

THE **ARRL**



# CONVENTION AND HAMFEST PRIMER

A Guide for Organizers of Amateur Radio Events



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# GUIDELINES FOR SUCCESSFUL ARRL CONVENTIONS AND HAMFESTS

## A Compilation of Expert Insights

Over the years, the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) has played a pivotal role in the organization and execution of countless conventions and hamfests. These events, which serve as crucial gatherings for amateur radio enthusiasts, offer opportunities for networking, learning, and exploring the latest in radio technology. From this extensive history, a wealth of experience has been distilled into a set of guiding principles and best practices that can be of immense benefit to anyone planning an ARRL convention or hamfest.

This document serves as a comprehensive resource, drawing on years of accumulated knowledge from ARRL officials and dedicated members. The goal is to equip planning committees with the tools necessary to ensure successful events that resonate with attendees and foster a vibrant community spirit. Whether organizing a modest club open house or a regional hamfest, the following principles can simplify the planning process and mitigate potential issues.



## 1.0 Understanding the Typical Event

The primary focus of this guideline is on conventions and hamfests that attract between 250 and 4,000 participants. These events are ideally held in locations such as fairgrounds, convention centers, or hotels, which can accommodate a variety of activities, including seminars, programs, commercial exhibits, and flea markets. Organizers should be mindful that larger events, surpassing the 4,000-attendee mark, involve complexities that necessitate professional assistance and more intricate logistical planning.

### 1.1 So, You Want to Sponsor a Hamfest!

Before you begin planning, first ask yourself these very important questions, and be honest in answering them.

- Do we need a hamfest? Is our event too close geographically and/or in time to another established event that would adversely affect attendance?
- Are there enough hams within a 2-hour drive of our location to support the event?
- Is there a suitable site, and is it available on a suitable date?
- Do we have enough advance funds?



**Before you answer “YES” to these questions, consider these facts:**

- Many hamfest sponsors believe a hamfest that is 200 miles away is not “in their area” and therefore, they need one in their own hometown. However, if there are successful hamfests within 200 miles of your location, the chances are limited that a new locally sponsored one will become a great success.
- It has been proven that an area can have 2,000 hams in it, but approximately 2/3 to 3/4 of them will not attend a hamfest, for varying reasons. Check your potential attendance very carefully before making commitments.
- Consider the need for parking. Many hamfest sponsors completely overlook the fact that most attendees do not carpool. Often a site is selected with a building that will accommodate 5,000 and a parking lot for only 500 (which many hamfest sponsors immediately turn over to outdoor swappers), leaving most attendees to fend for themselves in locating parking. These attendees come in the door angry at the hamfest and daring you to make them have a good time!
- Overnight RV parking has become a popular addition to many hamfests and can make the difference between attending or staying home for some. Check your selected site for regulations.
- The size and type of your hamfest dictates the amount of advance funds necessary. Common advance charges for 1-day and 2-day hamfests include site rental deposit, ticket printing, advertising and promotion charges, flyer printing, prize purchases, and postage.

If you have read the above and are still convinced that you’re ready to follow through, the remainder of this document is devoted to helping you plan a successful event. Good luck!



## 1.2 Key Principles for Organizing an ARRL Event

The principles laid out in this document aim to provide valuable insights for committees undertaking the organization of ARRL conventions and hamfests. By leveraging the experiences of past organizers and adhering to these best practices, committees can enhance the likelihood of hosting successful, engaging, and memorable events. Whether it's through meticulous planning, effective communication, or robust marketing strategies, the cornerstones of successful gatherings lie in the details presented here. With the right framework in place, the possibilities are endless.

### Establish Clear Objectives



Before diving into the logistics, it is imperative for planning committees to define clear objectives for the event. What is the primary purpose? Is it education, networking, showcasing new technologies, or a combination of these? Clear goals will guide all subsequent decisions, from venue selection to program content.

### Form a Dedicated Committee



A well-organized committee is the backbone of any successful event. Each member should be assigned specific responsibilities, allowing for a streamlined workflow. Effective communication and regular meetings are crucial to ensure that all moving parts are coordinated and on track.

### Budget Wisely



Financial planning is essential. Committees must outline a detailed budget that accounts for all potential expenses and income sources, including registration fees, vendor fees, sponsorships, and facility rentals. Understanding the financial landscape will help avoid unpleasant surprises down the line.

### Venue Selection and Logistics



The choice of venue significantly impacts the event's success. Considerations include accessibility, capacity, facilities for seminars and exhibits, and overall ambience. Additionally, ensuring that logistical arrangements—such as parking, technical support, and catering—are well-managed will create a smoother experience for all attendees.

### Diverse Program Planning



A balanced program is critical to attracting a wide audience. Offering a range of seminars, workshops, and keynote speakers can cater to different interests within the amateur radio community. The inclusion of hands-on activities or demonstrations can also enhance engagement.

### Effective Promotion



A well-crafted marketing strategy will drive attendance. Utilize various channels such as social media, email newsletters, and partnerships with local radio clubs to spread the word. Early promotions should highlight key speakers, programs, and activities to generate excitement among potential attendees.

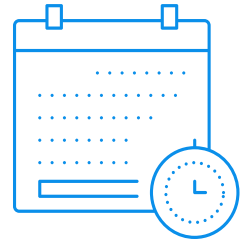
### Feedback and Adaptation



After the event, gathering feedback from attendees and participants is invaluable. This information can highlight what worked well and what areas need improvement, providing crucial insights for future events. Continuous learning and adaptation are hallmarks of successful event planning.

## 1.3 Advance Planning

Depending on the type and number of activities for your event, start the countdown to your event at least 12 months in advance. The need for advance planning cannot be stressed too much! Here's a sample outline of a schedule:



### 12 months prior:

- ☐ Create a budget.
- ☐ Appoint volunteers to hamfest/convention committee.

### 9 months prior:

- ☐ Notify committee members, outlining their responsibilities.
- ☐ Begin promotional efforts.
- ☐ Strike an agreement with site management.

### 7 months prior:

- ☐ Recruit commercial exhibitors.

### 6 months prior:

- ☐ Obtain status reports from committee members.
- ☐ Give committee members overall progress reports.
- ☐ Recruit food vendors.

### 4 months prior:

- ☐ Continue two-way communications with committee members.

### 3 months prior:

- ☐ Mail promotional flyer to all ARRL members in the ARRL Division.
- ☐ Post to the event's website (if applicable) and be sure to update your announcement on the ARRL website if any particulars of your event have changed since the sanctioning of the event by asking for assistance from Headquarters via **hamfests@arrrl.org**.
- ☐ Promote via broadcast email if possible.

### 1 month prior:

- ☐ Mail second promotional flyer and send emails.

### Month of the event:

Hamfest!



## 1.4 1-Day or 2-Day Event? Understanding the Hamfest Format

In the world of amateur radio, hamfests serve as the cornerstone for community engagement, equipment trading, and knowledge sharing among enthusiasts. However, organizers often grapple with a fundamental question: should the event be a 1-day or a 2-day affair? Each format has its unique advantages and challenges that require careful consideration to ensure a successful outcome.



