

# Attracting Retailers To Orange Beach

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### Executive Summary

In courting retailers, one should consider what kind of character, values and quality of life standards this new neighbor brings to Orange Beach, noting that not all retailers will fit the family-friendly atmosphere we have worked so hard to create.

### Essay

“Money is the blood that keeps a business going,” I thought.

Economic Development drives growth in a small town, given a high-level of Public Safety, equaling a better quality of life for residents, ensuring a plan with realistic policies, reaching the town’s objective, creating a safe, family-oriented community.

Attracting retailers who share this vision requires the town fitting the retailer’s mold rather than the retailer squeezing into the town’s mold, having proven business models like the one from Chick-Fil-A.<sup>1</sup>

CHICK-FIL-A PROSPECTS	CRITERIA
Population Base	50,000+
Workers	15,000+
Desired Acres	1 Acre
Lease Duration	10 Years w/ 5 year option (Prefer to Purchase)
Parking	65 Dedicated Spaces
Desired Co-Tenants	Target, Grocers, Department Stores
Facility Type	Campus, Downtown, Free Standing, Medical Center, Neighborhood Strip Mall,

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<sup>1</sup> Hudson, *Retail Academy Lunch and Learn in Monroeville*, Print, Accessed January 17, 2017

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	Power Center, Regional Strip Mall, Transit Terminal
Additional Comments	Growing upper middle class neighborhoods, High percentage of homes owned by their occupants, 30%+ occupants with children, 30-50% of worker base executive or managerial professionals

“What makes a retailer want to come to Orange Beach?” I wondered.

The classic conundrum is location, location, location, providing the retailer excellent exposure to possible customers like a mall where several stores are grouped together, feeding off each others’ customer base.

Orange Beach’s Inventory of available spaces varies from \$12 per square foot per year at the Wharf to Market Street for \$27 per square foot per year.<sup>2</sup> Realistically more is involved in the decision than just price and location. Orange Beach needs a strategy, uniquely crafted for our beach community, attracting family-oriented retailers.

Taking a broad brush the Environmental Protection Agency proposes a plan:<sup>3</sup>

“ **□ Identify and build on existing assets.** Identify the assets that offer the best opportunities for growth and develop strategies to support them. Assets might include natural beauty and outdoor recreation, historic downtowns, or arts and cultural institutions.

- **Engage all members of the community to plan for the future.** Engage residents, business owners, and other stakeholders to develop a vision for the community’s future. Stakeholder engagement helps ensure plans reflect the community’s desires, needs, and goals and generates public support that can maintain momentum for implementing changes through election cycles and city staff turnover.

- **Take advantage of outside funding.** Even a small amount of outside funding applied strategically to support a community’s vision and plans can help increase local interest and commitment in the area and spur private investment.

- **Create incentives for redevelopment, and encourage investment in the community.** Make it easier for interested businesses and developers to invest in the community in ways that support the community’s long-term priorities.

- **Encourage cooperation within the community and across the region.** Cooperation to achieve jointly established priorities helps leverage the assets that each party can bring to the table to make the most of the region’s resources.

- **Support a clean and healthy environment.** Invest in natural assets by protecting natural resources and cleaning up and redeveloping polluted properties, which makes productive use of existing transportation, water, and utility infrastructure; increases the tax base and employment opportunities; removes environmental contamination; and helps spur investment in surrounding properties.“

<sup>2</sup> City Fleet, *Database Search*, Accessed January 18, 2017, <http://www.cityfeet.com/cont/36561-retail-space?lat=30.2778491973876950&lng=-87.5609436035156250#>

