



Dear New Business:

Welcome to Downtown Coral Gables! The Business Improvement District (BID) of Coral Gables is pleased that you have chosen the Gables for your business.

The BID is a non-profit organization that represents businesses and property owners in the Downtown District. **The BID is here as a resource and a partner ready to help your business succeed.** Our mission is to improve the downtown through marketing and promotion, and to serve as an advocate for you in matters that affect the area.

Because of your location within the BID's geographic boundaries, you are automatically a BID member. There is no additional fee or charge for our services. Your involvement in the BID is crucial to the success of our downtown and business in our community.

This package includes information beneficial to your business. Should you have any questions or comments, please call or come by our office and we will gladly address them. I look forward to working closely with you and wish you great success in your new business.

Sincerely,

Aura Reinhardt
Executive Director



DOWNTOWN CORAL GABLES & MIRACLE MILE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT OF CORAL GABLES

1. What is the Business Improvement District of Coral Gables?

The Business Improvement District (BID) is a 501(c)(6) non-profit organization representing the District's property owners and businesses in marketing and advocacy of the area. The District's boundaries are from Douglas Road to LeJeune Road (east-west) and Giralda Avenue to Andalusia Avenue (north-south). The BID is an organizing and financing mechanism used by property owners and merchants to promote and improve the district.

2. Who manages and operates the District?

The BID is an autonomous non-profit organization that is operated independently of the City of Coral Gables. It has a 16 member *volunteer* Board of Directors, composed of 13 voting officers and 3 ex-officio officers. The BID office is currently staffed by the Executive Director, Aura Reinhardt and Project Manager, Jade Leonart. They can be reached via email at info@shopcoralgables.com or by phone at 305-569-0311.

3. What is the mission of the BID and what are its main goals and objectives?

The Business Improvement District's mission statement is to promote the quality and diversity of businesses in downtown Coral Gables through advocacy and marketing, increasing awareness to domestic, national and international audiences.

4. How many members does the BID have?

There are 370 businesses in the BID, approximately 260 of which are retail and restaurant establishments. There are 128 property owners in the BID.

5. Where can I find information to open a business in Downtown Coral Gables?

Please visit our website www.shopcoralgables.com and click on "About." Additionally, we have compiled useful links for potential and current businesses, just click on "Resources." Please feel free to contact our office, and we can direct you to the right place.



ABOUT DOWNTOWN CORAL GABLES QUESTION & ANSWER FACT SHEET

1. Where is the Miracle Mile/Downtown Gables Shopping District?

The Miracle Mile/Downtown Gables Shopping District is located in the heart of Coral Gables, ten minutes south of Miami International Airport, Florida, stretching from Douglas Road to LeJeune Road (east-west) and Giralda Avenue to Andalusia Avenue (north-south). In the center of the district lies the famous Miracle Mile which is a half-mile stretch of Coral Way.

2. What can be found in the Miracle Mile/Downtown Gables Shopping District?

Cast in a Mediterranean setting, Miracle Mile/Downtown Gables offers shoppers an oasis of specialty boutiques, cultural hubs and renowned restaurants accented by tree lined streets, fountains, and archways dotted with bougainvilleas. Downtown Gables is one of South Florida's most sought after shopping destinations, known for the personal attention of its shop owners and specialty stores. Shoppers will find over 180 moderate to high-end shops offering unique gift selections, including men's, women's and children's fashions, shoes, jewelry, home furnishings and bridal. From books to wine, custom specialty gifts for the home, or one-of-a-kind clothing, Downtown Coral Gables has it all.

3. What types of restaurants and cafés will you find in the Miracle Mile/ Downtown Gables Shopping District?

Coral Gables is home to world-class restaurants and has always enjoyed the reputation of being the place to indulge in exquisite dining. There are over 90 restaurants in the district offering worldly cuisine from European to Caribbean, Mexican to Asian, including five star restaurants and world-renowned steak houses. You will also find cafés and coffee houses, as well as trendy bars and pubs.

4. What types of entertainment, arts and culture can one find in the Miracle Mile/Downtown Gables Shopping District?

Downtown Coral Gables has become a cultural hub with plenty of booming institutions. Theatre lovers will delight in the productions of Miracle Mile's Actors' Playhouse. The historic Miracle Theatre, magnificently restored, is now the home of this leading regional performing arts company and a splendid center of community cultural activity.