### The Case for a 1-Day Hamfest

Opting for a 1-day hamfest is an appealing choice for many budding organizers. This format entails less expense, fewer volunteer-hours, and reduced risk of logistical failures compared to its longer counterpart. One day is often sufficient to craft a vibrant atmosphere filled with activities that cater to all attendees. Simple programming can include informal swapping of equipment, engaging browsing of gadgets and paraphernalia, family-friendly picnicking, or an insightful talk by a local ham showcasing their latest project.

Crucially, 1-day hamfests necessitate significantly lesser planning. Organizers can focus on creating an experience that engages attendees without overwhelming them with extensive programming. For venues that may not be conveniently located near diverse entertainment options for non-ham family members, it becomes essential to incorporate additional activities tailored to them. Happy family members tend to lead to joyful attendees—ensuring a celebratory atmosphere at the hamfest.

### The Commitment of a 2-Day Hamfest

Conversely, a 2-day hamfest represents a more significant commitment, demanding meticulous planning and robust community support. The success of a 2-day event hinges on the undivided backing of local clubs, dealers, manufacturers, and a sufficient reserve of advance funds. With greater length comes increased responsibilities, and organizers must be prepared for a dramatic escalation in both the complexity and the overall time investment required.

As the event Chairman assigns tasks, the number of volunteer-hours necessary to successfully operate a 2-day hamfest can be staggering. Organizers must consider a myriad of additional budgetary requirements including security services, electrical installations, booth setups, janitorial services, extra insurance coverage, program booklet printing, and potential advertising costs—regional or national, depending on scale. The administrative overhead can be daunting, yet essential for establishing a durable framework for the event.

A well-rounded 2-day hamfest typically offers a variety of activities, such as structured programs, organizational meetings, food functions, contests, and elaborate exhibits. However, securing viable exhibits can prove challenging, as participants must commit time and

resources to showcase. Moreover, it is imperative to establish a headquarters hotel that offers rates unmatched elsewhere, an aspect that can foster convenience for out-of-town attendees.

The potential risks associated with food functions also warrant consideration. Pricing necessities and food safety can pose financial pitfalls, underscoring the importance of prudent management in this area.



## Choosing the Right Format

Choosing between a 1-day and a 2-day hamfest ultimately depends on the objectives, resources, and community dynamics involved. A 1-day format offers a streamlined, lower-risk alternative perfect for engaging participants without overwhelming organizational capacity. Meanwhile, a 2-day hamfest provides expansive opportunities for deeper interaction and extensive programming—though it requires a higher level of commitment and financial prudence.

The decision should align with the goals of the organizing committee, the anticipated audience, and the logistical realities of hosting such an event. Whether 1 day or 2, the essence of a hamfest lies in enhancing the amateur radio community and fostering lasting connections among its members. Ultimately, a well-executed hamfest—regardless of its duration—will enhance the spirit of camaraderie and enthusiasm that defines this passionate niche.

## 1.5 Event Date Selection: A Strategic Approach

Selecting the date for a convention or hamfest is no trivial task. It is an endeavor that requires careful consideration of various factors, including geographical location, available accommodations, and, perhaps most critically, the customs and precedents established by neighboring Divisions. In the world of amateur radio, timing can influence the success of an event significantly. Therefore, event organizers are urged to consult with the Division Director, Section Manager, and ARRL Headquarters prior to finalizing a date. Such consultations are essential to prevent scheduling conflicts with other ham gatherings, as Headquarters maintains a comprehensive record of events planned up to 2 years in advance.

One of the paramount factors influencing event date selection is geographical location. The regional climate can dictate the preferable seasons for gatherings, with some areas flourishing in early spring or late fall, while others may benefit from the warmth of summer. Moreover, accommodation availability can heavily sway decisions, as organizers must ensure that the venues can accommodate the anticipated number of attendees. If the chosen date coincides with local events or holidays, accommodation shortages may arise, leading to potential attendees opting to attend alternative events.

## 2.0 Engaging the Right Committee Members

Once the date is established, the next crucial step involves assembling a robust committee. Selecting individuals with proven records of diligence and success in volunteer roles is imperative. A committee made up of solid candidates will be fortified against the inevitable challenges of event planning. Organizers are cautioned against appointing friends to critical committee positions unless their relationship is resilient enough to endure the stresses associated with such responsibilities. The stakes are high, and one must ensure that personal dynamics do not detract from the primary objective of a successful event.



### 2.1 The Chairperson's Role: Leadership and Oversight

At the helm of the planning committee is the chairperson, the individual ultimately accountable for the event's success. The chair must maintain vigilance over all aspects of planning, identifying potential issues before they escalate into significant problems. Effective leadership involves not just oversight but also active engagement with committee members to ensure that a shared plan and schedule are established and adhered to.



The responsibilities of the chairperson encompass a broad spectrum of tasks, including:

- **Recruiting Key Committee Members** It is the chair's duty to assemble a competent team to tackle various planning aspects. Each member should bring specific skills and experience to the table to enhance the committee's overall performance.
- **Ensuring Clear Communication** Effective communication is the backbone of any successful event planning initiative. The chairperson must facilitate and promote dialogue within the committee using meetings, phone calls, on-the-air nets, letters, newsletters, and emails to ensure everyone stays informed and engaged throughout the planning process.
- **Promoting the Hamfest** The chair takes a leading role in marketing the event to potential exhibitors, showcasing the benefits of participation and ensuring that the hamfest garners adequate interest and support.
- **Insurance and Permits** Securing liability insurance and obtaining the ARRL hamfest status are also critical duties that fall under the chairperson's purview. This ensures that the event operates within legal parameters and maintains the prestige associated with ARRL endorsement.
- **Financial Planning** Creating a solid financial plan is essential; the chair must assess potential costs, set ticket prices, and predict attendance to ensure the event's sustainability and success.

## 2.2 Other Committee Chairs: Crucial Specialty Roles

Each role within the hamfest planning committee contributes uniquely to the success of the event. From logistics and communication to engagement and safety, these positions require individuals who are dedicated, detail-oriented, and equipped to handle the multifaceted challenges of organizing a substantial gathering of amateur radio enthusiasts. Understanding the diverse responsibilities of these roles highlights the collaborative effort required to craft an outstanding hamfest experience.

### Associate Chairperson

The Associate Chair plays a fundamental role in the logistical framework of the hamfest. Tasked with supporting the Chairperson, this individual oversees site arrangements, including the rental of essentials for the event's maintenance. Responsibilities extend to coordinating trash dumpsters, ensuring adequate electrical distribution, and addressing other logistical contingencies that may arise during the planning phase. This role demands a keen eye for detail and problem-solving skills to manage the multitude of moving parts associated with such a large event.

