and a few ideas to think about when you reach the point in the planning process of brainstorming your local promotions.

### Community business cross promotions

One effective way to execute successful local store marketing is by creating community partners. Partners may include other businesses or non-profit organizations that interact with potential customers in your area. You can reference the Yellow Pages, your local Chamber of Commerce, local newspapers or even the building department to gather this information.



When choosing partners that will fit with your local store marketing plan, consider the type of products or services they offer. Determine what kind of potential customers frequent those places of business — focus on partners whose customers and employees you want to make your own.

Benefits of partnering with local businesses:

- Demonstrates your commitment to your community and other local businesses
- Creates a win-win sales opportunity for you and your partners
- Usually can be established at little or no cost to you
- Offers a unique way to reach new customers

See the chart on the following page for some ideas!



***One effective way to execute successful local store marketing is by creating community partners. Partners may include other businesses or non-profit organizations that interact with potential customers in your area.***

## Community Business Cross Promotions Ideas

### 1. Cenex Gift Card giveaway

You approach local businesses and provide them with the opportunity to purchase Cenex® Gift Cards at a discount, contact CHS Payment Solutions at 800-852-5301 for discount information. Your new partner gives the gift cards to their customers, who will then redeem the card at your store.

**Note: The average customer who redeems a gift card spends 20% more than the value of the gift card.**

Possible partners:

- Real estate agents and mortgage lenders often provide clients with a gift card after closing. Make your store the preferred fueling and convenience stop for new residents of your community by encouraging a visit as soon as they move in! Create your own custom “welcome to the neighborhood” letter to accompany the gift card. You can re-purpose a direct mail piece at Cenex Ad Builder and provide these along with the gift cards.
- Car dealerships frequently run promotions that provide customers who test drive or purchase a new vehicle with an incentive.

- By partnering with a local dealership you will boost your store traffic and gain another chance to earn a loyal customer. This may be an incentive that is advertised and offered for a weekend, or you may want to establish a long-standing partnership.
- Once you have determined who your desired partner is — reach out!
- Introduce yourself and the Cenex® brand.
- Have a sales plan for your call — describe the details of your proposal and explain how the partnership will benefit them.

### 2. Grocery receipt coupons

You present a coupon offer that will print on the back of the receipt tape from your local grocery store. This is a highly visible, repetitive and cost-effective form of print advertising. Contact your store of choice to find out who their receipt tape advertising vendor is. Contact CHS Refined Fuels Marketing for approved artwork.



### 3. Advertise in your local tourism or visitors guide

You reach visitors to your area through a trusted source by presenting a coupon offer in a local guide book. Tourism and Visitors Bureaus are already working hard to encourage tourism to their region. Advertising this way provides you with a first line opportunity to reach visitors. Be sure to use the approved artwork provided at Cenex Ad Builder.

### 4. Other ideas

- Become a member of your local Chamber of Commerce to help support your local business economy. A Chamber of Commerce membership demonstrates a sense of pride in your community, and members often benefit from association with local visitors and tourism bureaus.
- To enhance customer confidence in your business, apply for accreditation through your state's Better Business Bureau at [www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org).
- Advertise with Welcome Wagon — [www.welcomewagon.com](http://www.welcomewagon.com) — to welcome new homeowners to your community.



## Local Store Marketing Ideas

### Event marketing / store events

Hosting an event at your store is a fun and exciting way to attract new customers or reward your existing customers. By offering a special event for your customers or a specific segment of your customer base, you increase excitement and loyalty for your store. The customer group you focus on will be specific to your market. For example, you may have a large nearby business that employs several of your customers, or you may choose to recognize civil servants in your community such as firefighters or police officers.

Regardless of the details of your event, they should be scheduled on days that are typically less busy for your store. Not only does this help boost your sales, but it also minimizes disruption to your normally hectic days and times.

