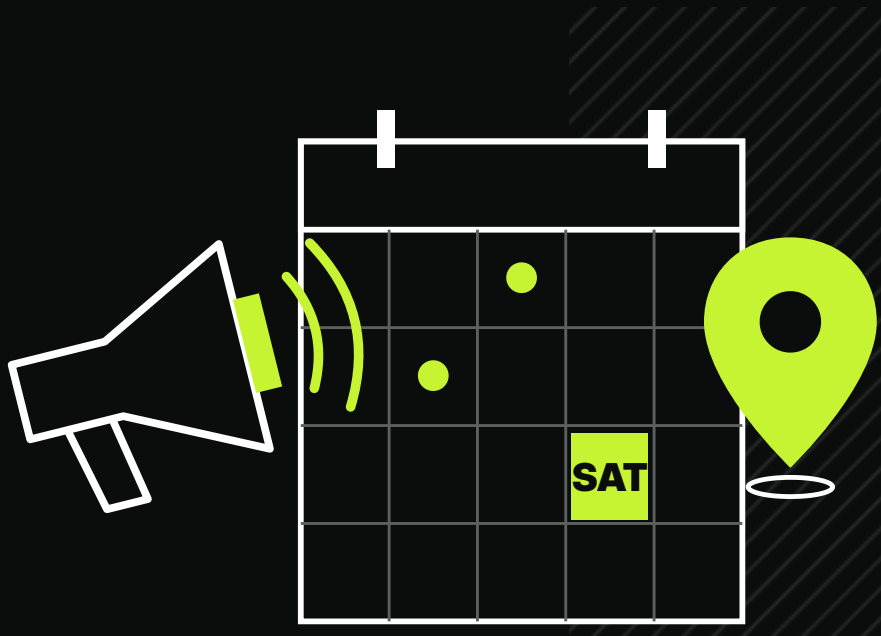
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DIGITAL MARKETING

FREE SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCE

# The Local Event Marketing Planner

Know when to start, where to spend, and how to spread the word in your community.




5 SECTIONS · PROMOTION TIMELINE · BUDGET WORKSHEET

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00 START HERE

# Great events don't fill themselves.

You've booked the date, ordered the food, and lined up the volunteers. Now comes the part that decides whether the room is full: getting the word out early enough, in the right places, without blowing the budget.

This planner is for local businesses, nonprofits, and community groups planning grand openings, fundraisers, markets, and neighborhood events. It gives you a goal, a timeline, a budget, a partner plan, and a simple way to see what worked.

## The five sections

**01**
**Set a goal**
One audience, one goal, one action.

**02**
**Work backward**
A week-by-week plan from event day.

**03**
**Budget**
Promotion money, kept separate.

**04**
**Partners**
Get the community sharing.

**05**
**Track**
Learn what brought people in.

## Plus two printables you can reuse

### Promotion timeline
Every task, who owns it, and when it's due, phase by phase.

### Budget worksheet
Planned spend, actual spend, and what's left, line by line.

### Example recap
How our fictional grand opening turned out, with the numbers.

## Three common mistakes this planner helps you avoid

### Starting too late
Calendars, printers, and partners all have lead times. A two-week scramble costs more and reaches fewer people.

### Asking for everything
"Follow us, share this, RSVP, donate, and tell a friend" is five asks. Pick one action and repeat it.

### Not knowing what worked
Without one simple question at the door, next year's plan is a guess.

**Our example event.** Lone Oak Coffee House is a *made-up* coffee shop opening in Old Town Burleson, Texas. Its grand opening is a Saturday morning with free drip coffee, local vendors, and a kids' chalk-art corner. All names, numbers, and results in this guide are fictional examples to adjust for your own event.

# 01 Set a Goal Before You Promote

Every flyer, post, and email should push people toward one action. Decide what success looks like first, so you know what to ask for and what to count.

**ONE AUDIENCE**
Who do you most need there?

**ONE MEASURABLE GOAL**
A number and a deadline

**ONE ACTION**
RSVP, buy, donate, or show up

| EVENT | MEASURABLE GOAL (EXAMPLE) | THE ONE ACTION |
|---|---|---|
| **Grand opening** | 150 people walk in on opening day | Stop by between 8 a.m. and noon |
| **Fundraiser** | $5,000 raised from 80 donors | Buy a ticket or donate online |
| **Market or fair** | 100 tickets sold by the Friday before | Buy tickets in advance |
| **Neighborhood event** | 75 RSVPs one week out | RSVP so we can plan food |

Example goals only. Pick numbers that make sense for your space, budget, and past events.