### Publicity Chairperson

At the heart of a successful hamfest lies the Publicity Chairperson, a position recognized as the most critical on the convention committee. The efficacy of publicity efforts can significantly influence the turnout at the event. This chairperson develops comprehensive strategies to disseminate information, employ direct mail campaigns, broadcast emails, and utilizing the online presence through websites. Additionally, advertising in respected ham magazines such as *QST* and distributing regional convention flyers ensures wide-reaching awareness. The Publicity Chairperson's ability to engage the community can make or break the event.

### Exhibit Hall Chairperson

The Exhibit Hall Chair is responsible for the strategic layout of the exhibition space, ensuring that commercial exhibitors have optimal placements. This role involves close collaboration with exhibitors to accommodate their needs and maximize viewer engagement. Creating an inviting and organized exhibit hall enhances the overall experience for attendees and promotes successful interactions between the public and exhibitors.

### Ticket Chairperson

The Ticket Chairperson streamlines the ticketing process, handling both advance sales and at-the-door ticket transactions. This individual arranges for the design and printing of tickets while meticulously maintaining sales records throughout the duration of the hamfest. The efficiency of ticket sales directly affects attendee entry experiences, making this role crucial in managing crowd flow and overall satisfaction.



### Parking Chairperson

The Parking Chairperson coordinates the parking logistics that are vital to the seamless flow of traffic at the event. This role involves developing a comprehensive parking scheme, creating signage for easy navigation, and scheduling staff to manage the parking lot effectively. A well-organized parking operation ensures that participants can access the venue with minimal disruption.



### Flea Market Chairperson

The Flea Market Chair orchestrates the arrangements for what is often a highlight of the hamfest. This includes planning the layout for flea market vendors and guiding sellers to their assigned spaces. Effective management in this area contributes to a vibrant market atmosphere that attracts attendees and encourages communal engagement.

### Safety & Security Chairperson

The Safety & Security Chair is responsible for maintaining safety and security across the event grounds, with a particular focus on the exhibit hall. This role encompasses planning security measures, coordinating with local authorities if necessary, and ensuring both exhibitors and attendees feel secure throughout the duration of the hamfest.

### Food Chairperson

Food services at the hamfest are coordinated by the Food Chairperson, who organizes food and drink concessions to cater to attendees' needs. Diverse food offerings can significantly enhance the overall experience, keeping participants energized and engaged throughout the event.



### Information Chairperson

The Information Chairperson acts as the critical communication hub during the event by managing the talk-in station. This role involves gathering local information on hotels, hospitals, restaurants, gas stations, shopping locales, and tourist attractions, which is invaluable, especially for non-ham spouses seeking alternative entertainment. Additionally, the Information Chair manages the public address system, ensuring that relevant announcements reach attendees effectively.

### Program Chairperson

Planning the event's program is the purview of the Program Chair, who curates an engaging lineup of forums, seminars, and videos. This role requires the ability to anticipate participant interests and deliver content that captivates and educates, enriching the overall hamfest experience.

### Alternate Activities Chairperson

This Chair ensures that non-ham participants have an enjoyable experience by coordinating alternative activities throughout the weekend. By providing engaging options, this role is vital in fostering a welcoming environment for all attendees, regardless of their involvement with amateur radio.

### Exams Chairperson

The Exams Chairperson oversees the coordination of the volunteer exam sessions. This position entails communicating with the ARRL VEC (Volunteer Examiner Coordinator) office well in advance of the event to guarantee all necessary arrangements are in place for exam day. The Exams Chair ensures that aspiring amateur radio operators have the opportunity to pursue licensing during the hamfest.



## 3.0 The Importance of Financial Planning for Successful Events

In the realm of event management, the significance of a robust financial plan cannot be overstated. The harsh reality is that numerous gatherings falter not due to lack of interest or engagement but because of inadequate financial foresight. When conventions are perceived solely as profit-driven ventures for the hosting organization, it can lead to discontent among attendees and ultimately jeopardize the event's credibility. Thus, a meticulous approach to budgeting and cost management is imperative for ensuring the event's financial viability while fostering goodwill among participants.

### 3.1 Essential Budgeting Considerations

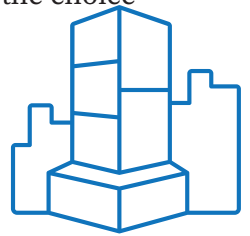
In the quest to achieve fiscal responsibility, several key elements must be meticulously evaluated when crafting a budget for an event.



- **Estimating Attendee Numbers** An often-underestimated aspect of financial planning is accurately predicting attendance. Many novice organizers tend to inflate these numbers, setting the stage for financial shortfalls. A conservative approach is advised, taking into account various factors that may affect turnout. For instance, overlapping events within a 300-mile radius could detract from potential participants, while adverse weather conditions could drastically reduce attendance.

A thorough review of past conventions or similar events offers invaluable insights. Attendance figures should be analyzed diligently to establish realistic expectations for the upcoming event, thereby laying the groundwork for a reliable budget.

- **Choosing the Right Venue** In the consideration of successful event execution, the choice of hotel or convention site plays a pivotal role. Experienced event planners understand that previous personal experiences are invaluable in selecting an appropriate venue where food quality, service, and facilities meet or exceed expectations.



Hotels typically require written contracts for event arrangements, with prices often quoted for banquet menus based on estimated attendance. It's vital for organizers to be aware of price disparities across different locations to avoid exorbitant fees that could lead to dissatisfaction among attendees. Moreover, most hotels impose a minimum guarantee for meal counts, so planners should factor this into their budget.

The logistical nightmare of insufficient meals due to underestimated attendance can be mitigated with proactive communication; notifying the venue of increased numbers ensures that everyone is adequately fed, enhancing the overall experience.

- **Banquet Costs** This encompasses rental fees for the venue, as well as expenses for food and any entertainment provided. An accurate estimate in this area sets the foundation for the entire financial plan.
- **Understanding Ticket Prices: A Strategic Approach** When organizing an event, determining ticket prices is a key component that can significantly affect attendance and overall success. The ticket price should be carefully calculated based on expected attendance and costs incurred, but flexibility is necessary in addressing consumer psychology.

- **The Calculation of Ticket Prices** The foundational step in establishing ticket prices begins with a thorough cost analysis. Once the total expenses of the event are calculated, dividing this figure by the anticipated number of attendees yields a cost per ticket, which often surfaces as an unconventional decimal, such as \$4.84 or \$7.37. To simplify pricing and enhance allure, event organizers should round these figures to the next higher, "even" number—\$5.00 or \$7.50. Setting a price that is too high may deter attendance, which is why maintaining competitive, yet profitable pricing is crucial.



A strategic adjustment can further alleviate the strain of higher ticket prices: making optional high-cost items, such as a banquet, available at an additional charge. This approach enables organizers to cater to attendees with varied budget constraints while maximizing revenue from those willing to spend more. Determining ticket prices effectively is not merely a numerical exercise; it is a strategic endeavor that aligns with the overall vision of the event.

- **Ticketing Expenses** The costs associated with ticket printing can accumulate quickly, especially if promotional discounts or early-bird pricing strategies are implemented.

