

RIBBON CUTTING GRAND OPENING



CHAMBER RIBBON CUTTING GUIDE

LIVINGSTON PARISH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

ONE OF THE MOST EXCITING EVENTS AND TIMES FOR A BUSINESS IS CELEBRATING THE RIBBON CUTTING, GRAND OPENING, ANNIVERSARY OR OTHER BUSINESS MILESTONE. THE CHAMBER PROVIDES THIS GUIDE TO ASSIST YOU IN THE PLANS AND PREPARATION.



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Your business is OPEN! Congratulations!

BY APRIL WEHRS, CHAMBER PRESIDENT

We've been a part of hundreds of Ribbon Cuttings and can attest to the excitement that they hold. Whether it's a super large affair or a simple 30 second photo op, no part of your business venture brings so much ceremony and marks such a significant milestone. It deserves a celebration, and we all know the really hard part is the work that comes after your doors are open. For now, take a moment to reflect on your journey and what led you here. It takes a certain type of person to venture into entrepreneur territory and / or expand into an area. We honor your spirit every day at the Chamber. It's what we do, and we want to see you succeed!

Planning for a Ribbon Cutting will assure that you have the outcome of the event you anticipated. For many of you, it's your first time being involved in a Ribbon Cutting and / or Grand Opening. That's okay, we can help you along the way.



Congratulations!

You've done
the hard part,
now it's time to
celebrate!

A Ribbon Cutting is an official ceremony conducted to celebrate the opening of a business or building AND to welcome your business to Livingston Parish! As the name implies, a ribbon is cut signifying your location is OPEN for BUSINESS. Chambers across the country, including the Livingston Parish Chamber of Commerce, are the official organization of ribbon cuttings in their communities. A ribbon cutting event can be a very large event or a simple, but no less important, event. The choice lies with the business, and the Chamber can help to guide you through the process whether your business is very small or very large!

Hosting a Ribbon Cutting is an exciting time for your business. We often say that the most exciting 30 seconds of the business opening process is when you cut the ribbon on your new location! In reality, the ceremony does last a bit longer, but the culmination of the planning and hard work that goes into preparing a business for opening cannot be celebrated in a better way. Because this is such a special occasion in the history of your business, take advantage of the photo opportunity and begin Building a Chamber Network – many of which start at this important event introductory event.

Scheduling the Event

*The more advance notice,
the better.*

PREPARING FOR A SUCCESSFUL RIBBON CUTTING EVENT

WHEN SHOULD I HOLD A RIBBON CUTTING?

Ribbon Cutting events are held within 6 months of the business opening. Many businesses have already opened before the ribbon is actually cut and that is widely acceptable protocol. Getting your business up and running is your first priority. Scheduling the ribbon cutting event within 2 months of your business opening is ideal. The ribbon cutting can be a stand-alone event or in coordination with a grand opening – also acceptable to hold after the actual opening – open house, after hours or other opening event.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR A RIBBON CUTTING? Because the chamber is privately funded and takes tremendous resources, a Ribbon Cutting special event is reserved for members. Please remember, the Ribbon Cutting is only the beginning of your Chamber relationship! We offer so much more to keep to your business through Programs, Events, Initiatives, Discounts, Committees, Referrals, etc.

IS THERE A COST? Enhanced level members and above include a Ribbon Cutting. Other considerations apply as well. It is recommended you consider a Ribbon Cutting as part of your pro-motion budget for your new location. The investment is minimal for each, and the return is great.

Chamber membership allows your business to be viewed immediately as not only a business in the parish: but also, a **Community Partner**. That's a very important role of today's business. Once the demands of your new business settle, the chamber has inclusive programming that is beneficial for your business keeping you connected and impacted.

TO CONSIDER - Some ribbon cuttings have been a simple photo opportunity. Some have dozens of people attend and extend the event for an hour or so. Some have light refreshments. Others have had a larger amount of refreshments or meals and still others have none. Ribbon cuttings and Grand Openings can be separate events and held on different days. The Chamber will support you on this exciting day in your business, and we look forward to your success!

We recommend you plan your ribbon cutting at least two weeks or more in advance. This assures your date is available and just as important, allows for more in-creased exposure of your business. Please provide as much information as possible to about your plans to help us properly pro- mote your event. We can also offer guidance on the event and scheduling. The Chamber attempts to accommodate your scheduling dates and times within typical business hours and available dates. The Chamber's online event calendar does fill fast with business events. Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays are usually the best days but there are always exceptions. Time is dependent on your plans. We can help with this too.

