

December 31, 2008

# Lanesboro Retail Market Survey FINAL Report



**Survey Conducted by:**

**Lanesboro Chamber of Commerce  
Lanesboro Economic Development Authority**

**Survey Report Prepared by:**

**Fred Kiel and Staff  
KRW International, Inc.**

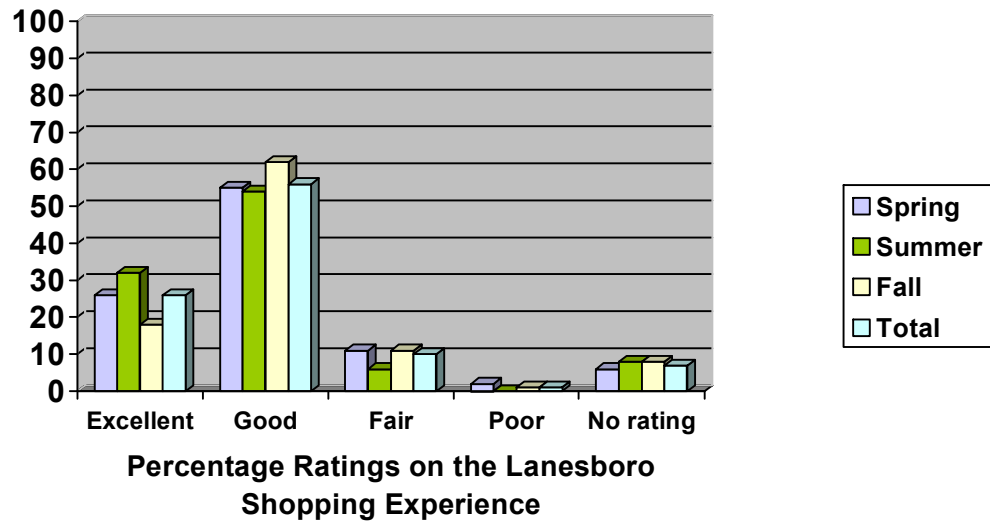
## I. Introduction

- A. Thirteen lodging establishments gathered survey forms from their guests three separate times during the 2008 season. The first data were gathered May through June (spring). The first report is based on this data. The second and third data samples were gathered July through August (summer) and September through October (fall), respectively. A total of 247 visitors completed the survey over the three sampling periods.
- B. Lanesboro residents were also surveyed during the first sampling period of May through June. A total of 57 residents completed the survey and the results of this survey were included in the initial report and will not be repeated here.

Three questions were asked of all three visitor samples:

1. Please rate the current retail shopping experience in Lanesboro (Excellent; Good; Fair; Poor)
2. Comments and suggestions on *current* retail shopping?
3. Please tell us what retail stores are *missing* in Lanesboro.

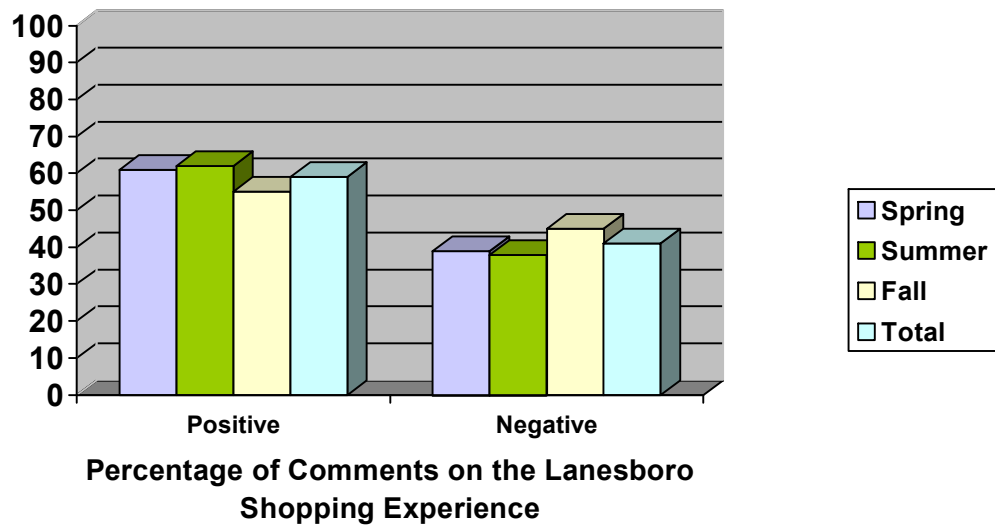
## II. Question 1: The Shopping Experience



	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No rating
<b>Spring (N=107)</b>	26	55	11	2	6
<b>Summer (N=78)</b>	32	54	6	0	8
<b>Fall (N=62)</b>	18	62	11	1	8
<b>Total (N=247)</b>	26	56	10	1	7

The good news is that over 80% of the visitors to Lanesboro rated their shopping experience as “excellent” or “good.” However, we must also recognize that a significant number of visitors rate it as only “fair” or “poor.”

