

Oregon Road Runners Club May 2023 Race Director Workshop Manual





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Introduction

For many runners, the finish line feels holy, and reaching it divine, with the journey ending with a final stride across a simple straight line and timing mat on the ground, giving way to exuberance, tears and relief. Not just anyone can cross it. Only those special few. All made possible by you - the race director.

Race event organizations and race directors are committed to encouraging health and fitness through running and walking. Participating in races and events is one of many ways people further their love of the sport and pursue their athletic goals. Directing a race can be a fun and challenging experience. With effective planning and good organization, you can make a successful race a reality and a truly wonderful experience for all.

A race director is similar to an orchestra director. Both lead separate and distinct components, each dependent upon each other for ultimate success. Each primary duty is to unify their individual volunteers, set the tempo, execute clear preparations, and to listen critically and shape the final presentation of the group.

This manual provides helpful guidelines for organizing a quality race. It is not, however, a replacement for experience. This handbook is designed for the first time race director coordinating a small to mid-sized (100 to 700 participant) running event. Preparing for and putting on a running event consists of a multitude of different elements. And while this manual will provide you with tools and suggestions, remember the running event is yours to customize, taking advantage of new concepts and fresh ideas, to meet the needs of your customers - your runners and walkers.

A separate appendix includes samples of race documents as well as various partner vendors and organizations' links.



This manual is not intended to be all-inclusive. Some races require more work, while others require less. Good luck in putting on your running event!



Initial Planning

Planning may not be the most enjoyable component of race directing. But it is the absolute most vital part for achieving success.

Introduction

Before you begin planning a race, you should ask yourself the following questions:

Do you have plenty of time on your hands? Coordinating a running event can take more time than you imagine. And there is always more that you can do.

Are you able to find others who are passionate about your cause and willing to be a lead volunteer and help with the planning? Planning a running event is more enjoyable and manageable as a team.

Are you a detail oriented person? The success of your running event is totally dependent on how well you and your team of volunteers are answer the question - what would I want this experience be like if I were a registered runner? The key is to focus on, anticipate and implement the smallest of details, whether it be weather, number of participants, medals, food and most importantly, the number of volunteers needed to serve the runners and walkers.

You may also choose to conduct hands-on research. Register for at least three local area running events. Notice how the event is organized. Take note of three best practices you could incorporate in your event as a race director. Also note three negatives you'd do differently.



Purpose

The purpose of your running event will determine everything from registration pricing to SWAG.

What is the reason for your running event? Is it to . . .

- Raise funds for a non profit cause.
- Bring awareness for a cause, charity, organization.
- Support a community activity and fitness for all.
- Generate net profits for a for and non-profit.

Race Committee

There are many different organizational items involved in putting on a race and you will need help. Ideally, you should create a race committee consisting of members who are passionate about your cause and/or about the reason you are directing the running event. For a small to mid-sized race, a planning committee of three to four members is sufficient size and each committee member can take responsibility for a main area such as, but not limited to:

- Course, timing, registration, aid stations, equipment
- Online website and registration platform
- e-blasts, social media, sponsorship
- Post-race food & festivities, awards and SWAG
- Volunteers

Race Naming



The name of your running event should in some way describe your event and include the course distance. Consider these named running events as example:

- Is your race a fundraiser for a specific charity, like St Jude's 5K?
- Is your race in a unique location, like ORRC Vernonia Marathon?
- Does your race take place at a specific time of year, such as ORRC Turkey Trot at the Zoo?

Race Location

Suggestive questions to answer:

- What community will your race be held in?
- Do you want to stay in a park or use roads or trails? Answering this question will determine permitting and volunteer requirements.
- Will you need shelter for the participants in case of rain and/or cold weather? Answering this question will determine securing equipment requirements.

Race Date and Time

Select a race date that works for you and your organization. For example, if your organization provides services for new mothers, you may want to plan a race close to, but not on, Mother's Day. Remember that the Portland area is saturated with running events. In a recent informal poll of 250 race directors, the Portland area had more running events, per capita, than any other area in the US.

Other considerations:

- **Dates of other local running events.** Google "Portland running event calendar" to ensure there are no other established, nearby competing events with the same or similar distances.



- **Time of the year.** Summer can get very hot, Winter can get very cold and damp. Almost half of all running events nationally occur during four months - April, May, September and October. You will need to plan for runners' accommodations based on climatic conditions.
- **Early morning races** work best for runners.

