

# Planning Your *Ribbon Cutting Ceremony*

## Guidelines & Tips

### ❖ Parameters set by the Melbourne Regional Chamber

- ♦ You **must be a Member** of the Melbourne Regional Chamber of East Central Florida in order to use our Ribbon Cutting service.
- ♦ If you wish to have the Chamber's help, you must submit the Ribbon Cutting Request Form at least **30 days** prior to your desired event date.
- ♦ The Chamber will assist a maximum of **3 Ribbon Cutting Ceremonies** per week. Dates are reserved at a **first-come-first-serve basis**.
- ♦ The Chamber can only assist with events **beginning after 8:00 AM and ending by 6:30 PM Monday-Thursday and 8:00 AM-12:00 Noon on Fridays**. We will not be able to assist with ceremonies planned for the weekend.

### ❖ Time & Date Selection

- ♦ Give yourself plenty of preparation time, 4-6 weeks is sufficient. Remember, the Chamber cannot help you if you do not submit a request at least 30 days in advance.
- ♦ Choose a date that avoids major conflict with holidays or other community events.
- ♦ Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays are usually better days during the week for business people.
- ♦ Careful consideration of the time of your event determines the atmosphere of the celebration.
- ♦ Morning events should start no earlier than 8:00 AM as a general rule. The most popular afternoon time is to begin between 4 and 5 o'clock.
- ♦ Confirm time and date with the Melbourne Regional Chamber.

### ❖ Invitations

Who you invite to your event is as important as hosting the event. Your invitations may be as simple as a letter or as elaborate as a formal invitation. Upon request, the Chamber can provide you with a list of Printing Companies, who are also Chamber Members, to meet your printing needs.

Be sure to include the: who, what, where, when and why as well as an RSVP contact. People you may want to consider inviting:

- ♦ Current, past and potential customers
- ♦ Family and friends
- ♦ Your employees and their spouses/guests
- ♦ Media – (The chamber can provide you with a list of media contacts)
- ♦ Those that helped you get started:
  - Banker, Accountant, Lawyer, Architect, Builder, Realtor, Insurance Agent, etc.
- ♦ Neighboring businesses

### ❖ Getting the Word Out

Remember that you never get a second chance at a first impression! Getting the word out is just as important as all of the other steps in planning your event. It is recommended that invitations be mailed 3 – 4 weeks in advance and eVites to be sent 2 – 4 weeks in advance with at least one reminder prior to the event.

You may want to consider marketing your event through social media, newspaper advertisement and radio or television ads for a large grand opening. Constant contact, press releases and Chamber networking events are other great ways of getting the word out on your event. The Chamber can provide a list of Public Relations, Marketing and/or Event Companies, who are also Chamber Members, to assist you with advertising your event.

### ❖ Refreshments

Providing time-appropriate refreshments is very well received. For example, during a morning event it is nice to offer coffee, juice, bagels or pastries. During a lunch or evening event offering light hors d'oeuvres or finger foods is appropriate. Enlisting the help of an event planner or caterer is often helpful. Upon request, the Chamber can provide you with a list of Caterers and Event Planners, who are also Chamber Members.

### ❖ Program Planning

Create an event agenda. A brief program adds focus to the event. It provides not only valuable recognition for you and your key people, but it makes the event more purposeful and permits you the opportunity to explain more about your business.

- ♦ Ideas to consider include: introduction of key people that helped you make this milestone possible, quotes from leaders in the community and a tour of your facility if time permits and is appropriate for your type of business.
- ♦ The highlight of your program will be your ceremonial ribbon cutting and photo-op to commemorate the event. Be sure to plan this for a time of maximum attendance.
- ♦ Remember that the *Ribbon Cutting Ceremony* is a great photo opportunity; you may want to look into getting a photographer. We have a list of Chamber Members that we can offer you as well.

### ❖ Additional Suggestions

Have plenty of brochures, business cards, and handouts available for your guests. If possible have promotional items such as pens, magnets, mugs, etc. available to hand out or have a drawing or give away. Winning a sample of your product or a gift certificate can add to your guest's enjoyment and perhaps build attendance. We can offer you a list of Promotions Companies, who are also Chamber Members, if you would like.

## Once you have selected a date & wish to utilize the Chamber's ribbon cutting services...

- ♦ Fill out the Ribbon Cutting Request Form online at [www.MelbourneRegionalChamber.com](http://www.MelbourneRegionalChamber.com)
- ♦ Once you've submitted the form, a Chamber Staff Member will call or email you to confirm date & time **within 5 business days.**
- ♦ After you receive confirmation, an invitation will be posted on the Chamber Website Calendar within 2 weeks.
- ♦ Once your date is locked in to the Calendar, you're off and running! Make your event a success 😊

For more information on Ribbon Cutting Ceremonies, please contact the Event Services Team at (321) 724-5400 or email [Events@MelbourneRegionalChamber.com](mailto:Events@MelbourneRegionalChamber.com)