

Five Point Communications: Reframing First Friday Art Walks

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Executive Summary

The City of Ocala's First Friday Art Walk has an opportunity to strengthen how the event is seen and experienced by the public. While the Art Walk already gives the community a free, family-friendly way to celebrate local art and creativity, limited awareness and a dispersed layout have made it harder for the event to build strong engagement and consistent attendance. As a result, many potential attendees may not fully understand what the event offers or may see it as less convenient than other community activities. This campaign responds to that challenge by helping reposition the Art Walk as a more centralized, accessible and engaging downtown experience that better reflects the Cultural Arts Division's mission to make art visible, meaningful and community-centered. The campaign primarily focuses on adults ages 18 to 35 in Ocala and surrounding north and central Florida communities, while also considering the influence of artists, small business owners, schools, community organizations, city stakeholders, local media and influencers.

The campaign aims to increase awareness, engagement and attendance by making the Art Walk feel more lively, connected and worth returning to each month. Rather than relying on promotion alone, the plan combines a more intentional event experience with stronger digital storytelling and community-based partnerships. Centralizing the event into a more walkable area, expanding themed nights, incorporating additional vendors and activities, featuring student artwork and using Instagram and Facebook content to highlight artists and event experiences all work together to make the Art Walk more visible and more appealing to the target audience. Influencer support, passport cards, artist spotlights and live art demonstrations further reinforce that goal by encouraging exploration, interaction and repeat attendance. Altogether, these efforts are expected to improve visibility, draw more visitors from north and central Florida, strengthen

participation from artists and businesses and help establish the First Friday Art Walk as a more energized and memorable part of downtown Ocala.

Communication Problem

Currently, residents of Ocala have limited awareness and engagement with the First Friday Art Walk due to its dispersed layout across the city, which makes it harder for attendees to connect with the event and its offerings. The target audience, primarily residents, may not fully recognize the event's potential or cultural value and many may view it as inconvenient or spread out, rather than a centralized and vibrant community gathering. Communication is necessary to address this issue because it will reposition the event into a more condensed, accessible and appealing experience, making it easier for people to attend and engage. The organization hopes to change the perception of the event, making it a more attractive and approachable experience for Ocala residents and visitors from north and central Florida. Ultimately, the goal is to increase awareness, engagement and attendance, shifting the community's perception of the event as a must-attend, family-friendly celebration.

Situation Analysis

The First Friday Art Walk is a fun and free family-friendly event that brings together members of the community to celebrate art and creativity each month. Our client is facing issues with the layout and logistics of shifting the event setup, as well as consistent attendance numbers and attendance retention. The client wants to focus on condensing and enhancing the event and its offerings in hopes that it will not only improve the event overall, but also attract more attendees and encourage them to return the next month.

Organizational Background

The Cultural Arts Division of the City of Ocala is all about bringing art and creativity to the heart of the community. Their mission is simple: make art accessible, inspire lifelong learning and fill public spaces with beauty that sparks pride and connection. From the First Friday Art Walk to various other local initiatives, the division provides a platform for local artists and businesses to showcase their work, allowing people to come together and celebrate creativity. They believe art has the power to build stronger, more connected communities and they aim to make that a reality in Ocala.

Serving both the residents of Ocala and visitors from surrounding areas in north and central Florida, the Cultural Arts Division creates events that are open and engaging for everyone. Whether it's a fun, family-friendly art exhibit or a concert, the division ensures there is something for everyone. By creating these opportunities, they not only support local talent but also help drive tourism and boost the local economy. In the end, the Cultural Arts Division plays a significant role in making Ocala a place where people from all walks of life can come together to enjoy the arts.

Current Communication Environment

The Ocala Art Walk primarily communicates with its audience through the City of Ocala's Facebook page. In addition, the Cultural Arts of Ocala accounts also promote the event. The City of Ocala further advertises the event on its website and Instagram account. Across these platforms, communication is mainly done through generic flyers posted on owned channels.

Industry or Issue Context

The City of Ocala wants to elevate its monthly First Friday Art Walk. They are currently facing issues with the layout and flow of the event and attendance rates. The client is struggling to create plans for changes that could improve the event and address these issues due to city regulations and public safety standards. Certain elements require permits, which could take too long to get approved, if at all. The client is aware that, because they are a government entity, there are setbacks due to timelines and paperwork needed for approvals, all of which limit flexibility and impact the campaign timeline. There are several strategies and tactics to address the current issues our client and the event are facing, which need to be worked into the timeline, depending on the local government office process.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths:

The First Friday Art Walk already has several qualities working in its favor. It takes place on a regular schedule, has existing relationships with artists and benefits from the credibility of being supported by the City of Ocala. The city has also established communication channels, including its website and social media platforms, which give the campaign a strong foundation for promotion.