### III. Question 2: Comments



Percentages

	Positive	Negative
<b>Spring (N=107)</b>	61	39
<b>Summer (N=78)</b>	62	38
<b>Fall (N=62)</b>	55	45
<b>Total (N=247)</b>	59	41

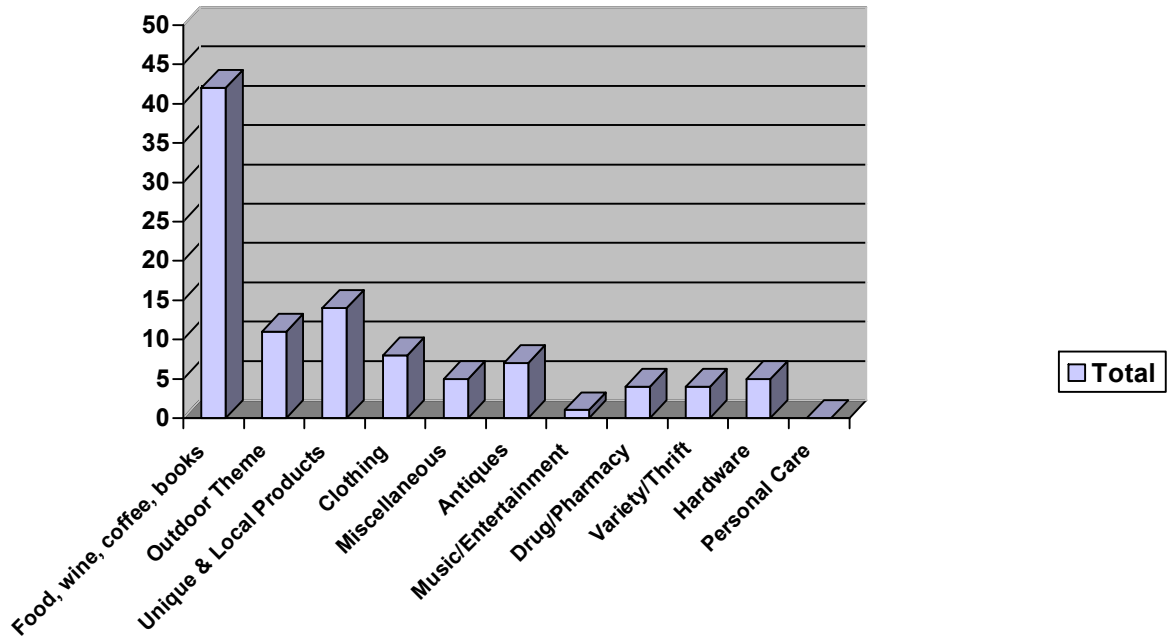
The data from the summer and fall samples are very clearly aligned with the spring sample.

The open-ended comments are pretty clear. They are telling us the same thing over and over:

1. Warm and friendly retailers
  - We are a friendly bunch—many, many comment on the friendliness of sales clerks and Lanesboro residents in general.
2. Frustration over hours
  - We don't seem to have a clue about how important it is to our visitors for the Lanesboro shops to have longer and consistent hours. Many comments reflect people's amazement that we want them to come and buy from our stores, but then many are closed at 5:00 P.M.! Closely related to this is frustration expressed by many that there is no place to go after the theater to sit and have a glass of wine or dessert and visit with friends. Again, the comments reflect puzzlement as to why we wouldn't capitalize on this opportunity to do business.
3. Bookstore and Coffee Shop
  - We need to provide visitors a place to get a good cup of coffee, sit and read a book or newspaper, get on the Internet, have a bowl of soup or a small salad, etc.

## IV. Question 3: What's Missing?

While the overwhelming majority of visitors' suggestions related to a place centered around food, wine, coffee, and books, there were also many other suggestions.



Percentage of Suggestions Regarding Types of Stores that are Missing

	Percentages			Total
	Spring	Summer	Fall	
<b>Food, Wine, Coffee, Books</b>	35	40	51	42
<b>Outdoor Theme (sporting goods, fishing supplies)</b>	12	9	13	11
<b>Unique Local Products (like Essence of Lanesboro)</b>	15	23	5	14
<b>Clothing (especially men's)</b>	11	9	4	8
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	7	9	0	5
<b>Antiques</b>	6	4	10	7
<b>Music/Entertainment</b>	4	0	0	1
<b>Drug/Pharmacy</b>	3	4	0	4
<b>Variety/Thrift</b>	3	0	4	4
<b>Hardware</b>	2	1	13	5
<b>Personal Care</b>	2	0	0	0

## V. Overall Conclusions

All three of these samples are large enough to qualify as legitimate statistical samples. Thus, it is reasonable to draw conclusions from this data and to have confidence that these conclusions represent *all* visitors to Lanesboro from May through October in a typical year.

These data suggest a number of opportunities for retailers. Simply put, visitors to Lanesboro would like:

- A place to enjoy a cup of coffee and a good book or newspaper
- A place to buy high-quality natural foods—both as “groceries” as well as to enjoy on-site in a deli or casual café setting
- A place to enjoy dessert and drinks after dinner or theater
- A place to buy sporting goods, such as fishing equipment, recreation gear, and associated clothing
- A place to buy locally produced products—Amish furniture and products; unique artistic craft gift items (such as exotic bird houses or other items one could only buy in Lanesboro)

And they especially would like to know that all shops are open later in the evening. Additionally, our visitors would like all the shops to have the same hours. If retail shops were open from 10:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. Monday through Saturday, and perhaps 12:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M. on Sundays, the visitors’ expectations about hours of operation would likely be satisfied.

Restaurant hours are also an issue. But this could be solved if only one place were open after theater for desserts and drinks. All restaurants would not need to be open—just one place where visitors can congregate for late evening conversation, desserts, and drinks with friends.

Even though a large percentage did not request it, there would probably be sufficient interest in a shop with antiques and thrift items to allow success. Nearly 10% of residents also expressed an interest in such a shop.

While there are some differences between the preferences of the spring, summer, and autumn visitors, none of them appear to be so significant that there are implications for any specific retailer.

The raw data for each of the three samples are stored at the Lanesboro Chamber of Commerce office and may be examined by requesting such from Julie Kiehne, the Executive Director.