> **Lone Oak Coffee House (fictional):** Audience: families and commuters within a few miles of Old Town. Goal: 150 walk-ins on opening Saturday and 100 RSVPs by the Thursday before. Action: "RSVP for a free drink, then stop by between 8 a.m. and noon."

## Event page checklist

Every share should point to one event page: a page on your website, a ticketing page, or an event listing. Before you promote it, make sure it answers:

- ☐ **Date and time**
  Start and end times. Note if people can come and go.
- ☐ **Cost**
  Free, ticket price, or suggested donation. Say what's included.
- ☐ **Accessibility**
  Step-free entry, restrooms, seating, and who to contact with questions.
- ☐ **What to expect**
  Activities, food, whether kids and pets are welcome.
- ☐ **Location**
  Full address, plus a map link and where the entrance is.
- ☐ **Parking**
  Where to park, how much it costs, and any overflow options.
- ☐ **How to register**
  One clear button or link to RSVP, buy, or donate, and the deadline.
- ☐ **Weather plan & contact**
  Rain date or indoor backup, plus a phone or email for questions.

# 02 Work Backward from Event Day

For a typical local event, **6–8 weeks** is a comfortable promotion window. Count backward from the date and put each task on the calendar. Larger events, sponsor commitments, and print or publication deadlines can require starting months earlier.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **6–8 weeks** PLAN | ☐ Set the goal, audience, and action | ☐ Publish the event page |
| | ☐ Set the promotion budget | ☐ List partners and calendar deadlines |
| | ☐ Order designs for signs and graphics | ☐ Ask sponsors and vendors to commit |
| **4 weeks** ANNOUNCE | ☐ Announce on social and email | ☐ Send partner kits and outreach messages |
| | ☐ Submit to community calendars | ☐ Order printing and signs |
| **2 weeks** BUILD MOMENTUM | ☐ Hang flyers and put out signs | ☐ Start any paid promotion |
| | ☐ Share vendor and sponsor spotlights | ☐ Send an email reminder |
| **Final week** REMIND | ☐ Post daily reminders and countdowns | ☐ Confirm partners will share |
| | ☐ Send a last-call email | ☐ Print sign-in sheets and the survey |
| **Event day** CAPTURE | ☐ Take photos and short videos | ☐ Post live updates |
| | ☐ Count attendance | ☐ Ask “How did you hear about us?” |
| **Week after** FOLLOW UP | ☐ Thank partners and sponsors | ☐ Share a recap with photos |
| | ☐ Log results and lessons | ☐ Save the files for next time |

**Only two weeks?** Compress it. **Days 1–2:** event page, one graphic, and partner messages. **Days 3–5:** social and email announcement, calendar listings, and signs. **Week 2:** reminders every few days, partner shares, and a final email the day before. Skip anything with a long print or publication deadline.

## Deadlines to look up first

**COMMUNITY CALENDAR & NEWSLETTER DEADLINES**

**PRINT ORDER DEADLINE (SIGNS, BANNERS, FLYERS)**

**SPONSOR & VENDOR COMMITMENT DATE**

**PERMITS OR VENUE APPROVALS, IF ANY**

# 03 Allocate the Promotion Budget

Keep promotion money separate from **event operations** like the venue, food, supplies, rentals, and staffing. Otherwise marketing becomes whatever is left over, and it's usually not much.

