

Early Planning, Collaboration and the Role of Social Media: A Model for Future Event Success and Lessons Learned from Eclipse 2024

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A total solar eclipse is a natural astrological phenomenon that is a special event in the infrequent interludes when it occurs. Two recent total solar eclipses in the United States occurred on August 21st, 2017, and April 8th, 2024. As was initially learned in 2017, such events are best experienced and handled if deliberate and detailed planning takes place before they occur. This paper examines the process that many cities, towns, brands, and companies across the country went through to prepare for and better handle the expected massive influx of interested observers and the important lessons learned that may have significant implications for local communities as well as business practices related to product development and promotion. The total solar eclipse on April 8th, 2024, showcased the potential for organizations and brands to create impactful campaigns that educate, engage, and drive brand awareness while promoting scientific inquiry and a sense of community.

Keywords: total solar eclipse, community planning, social media, product development and promotion, business knowledge lessons learned

ANTICIPATION AND PREPARATION BEFORE THE FACT

For the 2017 eclipse, 12 million people were in the path of totality, and another 7 million traveled to various parts of the country to view it as compared to 2024, where the path of totality covered an estimated 32 million people. (6ABC, 2017, Bakich, 2021). In addition, it was estimated that about 200 million people lived within a day's drive of the 2017 eclipse path, with similar numbers seen for 2024 as it stretched from Texas to Maine (Severn, 2016; Thomas, 2023). While larger towns and cities such as Dallas, Indianapolis, and Cleveland had significant concerns about such an event, it is interesting to consider the additional challenges and issues facing smaller towns and villages in the projected eclipse path that may have lacked more developed means of infrastructure. Therefore, because of such concerns, no one seemed to consider it obsessive when cities and towns across the country began to plan in early 2022 for this unique two-minute event, two full years before the April 8th, 2024, eclipse date. (Bennett, 2022).

The small town of Blairsville, Georgia, which is about 2 hours north of Atlanta, saw about a 200% increase in people beyond its average population during the 2017 eclipse (6ABC, 2017). Based on what happened in 2017, cities such as Lima, Ohio, in Allen County, which has a population of about 36,000, expect the possibility of 100,000 to 200,000 visitors (Kelly, 2023). Even though there was a total solar

eclipse in the United States in 2017, this is the first time since 1806 that it covered portions of western Ohio (Schriner, 2023). Because of the potential of what was about to happen in 2024, across the country, many police forces developed strategies to handle increased traffic and significant inflows of people and worked to ensure law and order. In addition, by the luck of the draw, Forest, Ohio, a small village in rural Hardin County, ended up being very close to the direct path of the eclipse's totality. Forest is a small town with a population of about 1,350 people that ended up absorbing a cost of \$150,000 for the town and surrounding county. Before the eclipse, Forest hoped to get some state-supported funding to offset some of the cost along with some fundraising and informed budgeting for 2024 (Robinson, 2022; McCullough, 2023b). However, support from the state of Ohio was not provided because the eclipse was not categorized as a disaster. Hence, no emergency funding was available, except for Cleveland, even though the state invited people and organizations to the state's prime observing counties in a come early, stay after attitude and philosophy of promotion (McCullough, 2023b). Hospitals in the path of the eclipse canceled elective surgery for that period of time and had extra staff on standby for emergency rooms and medical support. The Red Cross started developing contingency plans for the availability of support staff and resources for locations along the eclipse path well before the event. For example, the village of Forest, Ohio, which has no hospital, requested a mobile hospital be provided and made adjustments to change trash service days to avoid the build-up in traffic and confusion until after the eclipse. In addition, because of the potential burden on communications, Forest also looked into the systems needed during the eclipse to avoid communication blackouts. In preparation, the Village of Forest wrote a letter to Ohio Lt. Governor John Husted for any additional guidance (McCullough, 2023b).

Since April 8th, 2024, was a Monday, many school systems did not have class sessions for that day and several days during that week (Bennett, 2022). Many local and county law enforcement agencies instituted a no-vacation rule. They scheduled 12-hour shifts during the period of the eclipse, lessening the need for outside law enforcement help. However, support from other agencies, such as the State Highway Patrol or the National Guard, was offered if needed (McCullough, 2023b). Preparation for the eclipse also took place in larger area cities of Northwest Ohio such as Findlay, which were excited to host guests who took advantage of resources such as restaurants, hotels, and other amenities, as well as Lima who partnered with the Allen County government along with coordinating planning committees through the Allen County Emergency Management Agency (Schultz, 2023).