Just one block north of Miracle Mile stands the Coral Gables Museum- a 1939 Deco and Mediterranean Revival coral stone structure completely restored within LEED Silver certification standards. The Museum opened to the public in 2011 and is a vibrant gathering place featuring exhibits, events, movie nights, wine tastings, artisan markets and more.

Across the street, the Coral Gables Art Cinema is a 144-seat theater featuring diverse programming to serve both the Gables and Greater Miami community. Featuring independent and off-Hollywood films, the Cinema hosts international films, red carpet events, children's programs, works by emerging filmmakers, film festivals and more.

5. Who manages the Miracle Mile/Downtown Coral Gables Shopping District?

The Business Improvement District (BID) is a non-profit group that represents the District's property and business owners. The BID is an organizing and financing mechanism used by property owners and merchants to promote the area. The BID is responsible for marketing and advocating on behalf of the area. For further information you may contact the BID office at 305-569-0311 or via email at info@shopcoralgables.com.



WWW.SHOPCORALGABLES.COM
OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

The BID hosts a website, www.shopcoralgables.com, on which your business can have a free page with your logo, business description, hours and a link to your website/ social channels. Merchants who presently have websites will also have a link to their existing site.

Please e-mail this form, your logo, pictures and menus to info@shopcoralgables.com

Business Name:

Contact Name:

Address:

Phone:

Fax:

Website:

E-mail:

Facebook.com/

Twitter.com/

Instagram.com/

Business Hours:

Categories – List up to 3 you would like to be listed under (Ex: Men's, Furniture, Children):

1.

2.

3.

Brands – List your top 5 brands (This will allow customers to find you more easily):

Types of Products – List your 5 more popular products/services (ex: soaps, lamps, sofas, etc.):

Business Description - As you would like it to appear on your FREE informational page:



How the BID serves you Plus tips to boosting your business!

The BID is here as a resource and a partner ready to help your business succeed. Our mission is to improve the downtown through marketing and promotion, and to serve as an advocate for you in matters that affect the area. Your involvement in the BID is crucial to the success of our downtown and business in our community.

ADVOCACY & CITY-RELATED: REPRESENTATION REGARDING PARKING, SAFETY & DOWNTOWN ISSUES

The BID constantly works on behalf of property owners and merchants to create an environment favorable to you in terms of parking, planning issues, police safety, and much more. If you ever have any questions related to City services, the BID is here to help guide you in the right direction.

MARKETING SUPPORT

E-MAILS & DATABASES:

BID	MERCHANT
<p>The BID sends emails on a weekly basis, at the discretion of the BID's office, announcing major events or news in the downtown to a database of 24k area employees, residents and visitors interested in Coral Gables. This includes our weekly Thursday newsletter, which features a roundup of the week's top merchant events, promotions, and happenings.</p> <p>Get Featured in our Weekly Newsletter We love getting content from our BID businesses. If you would like your business to be the feature of a short article in our weekly e-newsletter, please send us your information via email, to: info@shopcoralgables.com. If your information is time-sensitive, we ask that you please send it to us with at least one week ahead. We cannot guarantee that all articles/information that we receive will be published.</p>	<p>E-Marketing is a great way to inform clients and potential clients about specials, sales, events, promotions, news, etc. You can even offer specials exclusive to those who sign up to receive your e-campaigns (such as e-newsletters or e-blasts).</p> <p>SETTING UP E-MARKETING</p> <p>Set up your Database</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The BID recommends that all businesses start by building a database that your marketing materials will go to. • This database should be created in Excel or Google Sheets so that it is easy to edit and export. • Add a place on your website where people can enter their email addresses in order to receive offers, specials, event notifications, etc. This information can then be added to your database to help it grow. Encourage your social media followers to sign up as well. <p>Set up your Content Management System {CMS}</p>