Target Audience

Your target audience will set the theme and tone of your race and will influence your marketing. Casual runners may enjoy a non-timed event. Recurring and serious runners prefer chip timing.

Target audience items to consider. The following quoted 2022 percentages are overall, and vary with event distances.

- All running categories
- Walkers
- Women - they make up 54% of all registered runners. Higher percent in short distances, lower in long distance events though
- Demographics
 - Average age: 39
 - Biggest age category - 18 to 39 = 40%
 - Married: 78.7%
 - College educated: 69.0%
 - Household income of \$75,000+
- Youth - new runners and walkers
- 18-29 year olds- An under populated segment of the running population.
- Those who have a connection to your cause?



Budgeting

Budgeting helps control your spending,
track your expenses, and save more money

A budget is a critical piece of your running event planning. A budget provides an overview of costs and allows you to set registration fees. A budget will also help you determine what items you need registration fees and sponsors to cover.

Factors you should think about when creating a budget include, but not limited to:

- Permit and insurance fees
- SWAG - medals, socks, free items given to every participant
- Overall awards, raffle prizes, pre and post event food/beverages
- Equipment and support supplies - rented and/or purchased
- Volunteers
- Administrative overhead
- Marketing /social media - online and third party
- Third party registration platform fees
- Sponsorship donations (cash or in-kind donations)
- Designated charity's desired fundraising amount

Next page shows a 10K race sample budget.



	Budget	Actual
INCOME	\$21,000	\$20,110
EXPENSES		
Facility Rent	\$800	\$208
Promo/Advertising	\$70	\$0
Shirts & Hats	\$1,250	\$1,801
Timing	\$1,390	\$1,170
Volunteers	\$260	\$249
Supplies	\$200	\$214
Awards	\$600	\$652
Food	\$2,500	\$2,446
Permits	\$346	\$286
Porta Potties	\$750	\$895
Travel Expense	\$215	\$214
EXPENSES	\$8,381	\$8,134
PROFIT/-LOSS	\$12,619	\$11,976
NUMBER OF RUNNERS	600	



Distance, Course, Permits, Insurance and Certification

The Portland Metro area provides over 300 miles of bike paths, 200 miles of running trails, and endless roads and parks to support running events.

General liability insurance protects you as the RD, your organization and volunteers against any claim filed by a race registrant. Inexpensive protection.

Municipality permits are required for running events held on public roads and trails which may have a direct significant impact on traffic/hiker congestion or which would significantly impact the need for city-provided emergency services such as police, fire, or medical aid. Municipalities also required insurance company's certificates of insurance of \$1M minimum.

The Distance

Standard distances for a running event are 5K, 10K, 15K, ½ marathon and full marathon. In reality your race can be any distance you want so long as the course is accurately measured. A shorter distance is easier in terms of logistics. However, registration fees are directly related to the course distance with longer distances requiring greater support services.



The Course

The composition of a course can also determine the number of registrations. Do you want a course run on the roads or on a trail? Do you want an easier course that is primarily flat, or a more challenging course

with hills? Do you want a course in the city or a course in a park? In general, the easier the course or more scenic the course, the more participants you might have.

Your course will also determine how many participants your running event can accommodate. A course set on closed streets can accommodate more people than a course in a local park or on trails. It is very important to cap the number of people your course can manage. If a race event and course is over-crowded, no participant or volunteer has a good experience. But a sold-out race with fewer participants is a good start for success. After year one, you may find that your course can accommodate more runners and you can expand the registration cap.

Courses come in two types - closed and open. A closed course is one that does not share the roadway with either pedestrians, bicycles or motor vehicle traffic. It holds a great advantage in that the risk for accidents is smaller. The race course is closed to everything except your race. An example is the 22 mile portion between Banks to Vernonia of the Vernonia Marathon that is on an Oregon rail-to-trails State Park. The disadvantage is a closed course can be expensive to permit, difficult to access, and harder for traffic control purposes and to register volunteers.

An open course, by definition, shares the open road with vehicular traffic. The advantages are the costs are usually less and they are best for smaller events. The disadvantage is that open courses can lead to congestion with other people, cyclists, and accommodating for intersection stop signs/traffic



lights and many times the permits require hired certified flaggers.

The location of your race will, in part, determine the configuration of your course.

● **Point to Point**

This type of course design is the most complicated for race directors to control. The start and finish lines are in different locations. Participants are usually bused to the start line and then run/walk to the finish line where they parked their vehicles. This course requires bus rentals, a separate start and finish area and your start line volunteers will not be able to do double duty at the finish line.