Weaknesses:

At the same time, the event faces some clear internal challenges. The campaign documents point to low awareness, low attendance and a layout that feels too spread out, all of which make the Art Walk harder to understand and experience. The materials also suggest that some people may not fully understand what the event offers or may see it as something that

appeals only to a narrow group. In addition, because the client is a government entity, approval timelines and permit requirements can slow down implementation.

Opportunities:

The campaign also has several meaningful opportunities it can build on. Partnerships with local businesses, schools, artists, media outlets and influencers can help expand awareness and make the event feel more connected to the broader community. The documents also point to themed nights, social media storytelling, interactive activities and the Downtown Discovery Card as opportunities to create a more engaging and memorable experience for attendees.

Threats:

There are also outside factors that could affect the campaign's success. Competing events, weather and public misconceptions about the Art Walk may limit attendance. On top of that, practical concerns such as permits, road closures and the need to protect business flow for local restaurants and shops create additional challenges that the campaign must work around.

These insights helped shape the campaign by showing that the Art Walk already has a solid base, but needs more visibility, clearer messaging and a more cohesive event experience. They also highlight the importance of building strategies that are creative and engaging while still realistic within the city's operational limits.

Target Audience Analysis

Primary Audience

The audience is adults ages 18 to 35, young professionals and families living in Ocala and surrounding north and central Florida communities. This audience is made up of people

looking for something fun and easy to do, especially on a Friday night, without needing a lot of planning. They are people who enjoy spending time with friends or family, supporting local businesses and choosing experiences that feel social, welcoming and worth their time.

Psychographically, this audience values convenience, social connection and events that feel energetic and inclusive. They are interested in a mix of food, music, art and entertainment and they are more likely to attend when an event looks active and easy to navigate. Their media habits are centered mainly on Instagram and Facebook, with influencer content and Instagram Reels also identified as helpful ways to reach them. They are motivated by the idea of a lively downtown experience, but barriers to engagement include limited awareness, confusion about what the Art Walk offers, the perception that it is too spread out and concerns such as parking, transportation or scheduling conflicts.

Secondary Audience

The secondary audience includes local artists, small business owners, community organizations, schools, city stakeholders, local media outlets and regional influencers. These groups matter because they can help strengthen attendance, visibility and credibility. Artists and business owners help shape the experience people have at the event, while schools and community organizations can bring in new participants. Media outlets and influencers can expand the event's reach and city stakeholders remain important because the campaign must work within city processes, regulations and approvals.

Audience Personas

Primary Persona

A primary persona for this campaign is a 27-year-old professional living in Ocala who is always looking for fun but low-effort ways to spend time with friends on a Friday evening. This person usually hears about local events through Instagram, Facebook or word of mouth and is most likely to attend something that feels social, busy and easy to understand. They enjoy supporting local businesses and like the idea of being part of a lively downtown atmosphere, but they may lose interest if the event feels unclear, too spread out or not especially relevant to them. This persona reflects the campaign's primary audience because it captures the age group, lifestyle, motivations, media habits and barriers that appear consistently throughout the planning documents.

Secondary Persona

A representative secondary persona is a local Ocala artist or small business owner who wants the Art Walk to bring more energy, foot traffic and support to the downtown area. This person values community involvement and sees the event as a chance to connect with residents, visitors and other local partners. They are likely to engage through local networks, city communication channels and community word of mouth, but may also be concerned about logistical changes that affect business activity or event flow. This persona fits the campaign's secondary audience because it reflects the people and groups whose support can help make the Art Walk feel more active, visible and successful.

Research

Secondary Research

Our secondary research included looking into past event announcements and coverage from local news publications such as the Ocala Star-Banner, WCJB and Ocala Style magazine. Much of this coverage focused on reporting event details, which allowed us to better understand how the Ocala Art Walk has been promoted in the past, including the types of activities, entertainment and artists featured.

By analyzing local publications, we were able to identify storytelling opportunities that are currently being overlooked, such as highlighting local artists and organizations to add a stronger human-interest angle. We also gained insight into how the event is currently being promoted, allowing us to refine our media relations plan and adjust our social media strategy accordingly.