Benefits of hosting a store event:

- Shows appreciation for your customer
- Provides a chance to gain additional traffic in your store during the event
- Increases opportunities for return visits through bounce-back coupons or loyalty punch cards

**How it works:** You honor customers by hosting an event with a special offer, giveaway, drawing or activity.



***Events can be as simple or detailed as you choose. But whatever size event you decide on, there are key items that should always be considered.***

### Getting started:

- Identify your target audience — Make it a large event for the entire community or focus on a specific customer group such as:
  - Employees of a specific employer (see Customer appreciation day section for ideas)
  - Police / firefighters
  - Local sports teams
  - Senior citizens
  - Students

- Determine the discount package or special offering. Excite your customers with the possibility of winning prizes:
  - Drawing to win free gas for a year
  - Drawing to win \$5, \$10, or \$20 Cenex® Gift Cards
  - Free cup of coffee or fountain drink
  - Free Cenex travel mug with the purchase of a beverage
  - Free hot dog with purchase of a beverage
  - Free car wash with gas purchase
  - Samples of hot dogs, pizza or other food item
  - Free balloons, coloring books or frisbees for all kids



### Get the word out:

- Generate excitement for your event by sending a press release to your area newspapers.
- Let your staff in on the upcoming events and prizes and encourage them to promote the event to customers. Word-of-mouth is an effective means of advertising.
- Work with your newspapers to develop an effective print ad schedule. Outline the dates and times of your events as well as your special offers and coupons.
- Place radio advertising with local stations. Be sure to include your store specials to draw more people into the store.
- Consider scheduling a live radio remote for the day of your event! If your event spans multiple days, schedule the live remote for your most exciting activity.
- Consider hiring a local club such as Boy / Girl Scouts, 4H, youth groups or sports teams to distribute flyers. Not only are you supporting your community, but you are also getting the message in the hands of your customers.
- Send a direct mail invitation to residents in the area. Creating a customized direct mail or sales flyer at Cenex® Ad Builder is easy. Ad Builder even takes care of the mailing! Your direct mail should include a coupon, special offer or even a Cenex Gift Card.



**Remember: The average customer who redeems a gift card spends 20% more than the value of the gift card.**

- Consider sending a personal invitation to your city officials (mayor, police, fire department, etc.). A positive impression of your store will help secure their future business, and customers will take notice of respected community officials shopping at your store.
- If you have a website, don't forget to build excitement there, too.

### Prepare your staff and store:

- Order plenty of bounce-back coupons and loyalty punch cards to hand out on the day of your event.
- Order matching uniforms to make sure your employees look their best.
- Get your store in tip-top shape by spending extra time picking up trash, cleaning the restrooms and stocking shelves.
- Dress up your store with Cenex® pennants and balloons.
- Be sure your staff is ready to answer questions and provide top-notch customer service — for new customers, this is your chance to make the first impression that will keep them coming back time and time again.





### Event Marketing / Store Events Ideas

#### 1. Grand opening, grand re-opening or remodel

— A brand new or newly refreshed store brings exciting opportunities! When planned and executed correctly, this type of event can attract the interest of new customers and excite current customers. Determine the size of your event, keeping in mind that the more involved your event is, the more customers you are likely to attract. Your event can be one day or extended to a week-long gala. If you choose to host your event over several days, you will want to plan activities for each day. Use one or all of the ideas noted below to set your daily schedule. The sky is the limit!

**2. Full service day** — Delight customers with first-rate Cenex® treatment and the helpful attitude we are known for.

Some ideas:

- Provide staff during the event to pump gas and wash windshields for customers
- Provide full service customers with an in-store coupon to encourage them to stop inside
- Give customers a coupon that is good for a future date, encouraging them to return for savings
- Bring full service customers a complimentary soda, coffee or popcorn



**3. Customer appreciation day** — Show your appreciation by recognizing a specific customer group. This can be done several times per year, with a different target each time. d

- Offer an in-store or at-the-pump special for members of a targeted customer group
- Offer a giveaway item or grand-prize drawing to that customer group
- Give customers bounce-back coupons and loyalty punch cards to increase the likelihood of a return visit

Consider these groups:

- School employees
- Police / firefighters
- Big box retailer employees
- Local sports teams
- Health care professionals
- Senior citizens
- Large local employers
- Students

**4. Double punch day** — Offer double punches on your fountain or coffee club loyalty cards.

- This can be done monthly, weekly, or even during a certain time of the day to increase traffic when your store is usually slow

**5. Car wash event** — Partner with a local non-profit group to give complimentary or low-cost car washes in your parking lot.

- A great way to show support for your local organizations while providing them with an opportunity to do some fundraising
- Offer in-store coupons to encourage patrons to stop inside



## Event Marketing / Store Events Ideas

**6. Cenex® Credit Card drive** — Increase your Cenex Credit Cardholder base and reduce your processing costs with a credit card drive. This benefits your customers and your business and can be done on its own or as part of a larger event.