SCHEDULE

2 WEEKS

OR MORE IN ADVANCE

6 MONTHS

WITHIN 6 MONTHS OF
OPENING

LOTS!

OF EXPOSURE
BIG RETURN | LITTLE
INVESTMENT

Ribbon Cutting Do's & Don'ts

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED ALONG THE WAY

DO

- **Schedule the event** when the people most important to your business, whether it is a business partner, CEO, community person, supervisor or family member, can attend.
- **Schedule ASAP** to allow potential attendees to plan for your event.
- **Invite guests** to your event including staff, family, builders, contractors, etc. Be proactive in getting the word out.
- **Determine and decide** in advance who will cut the ribbon at your event. The owner or top executives typically do the honors here, while in some areas other dignitaries are turned over the honor. Each business is different and free to choose. It's best, and even emotional, for the owner to do that honors themselves and widely accepted protocol.
- **Consider** who you would want in photos.
- **Use Chamber hashtags!**
#lovelivingstonparish #shoplivingstonparish
#lovelivingstonchamber

DON'T

- **Rely completely** on the Chamber for attendance at your event. The Chamber cannot guarantee the number of guests in attendance.
- **Over think** what you will say when telling your business story. We love to hear your story in an authentic way!
- **Don't forget to enjoy the event!** Stop to take it all in. Meet new people and build new relationships.

BUSINESS TIPS

MORE HELPFUL INFORMATION

• **Business Owners Should:**

- Extend invitations to your contacts to the event. Anyone you would like present.
- Plan the event in advance to get more exposure from the event.
- Plan to address those in attendance and give a brief overview of your business and your business story.
- Place notice of your event to your customers, if you chose.
- Take photos of the event.

BUSINESS SHOULD PLAN TO PROVIDE

REFRESHMENTS

Refreshments, drinks, door prizes, decorations, entertainment. These are optional and at the discretion of the business hosting. Many businesses add these extra touches, but some don't. Go as big or small as you would like. We have seen everything from a full meal with adult beverages to appetizers to snacks. As a courtesy, we recommend at the least you provide drinks for your attendees. Door prizes, giveaways and entertainment are at your discretion.

LOCATION

The event will be held at your location. We suggest you plan for parking, cleared entrances to your building, basic services and an overall neat appearance showcasing your new business. On occasion, the Chamber will provide our building for unique instances.

INVITES | TURNOUT

It is important that you stay in touch with those you wish to attend the event. We do not track or accept rsvp's to Ribbon Cuttings- exception is when a crowd of over 100 is expected due to the offerings of the business and the VIP nature of the event. The Chamber cannot guaranty attendance numbers as predicting turn out is, well, unpredictable!



\$1050.00

Value a Ribbon cutting to business

3 hours

or more of Chamber Staff time

1000 plus

Photos, Media Outlets, and views through social media

AFTER THE RIBBON CUTTING

1st

Learn more about the Chamber's programming for business

2nd

Be informed, included, involved,

3rd

Maintain your relationship with the Chamber and fellow members.

THE CHAMBER WILL

A LIST OF WHAT THE CHAMBER OFFERS - YOUR CHOICE ALL OR SOME

- **PROMOTE YOUR EVENT**
- PLACE YOUR EVENT on our calendar of events. (Top viewed event calendar in Livingston Parish.) This sets off a chain reaction of exposure for your event and business.
- PROVIDE THE DATE and time of your ribbon cutting in the emails that go out to the membership, unless you prefer that this information is not forwarded.
- SEND A BLANKET INVITE to elected officials representing your area to the event and provide guidance on protocol.
- INFORM CHAMBER BOARD, AMBASSADORS AND MEMBERS of your business and Ribbon Cutting.
- SEND THE EVENT information to our extensive contacts. It's like your own media company! Don't worry – they won't all show up! Unless you are giving away something really big! :-)
- **FACILITATE YOUR RIBBON CUTTING EVENT**
- PROVIDE a Complimentary Ribbon and Bow for your event.
- PROVIDE Large Scissors, they really do cut!
- "EMCEE" your event by providing remarks on behalf of the Chamber, officially welcoming you and introducing you to tell your business story.
- PROVIDE a list of peer Chamber members who cater. Please click here for an up to date list.
- TAKE PHOTOS of your Ribbon Cutting.
- **AFTER THE EVENT**
- WE WILL POST our photos of your event to our social media outlets. Please feel free to tag and use as you please – giving the Chamber credit for the photo – thank you, please.
- SEND PHOTOS of your event to an extensive list of media contacts both local and regional. We cannot guaranty they will be posted by other sources.
- Give you tremendous exposure for your Ribbon Cutting.

NOTES