	<p>Businesses are encouraged to put together e-campaigns that are sent out to their database via email or a Content Management System (CMS) such as MailChimp, Constant Contact, etc. After setting up your CMS account, add your database so your account is loaded up with the email addresses you would like to reach.</p> <p>Creating Content Your CMS will come with basic design templates. You can also create your own designs using online platforms such as Canva. Keep in mind that images are very important, so your e-campaigns must be visually appealing. Copy should be short and sweet.</p> <p>A few key points when creating email campaigns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never use deceptive headers, sender names, reply-to addresses or subject lines. • Always provide an unsubscribe link. The unsubscribe link must work for at least 30 days after sending. • You must include your physical mailing address. <p>Sending Out Once you have your content ready, it's time to send it out to your database. How often you send out e-campaigns is up to you. You don't want to go overboard with too many emails, but it is important to be consistent. Start with once a week or once a month, whatever you can do, and keep track of open and unsubscribe rates on your CMS. Also take note of how often visitors to your business mention your e-campaigns. There is no magic number to how many emails you should be sending, but your audience habits will let you know if it's too little or too much.</p>
<p>Do's and Don'ts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DO make sure your list is original and emails are obtained voluntarily. The CMS platforms mentioned above require your list to be authentic (<i>not purchased</i>) and have a double opt-in policy. • DON'T buy a list. Doing so will flag your account as SPAM and you could be fined. Spam negatively impacts deliverability rates, and we want to make sure your email marketing is effective and your emails reach their recipients. 	

SOCIAL MEDIA @shopcoralgables:

BID	MERCHANT
<p>The BID has a large social media presence that grows on a daily basis, with 16k+ followers on Facebook, over 5k+ followers on Twitter and 30k+ followers on Instagram.</p> <p>The BID staff manages the content flow of information and posts merchant events, offers, sales, and giveaway/contests.</p> <p>Getting Your Post on Our Feed</p> <p>We appreciate and welcome your content! Because of the amount of information we receive and the frequency of our posting, all received content will be posted at our discretion. Here is how to send us yours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Please send your news/promotions ahead of time, preferably at least a week before you need it posted so that we can get the message out to our followers.• Please do not send us your promotional information via social media. Instead, send us an email to: info@shopcoralgables.com.• Please tag us in your own social media posts by using: @ShopCoralGables• Please use these hashtags in your own social media posts: #ShopCoralGables, #DayInTheGables, #_____In TheGables.	<p>Posting Tips</p> <p>Your posts should be a reflection of your brand.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep in mind that images should be visually appealing! We recommend not posting images taken in poor light, images that are blurry, offensive images or images/text that are inappropriate.• Feature your products, staff, pets, clients, unique services, sales, promotions, events, etc.• Remember to create main feed posts as well as stories.• Videos are popular! Just don't make them too long.• If you need a unique hashtag, there are websites that can create one for you like, besthashtags.com <p>Use a scheduling Platform</p> <p>We understand that while running a business, you rarely have time to think about what you should be posting each day. A great way to get around that is by using a scheduling platform. These services store the content that you enter and post it for you based on the dates that you select. Also, these scheduling platforms can post to more than one social media platform at a time. Tip: You must have your Facebook and Instagram accounts connected first.</p> <p>Some suggestions to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Select a scheduling platform and sign up! Options include Hootsuite, Later, Buffer, Gain, and Sprout. We recommend doing your own research and selecting the one that best suits your needs and budget.• Plan your content a week or month in advance. This may be the most challenging part. One helpful way to do this is by creating a content calendar.• For example: --Mondays: Feature accessories/appetizers --Thursdays: Feature an entire weekend

	<p>outfit/weekend drink specials --Saturdays: Post an image of a great gift idea/great date night meal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dedicate however much time you can to creating posts for that week or month.• Load as much of that content as you can and schedule it on your scheduling platform
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Measuring Performance

While posting and creating new content is key to boosting your social media presence, you need to analyze your posts to measure performance and effectiveness. There are many free tools that you can access, including Google Analytics, which should be connected to your website and Facebook Insights (built in the platform’s backend). In addition, the scheduling platforms mentioned above also include some level of analytics and insights.

PUBLIC RELATIONS:

BID	MERCHANT
<p>The BID contracts a public relations firm to perform media outreach for its special events and programming such as Coral Gables Restaurant Week, Giralda Under the Stars and more. As we receive media leads, we will approach merchants accordingly.</p> <p>The BID created and shares a list of FREE media opportunities and media contacts for BID members to perform their own outreach. The list also includes how to be featured in community calendars.</p>	<p>Public Relations and Media Outreach</p> <p>If you are able to do so, it is recommended that you hire a local PR firm that can perform specialized outreach for your business. However, it is entirely possible for you to perform your own outreach, if you use the following best practices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use a press release template to get your story out and assign one or two staff members from your business to serve as the main media contacts.• Use the list of media opportunities and contacts that the BID provides as a start, and conduct research to find other relevant media contacts.• Find the most relevant contact at each media outlet, and direct your email to them personally.• Consider whether a paid release makes sense. PR Web and PR Newswire are two companies that will distribute your press release regionally, nationally, or internationally, depending on your needs.• Register as a source on www.helpareporter.com. This site matches journalists and sources. You will get a daily email with requests for sources and can choose to respond to specific media requests. <p>Keep in mind that every story is not newsworthy! Your story should be important, timely, and relevant.</p>