**Design**
Flyers, social graphics, signs.

**Printing & signs**
Yard signs, banners, flyers, A-frames.

**Paid promotion**
Boosted posts, local ads, sponsorships.

**Photo or video**
Coverage you can reuse after the event.

**Reserve**
Reprints, rush fees, and surprises.

## Example A · A $500 promotion budget

| LINE | WHAT IT COVERS | AMOUNT |
|---|---|---|
| **Design** | Flyer and social graphics from a designer | **$75** |
| **Printing & signs** | Yard signs, an A-frame sign, and flyers | **$150** |
| **Paid promotion** | Boosted posts or local ads aimed at nearby zip codes | **$150** |
| **Photo or video** | A photographer for the first hour of the event | **$75** |
| **Reserve** | Set aside for surprises | **$50** |
| **Total** | **Promotion budget** | **$500** |

## Example B · Mostly email, partners, and community listings

| LINE | WHAT IT COVERS | AMOUNT |
|---|---|---|
| **Design** | Owner makes graphics from a free template | **$0** |
| **Printing & signs** | Two yard signs and a stack of flyers | **$100** |
| **Paid promotion** | One small boosted post the week before | **$50** |
| **Photo or video** | A volunteer or staff member with a phone | **$0** |
| **Reserve** | Set aside for surprises | **$25** |
| **Total** | **Promotion budget** | **$175** |

Example B leans on free channels that often work well locally: your email list, partner shares, community calendars, and word of mouth. The $175 goes to the things that are hard to do for free, like physical signs.

> **These are illustrations, not recommendations.** Adjust every line to your audience and goal. A fundraiser aimed at existing donors may need almost no paid promotion; a grand opening that needs new faces may need more signs and local ads.

# 04 Get Local Partners Involved

Partners put your event in front of people who already trust them. Make it easy: ask early, be specific, and hand them everything they need to share in under a minute.

- ☐ **Chamber of commerce**
  Ask about member event listings, newsletters, and ribbon cuttings for openings.
- ☐ **Sponsors**
  Agree in writing on what they get (logo, mention, booth) and when they'll share.
- ☐ **Community calendar editors**
  Local news sites, radio, libraries, and city calendars. Check each one's submission deadline.
- ☐ **Neighboring businesses**
  Ask them to hang a flyer and share a post. Offer to return the favor.
- ☐ **Vendors and performers**
  They have their own followers. Ask each to post at least twice.
- ☐ **Schools, churches, HOAs, clubs**
  Newsletters and bulletin boards reach people who don't follow you yet.

**OUTREACH MESSAGE · LONE OAK COFFEE HOUSE (FICTIONAL)**

Hi Dana, I'm Jess, owner of Lone Oak Coffee House, opening soon in Old Town. Our grand opening is Saturday, [date], 8 a.m. to noon, with free drip coffee, local vendors, and a kids' chalk corner. Would you be willing to share it with your followers or newsletter? I've attached a graphic and a sample caption, and the event link is [link]. Sharing it the week of [date] would be perfect. Happy to promote your business in return. Thank you! – Jess

## The partner kit: send all four in one email

**A graphic**
Square for social, plus a flyer PDF. Event name, date, time, place, and link on the image.

**A sample caption**
Two or three sentences they can paste or tweak, with your link and any tags.

**The event link**
One link to the event page. Use the same link everywhere so tracking stays simple.

**A share date**
The specific day you'd love them to post, plus a reminder a few days before.

**SAMPLE CAPTION FOR PARTNERS**

New coffee in Old Town! Lone Oak Coffee House opens Saturday, [date], 8 a.m. to noon, with free drip coffee, local vendors, and chalk art for the kids. RSVP for a free drink: [link]

## Partner tracker

| PARTNER | DATE ASKED | KIT SENT | SHARE DATE | SHARED? NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

# 05 Track What Brought People In

Three numbers tell the story: how many people said they'd come, how many actually came, and where they heard about it. Write them down the same week, while it's fresh.

| NUMBER | COUNT |
|---|---|
| **RSVPs or tickets sold** | |
| **Actual attendance** | |
| **Show-up rate**<br>attendance ÷ RSVPs | |
| **Goal result**<br>walk-ins, dollars, sign-ups | |
| **"How did you hear" answers** | |

Count attendance with a clicker, a sign-in sheet, wristbands, or tickets scanned at the door.

| WHERE THEY HEARD ABOUT IT | COUNT |
|---|---|
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

**One optional question** to add to your RSVP form, sign-in sheet, or a quick tablet survey at the door: **"How did you hear about this event?"** Offer simple choices (social media, a sign or flyer, a friend, a partner, an email, a calendar listing, other) and keep it optional.

