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## How To Plan A Ribbon Cutting/Open House

Congratulations! If you are reading this, you must be celebrating the opening of a new business, achieving a major accomplishment, expanding or relocating an existing business in the Boonslick area. The Chamber of Commerce is here to support you, and we like to start with the ribbon cutting ceremony. This is a great way to mark the occasion and gain valuable media coverage. The information provided will help you get started. When you're ready to hold your ribbon cutting, please notify the Chamber office (660-882-2721) with the date and time and any questions you might have. Remember, we bring the scissors and ribbon!

### Take Note

A ribbon cutting is a formal ceremony to note a major milestone for a business or organization. It is a chance to mingle with co-workers, peers and community members and thank them for their contributions toward making your establishment a success or to mark the opening of your business. A well-organized ribbon cutting is an opportunity to publicize your business. Every person at this event is a potential customer and has the opportunity to influence others. Make sure you are ready to showcase your expertise. Your event should include a program that properly introduces your business and describes your products or services.



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## **Set Date & Time**

We recommend scheduling your event about a month in advance. This should allow enough time to deliver invitations and to make preparations. You should also check to make sure your event does not compete with other civic, organizational or government calendars. The Chamber office can help with this. Avoid having a ribbon cutting during holidays or on weekends, Monday mornings or Friday afternoons.

## **Invitations**

We suggest sending invitations. Your guest list should include: Chamber members, local officials and other dignitaries, current and potential customers, neighboring businesses, vendors and other business contacts, members of the media, friends and family. A set of Chamber member labels can be provided to you at no charge.

Also, consider sending your invite electronically to the names in your data base. Develop an electronic version of your invitation information for the Chamber office - text only, no art work. Include: Name of your business and tag line (what you do), address and directions, phone number, date and time of event, specific time of the ribbon cutting, list activities for the event (refreshments, door prizes, etc.) We can email to our Chamber membership as a reminder, post to our Facebook page and add to our events calendar.

## **Press Release**

Mail or email press releases to our local newspapers, the Boonville Daily News and Cooper County Voice, and to our local radio station, KWRT. Make sure they are aware of the date, time, special happenings, dignitaries attending, directions and your contact information. Our local papers and radio station are great partners in supporting our community businesses. While there is no guarantee, they usually make every effort to cover your event in some way. (The Chamber can take pictures of the ribbon cutting to provide to the media.)

## **Promotion**

Promote the ribbon cutting event by including information about it on your company website and other social media options. Create signs, posters and flyers to display on the premises advertising the event. With permission, you may be able to place posters or flyers at other businesses and public places – like the Chamber office. Advertising your ribbon cutting event may bring potential clients to your ceremony. The Chamber can promote your event during our monthly KWRT Chamber Chat segment and as a line listing in our monthly newsletter at no charge. For a minimal fee, you can insert flyers promoting your event into our newsletter. Our newsletter is mailed to all member businesses and delivered electronically to our membership.

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## **Agenda**

Prepare an agenda to assure that things run smoothly and on time. Ensure everyone knows their role and in what order. Choose a master of ceremonies to keep the event moving according to your schedule. A ribbon cutting ceremony should include welcome remarks, synopsis of your organization and accomplishments, introduction of your local employees and other key company personnel or board members, speakers, cutting of the ribbon (designate someone for this honor) and a thank you for attending. Overall, the ribbon cutting ceremony should only take 15 to 30 minutes. After closing remarks, invite the crowd to take a look at your facilities, products, etc. Have personnel on hand to give tours or explanations of your products and services, and to answer questions. (Your event can be as simple as a few remarks from you and your staff before the ribbon is cut. If requested, the Chamber can conduct the welcome and speak.)

## **Speaker**

If you have speakers, provide them with summary of the company's history and the products and services offered so they have plenty of relevant information to speak about. Speeches should be brief and be no more than five to ten minutes.

## **Refreshments**

Consider having refreshments for those that attend. Food creates a festive atmosphere. Each ribbon cutting is different. Do what your budget allows. If the event is at lunch time, you may want to provide a meal. If it is early in the morning, consider serving coffee and snacks. If you decide to provide some type of refreshment, make sure to note refreshments or meal on the invitations.

## **Extras**

- Attract attention to your business with grand opening banners, balloons, flowers, or other types of decorations.
  - Organize entertainment for the event. This could be a slideshow, a raffle, a dance or music group to perform. You can have magicians, clowns, or face painting for a children's theme. Music adds a nice touch to any event. This can be a live group, DJ, or pre-recorded music.
  - Also, consider door prizes where guests can drop their business cards or register. This allows for generating leads and follow-up mailings.
  - Have plenty of business cards, brochures, company data sheets, coupons, and other pieces attendees may take with them. Hand out token gifts to those who attended.
  - Your vendors may be able to donate to your event by providing prizes, products, speakers, or other.
  - If you plan an elaborate ribbon cutting, the Chamber has stages available for Chamber members to use.
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## Ribbon Cutting/Open House Work Sheet

Business/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Grand Opening, Anniversary, New Location, Etc)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Parking Availability, Nearby Landmarks)

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Plan: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Refreshments: \_\_\_\_\_

Special Promotions: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Information: \_\_\_\_\_

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