SPECIAL EVENTS & PROJECTS:

BID	MERCHANT
<p>Throughout the year, the BID produces events that bring people to the downtown. Past events include Coral Gables Restaurant week, Giralda Under the Stars, Wine, Walk & Shop, Halloween on the Mile and many more.</p> <p>The BID sends participation notices for most events and businesses are encouraged to sign up for any opportunities as early as possible.</p> <p>The BID will also sometimes inform merchants about events produced by our community partners, such as the City of Coral Gables or the Coral Gables Chamber of Commerce, and any participation opportunities.</p> <p>We recommend that, in addition to participating in BID events, businesses host their own events.</p>	<p>Here are some tips regarding your own events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send out invitations for your event to those in your database • Use a free platform like EventBrite.com to register event attendees. Bonus: you can import the RSVP list to add to your growing database. Most CMS platforms have a direct link to EventBrite and the emails are uploaded automatically. • Use the BID’s Free PR list to share your event with the community • Get creative when it comes to an event, think outside the box • Partner up with a charity for your event. They will share it on their own database. • Consider an event with or in collaboration with another local business • Hold a raffle or contest during your event • Invite a guest musician or speaker • Announce your event at least 4 weeks in advance • Send out weekly reminders • Take pictures at your event of attendees, special menu items or products, services being offered, guests of honor, people enjoying themselves, people winning prizes, etc. and post them on social media, thanking those who attended.
<p>More on Events...</p> <p>Once you see what type of events work for your business, consistency is key! Repeat popular events as often as it makes sense for your business, promote them on social media, and change things up a bit every now and then for repeat clients to have something new to look forward to.</p> <p>If you cannot come up with an event idea, consider staying open later once a week or month so guests have more time to explore your business.</p>	

BID DIRECTORY & WEBSITE:

BID	MERCHANT
<p>The BID hosts a website, www.shopcoralgables.com, on which your business has a FREE page with your logo, business description, hours and a link to your website and social channels. The website has built-in Search Engine Optimization (SEO) for the editorial and merchant content.</p> <p>The BID’s website features a robust Google-based event calendar. Businesses are encouraged to share upcoming events to be listed on the website by emailing the details to info@shopcoralgables.com for inclusion.</p> <p>The BID also works with an outside company to produce the Coral Gables Map, which lists all of our merchants at no additional charge. Nothing further is needed to be listed.</p>	<p>Boost your online presence</p> <p>Claim Your Free Google Page As you know, the majority of folks turn to Google to find what they are looking for. We recommend that BID members claim and frequently update their Google business page. In addition, the new Kiosks along Miracle Mile pull directly from Google business listings so claiming your page helps for your businesses to be found.</p> <p>Here’s how to Claim your FREE Google Business page. Click here to learn how!</p> <p>Make sure your Google listing contains the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Correct business name, address, website and contact information• Photos• Hours of operation• Accurate categories (For Example: a coffee shop should be listed under Café, Coffee/Tea, and/or Breakfast, but not under Bars/Lounges or other inaccurate categories)

ADVERTISING:

The BID advertises Downtown Coral Gables on digital media, billboards and print publications. Occasionally, the BID creates and/or negotiates special co-op advertising programs. These allow for significantly discounted advertising opportunities for our members.

BID Members should check with the BID for the most recent list of paid marketing opportunities/special rates available.

BID GIFT CERTIFICATES:

Participation in the BID Gift Certificate Program is FREE. When customers pay with gift certificates, you simply accept the certificates as cash and submit them to the BID office for 100% reimbursement. Please email us at info@shopcoralgables.com for complete details.

COMING SOON SIGNS & STORE FRONT COVERING:

The BID creates and designs storefront window wraps to cover vacant storefronts. The BID worked with the city to create an overlay within the city’s zoning code allowing new tenants to design and install custom, branded wraps with certain guidelines. The BID can guide you through the approval process. Please email us at info@shopcoralgables.com for complete details.