BIG PLANNING FOR SMALL TOWNS

A great deal of the planning for the 2024 eclipse was based on what was learned from 2017 and other previous eclipse events. Places of observation were identified and studied in terms of capacity, traffic flow, and people-friendly types of environments. Many town officials of those areas within the prime eclipse observation locations worked hard in the preparation and planning that let visitors know what they could and could not do to be safe by providing accurate, helpful, and useful information through proactive measures (Thomas, 2023). In addition to the additional burden on local areas and resources, organizers wanted to be aware of the potential for unprecedented recognition, economic and market opportunities resulting in vast additional revenue, increased local identity and recognition (Kelly, 2023). For example, at one time, NASA considered setting up a major solar eclipse observation station in tiny Forest Ohio in Hardin County because of the long exposure to the eclipse there but instead opted for Avon Lake near Cleveland since NASA already had an observatory in place and because the path of totality has shifted slightly to favor the Avon Lake site and thus removing Forest as a prime NASA observation site of notoriety (McCullough, 2023b; Schriner, 2023).

Places such as schools, churches, parks, airports, area fairgrounds, agricultural fields, and football and baseball fields were all prime areas for observing the eclipse. Beyond observing the eclipse, other issues were being considered in terms of food, sanitation, potential accommodations for lodging, and available communication systems, with many people planning to provide services to visitors through individual and private group facilities related to food and camping. With an expectation that it may be extremely difficult for local entities to achieve this task, some local town planners sent letters asking the state of Ohio to grant

a variance from April 1st to 15 to allow them to ask for somewhat impromptu camping areas and food areas. This was done to provide notification of their plans in anticipation of inspections and supervision to be plotted to some degree by the health department and law enforcement for sanitation and safe water drinking facilities. (Thomas, 2023). In addition, it was noted that having five or more units (tents, R.V., campers, etc.) clustered in one location was legally considered a campground subject to strict rules and regulations with a variance secured from the Ohio Department of Health (Robinson, 2022). To anticipate the need for inspections, the local and state health departments looked into developing improvised rules to deal with the anticipated bombardment of requests (McCullough, 2023c). Local government planners had hoped to control chaos because it would be impossible to prevent it. Fortunately, such out-of-control chaos did not occur to any degree. What was feared and was avoided this time around was what many private citizens and neighborhoods experienced in places like Kentucky in 2017, where visitors and would-be trespassers would stop in people's private yards and farm fields and set up tents without regard to privacy, ownership, or any supervision (Kelly, 2023; McCullough, 2023c).

To make up for the lack of many of the amenities offered by larger cities, small town planners were required to anticipate the need for visitor parking, space for food vendors and other potential vendors areas, as well as adequate sanitation facilities such as port-o-potties to support the low number of public flush toilets available as may be found in city parks and other buildings (Kelly, 2017). For example, Forest, Ohio, passed a village ordinance to specifically accommodate the anticipated massive influx of people with three parking subsections, including for vendors, special event parking on residential property, and camping on residential property (Holsinger, 2023). Based on past practice, many places of business found it convenient to post "out of order" signs on their restroom doors. In addition, towns needed to plan for adding temporary phone towers for the additional demand for cell and internet service, along with installing temporary landline facilities. As far as lodging goes, local planners contemplated ways to effectively communicate and identify available hotels and Airbnb locations, along with potential areas for campsites for those who drove R.V.s to the viewing areas that planned to provide adequate sanitary dumping stations in an eclipse event that took place on April 20th, 2023. Exmouth, a town of 3,000 found on a piece of land jutting out from Australia's west coast, hosted about 20,000 observers. Although it is a usual tourist attraction because of its pristine reef and resident whale sharks, about \$22 million of Western Australia state-supported planning went into improving infrastructure, preparing accommodations, traffic management, hundreds of portable toilets, dozens of additional emergency workers, the clearing of five acres of forestland and a 1.5-million-gallon water tank (Frost, 2023; Hayes et al., 2023). In addition, A great deal of planning went into associated entertainment and things to occupy the town's newfound 20,000 friends, such as outdoor music performances, stargazing tours, a festival, photography lessons, and astronomy education for the kids (Marcus, 2023).

