Why The Outlet Shoppes at Gettysburg needs help

A few days ago I received a four-fold brochure in the mail that had this tease on the address panel:

> *Governor O'Malley doesn't want you to know about this….SHOP TAX FREE*

My first impression was this was a political mailing. It wasn't, because on the back panel it says:

> *Shop Tax Free Every Day*
>
> *The Outlet Shoppes at Gettysburg (website, address, phone)*
>
> *Midnight Madness – Thanksgiving Night! Save All Night*

On the inside panels was a listing of participating stores with their different special offers.

Do you notice any missing information? How about driving directions, or even an indication how far it is from main roads/cities in Maryland? How about hours?

This brochure assumes that saving on taxes would be enough incentive for me to go the website or call to get the information that is missing. That is expecting too much. I did go to the website just to see how this mall does with this piece of marketing communication. The website does list hours and has a rather unhelpful map under the directions. And also a Facebook link (which is not listed in the brochure).

I think that if you are going to spend money on printing, it better be worth the money. In this case, the Outlet Shoppes at Gettysburg got carried away with an idea—lets tell people in Maryland that we don't charge taxes—and went from there. The

company neglected to include BASIC information that anybody choosing to shop out of state would need: how do I get there, how long is it going to take and when are you open?

I would bet anything that this brochure was done in house. If it wasn’t done in house, it was done by a local agency that knows exactly how to get to the Outlet Shoppes at Gettysburg, because there is no other mall like it nearby. In Maryland, there are several outlet shopping malls in state, and others in Northern Virginia.

To me, this is a clear example of why you need to get an independent or outside opinion on your marketing materials. You will overlook something and a third party may be able to point it out to you, like I am doing here.

Thoughts?