

2017 First Friday Business Guidelines



First Friday is a retail awareness and promotion event, not a sales event. It is designed to show local residents the variety of restaurants and retail businesses that exist in downtown Sandy in the hopes that they consider doing their shopping here instead of Gresham or Portland. When residents shop locally, their money stays in the community, and that's good for everyone.

First Friday will bring potential customers to your business. Your job is to figure out how to make an impression on them so they remember your store. So get creative: this is your chance to create a memorable experience that will make customers want to come back later and shop! The Chamber is also here to help support you in coming up with ideas and wowing First Friday visitors.

Each month participating businesses will be required to turn in a short blurb for that month's First Friday Event Guide. The blurb should include information about the participant's promotion or activity they will feature for that month. You may also send us all of your specials for the year in advance if you wish and eliminate any worry about the deadlines. The Event Guide will include a First Friday Walking Map and a list of participants with their featured promotion. An example of the Event Guide is attached. Below is a list of each month's deadline* to turn in Event Guide information:

- April Event Guide Deadline: **March 27th**
- May Event Guide Deadline: **April 24th**
- June Event Guide Deadline: **May 22nd**
- August Event Guide Deadline: **July 24th**
- September Event Guide Deadline: **August 21st**
- October Event Guide Deadline: **September 25th**

*If a participant fails to turn in their Event Guide information by the dates listed above they will not be included in the Event Guide for that month.

Sandy Area Chamber of Commerce has put together the following recommendations to help your business benefit from the traffic generated by First Friday:

- Offer a **significant** special that is **only available during First Friday** for maximum effect. If your 10% discount or "1/2 off an appetizer with the purchase of 2 meals" special isn't attracting customers, then step your game up and offer a better special. (hint: customers are more likely to respond to "dollars off" promotions than "percent off" discounts.)
- Be creative with your special. You want potential customers to remember you!
- Start promoting your special a week or so in advance. Use social media; send out a notice to your mailing list; have your employees hand out First Friday coupons to customers.
- Partner with a complementary business -- how can you promote your businesses together? (Example: Buddha Kat Winery loves to do wine tastings on site for local retailers!) We can help you with this...
- Offer food or drink to draw customers in -- wine and beer tastings work especially well. If you are a restaurant or a bar, offer a drink special or signature drink only available during First Friday.
- Bring in music or artists to encourage visitors to sit & stay in your shop. Make sure that passing pedestrians know that there's something going on!

- There are a lot of young families in and around Sandy. According to the Census Bureau, the total percentage of households with kids under 18 in Oregon in 2015 was 29.4% -- in Sandy, that percentage was 39.3%. First Friday participants have told us they want more kid activities. If it makes sense for your business, do something kid-friendly!
- Offer a kid activity (i.e. a balloon man, face painting, magician) or a kids craft. When kids are content and busy, parents will stick around. This is a great opportunity to meet potential customers.
- Do an in-store demonstration of your wares or services. Show them why you rock!
- **We strongly encourage business owners to be in their shops during First Friday.** Introduce yourself to your customers and tell your story. People like to patronize the shops of people they know.
- Personal service businesses like salons & massage parlors can modify their service to cater to First Friday visitors. A nail salon could set up a table offering “10-minute Total Hand Makeovers”. Rather than providing the full-blown nail salon service, provide a simple coat of any polish the customer chooses along with a sealer for one low price during the event. A hair salon might offer “Beads and Braids” for children. The possibilities are limitless!
- Offer free branded takeaways for customers, such as coupons, bookmarks, or pens. Remember, the whole point of the event is to get participants to REMEMBER YOU LATER.
- Improve your business’s “curb appeal”: The more attractive & interesting your business looks, the more people will want to look around. Sweep your sidewalk, clean your windows, & display specials or attractive product in your storefront windows.
- Encourage visitors to sign up for your mailing list or your Facebook/Instagram page. Follow up with the customers that do sign up – thank them and include a coupon for their next visit. On your signup sheet, consider asking for their birthday so you can send them a birthday special.
- Remind your social media followers about First Friday. Help us help you! Promote! Tag SandyORFirstFriday in your post and we will help share on the official Sandy OR First Friday Facebook page.
- If your first attempts aren’t successful, don’t give up! Promoting your business means trying new things & exploring new ideas. They won’t all be a slam dunk. Keep doing what works and discard what doesn’t. We are always available for suggestions.
- **Get involved in the planning of First Friday!** Sandy Area Chamber is always looking for new ideas & feedback from our participating businesses. We’re open to your suggestions. Help us create a First Friday that works for you!

Don’t hesitate to call the Sandy Area Chamber to discuss your ideas, ask questions, or to get suggestions. We are happy to help you ensure that your business benefits from First Friday!

Contact:

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