



# Milton Chamber of Commerce

## BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

### EVENT PLANNING GUIDE

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The Milton Chamber of Commerce wants your business to be successful. Hosting a Business After Hours (BAH) is one way the Chamber can help you to promote your business while at the same time providing the opportunity for Chamber members and guests to meet socially. Once you have a confirmed date, the following outline will help ensure that your event will be successful. This is your opportunity to showcase what you do.

#### **SCHEDULE:**

BAH events are always held on the 4th Tuesday of each month (except December and June) from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

#### **PROMOTION:**

The Chamber of Commerce will:

- Advertise your event in the Chamber of Commerce e-newsletter (distributed weekly on Tuesday mornings). Our Chamber has over 700 members.
- Advertise your event in the Chamber Centrespread prior to the date. The Chamber Centrespread runs in the Champion the first Thursday of every month.
- Email invitations to all Chamber members approximately one week prior to your event. Your BAH Committee representative will ask for your Logo and website for our invite.
- Business After Hours Committee will telephone new Chamber members, encouraging them to attend.

#### **AS YOUR EVENT APPROACHES:**

Approximately six weeks prior to your event, a BAH Committee representative will contact you to arrange a visit to your premises. During the visit, your plan for the event will be discussed and any questions you have can be answered. RSVP's are directed to the Chamber.

#### **AT THE EVENT:**

- Chamber staff will arrive at approximately 4:30pm to set-up the registration desk and, if needed, the PA system.
- You and your staff (if applicable) should be on hand to greet, mingle and answer questions about the business or assist with any mixer activities.
- The formal presentation part of the evening will begin around 6:10 p.m. and last for about 15 minutes. This will be conducted by a member of the BAH Committee and will include various introductions - including introductions of new members, as well as announcements of upcoming events.
  - During this portion of the meeting, you and your business will be introduced and you will have the opportunity to speak on behalf of your business for a few minutes (8 minutes maximum).

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#### **BUDGET:**

There are many variables, so ultimately the final cost is up to you. Here are some things you should consider when estimating your costs:

- BAH attendance typically averages at between 70 and 90 guests. Feel free to extend invitations to your special guests (e.g., suppliers, potential clients, clients, colleagues, neighbouring businesses, and friends). This, of course, will increase numbers over the Chamber's average attendance.
- As host, you are required to provide sufficient food and beverage for the guests.
  - Food at past BAH's has ranged from light, passed around appetizers to more hearty fare. The choice is up to you. Keep in mind that the quality and quantity of food can affect guests' impressions of your event.
  - Beverages are typically beer, wine and non-alcoholic choices. The Chamber can provide drink tickets at the registration desk to control the number of alcoholic beverages provided to our guests. The choice is yours whether to give one or two drink tickets per person.
  - For BAH locations that are not licensed, a Special Occasion Permit (SOP) will be required. The Chamber staff can advise you on how to obtain the SOP. Cost is \$25 and it can take up to 30 days to get the permit.
- promotional items/ giveaways for guests (not required),
- 2 or 3 door prizes (occasionally, other members arrive with door prizes. We will ask your permission to use these and will ensure they are non-competitive with your business),
- equipment rental such as tables and glassware.

#### **EVENT PLANNING:**

Attending one or more BAH events prior to hosting your own is highly recommended. That will enable you to see how people circulate and how to plan your event. The following are required:

##### 1. TABLES

- A table to be used to display promotional material or goods related to your business.
- A reception table is needed near the entrance where guests will be welcomed by a Chamber Representative. This needs to be clear for guest book, name tags and door prize boxes. Name tags will be provided by the Chamber. Any special instructions for the evening will be explained at this table and/or members will be directed to host staff and BAH committee members.

2. COAT CHECK - During "coat" weather, a coat check area and/or staff should be available.

3. FOOD & BEVERAGE - Refreshments set up in more than one location if possible in order to keep people moving and networking rather than congregating in one area.

4. DOOR PRIZE – Two or three to be drawn during the formal presentation from the business cards collected at the reception table at registration.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call your BAH committee representative or the Chamber.

We look forward to working with you to make this a successful event!