- ♦ **Complimentary Tickets** Allocating funds for free tickets or gratuities for speakers and guests is crucial, as these individuals are vital to the event's success and should feel valued.



- **Generating Revenue through Booth Space** One effective strategy for maximizing event revenue lies in selling booth space to manufacturers and vendors relevant to the audience. Typically, booths are designed with dimensions of 8' × 10' or larger, accommodating various displays. Additionally, flea market and tailgating spaces can serve as alternative income sources.

Furthermore, while hotels generally provide lecture halls at no extra charge when banquet arrangements are made, it remains imperative to verify this with management. Organizers should communicate their needs clearly to avoid unexpected charges that could deplete the budget.

- **ARRL Director Invitation** Be sure your ARRL Division Director is extended a personal invitation by the sponsoring club's president or secretary, or the chairperson of the committee. A complimentary ticket (without the prize stub) is a courtesy, but not a necessary gesture. The invitation itself is the important thing. A similar invitation should be extended to other ARRL officials in the area.
- **Speaker Logistics** If speakers are required to travel, provisions for their lodging and transportation expenses must be included.
- **Marketing Costs** Investments in marketing such as sending out notices, advertising literature, and printed programs play a crucial role in reaching potential attendees.
- **Transportation and Communication** Costs such as hiring buses for excursions and paying for telephone and postal communications can add up and should not be overlooked.
- **Facility and Office Supplies** Access to photocopy facilities and other necessary office supplies is paramount for effective communication and administration during the event.
- **Miscellaneous Items** This includes costs for badges, signage, banners, decorations, and prizes, which all contribute to the overall experience.



- **Leveraging Advertising for Financial Relief** Advertising serves as a viable strategy to offset printing costs associated with program materials. While soliciting ads from national manufacturers may prove ineffective due to their pre-set budgets, local and regional businesses present promising opportunities. In addition to targeting radio dealers, organizers should consider nearby businesses such as the host hotel, parking lots, and restaurants, creating multiple revenue streams.

- **Prize Acquisition and Legal Considerations** While it's common practice for committees to rely on donations for prizes, a more pragmatic approach involves allocating a portion of the event budget for purchasing prizes. Most suppliers offer generous discounts on bulk prize purchases, allowing planners to curate enticing rewards while maintaining financial control.

It's critical for organizers to familiarize themselves with local legislation regarding prize distribution methods. In some jurisdictions, drawing prizes based on chance may violate lottery laws, mandating thorough legal consultation before implementing any prize-based promotions.

- **Harnessing Local Resources and Support** A collaborative approach with local organizations enhances event planning effectiveness. Engaging with the local Chamber of Commerce or Convention Bureau can uncover opportunities for cost savings, particularly concerning printing programs, mailing notices, and organizing transportation. Many Chambers may provide essential services or subsidize program costs, thus alleviating some financial pressure from event organizers.



Bringing a tentative program to initial meetings with potential local partners can expedite the commitment process, demonstrating a level of organization and clarity that local groups look for in collaborators.

## 3.2 Crafting the Budget

With a projected attendance figure in hand, planners can begin developing a detailed budget. Each component of the event should be broken down meticulously, allowing organizers to assign costs to specific items effectively. After all expenses have been accounted for, a prudent practice is to add approximately 20% to the total estimated costs. This buffer caters to unexpected expenses and ensures a slim margin of profit, safeguarding against financial pitfalls.

## 4.0 Navigating the Complex Landscape of Exhibits

Exhibits play a crucial role in the success of any convention or hamfest, serving as a primary avenue for manufacturers and dealers to showcase their innovations and products. However, participation in these events has its challenges, primarily due to the associated costs and logistical limitations. As industry professionals recognize the financial implications of exhibiting, many have opted to engage exclusively in events with a proven track record of robust attendance, particularly 2-day events. This section explores the intricacies of exhibit participation and provides insights on enhancing the experience for both exhibitors and attendees.

### 4.1 The Cost Burden of Exhibiting

The financial responsibilities tied to exhibiting at conventions can mount rapidly. Manufacturers and dealers face expenses related to shipping, travel, and booth setup, creating a hefty financial burden. For many, particularly smaller enterprises, these costs necessitate a careful assessment of potential return on investment (ROI) when selecting which events to attend.





## 4.2 Attendance Dynamics that Affect Exhibitors

Notably, many conventions experience a significant drop in attendance on the second day. This reality places additional pressure on organizers to create engaging activities that encourage participants to return. It is essential to ensure that the second day's attendance is not limited to exhibitors and committee members alone. Strategic planning is required to enhance the appeal of the second day, thereby maximizing exposure for all parties involved.

## 4.3 Meeting Exhibitors' Needs

To foster a successful exhibiting environment, event coordinators must prioritize the needs of exhibitors. Here are several critical considerations that should be addressed:

- **Adequate Setup Time** Exhibitors often travel great distances, with some arriving overnight. Standard setup windows of 3 to 4 hours are insufficient for proper booth arrangements. Organizers must allocate at least 10 to 12 hours for setup, allowing exhibitors to adequately prepare before attendees arrive.
- **Friday Night Exhibit Policy** Many exhibitors prefer that commercial exhibits do not open on Friday evenings. This time is typically seen as less productive, as attendees might return on subsequent days. A focus on quality interactions during primary exhibition hours can optimize sales potential.
- **Exhibitors' Lounge** Providing a dedicated lounge for exhibitors is essential for their comfort. A nearby resting area allows exhausted vendors to take short breaks and recharge, ensuring they remain attentive and engaged throughout the convention.
- **Convenient Refreshments** Quick access to food and beverages is paramount. Facilitating easy acquisition of light meals and drinks within the exhibitors' lounge or through a streamlined concession line can save valuable time for vendors, allowing them to return to their booths promptly.
- **Loading Accessibility** The logistics of loading and unloading products can be a significant point of frustration for exhibitors. Ensuring that there are adequate loading areas and multiple means of access, particularly for events held on the upper floors of a building, is critical for a seamless transition at the close of the event.



## 4.4 The Allure of the Flea Market

Perhaps the most enticing aspect of any amateur radio convention is the flea market. This vibrant marketplace sees sellers displaying vintage radios, vacuum tubes, essential components, and an array of collectibles. Flea market participation typically requires an additional fee to be paid to the event organizer, a necessary investment considering the potential sales opportunities it presents.

Flea market sellers are usually granted early access to set up before the public opening, enhancing their chances to arrange appealing displays. To ensure a well-organized event, designated Flea Market Coordinators (working under the Flea Market Chairperson) oversee the layout and manage seller placements.

However, organizers must remain vigilant about preventing the sale of illegal items such as pirated software or counterfeit goods. Clear guidelines communicated through literature and signage deter this practice, safeguarding both the event's integrity and the local community's interests.

Lastly, organizers must prioritize accessibility for all attendees, including individuals with physical disabilities. Implementing wheelchair ramps and ensuring that all areas of the event are navigable for those with mobility challenges is not just a legal obligation; it reflects the values of inclusivity and community that are central to the spirit of amateur radio.