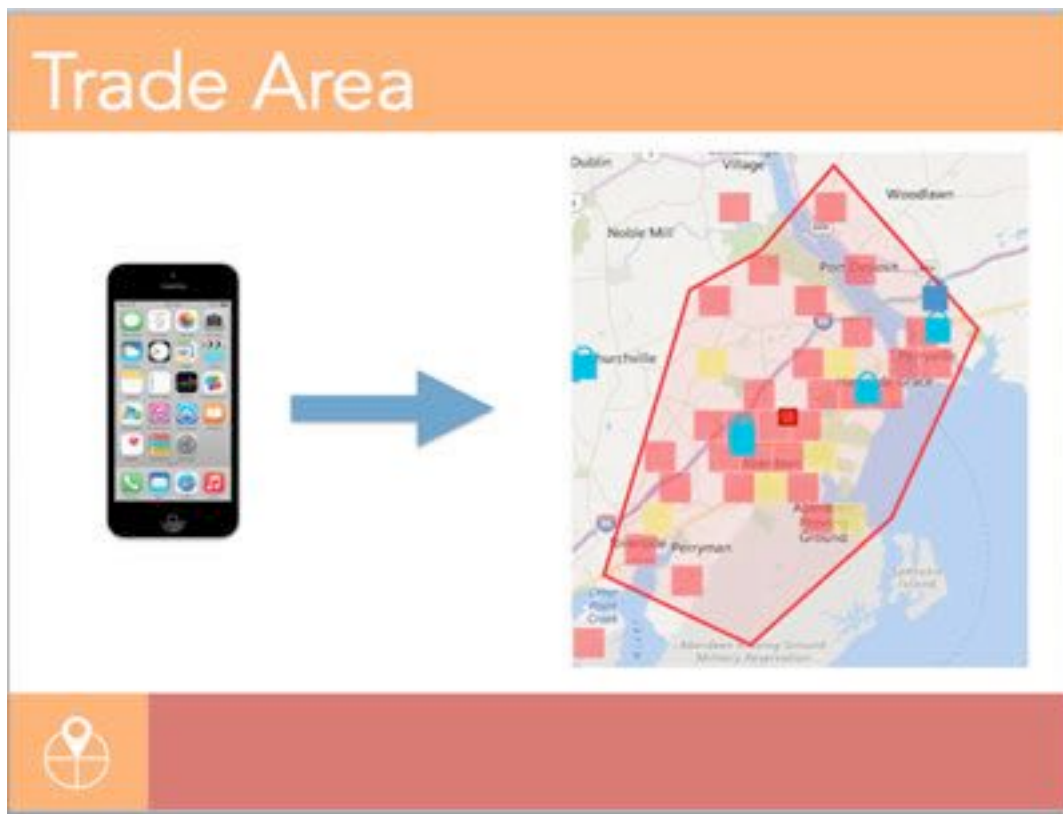
<sup>3</sup> Environmental Protection Agency, *Competitive Advantage EPA 231-R-15-002*, Accessed January 18, 2017, [https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-05/documents/competitive\\_advantage\\_051215\\_508\\_final.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-05/documents/competitive_advantage_051215_508_final.pdf)

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The search for a suitable location for your business is more of an art form than a science, going to the Chamber-of-Commerce, talking to Realtors, contacting Mall Managers, doing Internet searches for all the information you can find, driving and walking the area, perhaps deciding on a compromise because of what is available.

As a town, performing the above is useful, letting you see how to make the process easier, building databases of available space, collecting information on target areas and psychographic analysis like demographics, helping the prospective business owner with their decision. When a prospective business owner knows you thought of their needs, perhaps swaying their decision to move their store to your municipality.

