



TRAFFIC DRIVERS FOR GRAND OPENINGS

E - B O O K



Grand Openers
Putting You on the Map

a division of

inklink
MARKETING



Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

DEVELOPING A BUDGET

BEST INFLUENCERS

FREE (OR ALMOST FREE) WAYS
TO DRIVE BUZZ

DEVELOPING YOUR CONTACTS

IMPORTANCE OF FOLLOW-UP

TIPS ON HANDLING INTERVIEWS

MAKING YOUR GRAND OPENING
NEWSWORTHY



OVERVIEW

This e-Book covers some tips and tricks for driving traffic to your Grand Opening. There are some tried and true things you may do, from hosting a ribbon cutting to offering fun activities that will attract folks to your event. Keep in mind that markets and audiences may vary. If you would like a more customized plan for your location(s), please consult your Grand Openers rep.

DEVELOPING A BUDGET (ON THE CHEAP)

What type of media exists?

Before you dive into the planning of your Grand Opening, you'll want to set a budget, so you know what you can and can't do. After all, it's all about the numbers, especially when it comes to a budget.

We have a basic sample formula that we will share with you to calculate a Grand Opening budget, but keep in mind that this is *your business* and *your money*, so it's really at your discretion *how much* and *where* you spend it.

To estimate your Grand Opening budget according to our formula, you will want to calculate your **anticipated gross sales** for the **first two months** of operations at your new location. Once you have that figure, take **4.5%** of that amount and *voila!* You have your Grand Opening Budget.

Need to see that in numbers? Check out the following calculations and keep in mind that these are **only sample figures**. You will know your own numbers better than we do.

Calculation

*For example:

- **Step 1:** \$60,000.00 (Month 1) + \$70,000.00 (Month 2) = \$130,000.00 (Using the first two months of projected sales)
- **Step 2:** \$130,000.00 x .045 = \$5,850.00 (Funds to budget for Grand Opening event)

If you feel like your event needs more pazazz, then you can of course, budget for more (for example, additional Grand Openers services — hint, hint). Otherwise, this formula offers a good barometer of how you may plan for your event.

BEST INFLUENCERS

Influencers can help you get the word out on your event and talk up your business after your big day. The key is inviting the right influencers.

Who is an influencer?

Today, the most common influencers are bloggers, but influencers come in other shapes and sizes too. Influencers can be media personalities, entertainers, athletes, local dignitaries, business leaders, experts in specific fields and more. Depending on your business and market, influencers may vary. What they all have in common is a following. People are interested in what influencers have to say or what they're doing and want to be "in the know", and in the case of your Grand Opening, "in the where," with these influencers.

How do you determine who's the best influencer for your event?

You'll want to identify influencers who will, well, have the most *influence* with your target audience. You'll also want to find influencers who align as closely as possible to your brand or line of service. If you're opening a restaurant specializing in healthier menu options, then someone who is interested in food and health are good options. These could be health & fitness bloggers, food or mommy bloggers with a focus on health, an on-air TV anchor who is known for his/her healthy lifestyle and others.

As you're determining who is going to make the influencer cut, also keep in mind their following. You can find this by looking at their social media and how many followers they have on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. You'll also want to check how active they are on social media or other communication platforms, as well as how **engaged** their fans are with them.

You can buy fans. Crazy! We know, but money can buy lots of things. To find someone who has a more genuine following, see how engaged their fans are with them. Are fans making comments on the influencers' pages or is there just a series of one-way conversations or posts on their pages (coming primarily from the influencer)? Ideally, you want influencers and fans or followers engaged in two-way conversations.

FREE (OR ALMOST FREE) WAYS TO DRIVE BUZZ

Free is such a magical word. Who doesn't like free? When it comes to your Grand Opening and in life, some things are free (or at least close to free). The following are some free or almost free things you can offer at your event to help add to its grandness.