## 5.0 Crafting Engaging Programs

In the world of amateur radio, the planning and execution of events by an American Radio Relay League (ARRL) Division is a crucial undertaking that requires careful consideration and expertise. Drawing from historical successes, event programs are usually constructed based on proven templates from previous conventions. This structured approach is essential, particularly for committees that may not have extensive experience in organizing large-scale events. It is recommended that only seasoned committees attempt to innovate with radically new types of convention programs, and such ventures should be undertaken only after thorough consultation with the ARRL Director.

The success of ARRL Division events hinges on thoughtful program design that honors tradition while remaining responsive to contemporary needs. By adhering to established practices, involving knowledgeable speakers, and fostering community engagement through social opportunities and official meetings, committees can create enriching experiences that resonate with participants and uphold the standards of the amateur radio community.



When designing an event program, a key consideration is whether the focus will lean more toward technical presentations or social interactions. Experience often dictates this decision; some regions have a tradition of predominantly technical sessions, while others may choose to emphasize the social aspects of the gathering, especially in outdoor settings where the environment encourages interaction.

To maintain the integrity and value of the program, it is advisable to feature a reasonable number of high-quality technical addresses. If a committee finds itself unable to secure competent speakers for these sessions, it is prudent to forgo them entirely. In such cases, technical “roundtable” discussions centered on relevant and “live” topics can be an effective substitute. Engaging the most knowledgeable amateur radio experts on the selected subjects as moderators can significantly enhance the quality and relevance of these discussions.

Another essential component of the program is the welcoming address, typically delivered by the committee chairperson or the president of the sponsoring club. It is crucial to keep this address concise to maintain the audience’s attention. Often, it is beneficial to include a representative from the mayor’s office or other local political figures, who can provide a brief statement of welcome, particularly at more formal conventions. This inclusion not only adds a level of prestige to the event but also connects the amateur radio community with local governance.

Moreover, the planning committee should earnestly consider integrating ARRL Officials’ meetings into the event agenda. These meetings serve as platforms to discuss vital topics such as Field Organization issues, DX conclaves, and emergency communication strategies. The active participation of the ARRL Division Director and Section Managers from the local Sections in organizing these meetings can prove invaluable, ensuring that the program reflects current challenges and developments within the amateur radio community.

## 5.1 Ideal Topics for Ham Radio Programs

Selecting the right topics for seminars is essential for attracting those passionate about amateur radio. The following themes have proven to be significant draws in past events and are likely to spark interest among attendees:

### Antenna Talk

A perennial favorite, this topic can include discussions on design, tuning, and innovative solutions for antenna challenges.

### AMSAT or Satellite

As interest in satellite communications grows, presentations on AMSAT operations and how to engage in satellite radio become invaluable.

### ARES®/RACES

With emergency communication capabilities becoming increasingly critical, detailing the roles of ARES® (Amateur Radio Emergency Service®) and RACES (Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service) can equip hams with essential knowledge.

### ARRL Section Leadership Get-Together

This provides a platform for leadership within Sections to collaborate and share best practices, ultimately strengthening the overall organization.

### Clubs

Engaging discussions about the role of local clubs in fostering community, sharing knowledge, and promoting the hobby are vital.

### Contesting

Competitive spirit is a significant component of amateur radio. Seminars on strategies, techniques, and experiences can inspire participants.

### Digital Modes

With the rise of digital communication, topics covering various modes deserve attention, offering insights into new techniques and technologies.

### DXpeditions

These adventures into remote territories to contact rare stations are captivating stories that can highlight preparation and operational techniques.

### EmComm Forum

This forum can address operational protocols and strategies in emergency communication scenarios, creating awareness and preparedness among hams.

### FCC Forum

Discussing regulations, compliance, and updates from the Federal Communications Commission can help attendees stay informed.





### Instructor's Forum

A valuable resource for those involved in teaching amateur radio, where best practices can be shared.

### Public Relations Forum

Promoting the amateur radio service to the public and enhancing community relations is crucial for this hobby's future.

### RFI Forum

Addressing radio frequency interference can lead to productive discussions on solutions and mitigation strategies.

### Traffic Handlers' Confab

Dedicated to those who handle message traffic, providing tips and insight into improving this vital skill.

### VE Forum

A focal point for Volunteer Examiners, this forum can share experiences and techniques for facilitating examinations effectively.



### VHF/UHF Conference

Exploring the intricacies of Very High Frequency and Ultra High Frequency operations can draw considerable interest.

### Youth Forum

Engaging younger hams is essential for the future of the hobby. A forum dedicated to youth involvement can inspire the next generation of operators.

## 5.2 Hosting an ARRL Forum

The American Radio Relay League (ARRL) plays a central role in amateur radio organization. The ARRL Forum occupies a significant place at conventions and hamfests that ARRL oversees. This formal speaking program serves as an essential platform for members, enabling them to engage actively in discussions about the direction and priorities of the organization. Such forums foster discussions about policies, benefits, and changes impacting the community.

A key feature of the ARRL Forum is that the Division Director serves as the meeting's moderator. This individual embodies the voice of the members, uniquely positioned to discuss the Division's state of affairs. Their insights are invaluable, serving as a bridge between the grassroots concerns of amateur radio operators and the broader strategic objectives of ARRL.

While the ARRL Forum has the potential to be a productive and enlightening gathering, its efficacy hinges on thoughtful planning and execution. A poorly managed meeting can devolve into unproductive disputes, wasting precious time that could otherwise be spent on constructive dialogue. Recognizing this, it is crucial that the person selected to chair the meeting possesses strong leadership abilities. A capable chairperson can maintain order, encourage participation, and ensure the discussions remain focused on pertinent issues, thereby maximizing the forum's impact.

Timing is critical for the ARRL Forum to attract the largest audience possible. To achieve this, the scheduling should be meticulously considered; ideally, the forum should not coincide with other events that compete for attendees' attention, particularly those scheduled during popular

lunch hours. By strategically placing the forum at a time when members are more likely to attend, ARRL can amplify engagement and facilitate a transformative experience for participants.

The ARRL Forum is more than just a meeting; it is an opportunity for amateur radio operators to collectively shape the future of their community. By ensuring that it is well-planned, moderated effectively, and thoughtfully scheduled, ARRL can harness the collective voice of its members, driving forward initiatives that reflect their interests and concerns. The successful execution of the forum can solidify its status as an indispensable element of ARRL conventions and hamfests, ultimately enhancing the amateur radio experience for all involved.

### 5.3 Meeting Speakers' Needs

The selection of expert speakers forms another cornerstone of a successful event. Understanding how to best support these individuals can greatly contribute to the professionalism and fluidity of the program. There are several ways to ensure that the needs of speakers are met efficiently.