- Set up a table (with tablecloth) and a staff member to educate customers on the benefits of Cenex Credit Cards.
- Have plenty of applications on hand for customers who want to fill out applications on the spot.
- Consider offering an incentive for customers who complete their applications that day and display the incentive gift at the table to attract interest. Consider a \$10 Cenex Gift Card, Cenex branded prize or a free soda or coffee.
- Take advantage of corporate resources to build your cardholder base. CHS offers new cardholders a 15 cents-per-gallon discount on their first 100 gallons of gas or fuel. To schedule an additional discount during your event (funded by your store), call 800-852-5301 at least two weeks prior to your event.
- Consider rewarding your staff by setting a goal for the number of applications garnered by each individual or the entire team.

**7. Kids' coloring contest** — Bring excitement through the door by holding a coloring contest for kids in your community. Organizing a coloring contest is simple and inexpensive. Kids of all ages will enjoy participating. By handing out the coloring pages to customers, you increase the opportunity for another sale when they come back to turn it in.

- Download FREE seasonal themed Cenex coloring pages from the CHS Portal (Retail / Marketing Community). You can print as many as you need. Feel free to add your store logo and a space for contestants to write their contact information. Include the deadline on the page as well.
- You can choose to have prizes for a few of the top entries — or simply offer a small participation prize for each entry that is turned in. This could be something as simple as a sticker or a small treat.
- If you decide to judge the entries, set the contest age categories and determine who will judge the entries. You will need to choose some age-appropriate prizes for winners and set a contest deadline. Don't forget to post the winners.
- Don't be shy about handing out your coloring pages! The more you hand out, the more chances you have for a return visit. You can make your coloring contest as simple or as complex as you like, but most importantly, have fun.

## Event Checklist:

### 4 weeks out

- Identify your target audience
- Determine your discount package or offering and order any necessary items for giveaways
- Order bounce-back coupons and loyalty punch cards
- Order employee uniforms
- Order Cenex pennants and balloons
- Order pump toppers and other signage
- Schedule your advertising:
  - Print
  - Web
  - Press releases
  - Direct mail
  - Radio (ads or live remote)

### 3 weeks out

- Continue to build awareness through print and radio advertising and by posting in-store signage promoting your event
- Contact CHS to schedule a new cardholder discount

### 1 week out

- Send another press release to increase excitement

### 1 day prior

- Decorate your store with pennants and balloons
- Display Cenex® Credit Card applications to help build your cardholder base
- Get your store in tip-top shape
- Prepare your staff with proper knowledge to answer questions and provide top-notch customer service

## 💡 Local Store Marketing Ideas

### Stadium / sports sponsorships

Sponsoring a local sports team or venue is a great way to do something good for the community and get your name out there. A local sponsorship is an excellent strategy to increase your exposure and generate sales as well as stretch your advertising dollars. Most sports teams, especially the smaller local teams, will have a variety of sponsorship packages that should fit within your budget. Always choose sponsorships that are relevant to the Cenex® brand and your business so you will appeal to your target market. (Try not to choose sponsorships that only interest you or a particular employee.)

*To ensure consistent use of the Cenex logo, you must approve all materials where the Cenex logo or information about the Cenex brand will appear. Refer to the Cenex Logo Standard Guide on the CHS Customer Extranet ([www.chsinc.com](http://www.chsinc.com)), to assure that the Cenex logo is used correctly.*

**How it works:** By donating time / product / money to support a local sporting team or community event, you will gain brand exposure and your business will benefit by being associated with a goodwill action.

Benefits of sponsoring a local team:

- Gives back to the community
- Reminds consumers about the benefits of frequenting locally-owned businesses
- Provides team-building opportunities



**Getting started:** In the majority of sponsorship situations, you will be contacted by the local teams. However, if you are looking to be proactive, reach out to local youth sporting teams to see if they could use a sponsor. It's always good to understand their vision and sponsorship levels before agreeing to any terms.

Some questions to ask include:

- Where will my logo or brand / business name appear?
- How (and how often) will my logo, brand or business name appear?
- Is it an exclusive sponsorship or is it shared with other businesses? Who are the businesses that will be sharing the sponsorship and are they compatible with my business?
- What additional benefits will I receive for my sponsorship? (For example, inclusion of an ad in their program, logo on team t-shirts, etc.)