- **Giveaways:** If you have the goodies, then give them away! From free meal coupons to other types of coupons or goods, people like free- there's that word again! You can also make a small investment in branded items like pens, fans, sunglasses, and more. Free is free and people like free.
- **Bigger Giveaways:** While we're on the subject of giveaways, you can also offer "bigger" giveaways to help drive traffic to your location at a specific time. Ever wonder how people get a line out the door and around the block for a grand opening? The business is most likely offering a big giveaway like a year's supply of hamburgers or in the case of Ikea a free sofa for the first 100 people. You can determine what will be that "big" giveaway for your business, but remember that it can be something that you already have in stock to save yourself on costs.
- **Contests:** Grand Openings can be all about fun and games (and contests). Hosting a contest adds a sense of excitement to your event. People have something to look forward to with your big day. Who doesn't like feeling and actually being a winner? Contests can come in different forms; i.e., dance contest, singing contest, clucking contest (Yes, we've gotten people to cluck like a chicken, more times than we can count.), etc. You may also want to consider hosting a raffle or raffles. These are great, because you can collect guests' info (via entry forms) for future use, while offering them an opportunity to win some cool prizes.
- **Face painting:** Kids and parents love face painting. If you're being cost-conscious, you can purchase inexpensive face painting kits either online or from local party supply stores and have an employee with a bit of artistic flair, even it's just a hint of artistry, do the face painting. Some kits have stencils, so even the most unartistic person can do this.



- **DJ:** Music adds to the celebration atmosphere and DJs can be fairly easy to find. On average, they'll run about \$100/hr, but you can book a younger DJ or maybe you or one of your employees knows someone who DJs on the side, who may charge less. Also, if you plan on having multiple events, perhaps you can work out a deal, where you'll pay a lower rate, but commit to more than one event.
- **Bounce house:** There's something about bounce houses that drive kids crazy, but in a fun way. The visual alone attracts people. Their size and colors just say, "Come, join our party!" Bounce houses are also usually reasonably priced. A word to the wise, depending on your location, you may need to pull additional permits or insurance coverage for the bounce house. *Look into this before pulling the trigger.*

DEVELOPING YOUR CONTACTS

We touched on gathering guests' info in the last section. When guests are attending your big event, this is a great opportunity to gather their information for future use; i.e., add them to your email or mailing list. You want to stay engaged with them, so they will come back and support your business once the party is over and done.

How do you do this without being too direct?

The following are some ways to get that contact info and build your lists from Day One (Grand Opening Day).

- **Raffles:** As we mentioned in the previous section, host a raffle to add some fun to your event and capture guests' information at the same time. As the entry form, you may use a sign-up sheet for your e-mail program. If you don't have one, these are fairly easy to create. Tear pad forms are recommended for ease. You'll want to capture at minimum their name, email and phone number. You may also want to capture their address and some specific preferences, but the longer the form, usually the less complete they will be, so try to keep it short and sweet; and
- If you have an event where you know there will be mostly business folks, you can do a business card drop and host a raffle. This saves you printing costs and you just need to find a fish bowl, basket or other container to hold the cards.
- **iPad Collection:** If you're more tech savvy and want to save some trees, you can use an iPad or other electronic device to capture your guests' information. You can conduct short surveys or have an entry form on the device.
- **Register-To-Play:** If you have a Spin & Win or other contesting, you may ask your guests to register or fill out a signup form (that captures their essential information) before they get to take a spin on the prize wheel or participate in any other contesting. For the sake of not holding up a line, try to keep your form short and easy to complete.

IMPORTANCE OF FOLLOW-UP

If you want a second date with someone you like, then it would be wise to follow up with them after the first date, in a timely fashion, to thank them for the nice time you had. You know the drill. Well, when it comes to Grand Openings and helping your business thrive, you definitely want that second, third, fourth date and beyond.

"We had a great time with you. We hope you had a great time with us, and we hope to see you again." Of course, the conversation may go slightly different than that for your business, but following up gives you the opportunity to keep the lines of communication open and to also see where there are possible areas for improvement. Happy customers come back for more.

You may **survey** guests via e-mail, which is the easiest, especially since you captured their information via the awesome raffle or other contests you hosted at your big event.

You may also send **thank you notes** to key attendees like local dignitaries and other VIPs.

Also, **phone calls** to select guests can go a long way. People do still talk on the phone, believe it or not. Granted, email seems like the most convenient in these busy times, but a good old fashioned live conversation is nice too.

Net-net, following up with guests is important and can help keep business coming your way.