THE AFTERMATH OF THE ECLIPSE

Many local agencies and organizations around Cleveland had planned and provided information for periods before and after the eclipse, including interactive online games, contests, websites, and listings of local points of interest and prime eclipse viewing locations such as parks and the lakeshore (Fox, 2023). Several Northwest Ohio locations also planned for the post-eclipse to avoid mass traffic jams as visitors would be departing the area to be on their way. The question was contemplated as to what would happen after the four-minute eclipse concluded in the mid-afternoon of April 8th. To address this concern, cities such as Lima and nearby Wapakoneta planned events of interest that helped mitigate a mass exodus of the area, which would have tied up resources and infrastructure and created inconvenience for the local citizens. These events proved very successful and were well attended. For example, The City of Lima had recently built a new outdoor amphitheater in the downtown area, which could provide opportunities to keep people engaged and encouraged to seek entertainment, as well as dining and spending money opportunities, while nearby Wapakoneta has the world-famous Neil Armstrong Air and Space Museum dedicated to hometown hero and the first man on the moon (Kelly, 2023). In addition to being a prime area to view the actual eclipse, the Armstrong Museum, as well as Wapakoneta itself, was still feeling the positive effects of the

eclipse for weeks and months after the actual event. The museum's festivities during the eclipse offered food trucks, a D.J., shaved ice, T-shirts, and museum tours (King, 2024). Estimates are that with an influx of people; the Wapakoneta saw an influx of about two to three times the area's population, which is about 20,000 to 30,000, with local businesses still filling back orders as the eclipse did not overshadow the economic impact felt in the area (WDTN, 2024).

Forest, Ohio, which is near the path of totality of the eclipse, executed a plan to direct all exiting traffic flow only to the north using nearby U.S. Route 30, a major east-west four-lane highway built to normally handle such traffic (Thomas, 2023). Plans were developed and implemented to deal with post-event debris and waste removal since it was anticipated to be massive, time-consuming, and would put a strain on local services over and above normal requirements (Thomas, 2023; McCullough, 2023c).

Post-eclipse assessments of how the various locales within Ohio handled the eclipse event were generally positive and complementary. The consensus opinion since the eclipse occurred is that the cities and villages located in the path of totality of the eclipse flawlessly rolled out the red carpet for thousands of out-of-state visitors as well as native Ohioans to view and experience this very memorable event (Zimora, 2024). As early as 2022, officials throughout Ohio at the state, county, and local levels studied and learned valuable lessons from the problems experienced in Kentucky and Tennessee during the 2017 eclipse in working to avoid traffic congestion and unsafe conditions along busy highways during the eclipse as well as a lack of empathy and respect of visitors for the property of local citizens (Tares, 2024). As reported by Zimora (2024), planning early, the coordination of efforts with local partners to leverage resources and clear messaging and communication with the public proved effective, as reflected in the activities and efforts of various locations in Ohio:

Elyria, Ohio

Elyria's preplanning facilitated the effective flow of traffic, welcoming about 35,000 visitors, who benefitted from its proximity to the Ohio Turnpike and Interstate 90.

Mansfield, Ohio

Planning paid off in the coordination among local agencies and organizations such as schools, business groups, public health and social services, and the local library. Proximity to both Interstate 71 and U.S. Route 30 was helpful with smooth traffic flow in and out of the city.

Oxford, Ohio

The Office of City Management reported that widespread, clear messaging that began weeks before the eclipse helped with the event's success. Oxford also prepared maps of prime viewing areas along with a schedule for a full day of entertainment. Effective coordination was achieved through preplanning with local partners such as the library, local art center, tourism bureau, and local chamber of commerce.

Dayton, Ohio

Interstate 75 was an asset as far as effective traffic flow was concerned. Preplanning resulted in the development of a multi-tier communication system to be in place in case cellular communication was disrupted. The City of Dayton also encouraged local employers, the municipal workforce, and others to utilize remote work on the day of the eclipse.

