



Founder's District Marketing

How to Hold an Open House

Your Open House...

Build club-wide enthusiasm, focus on the club mission and develop your visitor's packet.

Develop a Plan

1. Choose a date for your open house. Give your club four to six weeks to publicize it.
2. Choose and reserve your location. Your normal meeting place, time and day are ideal. But if you are a new club or if your usual venue won't hold your guests, choose a location nearby.
3. Show hospitality with snacks or even a light meal.
4. Simplify your agenda. Pare the schedule down to two speakers and just three or four Table Topics questions. Now you'll have time to explain functionary roles during the meeting.
5. Promote your open house at least four weeks before the event.

Promote

The goal of an open house is to expose as many prospective new members as possible to your club. A good number to aim for is thirty guests. You can reach hundreds with these techniques:

- News releases
- Advertisements
- Flyers
- Personal invitations

Writing & Distributing News Releases

Also known as a press release, this tool is aimed at any publication or public access media that provides news to its consumers. *Your* goal with a news release is to get your announcement published at least one week before your open house; so be sure to send the release by fax or e-mail at least two to three weeks in advance to:

- Local weekly or daily papers
- City chamber of commerce publications
- Community newsletters
- Nearby company newsletters
- Local access television stations
- Local access radio stations

Here's what you need to include in a news release:

- Focus on the 5 "W's", who, what, where, when why in the first paragraph of the release.
- The club contact information should appear at the top, with a name, e-mail and phone number so that the media can contact you if they need more information.
- Use double-spacing, with one inch margins all around, 12-point Times Roman font.
- Limit your new release to one page.

Creating an Eye-Catching Flyer

- Use color graphics.
- Include your club's meeting place, time, and the place and date of your open house.
- Describe the benefits of joining Toastmasters.
- *Include a contact name, phone number and e-mail address.*

Consider distributing the flyer at:

- Libraries
- Chambers of Commerce
- Company break rooms and cafeterias
- Home owner association club houses
- Book stores and other businesses
- Hospital cafeterias

Buy Advertising

If your budget allows, you can also place an advertisement in local publications, TV and radio.

Capitalizing on Word of Mouth/Personal Invitations

Your own members are the best advertisement your club can have. Make sure each member has copies your flyer. Create a template e-mail invitation that members forward to their friends and colleagues. Challenge everyone to invite at least 10 guests!

Invite Area, Division and District officers. They may not always be able to attend, but District governors and Division officers *love* supporting clubs.

Produce a Great Program

Design a meeting that shows visitors what Toastmasters is all about, but leave enough time during the meeting for questions, answers and explanations.

One idea that works well is to ask a club member to give a speech *about* Toastmasters. Here are more ideas.

- Have experienced club members be seated next to guests, ready to answer questions.
- Give guests and members a meeting agenda.
- Give each guest a visitor's packet. Include a new member application and a visitor contact card that they can fill out and return at the end of the meeting.
- Before adjourning the meeting, ask guests to pose any questions they might have. Set aside at least ten minutes for a Q and A session before closing.
- Have your V.P. Membership and president available to guests after the meeting to answer questions and talk to guests.
- **Ask your guests to join!**
- Write thank you notes to your guests and use your contact information to follow up after the meeting.

Sample Club Visitor Packet

- Welcome letter from club president.
- New Member Application
- Copy of your club newsletter, and/or
- A flyer with club information
- Copy of Toastmasters Magazine
- Guest registration/contact form
- *10 Tips for Public Speaking* flyer (www.toastmasters.org/pdfs/105.pdf)
- *Confidence, The Voice of Leadership* (brochure, catalog # 101)
- *Find Your Voice* (# 99)
- *Clear Communication: Your Organization Needs It* (# 103)
- *Toastmasters Can Help!* (# 115)

For more flyers and ideas, visit www.toastmasters.org and click on the "For Members" link.

Appendix

“You need Toastmasters!”

News Flash: There’s a **Toastmasters Club** meeting near you! And you are invited to check us out at a special **Open House** on Friday, Augtember 13. Visit the **El Viejo Toro Toastmasters!**



Whether you are a professional, student, stay-at-home parent or retiree, **Toastmasters** is the most efficient, enjoyable and affordable way of gaining great communication skills.

Join us on Friday, Augtember 13 for an exciting [insert time period here]. We’ll be serving [**insert meal/snacks here**] and answering all questions!

open house

www.ourtoastmasters.com
www.toastmasters.org

When: 11:45 a.m. – noon
Where: 12345 El Mission Viejo Rd.
Toro Aliso, CA
Cost: *Free!*
Contact: *Susie Sue Susanson*
V.P. Membership, (949) 555-5555
Or Susie@mymojo.com

Visit our club website at
www.ourtoastmasters.com

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directions go here.
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hand corner of box
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**“You can't build a reputation
on what you are going to do.”
~Henry Ford,
American industrialist & inventor**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 1, 2006

Contact Susie Sue Susanson, V.P. Membership
El Toro Viejo Toastmasters
(949) 555-5555
Susie@mymojo.com

NEWS
FROM
Toastmasters International

TOASTMASTERS PLAN OPEN HOUSE

Toro Aliso, CA – The El Toro Viejo Toastmasters Club will host an open house meeting Friday morning, Augtember 13 at the Globe Restaurant. The special meeting will begin at 7:00 a.m., according to Club President, Brian White. Those interested may contact Dennis Brown at 999-0101 for information. The open house will feature speaker Carlene Hays, Toro Aliso comptroller. Ms. Hays is the club’s Sargeant-at-Arms.

A complete Toastmasters club meeting will be conducted with prepared and impromptu speeches and speech evaluations. The open house kicks off a series of community activities the club is conducting during its August Invitation Month membership drive. Invitations to see the club in action are being mailed to residents of Toro Aliso and nearby communities.

“We believe that the community will enjoy seeing how the club’ communication and leadership development program helps prepare members for higher pay and greater personal recognition,” Club President said. “Members are always interested in showing the residents of Toro Aliso how the Toastmasters can help make them be more sucessful.

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