- **Preparation and Communication** Organizers must clearly outline the expected duration of each presentation and necessary equipment well in advance. This includes audio/visual needs such as projectors, sound systems, and any specific software or devices required by the speaker.
- **Technical Support** Assign a committee member to assist speakers with technical setup. This individual should be prepared to introduce the speaker to the audience and ensure all equipment functions properly.
- **Strict Schedule Adherence** Timeliness is crucial to the event's overall success. Maintaining a rigid schedule not only respects the speakers' time but also honors the attendees' expectations. If any session runs over time, it jeopardizes subsequent presentations and undermines the event's professionalism.



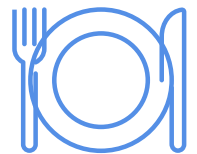
By prioritizing meticulous planning and organization, organizers can create a compelling program that not only draws attendees but also fosters a collaborative and educational atmosphere. The thoughtful selection of topics coupled with effective speaker management will ensure that amateur radio events continue to thrive, engaging current participants while enticing future generations to embrace the world of ham radio.

### 5.4 Hosting a Successful Banquet

In the world of events and conventions, banquets serve as important social gatherings that foster networking, celebration, and relaxation. Any entertainment offered as a part of the convention should be in good taste and in keeping with the standards of amateur radio. Here are some points to consider when planning your event's banquet.

#### Food

Try not to overestimate the number of people for a luncheon or dinner, and avoid over-purchasing supplies for a committee-operated food stand. If you cannot schedule "order from the menu" events, guarantee only those meals for which you have received advance payment.



The potential profit of a committee-operated food stand can be inviting. Nonetheless, it is sometimes the wiser choice to let a professional operate the stand in exchange for a percentage of sales to the committee. The professional also removes the insurance requirements from the committee by providing their own insurance to cover food operation.

A “dutch supper” at a reasonably priced local restaurant can be an excellent substitute for a formal banquet on the first evening of a 2-day event.

Similarly, a good way to start off the second day of a convention is to schedule group breakfasts at local coffee shops and restaurants. A convention official should be assigned to each group to arrive early and make certain that arrangements are in order. No formal program or seating is necessary; those who show up will form tables of their own. One or more of the following groups can be scheduled: traffic, DX, emergency, MARS, mobile, repeaters, nets, QCWA, etc.

### Your Banquet Emcee

While many elements contribute to the success of a banquet, one critical role stands out: that of the emcee. The effectiveness of an emcee can significantly shape the atmosphere and engagement level of the event, making the selection of this individual a paramount consideration.



The emcee serves as a bridge between the event and its audience. A well-chosen emcee understands the guests, can relate to them, and fosters an environment of camaraderie and enjoyment. It is essential to avoid individuals who are prone to delivering lengthy speeches or who might unintentionally overshadow other facets of the program. An emcee who dominates the evening with soliloquies risks leaving the audience disengaged. Instead, an ideal choice would be someone who can succinctly introduce segments and guests, maintaining a brisk pace that encourages participation and enjoyment.

For gatherings where the audience includes both licensed and unlicensed attendees, it is crucial that the emcee understands—and can briefly explain—relevant ham jargon. For instance, if call signs are utilized during guest introductions, clarity in conveying this context becomes essential for ensuring that all attendees can engage fully with the program.

One engaging method an emcee can use to enliven a banquet is informal contests. Recognizing attendees in a light-hearted manner—such as categories for the oldest and youngest ham radio operators present, or those who traveled the farthest to attend—can spark enthusiasm and promote an enjoyable atmosphere. These interjections not only serve as icebreakers, but also create memorable moments for attendees.

### Keynotes and Other Speeches

In scenarios where a banquet features a keynote speaker, the focus shifts to this individual. Typically, a banquet will highlight a singular keynote address, placing it at the center of the program. This concentrated attention allows for a more impactful delivery and a cohesive message that resonates with the audience, maintaining engagement throughout the event.



When possible, securing the attendance of representatives from the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) can provide invaluable insight and prestige to the banquet. While budgetary constraints might limit travel, timely communication and planning (subject to CEO authorization) can aid in arranging for a desired speaker. Organizers must allow ample lead time—ideally several months—to ensure arrangements align with both the event’s agenda and the ARRL speaker’s availability.

Banquets provide a unique opportunity to shift focus from formal educational sessions to meaningful social interactions. While it is appropriate to invite honored guests to sit at the speakers’ table and occasionally provide brief remarks, the trend is increasingly leaning away from lengthy speeches. Instead, banquet programming should prioritize fellowship and entertainment.



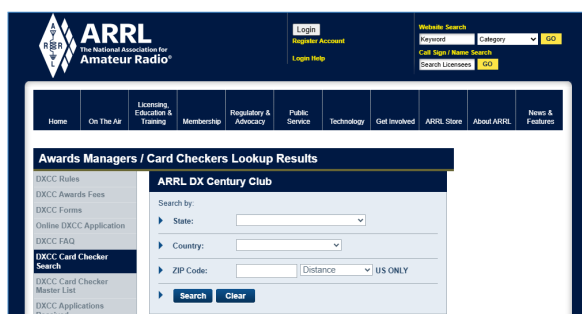
## 5.5 Activities for Non-Ham Attendees

Conventions often see the attendance of unlicensed partners and children. Therefore, it is essential for banquet organizers to cater to the needs of these individuals. A comprehensive program that includes tours, craft displays, luncheons, and recreational activities can significantly enhance the overall experience of the event. Visits to local points of interest are in order if there is something with real interest, such as an unusual type of industry or famous landmark.

By incorporating an array of engaging options—such as scavenger hunts, cartoons, or hospital-ity rooms—organizers not only ensure that attendees enjoy their time but also foster a welcoming environment for all.

## 5.6 DXCC Card Checkers

Inviting card checkers who can check QSL cards for DXCC and other awards can attract people to your event! ARRL HQ's DXCC desk can provide a list of approved card checkers so you can find a person who lives nearby. You can also find card checkers on ARRL's website at <http://www.arrl.org/dxcc-card-checker-search> or you can contact the DXCC desk direct at (860) 594-0234 or [dxcc@arrl.org](mailto:dxcc@arrl.org).



## 6.0 The Art of Promoting Your Hamfest

The success of a hamfest frequently hinges on the effectiveness of its advertising. Without a well-crafted promotional strategy, even the most meticulously organized event may flounder, rendering all efforts ineffective. By investing approximately one-fourth of the total budget into advertising, organizers can substantially enhance their event's visibility and appeal.

### 6.1 Types of Advertising and How to Leverage Them

Successful promotion is an indispensable component that can make or break an event. By strategically targeting local audiences, utilizing robust advertising approaches, and tapping into easy-to-access resources, organizers can cultivate significant interest in their hamfest. As with many aspects of event planning, diligence in promoting the event guarantees that all efforts come to fruition, ultimately leading to a successful and well-attended hamfest.

The type of advertising utilized will largely depend on the specific nature of the hamfest and the geographical area it targets. Recognizing the most suitable platforms for placing advertisements is critical; otherwise, financial resources may be squandered. Local advertising should be prioritized over national campaigns, particularly for events still gaining traction. Regional publications, club newsletters, local newspapers, and on-the-air announcements serve as excellent platforms for promotion. Ideally, however, a well-curated direct-mail approach should be employed, granted the budget allows for it.