**Tracking results:** Tracking of sponsorship tactics is often difficult due to the wide audience that may be reached. Some ways to track your sponsorship results include:

- Measuring the media exposure from the sponsorship (i.e., mention of the event and your sponsorship in the local newspaper, on the radio station, etc.)
- Measuring the exposure of your brand or business in other mediums (i.e., programs, clothing, signage, etc.)
- Counting new customers that have come from your sponsorship involvement (i.e., asking customers where did they hear about you)
- Tracking any coupons that were specifically handed out during a home game or to parents of the players

**Other ideas:** If you cannot commit to a whole season sponsorship, there are several ways to work with local sporting teams / venues for a single or short-term sponsorship. The next page features some ideas to get you started — speak with your local team's representatives to see what is available in your area.



## Ideas:

### 1. Couponing on admission tickets

- Reach out to your local sporting teams and venues to inquire about advertising on the back of the admission tickets
- Contact CHS Refined Fuels Marketing to develop artwork on your behalf

### 2. Venue signage

- Reach out to your local sporting venues to see if they have any open spots to place vendor signage for a donation — some examples include: under ice logos (hockey rinks), outdoor stadium banners and ad space in a program
- Contact CHS Refined Fuels Marketing to develop artwork on your behalf

### 3. Hot chocolate night

- Organize a committee of volunteers
- Work with your vendor to donate cups and hot chocolate
- Announce the promotion via signage and pump toppers and work with the local school to promote
- Set up a table and signage at your local high school football game — give away free hot chocolate, coupons, punch cards, etc.

## Charitable and community promotions

Charitable and community-focused promotions can work well in certain markets for philanthropically minded customers. Customers appreciate knowing that their purchases support a good cause in the community, and it gives them one more reason to feel good about filling their tanks with trusted, high-quality Cenex® fuels.

### *Benefits of hosting a charitable event:*

- Gives back to the community
- Reminds consumers about the benefits of frequenting locally-owned businesses
- Provides team-building opportunities
- Involves employees, families, youth organizations and volunteers
- Select events can be executed at little or no cost

## Ideas:

### 1. “Fuel Your School”

When customers purchase qualifying items, a portion of the purchase is donated to the school district, academic organization or athletic team.

Community message: “Cenex is proud to support education and serve the community by helping raise funds for our local schools. The more times you shop at Cenex, the more money we’ll donate. So stop by today. And next week. And the week after next.”

- Contact the school district to inform them of your plan and gain their approval
- Share details such as your promotion plan, how funds will be raised, and how you’ll promote the campaign
- Ask the school what your donation might be used for and what opportunities there might be to communicate your campaign to students and their families
- Visit Cenex Ad Builder for marketing tools and templates:
  - Pre-campaign press release
  - Post-campaign press release
  - Dealer newsletter article
  - School newsletter article
  - Letter to school principal
  - Customizable Cenex LSM templates to create print ads, pump toppers and more

### **Ideas to enhance your campaign:**

- **Vendor participation:** Vendor support can increase the contribution of a charitable donation or help raise awareness of your cause. This also gives your customers more ways to support the promotion through product purchases that benefit the cause.
- **School communications:** Ask your school to run an article in their newsletter or parental communications. Post signage in the lobby promoting the campaign, etc.

### Event Marketing / Store Events Ideas

#### 2. Food drive

Your store serves as a drop-off point for non-perishable food donations, which will be donated to the area food shelf.

Community message: “Cenex® is proud to serve the community by being a food drive drop-off point for our local food shelf. You can help feed a hungry family (or spread holiday cheer) by bringing in non-perishable items on your next visit.”

*Contact your local food shelf to inform them of your plan, get helpful advice and feedback, and start your drive.*

- Be prepared to let them know when your promotion will run and how it will be promoted
- Get their approval to use their organization in press releases, advertising and communications
- Discuss details — such as who will transport goods from your store to their center; if collection bins are available, etc.

- Visit Cenex Ad Builder for sample marketing tools:
  - Pre-campaign press release
  - Post-campaign press release
  - Radio script
  - Customizable Cenex LSM templates to create print ads, pump toppers and more

#### Ideas to enhance your campaign:

- **Use bounce-back coupons** to promote the drive and encourage customers to return with canned goods — and offer an incentive such as a hot beverage, a cent-per-gallon discount on fuel, etc. in exchange
- **Educate customers on the importance of your cause and hunger facts:**
  - In 2010, food shelf usage increased, on average, by 14%
  - Hunger touches people of every age: 56% of food shelf visitors are families with children and 20% are seniors



#### • Educate customers on different ways to help:

- **Donate food.** Drop off nonperishable food donations at your Cenex location
- **Give cash.** Encourage customers to make monetary donations directly to the food shelf. (Avoid collecting cash in store.) Fact: Because of food shelves’ buying power, a \$1 donation can provide 5 to 7 meals for hungry families
- **Volunteer.** Volunteer time and talents at the local food shelf, meals on wheels, etc.