Trade Area (Example)<sup>4</sup>

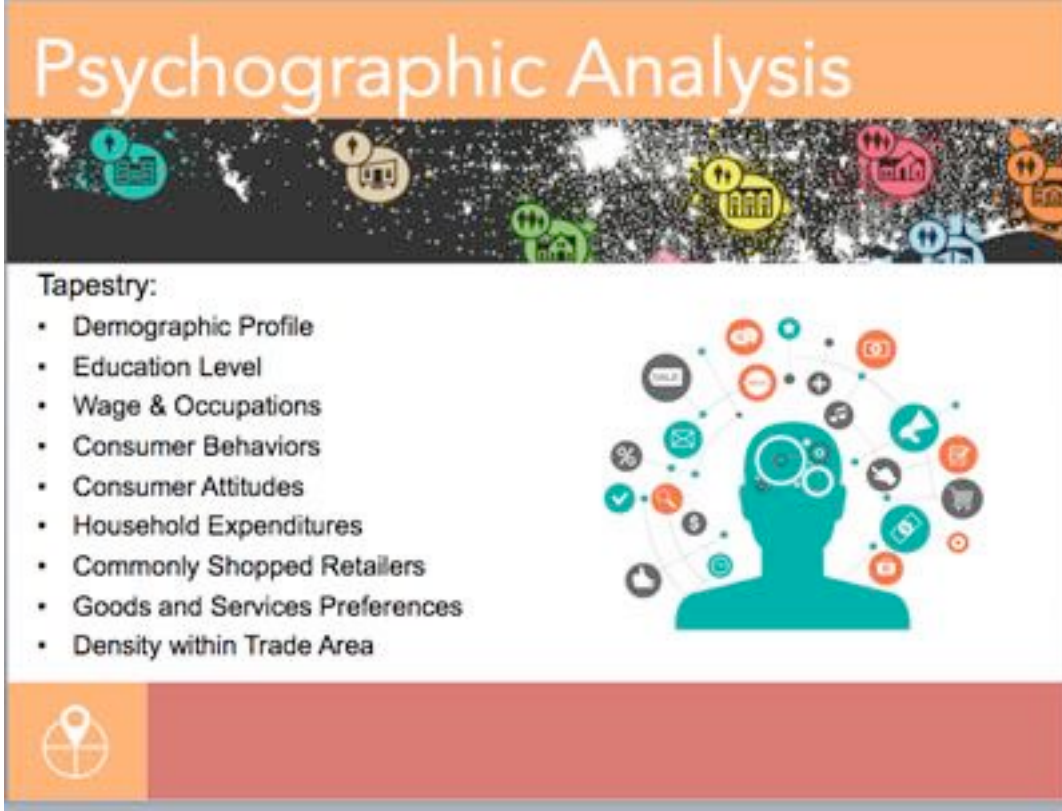


Psychographic Analysis (Example)<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Hudson, *Retail Academy Lunch and Learn in Monroeville*, Print, Accessed January 17, 2017

<sup>5</sup> Hudson, *Retail Academy Lunch and Learn in Monroeville*, Print, Accessed January 17, 2017

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The slide features a title 'Psychographic Analysis' in white text on an orange background. Below the title is a decorative banner with various colorful icons representing different psychographic factors. The main content area has a white background with a list of factors under the heading 'Tapestry:'. To the right of the list is a graphic of a teal human silhouette with various icons (like a percentage sign, a shopping cart, a speech bubble, etc.) floating around its head, connected by lines. At the bottom left, there is a small orange square with a white location pin icon, and the rest of the bottom bar is a solid red color.

### Psychographic Analysis

Tapestry:

- Demographic Profile
- Education Level
- Wage & Occupations
- Consumer Behaviors
- Consumer Attitudes
- Household Expenditures
- Commonly Shopped Retailers
- Goods and Services Preferences
- Density within Trade Area

Retailers make communities better, providing goods and services locally so residents do not have to drive as far, partnering where they do business, encouraging through their leadership participation in activities, supporting youth sports and churches. Retailers who have a spiritual and financial investment in a community are going to be model citizens and advocates for growth.

Infrastructure like sewer, water, electricity and good roads are essential for business, communicating by Internet and telephone are the hormones of growth.

Insurance on the Gulf Coast is sometimes hard to get, living in a hurricane zone, meeting FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency)<sup>6</sup> Requirements is essential for coverage.

Tourism is the heartbeat of our market on the Gulf Coast, understanding that your retail criteria may not fit into the concentric circles of a land-locked location because we are oceanfront, making rejection a strong possibility when decisions are made at corporate offices without geographical knowledge of the Alabama Gulf Coast.

Seafood is one of the reasons people come to Orange Beach, having rebounded from the Oil Spill of 2010 our cuisine is varied and attractive, being part of a new business or as atmosphere for business meetings when coming to Orange Beach, dining on seafood goes with being at the beach.

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<sup>6</sup> FEMA, National Flood Insurance Program, Accessed January 18, 2017, <https://www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program>

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“Attracting more people is not what we want,” I heard someone say.

“What do you mean?” I asked.

“I am tired of the traffic, taking my family to the beach is impossible, launching my boat is impossible, fishing for snapper is impossible with a shortened season.” He said, climbing back into his truck, rolling down the window he added, “This place used to be nice but it has grown too fast.”

I got on my bicycle, following him down the road, wondering if there is a solution for growth and the quaint tranquility of the old days.

He stopped again, opening the door as I rode up, wiping the sweat off his brow with the back of his hand.

“You know,” he said. “I wouldn’t be against development on the beach if they just took better care of the residents like eliminating the 4 mil property tax<sup>7</sup>, offsetting the loss with increased revenue from condo developments, bringing in more people, generating additional revenue from retail sales.”

He turned, not waiting for an answer and drove off.

Enticing Small-Business Retailers to come to Orange Beach is an engine for growth, creating prosperity and a general feeling of contentment. Corporate-Franchise Retailers are tied to a different formula, finding it hard to justify their numbers with the geographic data on Orange Beach, granted we do not integrate into their computer model, needing to pay a physical visit to see that we are an exceptional instance for retail success, whether small business or corporate.

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<sup>7</sup> Finance Department, \$3,432,321 in property-tax revenue for 2016, Accessed January 17, 2017

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