

Promoting Your District Event

Orange County Council, BSA

In every district in the BSA there are several events that take place each year. Some of them are fun activities for our Scouts, some are recognition events meant to honor someone or several people, and some are training events or meetings where important information is to be dispersed and or discussed. Whatever the event, one thing is the same; you need a solid plan for promotion. Here are some questions to think about when putting together your plan.

What is your event?

- Program Activity
 - Day Camp
 - Camporee
 - Pinewood Derby
 - Etc.
- Recognition Event
 - District Dinner
 - Blue and Gold
 - Etc.
- Training/Meeting
 - Roundtable
 - District Committee Meeting
 - Wood Badge
 - NYLT
 - Etc.
- Other
 - _____
 - _____

When is your event taking place?

- How much time do you have to get the word out?

Who is this event or activity intended for?

- Scouts
 - Cub Scouts
 - Boy Scouts
 - Venturers
- Leadership
 - Unit Leadership
 - District Leadership
 - Youth Leadership
- General Public
 - Families
 - Youth
 - Adults

Once you have all of this information together you can put together your timeline for messaging.

- 3-4 Months Out:
 - Send a Save the Date
 - Keep it simple. You don't want to overwhelm with information. This is just an opportunity to get your event on the radar.
 - Send your message via:
 - Email
 - Mail
 - Flyer
 - Newsletter or
 - Social Media

- 2 Months Out:
 - Send an electronic invitation to your audience:
 - Use an email service like MailChimp (you can set up a free account with a mailing list of up to 250 addresses) to send out an e-vite.
 - Be sure to include all of the following:
 - Who is hosting the event?
 - What is the event?
 - When is the event?
 - Where is the event?
 - Why should your audience attend?
 - How do they register? Do you have a link?
 - Who is the contact person and how can they be reached?

 - List your event online:
 - On the District Website
 - Calendar
 - Upcoming Events Section
 - Home Page Slider
 - Event Page

 - List your event on Social Media:
 - Facebook Events

 - Have a flyer prepared and take it to Roundtable

- 4-6 Weeks Out:
 - Mail an invitation to your audience.
 - Be sure to include all of the following:
 - Who is hosting the event?

- What is the event?
 - When is the event?
 - Where is the event?
 - Why should your audience attend?
 - How do they register?
 - Who is the contact person and how can they be reached?
 - Post on social media (if your District uses it)
 - Be sure to include all of the following:
 - Brief description of the event
 - Link to more information/registration
 - Try to find an interesting photo to accompany your post
 - List event in District Newsletter (if your District has one)
- 2 Weeks Out:
 - Email a reminder out to your audience.
 - Add a sense of urgency:
 - Stress a deadline for registration
 - Space is limited
 - Don't miss it
 - Stress your Call to Action:
 - Register Online
 - Visit your website
 - Call or email someone
 - Post reminders on Social Media
 - Less than 2 Weeks Out:
 - By this time you should have a good idea about the attendance for your event. If you feel that it is low compared previous years or what your goal is, then use the time you have left to reach out one last time.
 - Can you do a Roundtable announcement?
 - Can you and your committee make some phone calls?
 - Is there another event happening that you can advertise at?
 - Talk to your DE to get some ideas.
 - Keep in mind that you don't want to get to the point where your audience feels like they hear from your too often. Spreading out your communications works to remind them of impending deadlines without inundating them with contact.
 - After your event:
 - Post some photos on social media
 - Include a thanks to those who came out or volunteered
 - Submit photos to the Council Newsletter for Photo of the Week

Is your event news worthy?

- Write a Press Release
 - What is your goal in contacting the media?
 - Promotion prior to the event to boost attendance. 2 Weeks Out.
 - This type of coverage can be difficult to obtain. Typically a partnership with a media outlet or paid advertising is needed. If you want to buy ad space, it is best to start the process about a month before you want the ad to run.
 - Media coverage the day of the event. 2 Weeks Out.
 - Scouting is full of feel good stories that the media looks for in both print and televised formats. With enough notice – and not a lot of other competition for their attention – news outlets will send a camera crew to events like Scouting for Food or recognition events.
 - Post event coverage. The day after your event.
 - This type of coverage tends to be the easiest type to secure. It doesn't require a lot of work on the part of the journalist, and including photos is a good way to increase your chances of getting coverage. While post event coverage does not increase attendance of your event, it does share what Scouting is all about, and that is always a good thing.

BSA Resources

The Marketing Toolbox

The BSA Marketing Toolbox houses many resources for Council and volunteer use. Download the latest recruiting materials, access Fact Sheets, download images and more.

<http://www.scouting.org/Home/Marketing.aspx>

Scouting News

The BSA has made a site strictly for sharing Scouts in the news. Find inspiring stories to share with your audience or submit stories to be shared.

www.scoutingnewsroom.org

The Voice of Scouting

Launched just a few months ago, this joint venture between several Councils is an effort to share great Scouting stories, tips, and general information. If you would like to contribute to the blog, contact Carolyn at carolynz@ocbsa.org.

<https://voiceofscouting.org/>