## Event Marketing / Store Events Ideas

### 3. Community beautification

- Organize a committee of volunteers
- Adopt a Highway or collect trash along the roadsides
- Plant trees in the community — check with your local DNR or **arborday.org** for free or low-cost seedlings
- Start a new landscaping project in a part of town that needs some TLC — or spruce up an older landscape with fresh mulch and new plants
- Raise funds for a new community park or bike trail
- Following a day of hard work, thank volunteers for their time with a free lunch or dinner at your store

### 4. Operation Thank You

- Collect thank you notes from the community; mail them to members of the military in active duty overseas or to local police and firefighters
- Contact schools or area teachers and ask them to participate as a class project. Students will learn about expressing gratitude toward others, and it will quickly increase the number of thank you notes you'll send.

### 5. Habitat for Humanity

- Find a project near you at **www.habitat.org**

### 6. Host a Farmer's Market

- If you have extra space on your property or lot, start a community Farmer's Market
- It's great way to help generate store traffic, too!

### 7. Holiday community care box

- Help those in need who might not otherwise have a very merry holiday season by collecting new toys, hats, scarves, mittens, etc.
- Donate items to an area Toys for Tots or Coats for Kids organization



- Pump toppers
- Store signage (multiple sizes)
- Print ads
- Radio ads
- Sale and coupon flyers
- Direct mail
- Newsletter articles
- Press releases
- Bounce-back coupons
- Loyalty punch cards



- Cenex® Gift Cards and displays
- Cenex Credit Card displays
- Event marketing materials
- Cenex branded apparel and merchandise
- Cenex uniforms
- Sales tools and product brochures
- Decals
- Banners
- Pump toppers and store signage
- Cenex Guy materials

## Monthly Marketing & Sales Promotion Ideas

### September

**National Chicken Month:** Deli specials

#### Labor Day

- Camping supplies: Bug spray, sunscreen, snacks, beverages, coolers, batteries, can koozies, lighters, flashlights, s'mores ingredients, firewood
- Grilling supplies: Condiments, buns, napkins, disposable tablecloths, garbage bags, ice chests, propane, charcoal, lighter fluid
- Food items: Hot dogs, brats, burgers, cheese, buns, condiments, ice, beverages, snacks, 12-packs of soda

#### Students / back to school

- Student discount promotion: "Show your ID to save X¢ per gallon or get a free fountain soda with 8-gallon fill"
- Report card promotion: Bring in your report card and receive X for every "A"
- Lunch specials, for open-campus lunch hours
- Text campaigns: Trivia questions, special offers, after-school snack offers
- Sponsor driver's education: Provide safe driving packs and a Cenex® Gift Card to new drivers

### Tailgating and fall sports

- Sell imprinted travel mugs or stadium cups with the high school logo or mascot
- Host an "if they win" night where all fans receive a free (item of your choice) if the home team wins
- Prize drawing: Game day party food for 12 (deli subs, pizza, salty snacks, soda, ice)
- Employees wear team jerseys on game day

### October

**National Pizza Month:** Pizza specials

**National Pork Month:** Hot dog specials

#### National Boss' Day

- Cenex Gift Cards
- Coffee specials: Buy 1, Get 1 free (one for you — one for the boss)
- Essay contest: Best and worst boss stories (win a \$50 Cenex Gift Card)

#### Halloween

- Candy specials
- Kids coloring page / contest
- Trick or Treat: candy for kids who come in costume
- Free pumpkin with 8-gallon fill

### Hunting

- Bring in the biggest pheasant / largest deer rack / longest fish / etc. to win a \$50 Cenex Gift Card
- Hunting licenses
- Camo or blaze orange apparel

### November

**National Peanut Butter Lovers Month:**

Reese's Peanut Butter Cups, Reese's Pieces, peanut butter

**Thanksgiving Day:** Food shelf drive

#### Election Day

"Cast Your vote with a Cenex beverage!"  
Predict election results by tallying 'votes' through beverage purchases:

- Red Cenex cup = a Republican party vote
- Blue Cenex cup = a Democratic party vote