Primary Research

Our primary method of research was in-person interviews conducted at the February Ocala Art Walk event. We made sure to include a range of demographics, including artists, attendees of different genders and age groups and local business owners. These interviews allowed us to better understand what participants enjoy about the event, what they would like to see improved and how they believe the event could evolve moving forward.

The most consistent feedback across all audiences was related to the event's layout, as many attendees and artists felt that the booths and vendors were too spread out. Both groups suggested consolidating the event into a more centralized area to increase engagement and improve the overall experience.

Another common recommendation was to increase community involvement. Participants expressed interest in stronger partnerships with local schools, artists and businesses to diversify the audience, engage younger attendees and foster a stronger sense of community.

Finally, many attendees suggested incorporating more activities, music and themed nights to create a higher-energy atmosphere. Expanding live performances and introducing themed events were seen as key opportunities to enhance engagement. We also observed that attendance tends to be higher during warmer months.

These insights from our research narrowed down our strategy to increase music offerings and local vendors, centralize the event layout and incorporate local schools and organizations to strengthen community engagement.

Campaign Goal

The goal of this campaign is to increase awareness, engagement and attendance at the City of Ocala First Friday Art Walk among Gen Z and millennial central Florida residents.

SMART Objectives

- Increase attendance of 18 to 35-year-olds at the Ocala Art Walk by 20% by the first Friday in May 2026 through the implementation of new event concepts and targeted social media campaigns.
- Attract 15% more visitors from north and central Florida to the Ocala Art Walk on the first Friday in June 2026 through regional advertising and collaborations with tourism boards.
- Expand the variety of food and local business vendors at the Ocala Art Walk by 25% by the first Friday in July 2026 to create a more diverse and engaging experience for attendees.
- Increase artist sales and engagement by 15% by August 2026 through the introduction of new features such as live art demonstrations and artist spotlight promotions on social media and at the event.

Key Messages

Core Campaign Message

"Reframing First Friday Art Walks" brings the community together to explore, celebrate and connect through the vibrant art and culture of Ocala. This revitalized event offers a dynamic, walkable experience that showcases local talent and small businesses, creating a truly immersive cultural hub.

Supporting Message 1

The campaign provides a platform for local artists and businesses to reach a larger audience, helping them grow while enriching the city's creative scene.

Supporting Message 2

By consolidating the event into a single, accessible downtown location, the campaign fosters a stronger sense of community, making it easier for everyone to enjoy and participate in the cultural fabric of Ocala.

Supporting Message 3

The revitalized Art Walk also boosts the local economy by attracting new visitors from north and central Florida, benefiting vendors, artists and the city as a whole.

Creative Concept and Campaign Theme

The campaign, "Reframing First Friday Art Walks," is all about turning the event into a more exciting, connected experience for the community. The theme, "Art, Streets and Stories," reflects the heart of what we're trying to do: bring people together in a fun, walkable downtown space where they can explore local art, culture and businesses all in one spot. The creative direction will focus on vibrant, lively visuals that capture the energy of the event and highlight the stories behind the art and the people who create it. This campaign is designed to make the Art Walk more accessible and appealing, not just to Ocala residents, but also to visitors from around north and central Florida. It's all about creating a place where people can walk through the streets, connect with each other and experience the unique culture of Ocala, making it a memorable and engaging night for everyone.

Campaign Strategies

Strategies describe the broad approaches used to achieve campaign objectives. Strategies explain how the campaign will influence the audience.

1. Utilize targeted digital and social media engagement to reach and attract 18 to 35-year-olds.
2. Implement a mix of community engagement initiatives and strategic partnerships with influencers and local businesses to expand awareness among college students and the Ocala community.
3. Enhance event engagement through interactive, incentive-based experiences and a more centralized event layout.

Campaign Tactics

Our first campaign tactic is to physically shift the location of the Ocala Art Walk into a smaller, more condensed area where audience members can more easily access all of the events and art the city has to offer. One of the major issues people mentioned was how spread out the event felt, so bringing it into the Ocala City Center would create a more cohesive, community-focused experience.

Our second tactic is to upgrade the event through themed nights, which has already started to be implemented. Incorporating themed nights creates a cohesive experience and can attract a larger audience by appealing to specific interests, even for those who may not have initially been interested in the event. For example, themes could include decade-based nights or an “around the world” concept, helping draw in diverse groups.

Our third tactic is to offer more activities at the Ocala Art Walk, such as bringing in local businesses and new vendors to showcase their products. We are also interested in partnering with local schools to feature student art and create activities where students can showcase their artistic

abilities. This would also give parents or guardians time to enjoy the event without having to worry about childcare for an hour or two, allowing them to fully experience the Ocala Art Walk.

