



# HOW TO:

## *Host a Business After Hours*

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# BUSINESS

*After* HOURS 

THOMASTON-UPSON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE







# WHAT IS A BUSINESS AFTER HOURS?

The Chamber's Business After Hours is an opportunity to enjoy an evening of social networking with other professionals from around the county. Drop in to visit other businesses, build connections, visit old acquaintances and make new. Please note: These events are open to all current Chamber Member businesses and employees. Business After Hours is a perk of Chamber Membership.

You must be a current Chamber Member in good standing (dues paid) to host a Business After Hours with the Thomaston-Upson Chamber of Commerce.



## *Benefits of a Business After Hours*

- You get to showcase your business, location, services, and team to a captive audience.
- The event puts your name front and center in chamber promotions, social media, newsletters, and word-of-mouth.
- Attendees often exchange business cards, join mailing lists, and engage in follow-up conversations.
- Let people experience your company vibe, values, and hospitality firsthand.
- Event photos and highlights posted on the Chamber's Facebook page afterwards.



# WHAT CAN THE CHAMBER DO FOR YOU?



## 1. **Promotion**

- The Chamber will design an invitation using the Business After Hours Logo and your business logo!
- Market the event through website, social media, and event calendars.
- The Chamber will make an event group on Facebook, send emails to current members, and place a graphic in the weekly email blast.

## 2. **Registration & Check-In**

- Provide a check-in table at the event and collect attendee information. Most of the time this is done through a Door Prize Entry table and a Next Business After Hours 50/50 Raffle Table.

## 3. **Decoration and Theme**

- The Chamber will help provide decorations dependent on the theme. The Business After Hours Committee works to create a theme that fits your business. If a host has a specific theme, please let the Chamber know.

## 4. **Welcome & Program Management**

- Deliver welcome remarks and introduce the host/business.
- Facilitate announcements, prize drawings, and any brief presentations.

## 5. **Networking Facilitation**

- Encourage interaction among guests and introduce new members.
- Provide name tags or networking tools (icebreaker activities, table topics, etc.).

## 6. **Photography & Media**

- Take photos for social media and post-event promotions.
- Tag and feature the host business in follow-up communications.

## 7. **Support for the Host**

- Provide guidance and a checklist for host preparation.
- Coordinate a walk-through with the host ahead of the event if needed.

## 8. **Post-Event Follow-Up**

- Share photos and event recap in the newsletter or social channels.
- Thank the host publicly and provide attendee feedback if appropriate.

# WHAT ARE THE HOST BUSINESS RESPONSIBILITIES?



## 1. Venue Preparation

- Provide a clean, welcoming space that accommodates the expected number of attendees.
- Arrange for necessary seating, lighting, and restroom access.

## 2. Food and Beverage

- Provide refreshments (hors d'oeuvres, snacks, drinks — alcoholic/non-alcoholic as appropriate).
- Ensure catering and/or bar service complies with local health and licensing regulations.

## 3. Staffing

- Have knowledgeable staff available to answer questions about the business.
- Designate someone to greet guests and direct them within the venue.

## 4. Promotional Materials

- Provide brochures, business cards, giveaways, or promotional items.
- Set up displays or signage to highlight services or products.

## 5. Raffle or Door Prize

- Offer at least one door prize to encourage attendance and engagement.

## 6. Technology Needs

- Set up audio/visual equipment if a presentation or background music is planned.
- Ensure Wi-Fi access if needed for presentations or Chamber use.

## 7. Parking and Accessibility

- Provide information and signage for parking.
- Ensure the venue is accessible to all attendees.

## 8. Clean-Up

- Handle clean-up after the event or coordinate with vendors/cleaning services. The Chamber will clean up all decor brought, the 50/50 Raffle Table, and the door prize table.

# Business After Hours Frequently Asked Questions

You may have many questions or not know where to start. Luckily, since this is your event, there are no set rules! Here are a few FAQ that may help.

Q: How many people usually attend?

A: Attendance varies for each After Hours. We usually plan for 20-30 in attendance, but an average number varies on time of year and location.

Q: When is the best time to host a Business After Hours?

A: We try to hold Business After Hours on Thursday evenings from 5-7pm.

Q: Can I co-host with another business?

A: Yes! Co-hosting is a great option for smaller spaces or businesses looking to share the spotlight and expenses.

Q: What kind of speech should I prepare? Do I need a speech?

A: A short welcome or introduction is typical, but the Chamber can help guide this. Some businesses choose to give a tour or a brief presentation — it's entirely up to you.

Q: Who will attend?

A: Business After Hours events are typically open to Chamber members and their guests.

Q: Is there a dress code?

A: Business After Hours events are typically themed. We always encourage attendees to dress according to the theme.