Butler County, Ohio Emergency Management Agency

Local government leaders of Southwest Ohio were grateful for the early and in-depth planning undertaken by the Ohio Emergency Management Agency and the coordination of local meetings that began in July 2023. The agency was a helpful partner in the planning and implementation efforts related to working with local health departments to issue permits, set up food trucks, and set up temporary campsites, including water and waste system management.

In all, it was reported that traffic flowed smoothly throughout Ohio, where many towns and villages were in the path of totality, and that more than 500 family-friendly eclipse events across the state provided

a pleasant and memorable experience, showing how effective planning and implementation can create positive outcomes (Zimora, 2024).

Despite all the successes and good news, many locations on the path of totality of the eclipse concluded that there was a great degree of over-preparing that took place, which might have been overkill. For the future, many advocate being more realistic regarding visitor numbers and closures because of the concerns that future predictions may create doubt, significant disagreement, and disappointment in the projected expectations of coming events (Observer, 2024). In fact, in a recent analysis of the planning done in Hardin County, Ohio, Sheriff Keith Everhart reported that his department spent \$20,000 for overtime expenses, extra fuel, food, and lodging for the eclipse, which he considered the most significant waste of taxpayer dollars in his career in addition to being an "expensive training exercise" that was mandated by Governor Mike DeWine (Keller, 2024).

INCREASING ECONOMIC IMPACT THROUGH MARKETING PLANNING INITIATIVES: TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE 2024

The total solar eclipse offered a unique opportunity for companies, small businesses, communities, and local groups to engage with current and potential followers through products, events, and activities centered around the eclipse. The events based on the eclipse greatly broadened brand visibility and engagement for those who took the time to plan months and sometimes years in advance. This section explores the campaigns launched by different brands, the outcomes of those campaigns, and best practices that can be used for future events.

Success Stories: Solar Eclipse Brand Campaigns, Events and Products

According to Wallinger (2024)

As marketers, the solar eclipse is a welcome break from the predictable holidays and influencer-driven awards events cycle. It offers the ability to respond to a rare, naturally occurring moment, complete with a low overhead and high wow factor. A unique confluence of possibility that seasoned creatives, content, and product innovators can't help but respond to. The brief is simple: incorporate your brand authentically in celebration of a phenomenon that unites humans as they pause to reflect upon their place in the solar system. It's the stuff of marketing dreams, the ability to connect with audiences while memorializing a shared experience that salutes the magic of nature.

Forward-thinking marketers, businesses, and communities around the world agree. Creativity, mixed with good planning and execution, creates a perfect combination for successful products and campaigns. Below are a few fan favorites that proved to trend, drive traffic, and become a part of U.S. eclipse history.

Bill Nye, the Science Guy, representing Eclipse Fashion for Time Out New York

Fashionistas, stylists, and fashion editors got in on eclipse marketing opportunities, enlisting stars from every genre and encouraging statement pieces with style inspiration from both science and the sky. Bill Nye, the Science Guy, made the cover of Time Out New York in a departure from his normal white lab, suit, and tie (Forbes, 2024).

FIGURE 1
BILL NYE FOR “TIME OUT NEW YORK”



Boogie Board

Reusable writing pad manufacturer Boogie Board, based in Kent, Ohio, used both the eclipse event and the travel to the path of totality in an excellent marketing push to gain consumers. For twenty-four hours on March 14th, customers got to pick a Sketch Pals Doodle Board or a Jot Pocket Writing Tablet for free, which normally would cost them \$19.99 after they paid shipping and taxes (Inc., 2024). The promotion brought over 1,000 customers in for a free board, and the company saw an eighty-seven percent spike in referral web traffic driven by influencers and free media coverage of the promotion (Inc., 2024). The tie between the product being produced in the path of totality and already strongly promoting the brand's essential travel qualities for less screen time, the company noted the eclipse event as a natural fit with great payoffs (Inc., 2024).

FIGURE 2
BOOGIE BOARD ECLIPSE PROMOTION FOR SCREEN-FREE TRAVEL



Delta

Delta ran an extremely unique campaign, offering customers the chance to experience the path of totality from the sky on a special flight from Austin to Detroit on April 8th, 2024. The flight was such a sensation that it sold out in one day, prompting Delta to add a second flight (Sampson, 2024).

