

Steps to a Successful Grand Opening or Milestone Event

Congratulations! Opening a business or making it to a major milestone is no small feat; of course you should mark the special occasion. Hosting an event is a wonderful way to celebrate all your hard work and effort, meet members of the community, and create awareness for your business.

Here are a few steps to help you plan your successful event.

Planning

- Step One: Date Selection
 - Allow plenty of preparation time. Give yourself three to four weeks of lead time if possible
 - Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday is best. Try to avoid the weekends and major holidays
 - Ensure your business is ready to officially open - last minute delays can ruin a great plan

- Step Two: Choosing a Time
 - Determine the type of grand opening you want to host; breakfast, lunch, or early evening
 - Late afternoon or early evening events are most popular (between 4:30 to 6:00 p.m.). Guests can stop by on their way home from work. Morning events should start after 8 a.m.
 - For media coverage, consider their deadlines before selecting a time

- Step Three: Creating an Invitation List
 - Consider inviting current and potential customers, family and friends, suppliers, employees, media, those who helped you get your business started (banker, accountant, architects/engineers, builders, contractors, all other advisers), neighbouring businesses in your area, key government officials (Mayor, City Council Members, Regional Council Members), economic development staff, and your local chamber of commerce.
 - Prepare an invitation that includes who, what, where, when and why
 - Request a confirmation of attendance and be sure to include an RSVP date
 - Allow plenty of notice, two weeks is preferable. Government officials and media outlets may need more time
 - If you're looking to invite Wetaskiwin City Council and Administration to your event, please contact Karin Boddy, Executive Assistant at Karin.boddy@wetaskiwin.ca or 780-361-4409

- Step Four: Program Plan
 - Whether you are hosting a ground breaking, a grand opening or an anniversary celebration, a brief program keeps your event focused. It can provide recognition for you and your key people, make the event more purposeful, and allow you to talk more about your business. The ideal program time is ten minutes in length

