



Planning Guide

Quality

It is helpful for the host to plan with Chamber staff in order to present a quality event – one that will reflect favorably on the host’s business and the Kinston-Lenoir County Chamber of Commerce.

Date

Business After Hours are held once a month on Thursdays.

Business Before Hours are scheduled according to date availability.

Be sure to select the month most desirable for you and secure the date as soon as possible. A signed copy of this agreement is needed to secure the date. Once the agreement is received, the Chamber will review the community calendar and will contact you within five business days to confirm a secured date.

Time

Business After Hours begins at 5:30 pm and ends at 7:00 pm.

Business Before Hours begins at 7:30 am and ends at 9:00 am.

Some people may arrive a little bit early and leave after the program which begins 30 minutes into the event.

Facilities

The host should be prepared to provide a location that is large enough to entertain 50 – 100 individuals. A location that is accessible and has adequate parking is a positive draw for these events. The Chamber building may also be used if your site does not have adequate space.

Partnering

In the history of **Business After Hours and Business Before Hours**, some hosts have chosen to partner with other member businesses in sponsoring the event. This has often worked to the benefit of all involved. In any partnerships, the Chamber requests that one business be the main contact and coordinator. If this is of interest to you, please contact Chamber staff with any questions. The Chamber building may also be used if your site does not have adequate space.

Promotional Information

Please provide the Chamber with up to a 150-word story or promotion about your business and a high quality logo prior to your event. This information will be used for press releases and website information. The Chamber reserves the right to edit the copy. Your event will be posted on the Chamber community calendar, the Chamber event listing section on the home page and featured in the Free Press in the Chamber’s newsletter “Business Update”.

Invitations

The Chamber will invite each Chamber member via email or fax and extend an invitation in the Chamber’s newsletter.

Reception Area

Please provide one small table for reception and registration located near the entrance of the event. Guests will receive their name badges and enter for door prize drawings at this location.

Name Badges and Reception Staffing

The Chamber will manage RSVP communications and will supply computer printed name badges of registered guests. If you know of individuals that plan to attend please encourage them to call us so we can prepare a name tag for them. The Chamber staff and Ambassadors will also assist as greeters.

Hors d'oeuvres, Breakfast Foods and Beverages

The host is responsible for the purchasing and serving of food and beverages. The provider of food and beverages must be a Chamber member. A list will be provided upon request or you can go to www.kinstonchamber.com and view the member directory listing.

Door Prizes

Guests at **Business After Hours and Business Before Hours** look forward to the opportunity to win door prizes. The host should plan to provide a minimum of three door prizes.

Program

At approximately 30 minutes into the event, the crowd will be quieted for a short program. At this time, the Chamber Board Chair will welcome everyone. Then a Chamber staff member will recognize the host who may address the audience. Following this, the door prizes will be drawn and distributed. Finally a 50/50 drawing to benefit the Education Foundation and Chamber announcements will follow.

Marketing

Business After Hours and Business Before Hours are very popular events, drawing your business peers to you. It is strongly recommended that you take advantage of the occasion to creatively market your business. This can include guided tours of your facility, multiple short demonstrations in various locations, audiovisual presentation, etc. Chamber staff is willing to work with you to suggest ways to showcase your business.

Clean Up

The host is responsible for clean up after the event.