Destination Seneca County: www.destinationsebecounty.org/2024-solar-eclipse-in-Seneca-county

One of the most notable nationally covered, well-planned, and executed events occurred in a small town in northwest Ohio called Tiffin. Tiffin, Ohio, is home to two Universities, Tiffin University and Heidelberg University. This college town, with young leaders aspiring to put Tiffin on the map, did one of the best jobs of collaboration and planning, as reviewed by the authors. Destination Seneca County showcased all of the camping and eclipse-based activities in the county through co-promotion on its website. They also created three events: Solar Eclipse of the Heart Bingo, Out of the Dark 5K Run, and most notably, Elope at the Eclipse (destinationsebecounty.org, 2024). According to Fox 8 (2024), couples came from as far as Japan, the Netherlands, California, and New York to get married during the totality of the eclipse. The New York Times, Washington Post, USA Today, People magazine, and other national outlets sent crews to cover the history-making event (Fox 8, 2024). The event was well designed, offering 150 couples the opportunity to get married during the once-in-a-lifetime event in downtown Tiffin, along with professional photography and a wedding cake for each couple (destinationsebecounty.org, 2024). Notably, the Destination Seneca County group did a great job of showcasing and cross-promoting the event. They also showcased every store in the county selling merchandise that consumers could directly click on from their website.

**FIGURE 3
ELOPE AT THE ECLIPSE**



Jeni's Ice Cream

For some businesses, like Jeni's Ice Cream, previous flavor launches that were not well planned, such as its flop in 2021 with a collaboration with Dolly Parton, proved that for the eclipse event, they needed to start at least a year in advance for the product development and no less than a month for promotion (Inc., 2024). This time around, Jeni's developed a four-flavor series named Punk Stargonaut that included Cosmic Bloom, Purple Moon, Purple Star Born, and Nebula Berry flavors with a team of thirty employees starting in June of 2023 (Inc., 2024). Jeni's launched the flavors on the website and socials starting in March (Inc., 2024).

FIGURE 4
JENI'S ICE CREAM ECLIPSE SPECIALTY FLAVORS



Krispy Kreme

Krispy Kreme took its usual playful approach to create the Eclipse Doughnut that was only available on April 8th, 2024. The company created a well-diversified and engaging marketing campaign with a mix of traditional advertising and social media to promote the special product. It should also be noted that the campaign used the hashtag #Eclipse Donut, which was highly trending. According to company officials, the campaigns used a mix of live streaming and led to a significant spike in foot traffic at brick-and-mortar locations nationwide (U.S. News, 2024).

FIGURE 5
KRISPY KREME ECLIPSE DOUGHNUTS



Moon Pies

The Chattanooga bakery, founded in 1903 and owns and bakes the original marshmallow sandwich, self-proclaimed itself as the official sponsor of the total solar eclipse on April 8th, 2024. After having massive success on the 2017 eclipse, Moon Pie went all-out to celebrate the 2024 eclipse with a special, limited-edition drop of Solar Eclipse Survival Kits (Amir, 2024) The limited supply of custom blackout boxes of chocolate, vanilla or banana mini Moon Pies were a must-have for eclipse watch parties, especially in the path of totality (Amir, 2024).

FIGURE 6
MOON PIE SPECIAL EDITION ECLIPSE EVENT 2024



Oreo

Oreo started capitalizing on the eclipse crowds and demand for eclipse-based products in January 2024 when it early released its space dunk-flavored Oreo.

FIGURE 7
ECLIPSE OREO SPACE DUNK



Omaha Steaks

The one hundred-and-seven-year-old Omaha Steaks corporation located in Omaha, Nebraska, saw mass success with a fifty percent increase eclipse of the Burgs 41-item burger bundle valued at \$376.00 (Inc., 2024). The promotion started in late February and went on until the eclipse date of April 8th, 2024. Omaha projected it would sell roughly 500,000 boxes of burgers with the eclipse promotion efforts (Inc., 2024).