Our final tactic is to launch a new social media campaign by activating student influencers at UF to attract a younger, college-age demographic. In addition, we aim to rebrand the event's social media content to focus on short-form storytelling and visually appealing Instagram Reels and Facebook content (as TikTok cannot be used due to the government ban). This approach will help increase awareness of the event and show students what the city of Ocala has to offer.

Campaign Timeline

Month 1: January

During the first month of the campaign, we conducted research about the Ocala Art Walk. Our team attended and asked locals what they thought about it and we also talked with artists about what they thought about the event as a whole. After attending the event, we compared the City of Ocala's Art Walk to other Art Walks and then made assessments about what we believed they could do to better the event. Five Point Communications looked at attendance rates and purchases made.

Month 2: February

After conducting extensive research on the city and the demographics, like age, population size and more, the team started planning the campaign. To gather more attendance for the Art Walk, we decided to do a City of Ocala Art Walk passport. The plan is to hand out these passports when people walk to the Art Walk and the goal is to visit every booth and get a

signature from each artist. Once you get signatures, you can enter your passport into a raffle drawing. The prize will be full of donations from local restaurants and shops.

Month 3: March

Five Point Communications planned a ton in February, so the month of March will be full of thinking of ideas for social media content and making a social media content calendar. Our team will be using platforms like Instagram and Facebook to post about the Art Walk. We want our content to hit the younger target audience on Instagram, so we will create reels and fun posts. The same types of posts will be on Facebook as well, but slightly tweaked to engage the older audience as well.

Month 4: April

After we crafted social media posts for the Art Walk, April will be filled with launching the content. Throughout the month, there will be multiple posts made about the Ocala Art Walk every week. The posts will consist of reels of the artists who will be at the Art Walk and what their art looks like to get attendees excited. There will be multiple posts of pictures of Ocala, more specifically, the map of the Art Walk, a list of artists/booths, the setup and more. Posting all through the month of April will get everyone excited to attend the First Friday Art Walk in May.

Month 5: May

The month of May will be all about our first SMART objective of trying to increase attendance of 18-35 year olds at the Ocala Art Walk by 20% by the first Friday in May 2026 through the implementation of new event concepts and targeted social media campaigns.

Month 6: June

The month of June will be all about our second SMART objective of attracting 15% more visitors from north and central Florida to the Ocala Art Walk by the first Friday in June 2026 through advertising.

Month 7: July

The month of July will be all about our third SMART objective of expanding the variety of food and local business vendors at the Ocala Art Walk by 25% by the first Friday in July 2026 to create a more diverse and engaging experience for attendees.

Month 8: August

The month of August will be all about our fourth SMART objective of increasing artist sales and engagement by 15% by August 2026 through the introduction of new features like live art demonstrations and artist spotlight promotions on social media and at the event.

Month 9: September

September will be about campaign outreach and evaluation. Five Point Communications will look at the campaign as a whole and see if the goals that were set were met. To make sure we hit the mark with the community, there will be a survey given out at the Art Walk in September to collect data about how the attendees liked the new implementations and if they would consider coming back.

Budget

- **Content Creation and Design**

Graphics - \$100

Photography - \$250

Video - \$250

- **Social Media and Digital Advertising**

Paid Promotions - \$1,000

Boosted Posts - \$1,000

Targeted Ads - \$1,000

- **Event Costs**

Signage - \$350

Materials - \$350

Supplies - \$250

Passport Cards - \$100

- **Media and PR Tools**

Canva Pro - \$100

Analytics Tools - \$750

Scheduling Platforms - \$200

- **Community Outreach and Partnerships**

Sponsorships - \$500

Collaborations - \$1,000

Influencer Support - \$1,500

- **Contingency Fund**

10% of the total cost - \$870

Budget Table

CITY OF OCALA BUDGET

Category	Item Description	Estimated Cost
Content Creation & Design	The city of Ocala needs graphics, photography, and video to be made to promote this event to the capacity it needs. The city runs these items as a one-person show, and \$600 is appropriate to pay.	\$600
Social Media & Digital Advertising	Boosted and targeted ads on social media are extremely important. The campaign is targeting a younger demographic, so there is a good chunk of money allocated for promotion and advertising.	\$3,000
Event Costs	Since the event is an art walk, signage, materials, and supplies are crucial for the visual aspect of this campaign. There will be big signs created, and materials for this can get expensive. The team will also pay to print the passport cards.	\$1,050
Media & PR Tools	Media and PR tools are important to making the campaign successful. Having items like Canva Pro and good social media analytics tools can lead our team to know what works and what doesn't.	\$1,050
Community Outreach & Partnerships	Sponsorships, collaborations, and influencers are also crucial for this campaign. Our team wants to have influencers who are around the Gainesville area, someone who is big on social media but is also attainable. Influencer collaborations are the success of a lot of campaigns.	\$3,000
Contingency Fund	This amount is 10% of the overall campaign budget.	\$870
Total		\$9,570