TIPS ON HANDLING INTERVIEWS

Your big day is on its way and people, especially the media, are showing interest. Some may want to interview you to get the scoop on what you have planned for Grand Opening day. The following are some tips for handling media interviews.

First, know your messaging! What are the key talking points you want to get across to the media? Think: Who, What, Where, When, Why and How. Below is a basic overview.

Who: Your Business

What: Your Grand Opening Day

Where: Your New Location (address - include landmark, if relevant; i.e. shopping center name or neighborhood name)

When: Date and Time of your Grand Opening

Why: You're NEW to the neighborhood - it's time to celebrate!

How: What are the key drivers for your event? Notable entertainment, big giveaway, etc.

You will want to try to capture these six details as concisely as possible within the first 15-20 seconds of your interview. Once you've covered the basics, you can go into detail.

If there's secondary messaging, such as a charity component or signature services or menu items that you want to highlight, then note those for mentioning after you've covered the basics.

Interviews, particularly TV, may vary between three to five



minutes. Radio may range about the same or sometimes longer. Newspaper interviews are generally much longer, 15-30 minutes on average. Know which type of interview you're doing in advance and prepare your talking points accordingly for each.

If you haven't read our Brand Spokesperson e-Book, you may want to take a look at that for more tips to help you with the interview, including how to position yourself, what to wear (for TV interviews), and more.

Keep in mind that you're representing your brand. You are there to help deliver a message. In this case, the message is your Grand Opening, so you want to make sure you have all your facts straight and get people excited for your big day. What you share and how you share it may help drive people to your event.

Also, if you or anyone on your team would like to be media trained by one of our Media Specialists, contact your Grand Openers rep to schedule a session tailored for you.



MAKING YOUR GRAND OPENING NEWSWORTHY

Congratulations! You've set your Grand Opening date, secured some lively entertainment and have interactive games and contests planned that will have people lined out the door. Now, how do you turn your fun-filled event into something newsworthy?

The following are some suggestions for attracting media attention to your Grand Opening.

- **Ribbon Cutting:** A ribbon cutting is fairly easy to conduct and sometimes you can let other people do the work for you. If you join the local Chamber Of Commerce, they often times will help you with your ribbon cutting, even down to bringing the ribbon, scissors and some key members to attend your event. Not all Chambers are created equal, so be sure to inquire with your local Chamber regarding their policies. Media like ribbon cuttings, because there's a nice visual element. You get to showcase your location and key people from your business, as well as the community; i.e., Chamber members, local dignitaries, etc. Plus, there's no cost to host these, except for your Chamber membership, which gets you access to other benefits too. Take advantage of those other benefits (you're paying for them)!
- **Charity Challenge:** A charity challenge typically involves multiple charities that are vying for funds through a charity event that you're hosting. Each charity would be responsible for getting the word out on the challenge and encouraging their constituents to come out and support them. **READ:** Draw more people to your location.
- **Media Challenge:** A media challenge is similar to a charity challenge, but involves local media personalities. The personalities may choose to compete on behalf of their charity of choice, which is a way to entice them to participate. Media personalities are sometimes considered local celebrities and people may want to come out just to see them, but this still equates to more people coming to your location and learning about you.
- **Benefit Night/Event:** A benefit night/event provides local charities, schools, etc. to raise funds for their groups, while driving traffic to your location. You may designate a percentage that will be donated to the organization based on sales for the event period. The average donation amount ranges from 10-25%. Some businesses may generously donate 100% of proceeds, but this may be limited to a particular menu item or service. Again, this amount is at your discretion.

- **Charity Drive:** Sometimes in-kind (or goods) are easier to secure than cash. If you choose to go this route, you may host a drive to collect canned goods, clothing, school supplies, etc. For each donation, you may offer an incentive to donors to encourage them to participate.

When deciding how to make your event newsworthy, one key factor to keep in mind is that most media want to cover what's local. Try to select charities or causes that are local to your area. You may choose to support a large, well known (national) organization, but designate your efforts to benefit the local arm of that organization.

At the end of the day, you're doing something good for the community, and the media and public should be aware of it.





NEED MORE HELP?

If you need additional assistance or would like to discuss other ways to drive traffic to your Grand Opening, contact your Grand Openers rep at **844.744.0655**.



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