FIGURE 8
OMAHA STEAKS ECLIPSE OF THE BURGERS MARKETING PROMOTION



Princess Cruise Line: Total Eclipse

In line with the rest of the tourism industry, Princess Cruise Lines created a 10-day Mexican Riviera cruise that promptly sold out, prompting the company to add a second adjusted route and fifteen-day cruise. With so much success with the 2024 cruises and marketing efforts, Princess has already announced a new astrotourism experience for the European 2026 total solar eclipse (Princess, 2024). The next event will take place on August 12th, 2026, and will be two minutes and eighteen seconds of totality (Princess, 2024). The 3,660 guest Sky Princess will depart Southampton on August 8th, 20026, for a fourteen-day Mediterranean cruise highlighting the total eclipse viewing in the pat at sea off the coast of Spain (Princess, 2024). The Total Eclipse Sky Princess Voyage goes on sale May 23rd, 2024, with rates starting at \$2,199 per person and is expected to sell out within hours (Princess, 2024).

Sonic

Sonic took to creating specialty flavors along with many other food manufacturers and fast-food chains to see much success with their limited-edition slush float called the Blackout Slush Float. Sonic featured the slush float, which was cotton candy and dragon fruit-flavored, all-black slush representing the temporary darkness from the eclipse. The slush was topped with purple galaxy-themed sprinkles, and each one came with a pair of eclipse viewing glasses. Sonic, too, joined forces with an astronaut, Terry Virts, to increase scientific exploration and expertise on its website, live stream, and social channels. (Inc. 2024).

FIGURE 9
SONIC BLACKOUT SLUSH FLOAT LIMITED EDITION SLUSHY



SunChips®

Frito-Lay North America utilized the eclipse and its product name – the SunChip® - as an inspiration for a limited-edition chip that they gave away online starting at 1:33 p.m. C.T. on April 8th, during the four minutes and 27 seconds of the solar eclipse's duration of totality. The company partnered with astronaut Kellie Gerardi to give away the new limited-edition flavor that was SunChips® Solar Eclipse Limited-Edition Pineapple Habanero and Black Bean Spicy Gouda. Frito-Lay North America cross-promoted the chips and viewing experience with a website launch, www.SunChipsSolarEclipse.com, as well as paid and organic campaigns on streaming, paid advertising, Instagram, TikTok, X, and Facebook campaigns. (America, 2024).

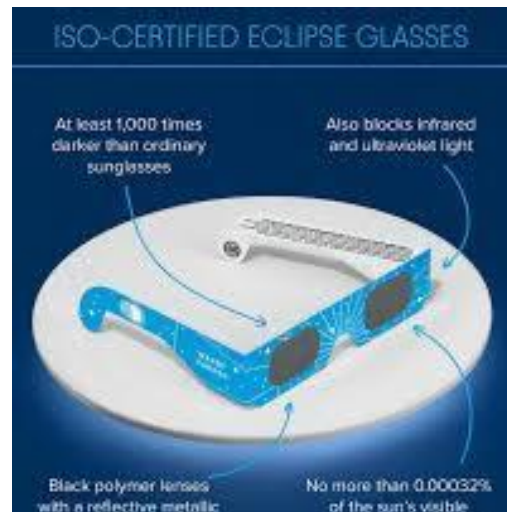
FIGURE 10
SUNCHIPS SOLAR ECLIPSE LIMITED-EDITION PINEAPPLE HABANERO AND BLACK BEAN SPICY GOUDA



Warby Parker

Warby Parker notably collaborated with Delta by creating a special edition of Warby Parker eclipse glasses that each passenger wore on the special flight. The company also handed out free pairs of the eclipse glasses at its 240 brick-and-mortar stores and held a special watch party at Soho House in Austin (Inc., 2024).

FIGURE 11
WARBY PARKER ECLIPSE GLASSES



EARLY PLANNING, COLLABORATION AND THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA: A KEY MODEL FOR FUTURE EVENT MARKETING SUCCESS

According to Amir (2024), companies from various industries took the opportunity to engage with consumers and capitalize on the energy surrounding the celestial event, with brand involvement being diverse and widespread. States, cities, and brands that planned early, created strategic plans, and effectively leveraged marketing tools clearly saw the highest economic benefit. The total solar eclipse on April 8th, 2024, showcased the potential for organizations and brands to create impactful campaigns that educate, engage, and drive brand awareness while also promoting scientific inquiry and promoting a sense of community.