## Crafting Effective Advertisements

When creating an advertisement or announcement for a hamfest, there are fundamental details that must be included to ensure clarity and effectiveness. Essential information includes the name of the hamfest, its location (ideally supported by a map), the date and hours of operation, entry fees, additional functions such as food offerings, and contact details for further inquiries. Including the event's website and talk-in frequency can further facilitate engagement.

While it's tempting to provide exhaustive details about the event's attractions, the promotion should remain concise. Expanding too much on ancillary activities may clutter the announcement and dilute its impact. Instead, focusing on the basics and incorporating a few compelling teasers can effectively pique interest without overwhelming potential attendees.

Caution: It is crucial never to promote activities that have not been formalized. Unforeseen circumstances can lead to disappointment among attendees, and they will not hesitate to hold the organizers accountable for unmet expectations. Hence, starting the promotion early, while allowing for any potential adjustments, is highly advisable.

## Targeting a Direct Mail Campaign

To maximize event attendance, it is advisable to send promotional materials directly to principal clubs within the targeted area. A list of these clubs can be obtained from ARRL HQ upon completing the mailing label request form at [https://www.arrl.org/files/file/Clubs/ARRL\\_Mailing%20List%20Request%20Form.pdf](https://www.arrl.org/files/file/Clubs/ARRL_Mailing%20List%20Request%20Form.pdf).

In addition to local clubs, outreach to groups like the Military Auxiliary Radio System (MARS) and the Quarter Century Wireless Association (QCWA) can expand visibility and draw potential attendees from various facets of the amateur radio community. By ensuring that promotional materials reach key community players, organizers can effectively inform potential participants of the hamfest.

To further enhance the effectiveness of promotional materials, consider creating customized flyers for targeted audiences, such as one aimed at licensed amateur radio operators, and another directed toward the broader electronics community. This approach can significantly improve outreach and participation.

Furthermore, digital avenues such as broadcast emails and promotional posts on relevant websites can significantly enhance visibility.

## Leveraging Word of Mouth

For those unable to cover the expense of mass mailings, a strategic alternative involves reaching out to the most active amateur radio operators in the vicinity. These individuals can act as invaluable ambassadors for the event, engaging their networks and spreading awareness about the hamfest.

To maximize the breadth of promotional impact, it is essential for club members and affiliates to mention the hamfest in their everyday conversations. This grassroots approach ensures that the hamfest reaches a broad audience, fostering a communal knowledge of the event that can lead to increased attendance.

A form titled "MAILING LIST REQUEST" from the ARRL (American Radio Relay League). It includes fields for Name, Call Sign, Email, and Club. There are checkboxes for "Who should the list include (check one or more)" with options: Full Members, Cadets, FCC Class B and below (includes full members), Associate Members, and JARRL. Another section asks "What geographic area should the list cover (check one or more)" with options: All ARRL Divisions, All ARRL Sections, States or Territories, and List of States where the list is being prepared. A "File format:" section has checkboxes for Download Excel and Download CSV. A note at the bottom states: "The cost of labels is dependent on the number of labels, cost of postage and must be prepaid. You will be notified of the cost and instructions on how to proceed."

## ARRL Resources and Media Outlets

One of the most effective platforms for promoting hamfests and conventions events is through ARRL's *QST* magazine. If there is enough lead time before publication, ARRL-sanctioned hamfests and conventions will be listed in *QST*'s Convention and Hamfest Calendar (at no charge) about 1 month before the event.

Submit announcements in accordance with *QST*'s publication's deadlines—March 1 for a June event, for instance, to assure that information reaches potential attendees well in advance. Notably, there is no charge for these listings, though additional advertising options in the “Ham-Ads” section of *QST* are available for those who seek enhanced visibility at competitive rates.

ARRL-sanctioned hamfests and conventions will also be listed in ARRL Web's online [Ham-fests and Conventions Calendar Database](#) at no charge. Upcoming conventions are also listed in the weekly e-newsletter, *The ARRL Letter*.

To have your hamfest or convention sanctioned, complete the [online application](#) or contact ARRL Headquarters at [hamfests@arrl.org](mailto:hamfests@arrl.org) or call ARRL Headquarters for more information.

To amplify promotional reach, organizers should take advantage of the free mailing labels that ARRL provides for approved events. Even for those events that do not have ARRL sanctioning, obtaining mailing lists for targeted demographics can prove beneficial. Such lists can be obtained through a simple request process, with a typical turnaround time of 2 weeks. Request mailing labels at [https://www.arrl.org/files/file/Clubs/ARRL\\_Mailing%20List%20Request%20Form.pdf](https://www.arrl.org/files/file/Clubs/ARRL_Mailing%20List%20Request%20Form.pdf).



ARRL also recognizes the importance of a professional presence at events. Coordinators, ARRL Directors, and Section Managers can order various exhibit materials to bolster their booth's visibility at hamfests. This includes everything from banners to handouts, available at minimal or no cost. These promotional tools are critical in engaging attendees and conveying the benefits of membership in ARRL.

## 6.2 Navigating ARRL's Approval Process for Organizing Conventions

Initially, the Convention Program Manager must be contacted to review the event proposal. The application needs to receive approval by the Director of the respective Division along with consultation with the respective Section Managers before the event is designated as an ARRL convention. This structured approach ensures that only high-quality events associated with the ARRL brand are promoted and recognized. Visit [ARRL Sanctioned Events](#) and the official [Rules and Regulations](#) for more information.

## 7.0 Volunteer Exams: Elevating the Hamfest Experience

In the evolving landscape of amateur radio, the role of Volunteer Examiners (VEs) has become increasingly pivotal. The American Radio Relay League (ARRL) champions the inclusion of Volunteer Examination sessions at various hamfests and conventions, offering a unique opportunity for aspiring operators to earn their licenses while enhancing the community's vibrancy.



- a) The ARRL's supportive initiatives underscore its commitment to nurturing the next generation of amateur radio operators, and these examinations serve as a direct pathway for participants to engage with the community while pursuing their interests in radio communication. Moreover, the integration of Volunteer Examination sessions is beneficial on multiple fronts. It not only allows newcomers to take the plunge and test



their knowledge but also unites existing operators, creating a collaborative environment where experienced hands can mentor those just starting their journey. This interaction fosters a sense of camaraderie and shared purpose that is at the heart of the amateur radio spirit.

- b) For those interested in sponsoring a Volunteer Examination session, detailed guidance and resources are readily available on the ARRL's website ([www.arrl.org/vec](http://www.arrl.org/vec)). This resource not only outlines the procedures involved but also offers support to ensure that the exam process runs smoothly.
- c) The encouragement from the ARRL to include Volunteer Examination sessions in hamfest programming reflects a strategic step toward cultivating a healthy and growing amateur radio community. As more operators receive their licenses, the frequency of knowledge sharing, innovation, and collaboration increases, ultimately enriching the amateur radio landscape for all involved.
- d) By taking advantage of this opportunity, hamfest organizers can position their events as vital resources for both education and community engagement, ensuring the future prosperity of amateur radio.

