



Hosting a ribbon cutting or grand opening is a great way to announce you're open for business!



## Tips to help you plan your event:

**Public or private event?** Decide what type of event you want and set goals. Will it be open to the public or will it be a smaller affair for a select group? Will you serve any food or drink? What time of day will you host your event?

**Timing is everything.** Decide the date, time and people you need to invite. It's a good idea to make certain there are no other Chamber or community events that might conflict with your date. Scheduling your event Monday - Friday ensures Chamber staff and Ambassadors can attend. Please note: The Chamber needs at least a two (2) weeks notice to effectively promote your event.

**Invite!** Create your invitation list based on your event's goals and budget. Consider the following potential guests: Current/prospective customers; nearby businesses; community leaders, networking partners and your employees. Perhaps add your own marketing to the mix, to attract others to your event - You can easily create a flier, create a Facebook event or e-invite to share the news. If you plan to invite the Mayor or other local leaders, they usually require at least 2-4 weeks advance notice. We will invite our Chamber Ambassadors!

**Publicize.** Write a press release and submit it to the local media at least two weeks before the event. Add your event to community calendars. Please be sure to send a copy of the press release and your flier to The Chamber so we can include the announcement in our publications and calendar!

**Go Social!** Use social media to generate excitement and create awareness. Designate one of your staff to be in charge of your social media before, during and after your event. Create the event on Facebook, use a #hashtag and encourage your attendees to "check-in" during the event. Post event info as well as pictures leading up to and from the event. Tag The Chamber, and consider having The Chamber "co-host" the event on Facebook.

**Make the event AN event.** Your ribbon cutting may be the first time people enter your business so make it fun and festive. Tours, door prizes, give-aways, discounts on products or services can add incentive for attendees to become customers. Having refreshments, music or decorations liven up the atmosphere. Assign different roles and responsibility to staff so everyone is engaged. Be sure one of those roles is "photographer" because you definitely want to capture the moment.

**Relax and enjoy.** Be a warm host, welcome your guests - and enjoy!



**The Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce**  
*Better business. Better community.*



Let us bring the ribbon and "the big scissors" to your ribbon cutting or grand opening event!

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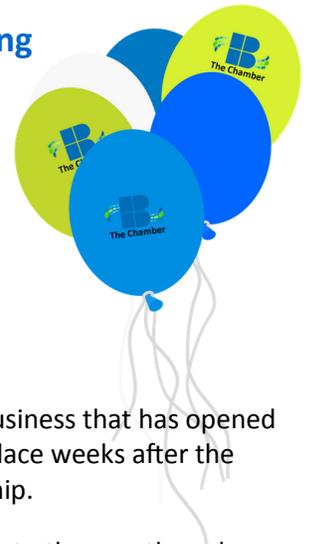


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## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is a Chamber ribbon cutting?

A ribbon cutting is the ceremonial opening of a brand new or newly renovated/relocated business that has opened within the last six months. It can inaugurate a business' first day of business or it can take place weeks after the business' soft opening. A ribbon cutting is not an automatic event to mark a new membership.

Furthermore, the ceremony gives the business owner/manager a chance to say a few words to those gathered. Business owners have used this time to publicly thank their financial backers, their employees, their friends and family and all who have attended for support. They may also take the opportunity to talk about what their business does.

You must be a new or current Chamber member in good standing for The Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce to endorse and help you coordinate the event.

### What are the benefits of holding a ribbon cutting ceremony?

By hosting a ribbon cutting, you can:

- Introduce your business to both the public and other Chamber members
- Announce your ribbon cutting on the Chamber's website's calendar of events
- Familiarize your public and Chamber members with your location, products and services
- Increase your customer base and generate possible leads and sales from attendees and those who have heard about it
- Publicize your ribbon cutting photo by being published in local publications, social media outlets and the Chamber website

### What is the fee to conduct a ribbon cutting?

There is no fee for your ribbon cutting if you are a Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce member.

### When can I hold a ribbon cutting?

Our ribbon cuttings are done during the typical Monday-Friday , 8:00 am - 5:00 pm window.

### What does the Chamber do for my ribbon cutting?

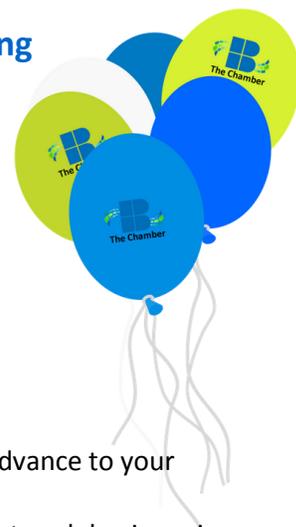
The Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce will gladly:

- List your ribbon cutting on the Chamber's website calendar of events
- Provide you with the Official Chamber plaque, scissors and ribbon
- Welcome attendees and speak at your ceremony if requested
- Publish your photos on the Chamber Facebook page
- Publish your photos in our bi-weekly newsletter

\*Number of attendees is not guaranteed by the Chamber



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## Tips to help you plan your event:

### What do I do for my ribbon cutting?

We ask that you carefully consider and determine:

- Your date and time. We ask that you submit your paperwork at least two (2) weeks in advance to your Membership Representative
- Who will cut the ribbon. The owners or top executive most frequently do the honors, but each business is different and can pick whomever they like. If you choose to invite any elected officials to attend, he or she often cuts or assists in the cutting of the ribbon.
- Who you'd like in the photo(s). Some businesses will take multiple photos with various groups of people before the ribbon is actually cut.
- Your remarks or speech.
- Other details to enhance your event. Refreshments, light hors d'oeuvres, door prizes, and decorations are all optional. Many businesses add these extra touches when conducting a public grand opening in conjunction with the ribbon cutting
- Marketing Opportunities. Coupons/discount cards are a great way to track impact. Giving away something with your name is a great way to make a lasting impression as well.
- Organize a separate PR campaign. If you would like to invite the general public, you should explore other advertising avenues or consider sending a press release to the local media.

### Who will attend my ribbon cutting?

The Chamber will automatically invite the Chamber's Board of Directors, Staff and Ambassadors. Between four to ten people from this group typically attend.

While we'll list your ribbon cutting on our website calendar of events, we strongly encourage you to conduct your own PR campaign to increase the attendance and awareness of your business' opening. You should also consider inviting your business partners, financiers, contractors, employees, clientele, friends and family to be with you to celebrate this momentous occasion in your business' history. Please understand that you should not rely solely on the Chamber to attract your audience. The Chamber does not request reservations and does not keep track of attendance on your behalf.

### What have other businesses done to make their ribbon cutting and/or grand opening unique?

- Sent a special invitation to the whole Chamber membership (email blast provided for a fee)
- Sent a special direct mail piece to area residents and/or non-member businesses
- Invited clients, employees and board of directors from their organization
- Offered complimentary appetizers and beverages and gave free samples of their products/services
- Hosted an on-site remote radio broadcast
- Decorated with balloons, banners, etc.
- Attended Chamber events leading up to their Ribbon Cutting to personally invite members to their Ribbon Cutting
- Did the ribbon cutting after their soft opening to build up customers to invite prior to the official opening