BUSINESS KNOWLEDGE ACQUIRED AFTER THE FACT

In many ways, the solar eclipse was more than just a true astronomical phenomenon. The magnitude of such an event as a mystery of nature and the majesty of the universe brought out a sense of commonality, belongingness, and a shared experience of awe that business leaders can leverage to develop and encourage caring and supportive work teams (Smith, 2024; Naseer, 2024). As a powerful metaphor for leaders, the eclipse proved to be a profound experience of clarity and community where leaders can create more enlightened workplace dynamics based on the concept of asking over telling, empathy over efficiency, growth over a fixed mindset, intrinsic over extrinsic motivation, and progress over results (Giuliani, 2024). The obvious lessons learned from the recent solar eclipse were preparation, the expectation of early arrivals, and that planning well in advance of the events has definite advantages, as was also learned from the earlier eclipse in 2017, where planning started five years out (Peltier, 2017).

One common theme that came out of the recent eclipse experience is that some business organizations, as well as geographic market areas, realized that such an event could be a catalyst for promotion and demand creation. Cities along the path of totality from Mexico into Canada known for certain qualities could be reinforced through persuasive and reminder advertising and public relations. For example, Mazatlán, Mexico, seized the opportunity of the fact that it was in the path of totality by promoting it as a beach and resort town, as well as Indianapolis seized on the chance to promote its arts and culture scene along with Wapakoneta, Ohio in using its moon connection as the location housing the Space Museum named in honor of its hometown hero Neil Armstrong (Nerkar & Moreno, 2024; King, 2024). In addition, Indianapolis took advantage of the space and the accommodation of the Indianapolis 500 Speedway with its IMS Total Solar

Eclipse Event presented by Purdue University, which was an opportunity to introduce the venue to many non-race fans from all 50 States, the District of Columbia and more than 21 other countries and territories, including Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Czech Republic, Dominican Republic, England, France, Germany, Greenland, Japan, Lithuania, Mexico, Northern Ireland, Philippines, Poland, Romania, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland (Martin, 2024). Indianapolis, as well as many cities and business organizations, have realized that they could never afford all the advertising and P.R. that they "got for free" and what the eclipse meant for promoting local points of interest and raising awareness of the area for potential future events and opportunities generating the concept that when opportunity knocks, answer by creating a demand by becoming a demand creator (Peltier, 2017; Dunn, 2024).

CONCLUSION

In a world seemingly preoccupied with conflict and polarization, it was refreshing for a short period as it allowed us to enjoy a sense of shared humanness and collective imagination (Smith, 2024). In the spirit of grasping the gravity of such an event and the associated consequences, those anticipated those unforeseen, a serious-minded planning effort seemed to be a success in planning and implementation. Local officials throughout the state of Ohio, as well as the rest of the country in the eclipse observation path, acknowledged that this was going to be a major event and had to be dealt with in a coordinated effort with an emphasis on representation, coordination, and communication among the various civic, governmental, law enforcement and business communities to achieve a safe and successful eclipse event in the days around early April 2024 (McCullough, 2023b). As a part of informed planning as a way to facilitate open communication and coordination, Hardin County officials created the organization known as "Leading the Way," made of individuals from local hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living, EMS, hospice, Council on Aging, Area Agency on Aging, transportation, and medical personnel to hold monthly round table meetings to discuss relevant health, transportation, and planning issues to prepare for April 2024 (McCullough, 2023).

There is a legacy of the eclipse that many business organizations and communities can leverage for future benefit. Exploring new ideas and concentrated brainstorming can net results for future success and for ways to integrate new ideas into existing programming, such as developing community centers and associated programming related to science and astronomy, encouraging an interest in the arts and culture programs, and using this opportunity to promote area tourism (Jones et al., 2024). The eclipse not only brought thousands of people to various locations to view it but also provided numerous opportunities that are being explored to create value, market growth, and a better understanding of our amazing universe.

FIGURE TWELVE
PATH OF TOTALITY OF THE SOLAR ECLIPSE THROUGH OHIO



Source: <https://www.facebook.com/TotalSolarEclipse2024HardinCounty>

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