**Veterans Day — November 11:**

Free American flag with an 8-gallon fill





### Cold weather

- Windshield wash fluid
- Coffee refill program: Sell Cenex® travel mugs and offer savings on future refills (It's environmentally-friendly and saves you the cost of disposable cups!)
- Mug Club: Loyalty program – buy 9, get 1 free
- Free snow scraper / brush with an 8-gallon fill

## December

### Christmas / Hanukkah

- Gift cards, greeting cards
- Pictures with Santa

### New Years Eve

- Party snacks, subs, pizza
- Soda, beer, ice
- Videos

### School vacation

- Winter coloring page or contest
- Pizzas
- Videos



## January

### Super Bowl Sunday

- Chips, snacks, pizzas, deli subs
- Beer, soda, ice

### Hot and Spicy Food Day – January 18

- Nachos
- Chili specials
- Tortilla chips, salsa

### Cold weather

- Coffee, cappuccino
- HEET, ISO-HEET
- Kids coloring sheet or contest
- Full service fueling: create community buzz by pumping fuel while customers stay warm in their car. (Offer a free hot beverage; promote with a live radio remote.)

## February

### Valentine's Day – February 14

- Greeting cards
- Gift cards – “Make your Valentine extra sweet with a Cenex Gift Card”
- Flowers
- Candy

### Lent

- Cheese pizzas

## March

### St. Patrick's Day – March 17

- Lottery tickets – “May the luck ‘o the Irish be with you”

### March Madness

- Beer, ice, soda
- Salty snacks
- Deli pizzas, subs

### Spring thaw / road spray

- Windshield wash



## April

### Secretaries / Administrative Professionals Week

- Greeting cards
- Gift cards

### Easter

- Greeting cards
- Gift cards
- Eggs



## Monthly Marketing & Sales Promotion Ideas

### Earth Day — April 22

- Beverage re-fill promotion — encourage use of refillable travel mugs
- Travel mug trade-in: Bring a competitor's travel mug for a free Cenex® mug replacement
- Recycling bins at your store

### Arbor Day — April 27

- Free seedling tree with an 8-gallon fill

### Think spring

- Kids coloring sheet or contest
- Drawing for tickets to a baseball game
- Free flower seeds with an 8-gallon fill
- Spring oil sale

## May

### National BBQ Month

- Hot dogs, buns, condiments
- Propane, charcoal, lighter fluid
- National Hamburger Month
- Deli specials, combo meals

### Cinco de Mayo — May 5

- Deli Specials — burritos, tacos, nachos, etc.
- Tortilla chips, salsa / queso combo deals

### Mother's Day

- Greeting cards
- Gift cards

### Memorial Day

- Snacks, soda, ice
- Firewood, propane, lighter fluid

### Fishing opener

- Fishing licenses
- Bait
- Ice
- Fuel and oil for the boat

### Graduation

- Greeting cards
- Gift cards

## June

### Dairy Month

- Milk — “2 fors” or milk club
- Ice cream
- Free scoop with ice cream purchase
- “Thank you, hardworking dairy farmers” signage or ads

### Father's Day

- Greeting cards
- Gift cards



### National Donut Day — June 6

- Free donut with coffee purchase

### Flag Day — June 14

- Free flag with any 8-gallon fill

## July

### Independence Day — July 4th

- Kids coloring sheet or contest
- Free American flag with 8-gallon fill
- Ice, beverages, 12-pack of soda
- Paper plates, napkins
- Chips, salty snacks
- Red, white & blue helium-filled balloons for kids

### National Hot Dog Month

- Deli specials, combo meals, buy one — get one free
- Hot dogs / corn dogs / chili dogs — “We make it your way”
- Packaged products and buns on sale (combo deal)



### Family travel season

- Kids coloring book / contest: host a prize drawing at the end of summer: bike, scooter, roller blades, etc.
- Hand out treats to kids in the store — lollipops, temporary tattoos
- Offer healthy snack choices: string cheese, yogurt, granola bars, fresh fruit, juice boxes, etc.
- Create an end-cap: travel games and healthy snacks

### National Ice Cream Month

- Sampling event — coupon toward purchase
- Free scoop with purchase
- Special pricing
- Cone sale

### Cabin season

- Create an end-cap for supplies: bug spray, sunscreen, snacks, beverages, coolers, batteries, can koozies, lighters, flashlights
- S'mores (graham crackers, marshmallows, chocolate bars)
- Firewood



