

- What is the objective of the event? Is it social, networking, family friendly, volunteering in the community or a combination?
 - Target Audience
 - Who is your target audience? Who do you want to attend this event? Who has attended similar past events?
 - Will this event attract new participants
 - Past events
 - What events were successful in the past? What do you think made them successful?
- Selecting a date
 - Consider the following when choosing your date
 - Conflicts with other events in your area or holidays
 - Location availability
 - Are you flexible on the location or is it important to the success of the event?
 - Time of the event
 - In a big city, does the start time leave enough time for alums to arrive after work?
 - Lead time
 - Is there enough time to successfully promote your event?
- Selecting a location
 - Consider the following when choosing your location
 - Centrally located venues are ideal
 - Survey your alumni to find out which area of town works best for them
 - Will the venue be hard to get to at that time of day?
 - Unique locations will draw people to your event
 - Alumni will attend an event if it's at a venue that they don't usually have access to.
 - All costs involved
 - Rental fees, catering, equipment rentals, parking fees, etc
 - Does hosting the event there justify the cost you will need to charge to cover the expenses?
 - Set up of the facility
 - Is the room large enough to accommodate your expected number of attendees?
 - Is the room too large? Events that are held in venues that are too large tend to seem emptier than they are.
 - If it's outside, is there an alternative rain plan?
 - Parking
 - Is it easy and accessible?



Communicating the Event

Promoting the event – how to get them there

- Promotion is essential to the success of an event – if they don't know, they won't come!
- Ways of promoting your event
 - Website
 - Update your website with any new, upcoming events. Make sure to include all pertinent information – date, location, time, cost, if applicable.
 - Don't just include the basics – make the event sound fun!
 - Update your website with write ups and photos from past events – this showcases your successes and speaks to those alums who have not attended events in the past.
 - Emails
 - The Texas Exes will email event notices for chapters on a weekly basis.
 - If you are trying to promote a large event, send that event out in a stand alone email, rather than part of an email newsletter.
 - Emails can be segmented by demographic information. We can send emails out based on graduation year, for example. This allows you to customize your message.
 - It's always a good idea to send a reminder email a day or two days before the event.
 - Paper mailings
 - Invitations for events should be in mailboxes 6 to 8 weeks prior to the event
 - Send all paper mailing requests to the Texas Exes 10 days prior to your target mail date – this will ensure they hit mailboxes in plenty of time.
 - Standard mailings are either a postcard or a tri-folded letter size self mailer. We can help design the mailing to suit the event.
 - Local papers or magazines
 - Advertise your event in the local media. Lots of local newspapers and magazines have calendar listings of local events. Generally those listings are free or carry a nominal fee.
 - If it's a larger event, consider purchasing an ad in the local paper or magazine. This will help attract alumni that are new to the group.

To make your communications most effective make sure to include the following:

- Name of event
- Description of event
- Time of event
- Location of event
- RSVP deadline
- Cost per person
- Event details – dinner, cash bar, ect
- Parking information
- Information on attire
- Contact information for questions
- Information on speaker, if applicable

Budget

Expected Attendance: _____

Admission Price: \$ _____ Texas Exes Members \$ _____ Non members

Projected Expenses:

Facilities/room rental charges \$ _____

Set up charges/fees \$ _____

Rental equipment (a/v, tents, tables, chairs, risers, etc) \$ _____

Food \$ _____

Beverages \$ _____

Bartender and server fees/gratuities \$ _____

Decorations \$ _____

Entertainment \$ _____

Miscellaneous (photos, speaker travel expenses, supplies, etc) \$ _____



Event Planning Timeline

4 to 6 months in advance Date _____

- Confirm event date with Chapter Board
- Reserve venue for event
- Set the budget
- Start collecting donations for auction items, if applicable

2 to 3 months in advance Date _____

- Finalize the details: menus, bar arrangements, speaker (if applicable), cost, etc
- Assign specific jobs to Board and/or committee members
- Decide how to take reservations and deadline for reservations
- Rent any equipment needed

9 weeks in advance Date _____

- Send details for paper mailing to Texas Exes, if applicable

6 to 8 weeks in advance Date _____

- Paper mailings should be in the mail, if applicable
- Order any supplies or decorations needed
- Post event on chapter website
- Send out save the date email
- Invite any special guests

3 weeks in advance Date _____

- Send out email to announce event
- Begin work on paper program

2 weeks in advance Date _____

- Confirm with speakers
- Finalize program and get to printer

Week of event Date _____

- Final headcount to caterer
- Print out rosters for event, if applicable
- Put together materials for the event – sign sheet, membership brochures, nametags, pens, etc
- Finalize all auction items

Post Event Checklist

Provide the following to pass on to future event coordinators:

- Copy of invitation and all other marketing materials
- Copy of program
- Speaker/Entertainment with contact information
- Copy of menu
- Copy of committee list
- Photographer with contact information
- List of decorations used
- List of auction items
- Notes on what worked/what didn't work