

# *Southern Oakland* **TOWNSHIP** *Living*

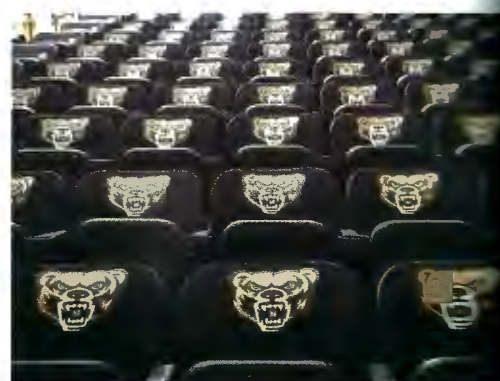
AN EXCLUSIVE NEWSLETTER FOR THE RESIDENTS OF SOUTHERN OAKLAND TOWNSHIP

JUNE 2014

Turn to the Business Beat Section and read about Oakland Township entrepreneur Gina Hoensheid and her company SeatSational.







Gina would love to "pink out" an entire stadium for breast cancer awareness.

## BUSINESS beat

TAKE A SEAT; GINA HOENSHEID HAS IT COVERED - SEATSATIONAL BRINGS ENHANCED MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES TO STADIUM-TYPE SEATING

By: Amy DiCresce

Oakland Township entrepreneur Gina Hoensheid offers preferred seating to arena spectators and innovative, interactive marketing opportunities to advertisers. It's a high-tech opportunity through a low-tech product: seat covers.

Easy-on, easy-off SeatSational slipcovers offer versatile options for sponsors at sporting events, movie theatres, concert venues and more. The seat covers can add a pop of color to a stadium or dramatically call out a student section or alumni section, for example, says Gina. They can also tout local business partnerships, highlight certain players or events, encourage interactive data gathering, or provide multimedia coupons. ... There are endless opportunities and ideas. "The seats are permanent, but the messages can keep changing again and again," Gina said. "It's completely dynamic."



At a recent Oakland University Grizzlies basketball game, SeatSational covered 300 chairs in the alumni section with black fabric covers that featured the Grizzly logo on the front and a special offer from CoolYo Yogurt on the back. It was great for O.U., as it made the arena look sleek and sharp on television, it made the spectators feel like V.I.P.s, and it provided cross-promotion for the co-sponsor. The seat covers were likewise great for CoolYo, a new local business with a strong desire to capture the college market. The text on the seat cover urged Grizzly fans to take a photo of the seat with their smartphone and present it at the yogurt shop for a buy-one-get-one-free promotion. Another version asked basketball fans to tweet their favorite player.

"It's really blending marketing and social media in clever ways," Gina said. "We can collect data, learn more about our audience, offer trackable discounts, create brand awareness, and be completely interactive and personal with our audience. It's very exciting!"

The idea for SeatSational came to Gina while she was at a Detroit Pistons game with her family at the Palace of Auburn Hills. "Between quarters, we were all people-watching and looking around, and I found myself looking at the seats in front of me much more than the giant billboards and Jumbotron screens, where most advertisers are featured. I had this "aha" moment and realized there was a huge missed opportunity. To put the message directly in front of spectators, up close and personal, made way more sense to me. My mind's been going a mile a minute ever since."

There are patents pending on the seat covers, which are manufactured locally and have multiple uses like cross-promoting products, gathering marketing data from spectators, or honoring certain groups of people. For instance, Gina would love to do a camouflage seat cover to honor military at an arena or large-scale venue. She'd also like to "pink out" an entire stadium for breast cancer awareness.

In May, SeatSational took over an entire Emagine theatre in Royal Oak for a movie premiere, honoring a local woman whose husband died of cancer, inspiring her to create a charity, called New Day Foundation, which provides financial support to cancer patients and families. The seat covers bring together all three organizations: Emagine theatre, Hallmark movies, and New Day Foundation—for combined marketing punch and charitable fundraising. With a background in marketing, advertising and interior design, Gina has the background to handle multi-faceted business plans, but she most loves projects like this that give back to the community and local charities.

The small business with great potential for expansive growth is currently operated out of the Hoensheid's Goodison Place home, where the whole family gets involved. Kurt and Gina have two children: Brooke (4th grade at Holy Family) and Hunter (11th grade at Notre Dame Prep). She often has her children serve as her test audience, as marketers try to appeal to younger groups. "Because of their input, we've added Twitter and Instagram opportunities to the backs of the seat covers. They represent a different market and they recognize the importance of social media. They have helped us make stadium events even cooler," Gina said.



The back of the seat covers offer interactive, social media opportunities for advertisers.

For more information, visit: [www.seatsational.com](http://www.seatsational.com).

If you are a business owner and would like to have your business featured for one month, please contact us at [lindsaymack.n2pub@gmail.com](mailto:lindsaymack.n2pub@gmail.com). This is a free one-page article that will run for one month and is only available to residents.

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