## The follow-up plan

- ☐ **Within 2 days: thank partners**
  A personal thank-you to every partner, sponsor, vendor, and volunteer. Tag them in the recap.
- ☐ **Within a week: record what to repeat**
  What worked, what didn't, and what to start earlier. Save it with this planner.
- ☐ **Within a week: share a recap**
  Photos, a short video, the turnout, and what's next. Thank attendees by name only with permission.

**REPEAT NEXT TIME**

**CHANGE OR START EARLIER NEXT TIME**

# 06 Promotion Timeline

Print one per event. Every task gets an owner and a due date. Use the section 02 checklist for ideas.

**EVENT** _____ **EVENT DATE** _____ **EVENT PAGE LINK** _____

| TASK | OWNER | DUE DATE | DONE | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **6–8 WEEKS OUT** | | | | |
| | | | ☐ | |
| | | | ☐ | |
| | | | ☐ | |
| | | | ☐ | |
| **4 WEEKS OUT** | | | | |
| | | | ☐ | |
| | | | ☐ | |
| | | | ☐ | |
| **2 WEEKS OUT** | | | | |
| | | | ☐ | |
| | | | ☐ | |
| | | | ☐ | |
| **FINAL WEEK** | | | | |
| | | | ☐ | |
| | | | ☐ | |
| | | | ☐ | |
| **EVENT DAY** | | | | |
| | | | ☐ | |
| | | | ☐ | |
| **WEEK AFTER** | | | | |
| | | | ☐ | |
| | | | ☐ | |

# 07 Promotion Budget Worksheet

Promotion costs only. Track the venue, food, and staffing separately. **Remaining = planned – actual** for each line; a negative number means you went over.

**EVENT** _____ **EVENT DATE** _____ **BUDGET OWNER** _____

| BUDGET LINE | PLANNED | ACTUAL | REMAINING | NOTES (VENDOR, RECEIPT, DATE PAID) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Design** graphics, flyers, signs | $ | $ | $ | |
| **Printing & signs** yard signs, banners, flyers | $ | $ | $ | |
| **Paid promotion** boosted posts, local ads | $ | $ | $ | |
| **Photo or video** event coverage | $ | $ | $ | |
| **Reserve** surprises and rush fees | $ | $ | $ | |
| **Other: _____** | $ | $ | $ | |
| **Other: _____** | $ | $ | $ | |
| **Total** | **$** | **$** | **$** | |

**EVENT OPERATIONS BUDGET (TRACKED SEPARATELY)**
Venue, food, supplies, rentals, staffing

**GOAL RESULT**
Walk-ins, tickets, donations, or RSVPs

**TOTAL PROMOTION COST ÷ ATTENDEES**
A rough cost per person, to compare events

**APPROVED BY & DATE**

**SPEND DIFFERENTLY NEXT TIME**

EX EXAMPLE RECAP · LONE OAK COFFEE HOUSE GRAND OPENING FICTIONAL

# How the example turned out

**124**
RSVPS (GOAL: 100)

**165**
WALK-INS (GOAL: 150)

**90**
ANSWERED "HOW DID YOU HEAR?"

### Where the 90 respondents heard about it




### Budget: planned vs. actual

| LINE | PLANNED | ACTUAL | LEFT |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Design** | **$75** | **$75** | **$0** |
| **Printing & signs** | **$150** | **$168** | **−$18** |
| **Paid promotion** | **$150** | **$150** | **$0** |
| **Photo or video** | **$75** | **$75** | **$0** |
| **Reserve** | **$50** | **$0** | **$50** |
| **Total** | **$500** | **$468** | **$32** |

Printing ran $18 over; the $50 reserve covered it. $500 − $468 = $32 left.

**What they'll repeat:** partner kits sent four weeks out, and yard signs on the two busiest nearby roads. **What they'll change:** order printing a week earlier to avoid rush fees, and add the survey question to the RSVP form instead of only the door.

Every number on this page is a fictional example to show the math, not a benchmark or a promised result.

## Need a Hand? We Know Some People.

Want help with event graphics, promotion, photography, or video? Kre-adiv is here. No pressure. No confusing marketing talk. Just real people helping businesses and communities get found.

**kre-adiv.com · connect@kre-adiv.com · 817-223-5583**

**Let's Talk About Your Event →**

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