



RIBBON CUTTINGS, GROUND BREAKING'S AND GRAND OPENINGS



ATHENS-LIMESTONE
CHAMBER of COMMERCE

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Coordinating Your Event

One of the most thrilling moments for any business, whether it's a startup or an established one, is commemorating a grand opening, the launch of a new location, or a recent expansion. The Athens Limestone County Chamber is ready to lend its support to ensure the success of your event if your:

- Is in its inaugural year of operation
- Has recently relocated to a new address
- Has recently undergone expansion or completed significant renovations

What kind of event suits your business best?

- **Grand Opening**
A 1-2 hour event that can be either casual or formal.
- **Groundbreaking**
An event marking the commencement of a construction project.
- **Ribbon Cutting**
A formal ceremony with a designated time for guests to be present. The owner and/or Manager greets guests, cuts the ribbon, and may involve public officials in the ceremony.

Setting a Date

Ensure ample time for organizing the event details by initiating the planning process at least three to four weeks prior to the scheduled event date, if feasible. Before settling on a date, take into account the following crucial factors:

- Optimal days for higher attendance are Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, as Mondays are typically too hectic for many to leave the office, and Fridays often see people taking time off for an early start to their weekend.
- Coordinate the date with the Chamber at least two to three weeks in advance to ensure inclusion in the weekly e-newsletter and proper notification to potential attendees.
- Steer clear of scheduling your event on holidays when numerous local businesses and government offices remain closed.

Setting a Time

The success of your event is significantly influenced by the timing you select, as it plays a crucial role in shaping the nature of the event. The ambiance of a morning function differs substantially from that of a late afternoon reception. Deliberate on the following factors when finalizing your decision:

- Morning events should kick off no earlier than 9 a.m., typically coinciding with the opening hours of businesses.
- Lunchtime events, like 11:30 a.m. ribbon cuttings, tend to be successful as many people schedule mid-day meals. However, luncheons necessitate more advance notice for invitations, as individuals often plan lunch arrangements weeks ahead.
- Late afternoons are a popular choice, especially if the venue allows attendees to drop by at their convenience after work. The optimal time for an afternoon event is to start between 3-4 p.m.
- It's advisable to avoid mid-morning and mid-afternoon time periods, as many individuals find it challenging to break away from work during these hours.

Guest List

Curate the invitation list with individuals who hold significance to both you personally and to the prosperity of your business. Determining the "right" invitees depends on the nature of the event, but potential inclusions may encompass the following:

- Present and prospective clients
- Contractors, suppliers, and collaborators
- Local business peers and allies
- Family, friends, and personal connections
- Staff and their significant others
- Contributors to your startup success: banker, accountant, attorney, advisor

Event Invitations

After finalizing your guest list, consider the following tips when sending out:

- Craft a concise invitation with essential details: who, what, when, where, and why.
- Optionally include an RSVP to gauge attendance and plan for food/beverages.
- Allow a week to 10 days for guests to reply; two weeks is preferable for most events.
- Provide a map or clear instructions for event access; a street address alone may not suffice.
- Address potential parking concerns in the invitation, specifying designated parking areas.
- For elaborate invitations, seek assistance from a professional graphic artist or designer.

Food and Drinks

Offering a thoughtfully curated selection of delectable treats and refreshing beverages not only elevates the overall experience but also fosters a welcoming atmosphere for meaningful connections and enjoyable moments.

- **Morning Events**
Coffee, juices, and pastries are fitting choices for a morning event.
- **Lunch Events**
Opt for sandwiches or light buffet items for a midday gathering.
- **Late Afternoon and Early Evening**
Consider hors d'oeuvre s or finger foods such as chips, dips, cheeses, Vegetable plates, or deli meat trays.

For larger events, consider hiring a professional caterer. Check the Chamber's Online membership directory at alcchamber.org for a list of catering members.



RE/MAX



Structuring Your Agenda

A concise agenda of some sort kick-starts your event, offering valuable acknowledgment for you and your key figures. It lends purpose to the gathering and provides an opportunity to elaborate on your business. Take these recommendations into consideration:

- Plan your agenda with the understanding that attendees typically spend about half an hour at such events.
- Keep the program concise by limiting the number of speakers and setting time limits for their speeches to maintain a smooth flow.
- Conclude the program with a ceremonial activity, such as a ribbon cutting, signaling the formal end and providing excellent photo opportunities.
- For open houses or facility tours, ensure guided tours by friendly and knowledgeable staff, as they offer more value than self-guided exploration.

What We Can Do For You

Offer valuable insights and practical recommendations for successfully orchestrating every aspect of your event, ensuring a memorable and smoothly executed occasion. Key elements to consider include:

- Enhance your event's visibility by featuring it on the Athens Chamber's Calendar of Events at alcchamber.org utilizing the details provided on the attached Event Reservation Form.
- Extend invitations to the Athens-Limestone Chamber's Ambassadors, a dedicated group of volunteers from local member businesses. Typically, 5-10 Ambassadors and the Director of Member Relations will be in attendance.
- Capture memorable moments with the help of our communications staff, providing photography services.
- Your company photo and name will be showcased on the Chamber's social

The Chamber is eager to showcase your ribbon-cutting on our Event Calendar, but we urge you to take the lead in promoting it. Boosting your efforts will increase attendance and make the event more memorable.



Social Media

Promotion

After the event, we will share photos from your ribbon cutting on each of the Chamber's Social media feeds

- Facebook: facebook.com/athenslimestonecountychamberofcommerce
- Instagram: instagram.com/athenschamber
- LinkedIn: linkedin.com/company/athens-limestone-county-chamber-of-commerce

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