### Hot weather

- Cold beverages / fountain drinks
- Refill program: Sell Cenex® travel mugs and offer savings on future refills (It's environmentally-friendly and saves you the cost of disposable cups!)
- Mug Club: loyalty program (buy 9, get 1 free)
- Ice / ice chests / coolers
- Gift with Purchase: Can koozie with 12-pack of soda

### Grilling season

- Propane, charcoal, lighter fluid
- Hot dogs, brats, burgers, cheese, buns, condiments
- Ice, beverages, 12-pack of soda
- Create an end-cap: condiments, buns, napkins, disposable tablecloths, garbage bags, ice chests, etc.

### Full Service Fueling Day

## August

### Beat the heat specials

- Pop and ice combo

### Dog days of summer

- Hot dog specials



### Back to college

- Gift cards
- Student Discount Promotion: "Show your ID to save X¢ per gallon or get a free fountain soda with 8-gallon fill"

### (Pre) Labor Day

- Propane, charcoal, lighter fluid
- Hot dogs, brats, buns, condiments
- Firewood
- Paper plates, napkins,
- Ice, beverages, salty snacks



## Next Steps

### Measurement and tracking

The final step to your local store marketing planning is to track and evaluate the promotion. This is the time where you determine if your marketing plan worked as originally intended, and if not, find out why so you can succeed with future marketing plans. In order to grow your business and the Cenex® brand effectively, it's important to know what is working in your market, and what isn't.

Tracking is simply making sure to monitor your marketing efforts and exactly how many responses you are getting from each one. Track each mailer or coupon that you give out and regularly ask customers how they heard about your business — without this information you'll waste a great deal of money and time, and lose the opportunity to increase sales.

Knowing where you stand every day / week / month of all marketing promotions will help you track your success. Consistent tracking from program to program will help you quickly identify those LSM strategies that are the most effective. Don't forget — log the results! Make sure to keep all the campaign details (dates, promotions, support POP, etc.) together along with the results of the promotion, to help you plan future campaigns.

*In order to grow your business and the Cenex® brand effectively, it's important to know what is working in your market, and what isn't.*

### CHS support

CHS offers a wide variety of marketing support available to you 24/7 — from easy-to-use templates to a 50% cost share program for produced Cenex® materials. CHS Refined Fuels Marketing is here to support you and your marketing initiatives with the following resources:

**Cenex Ad Builder** — Build and manage your store's customer marketing campaigns and sales promotions; create pump toppers, direct mail, coupon flyers, signs, postcards and more. All pieces are customizable with your store logo, specials and messages.

**Cenex Shop** — This is your one-stop shop for Cenex branded apparel and merchandise, the Cenex store uniform, Cenex Gift Card display, point-of-purchase signage, event marketing materials, product information and more.

**Cenex Ad Share Program** — Cenex Ad Share is designed to help you grow brand awareness and sales through consistent local marketing. CHS provides up to 50% cost share for produced Cenex materials. Outdoor billboard and highway logo sign rebates are also available.

**Cenex In The Know marketing newsletter** — Stay connected with *In The Know*. In each issue you'll find great tips, relevant news, spotlight stories on Cenex stores like yours and helpful resources — all designed to help build sales and improve your bottom line. If you're not already registered, visit <http://retail.chsintheknow.com/subscribe>.

**CHS portal customer extranet** — The CHS portal exists just for our customers. It's how we help you stay connected with CHS news and information and Cenex brand campaign updates. Plus you'll find product news, articles, helpful web links and downloads of the most recent marketing guide, annual promotional calendars, programs and more. If you're not already registered, visit [www.chsinc.com](http://www.chsinc.com). *For the most up-to-date information on all CHS-provided marketing support, visit CHS Portal (click on Energy > Retail > Marketing & Promotions).*

**CHS Refined Fuels marketing support** — Contact the Refined Fuels Marketing team with any marketing questions at [refinedfuelsmarketing@chsinc.com](mailto:refinedfuelsmarketing@chsinc.com).





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Download a copy of this Local Store Marketing Guide and Cenex® brand guidelines at the CHS Customer Extranet, [www.chsinc.com](http://www.chsinc.com)



*OUR ENERGY COMES THROUGH®*

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A BRAND OF The CHS logo, consisting of the letters "CHS" in a white, serif font, with a white swoosh underline that starts under the "C" and ends under the "S".