



BUSINESS AFTER HOURS INFORMATION PACKET

Congratulations! We are excited you are taking the opportunity to open your doors to showcase your business and host fellow members of the Chamber & community! We appreciate the opportunity to drive new foot traffic to your location and hope the following information is helpful to you.

WHAT IS A BUSINESS AFTER HOURS?

Our *Business After Hours* event offers members, prospective members, customers, and guests the chance to network in an engaging, unique atmosphere.

These events are typically held on the second Wednesday of each month, from 4:30 – 6:30 PM, but days/times are flexible. The Member host is presented the opportunity to invite business and community members into their facility to showcase the products and services they offer as a company, making every event distinctive & unique. Thoughtfully detailed venues, inspired fare, delicious drinks, and door prizes are trademarks of this event series.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF HOSTING A BUSINESS AFTER HOURS?

By hosting a Business After Hours, you can:

- Introduce Chamber Members to your business
- Publicize your business within the local community
- Gain name recognition through listings on the Chamber's website, calendar, Facebook, LinkedIn, and weekly Beacon (the Chamber's e-newsletter)
- Familiarize Chamber members and business owners with your products/services
- Provide an opportunity for Chamber members and business owners to visit your physical location
- Grow your customer base, generate possible leads and sales from attendees

WHAT DOES THE CHAMBER DO FOR A BUSINESS AFTER HOURS?

- Invite the Chamber Board of Directors, Lakefront Career Network members, and general membership to attend
- List your event on the Chamber's website, calendar, weekly Beacon, Facebook, and LinkedIn – featuring your logo and/or graphics
- Set-up a registration station including nametags for guests, blank business cards, and a format for gathering the attendees' information for the host
- Collect all registrations and contact information for each attendee
- We will send all attendee contact information to you the week following the event.
- Briefly address guests, introducing you as the host
- Provide you with a list of local media contacts and caterers, upon request

WHAT IS THE COST TO HOST A BUSINESS AFTER HOURS?

The fee to host is \$200. Any other expenses associated with food & beverage, novelty items, door prizes, etc., are at the discretion and cost of the host.

We encourage hosts to partner with non-profit groups and local restaurant/caterers to enhance the Business After Hours. We can provide both member lists for non-profits and restaurants/caterers.

WHAT CAN YOU DO FOR YOUR BUSINESS AFTER HOURS?

We ask you to carefully consider:

- **YOUR REMARKS OR SPEECH:** This is typically done after the Chamber representative has gathered the group's attention and introduced you as the host. Please limit your speech to three minutes. If you have giveaways or door prizes, this is the time to promote those.
- **CREATING A UNIQUE EVENT:** Many businesses choose to add a door prize, party favor or product/service sample, signature drink, themed décor or other extra touches. Hosting a drawing will help you gather business card to include in your database. *If you plan to serve alcoholic beverages, it is your responsibility to ensure that you are following the Indiana State Guidelines.*
- **SPECIAL INVITATIONS:** If you wish to mail invitations, we will provide you with printed mailing labels for each chamber member. You may also wish to extend an invitation to your customers or other special guests.
- **WHO WILL ATTEND:** The Chamber will invite its Board of Directors, Ambassadors, Lakefront Career Network, and Elected Officials. Typically, 25-40 people from the general membership attend the event. Upon request, we will extend an invitation to the Mayor of Michigan City and City Council, and other dignitaries, however we cannot guarantee their attendance.

WHAT HAVE OTHER BUSINESSES DONE TO MAKE THEIR EVENT UNIQUE?

- Sent a special invitation to the entire Chamber membership
- Sent a special direct mail piece to area residents and/or non-member businesses
- Invited clients, employees, and/or board directors from their organization
- Invited corporate staff from out-of-town corporate headquarters
- Offered complimentary appetizers and beverages from fancy to simple, from a few selections to a large buffet and/or chocolate fountains, champagne fountains, and sweets
- Invited sports or business mascots and superheroes in costumes
- Gave free samples of their product or services
- Played live music: disc jockey, band, string quartet, soloist, or pianist
- Gave door prizes or other give-a-ways
- Hosted an on-site remote radio broadcast
- Decorated with balloons, banners, lights, search lights, etc.



BUSINESS AFTER HOURS REGISTRATION FORM

Complete this form and email to jelwood@mcachamber.com

In order to ensure that these events are successful:

- Business After Hours must be scheduled 30 days in advance of the event and payment (\$200) must be received at that time to secure your reservation
- The Chamber accepts sponsors on a first come, first served basis

SECTION ONE: TELL US ABOUT YOUR EVENT

Preferred date: _____
Month/date Year

Alternate date: _____
Month/date Year

Business/Organization name: _____

Contact name: _____

Contact phone: _____ Email: _____

Physical address: _____

Event details (i.e. theme, specialty food/beverage, door prizes, incentives, etc.):

Speaker name & title (if applicable): _____

SECTION TWO: WHAT DO YOU NEED FROM THE CHAMBER?

- Chamber Membership mailing labels
- Chamber Member caterers list
- Local media contacts list
- Chamber Member Non-Profit list

PLEASE EMAIL THIS FORM TO
Janelle Elwood, Operations Manager
Michigan City Chamber of Commerce
jelwood@mcachamber.com
219-874-6221