Total Campaign Budget: \$9,570

Budget Justification

The budget supports our campaign goals because this is a very visual campaign. Our team is representing the city of Ocala in an Art Walk and promotions, graphics and more need to be a top priority. Passport cards will be made to visit booths around the Art Walk. There are such big budgets for social media & digital advertising and community outreach & partnerships because we are targeting a younger demographic to come to the Art Walk. Social media is one of the most powerful tools to get the word out about an event and our team wants to take this

seriously. There are also a couple of influencers at the University of Florida who could be willing to partner with us and get people to come out to the Art Walk. Our campaign is focused on getting two Gainesville influencers, Liz Landen and Sofia Varon. Each girl will be paid a fixed amount to make reels and posts talking about the Ocala Art Walk, why people should attend, what there is to do and how they support local artists. These posts will be made on Instagram and Facebook.

Evaluation and Measurement

The success of this campaign will be measured through multiple factors. As far as social media engagement goes, there are platforms to see if our content is doing what we want it to. Hootsuite is a great platform to monitor Facebook and Instagram engagement. Event attendance will be tracked through passport cards given out and an overall total headcount. If our campaign goes according to plan, there will be a noticeable difference in the headcount. Tools like Google Analytics will be used to see if there is an increase in website traffic on the City of Ocala page. Surveys will be given out at the end of the Ocala Art Walk to attendees and we will measure our success through that as well. If attendees give an overall positive response, then the team knows that we succeeded in increasing attendance for the Art Walk.

To measure the success of our first SMART objective of increasing attendance of 18 to 35-year-olds by 20%, our team will look at the original attendance from the month before (about 250) and make sure it has gone up to 300 by the next Ocala Art Walk. For the next SMART objective of attracting 15% more visitors from north and central Florida through advertising, we will measure this through the end survey. There will be a question asking where you are visiting from and there will be different parts of Florida to select from. For the third SMART objective of

expanding the variety of food and local business vendors by 25%, we will compare it to the Art Walk from the month before, looking at how many food and local business vendors we had and making sure it has increased by 25%. Lastly, for the fourth SMART objective to increase artist sales and engagement by 15% through new features like live art, we will get total sales from each artist from one month's Art Walk and then compare it to the next month to see if the tactics we tried have increased sales.

Recommendations

The recommendations for future campaigns for the City of Ocala's Art Walk are to have certain booths where artists are creating art while people are walking around, so that attendees can see the process and how hard the artists work. There are two major long-term communication strategies. The first is to keep it very consistent with posting content that is marketed toward younger crowds. The second long-term communication strategy is to make sure that the Art Walk also maintains the audience they already have and keeps them wanting to come back to the Art Walk.

To achieve this, there will still be an event section for the Art Walk on the City of Ocala's website. Potential partnerships could be with the restaurants around the Ocala Square. There are a good number of them and our team thinks that if they partner together, it would be successful for both the restaurants and the artists. There were a lot of lessons learned throughout this campaign and obstacles that weren't thought about, like permitting and liquor licensing. Since the City of Ocala is a government entity, the Art Walk could not be promoted through platforms like TikTok, which is a big social media platform. The team had to navigate these challenges to make sure the campaign was successful.

If the city continues to use this campaign plan, this could turn into an all-out event attracting people from all around the state. Attendance rates could go up to 750 to 1,000 people, and local artists and restaurants could be thriving. People could love the idea of the passport so much that this campaign could expand into different countries' passports, and there could be more prizes to win in the end. For example, each section of the Art Walk could be a country, and if you visit all of the booths and get stamped on your passport, you visited the whole country and got entered to win that country's prize basket. Social media for the City of Ocala could also expand as well, making more posts and getting more engagement through likes, comments and shares, which could be beneficial to the city as a whole.

References

- City of Ocala. (n.d.). *City of Ocala*. <https://www.ocalafl.gov/>