## 8.0 The Role of the ARRL Booth at Conventions and Hamfests

ARRL plays a pivotal role in nurturing and promoting the interests of its members. One of the most visible aspects of this mission is the presence of the ARRL booth at conventions and hamfests. Governed by specific regulations established by ARRL's Board of Directors, these booths serve as more than just a promotional space; they are vital points of engagement for current and prospective members alike.

- a) Rules and Responsibilities—A complete list of the rules for Conventions / Hamfests can be found: <http://www.arrl.org/files/file/Rules%20for%20Hamfests%20Trunkfests%20Conventions.pdf>.
- b) While elected ARRL officials and HQ personnel may contribute their expertise by helping to staff the booth, their responsibilities are multifaceted. They are not only present for general interaction but are also available for talks, workshops, and one-on-one membership consultations. This multi-layered interaction fosters a deeper connection between ARRL and its members, enhancing the overall experience of those in attendance.
- c) The Importance of Engagement—The ARRL booth is far more than a simple membership sign-up location; it is a manifestation of ARRL's commitment to its members and the amateur radio community at large. By actively engaging with both seasoned operators and newcomers, ARRL can cultivate a spirit of camaraderie and collaboration. This engagement is fundamental in promoting the growth of amateur radio and ensuring that it remains a vibrant and relevant hobby.
- d) The approach taken by ARRL in managing its booth at conventions and hamfests reflects a thoughtful strategy designed to maximize outreach and connection. By complying with the regulations set forth by the Board of Directors, the ARRL booth is a testament to the organization's commitment to its members. It is an essential fixture playing a crucial role in the recruitment and retention of amateur radio enthusiasts across the nation.



### Checklist

#### Ensuring a Seamless Event: A Comprehensive Presenter Checklist

As event organizers, we understand the importance of delivering engaging and informative presentations. A well-prepared presenter can elevate an event from good to exceptional. To help ensure a smooth and successful experience for both our presenters and our audience, we've created this comprehensive checklist. Think of it as our collective guide to crafting memorable events.

#### Before the Event: The Enquiry/Booking Stage

This initial phase is crucial for setting expectations and ensuring everyone is on the same page. We aim to provide our speakers with all the necessary information to prepare effectively. Here's what we include in our speaker pack:

- **Description of the Event:** A clear outline of the event's purpose and date.
- **Proposed Topic:** Confirmation of the presentation topic.
- **Venue Details:**
  - ☐ Location of the venue.
  - ☐ Directions on how to reach the location.
  - ☐ Room size and orientation.
  - ☐ Information about sunlight exposure.
  - ☐ Suggested seating plan (fixed, movable, etc.).
- **Facilities List:** A complete inventory of available equipment, including:
  - ☐ Screen
  - ☐ Projector
  - ☐ PA system
- **Evaluation Process:** An overview of how we will gather feedback.

#### One Week Before: Final Checks and Preparations

This is a critical time for confirming details and addressing any last-minute questions.

- **Confirmation Call:** We make a call to the speaker to:
  - ☐ Ensure everything is proceeding as planned.
  - ☐ Clarify any remaining needs or concerns.
  - ☐ Fill any information gaps.
- **Introduction Material:** We request information from the speaker to create a compelling introduction for the audience.

## On the Day: Checklist

The day of the event is all about ensuring everything runs smoothly.

### Flip Charts (if needed)

- ☐ **Setup:** Flip charts are set up on either side of the screen for easy access.
- ☐ **Ample Supply:** Plenty of sheets are available on the pad.
- ☐ **Pens:** Pens are readily available on the easel ledge.
- ☐ **Standard Cover Page:** A welcome message is displayed on the first page.

### PowerPoint and Projector

- ☐ **Advance File Check:** We invite the speaker to send a sample file in advance to ensure compatibility with the venue computer.
- ☐ **Backup Plan:** We encourage the speaker to bring presentation files on a thumb drive for easy transfer.
- ☐ **Connectivity:** We confirm the presence of an HDMI input at the presenter's position.
- ☐ **Projector Adjustment:** We check and adjust the projector for focus and image size.
- ☐ **Ceiling Mounted:** If it is ceiling mounted, make sure to check the focus.

### Audio

- ☐ **Microphone Preference:** Check the speaker's preferences (none, tie clip, or stand-mounted).
- ☐ **Recordings:** We inquire if recordings are incorporated into the presentation.
- ☐ **PA Connection:** We test the laptop/tablet connection to the venue PA system.

### Lighting

- ☐ **Control Availability:** We specify the availability of lighting controls.
- ☐ **Window Coverings:** We indicate the presence of window shades or curtains.

### Presentation Organization

- ☐ **Early Arrival:** We always arrive early to assist the speaker in checking the facilities.
- ☐ **Visible Positioning:** Ensure the speaker is in a position where they are clearly visible to the audience.
- ☐ **Introduction Notes:** Have introduction notes prepared using the information provided.
- ☐ **Pronunciation Check:** Double-check the pronunciation of names, titles, and qualifications.
- ☐ **Welcome Message:** Display a welcome message on the screen or flip chart.
- ☐ **Side Table:** Provide a side table for handouts, props, or other items.
- ☐ **Clock:** Ensure a clearly visible clock is available.
- ☐ **Smooth Transitions:** Be prepared to provide smooth transitions between content segments, thank the speaker, and direct attendees to coffee breaks, etc.



## After the Event: Following Up

Maintaining a positive relationship with our presenters is crucial.

- ☐ **Thank You Letter:** A thank you letter to the speaker expressing our appreciation.
- ☐ **Speaker Feedback:** Gather feedback from the speaker on their experience.
- ☐ **Evaluation Results:** Share the evaluation results with the speaker to help them improve future presentations.

## Guidance for Presenters

We can also offer guidance to presenters based on the information given.

Category	Tips
Contracting	Ensure clear agreement on topic, purpose, date, time, audience, venue, fees, expenses, and payment terms.
Before the Event	Confirm arrangements 2-3 days before and provide introduction material.
Materials	Use visuals (flip chart, PowerPoint), gestures, and engagement devices.
PowerPoint	Use consistent layouts, simple animations, and check audio/video.
Flip Charts	Pre-draw headings if needed.
Audio	Check sound without blowing into the microphone, stay within pickup area.
Video	Clearly identify, cue, and script video clips.
Structure	Use a "route map," allow audience to read slides, provide handouts, and offer a summary.
Organization	Arrive early to check facilities, meet the audience, and ensure good positioning.

## FAQs

### Q: How far in advance should I book a speaker?

A: Ideally, we recommend booking speakers several months in advance to ensure availability and adequate preparation time.

### Q: What type of post-event evaluation process do you use?

A: We typically use a combination of written surveys and post-event interviews to gather feedback from attendees.

### Q: Can the speaker bring their own projector?

A: In most cases, we provide the necessary equipment. However, speakers are welcome to bring their own equipment if they prefer, as long as it is compatible with the venue's setup.