● **Loop**

A loop configuration has the same start and finish line, allowing you to have one large area set up for pre and post-running event activities. A loop allows runners to spread out as the race progresses. The disadvantage of a loop is to be a certified course since measuring for an accurate distance is harder.

● **Out and Back**

Like a loop configuration, the out and back has the same start and finish line providing less work for initial set up. However a narrow out and back course can lead to congestion with the faster runners coming back while the slower runners/walkers are still going out. An out and back course advantage is adjusting for a certified race distance is made easy.

Once the course distance and configuration have been determined, then map the course out online. Strava, Runkeeper, Nike Run Club and RunGo are four of many apps that allow you as a race director to estimate the



distance. Next, using a GPS watch or one of the apps, you will want to run the course. This will allow you to see traffic patterns and understand any directional issues. Consider the following safety issues as you run:

- Motor vehicle traffic

- Intersection crossings (both motor vehicle and pedestrian)

- Start/finish lines and neighboring pre/post event areas

- Busy bike paths

- Busy pedestrian paths

- The ability for participants to run with dogs and jogging strollers, if allowed.

The GPS and online apps are not exact. To obtain an accurate measurement, you will need to use a measuring wheel, hire a certified measurer or use a bicycle equipped with a Jones Counter that has been calibrated on Portland's measured mile, located on NW Front Street. Accuracy is key.

Aid Stations

Participants will expect aid stations with water/replenishment on the course and should be provided every 2-3 miles depending on the course distance, weather and the terrain. If you are not providing aid stations, ensure to tell your runners and walkers ahead of time and on your website.

Marking the Course

Mark the course extensively so runners do not get lost. The course should not be permanently marked in any way with paint. Spray chalk use is prohibited in many municipalities. Inexpensive and easy ways to mark a course the night before or morning of your race include:



- Directional signs on stakes mounted into cones or stuck into the ground.
- Chalk arrows on pavement, if allowed by municipality
- Flour arrows on dirt/pavement/gravel
- A-frame sandwich board signage

Permits and Insurance

No matter where the running event is held, municipality/park permits are required. Check with all of the city, county, state and park agencies on whose land you want to use in your event. There may be multiple permits that you are required to obtain and you will be required to provide proof of insurance in order to finalize the permits. This insurance is for liability so the individuals and organization/s hosting the event are not held responsible unless there is negligence on individuals and organization/s hosts. The city, county or park requires that they be named as an additional insured party. See appendix for insurance information.

Reducing risk management and keeping the participants safe is the number one race director's goal. Obviously not all problems can be foreseen and prevented. Therefore, obtaining sufficient insurance is critical to a running event's and organizations' ultimate success.

Insurance can be purchased through Road Runners Club of America's (RRCA) insurance program or through USA Track and Field (USATF).

As part of the insurance program, all permitting agencies require a Certificate of Insurance issued by the insurance carrier.



Risk management is one of the primary responsibilities of a race director and following the guidelines, such as developed by Road Runners Club of America, will help ensure a safer event for participants. It is a shared responsibility of race directors to ensure they are doing everything possible to deliver a safe, well planned event for their participants.

Advise your insurance provider within 24 hours of any injury or incident should they occur.

Course Certification

You may want to consider having your course certified if you 1) to plan establish your event as a recurring race; 2) desire to attract a larger audience who only run certified courses; 3) believe an age group record might be set at your event, or 4) participate in your event to qualify for another event, such as Boston marathon.

Contact the USA Track and Field Association and their local state rep for information regarding this process to certify your course..



Website and Running Event Logo

Online 24/7 presence is absolutely essential for the success of a running event. Having a website means that customers are always able to find your event, anytime, anywhere. It also gives you credibility to your event, cuts costs, and sets your event apart from other competitive events. Equally important is creating an event logo as a branding marketing tool to sell your event and keeping that logo image in the eyes of your audience at all times.

Website and other options

It is critical to create an online presence for your race. Your race website allows participants to find information on their own and allows you to quickly and easily provide updates.

A website can take a significant amount of time to develop, and will need to be maintained as your race details solidify. Be sure to update relevant dates, results, and photos in a timely manner. The information you should include on your web site can be found in the appendix.

One huge advantage of a website is that online registration platforms can be linked and appear transparent to your website. Some of these platforms are RunSignUp, Race Roster and Ultra.

If your race is associated with an organization or charity, you can ask them to host the race webpage with or without the registration platform.



If your race is a one time event or you wish to keep the event small and/or lower cost, Facebook can also be used. Registration platforms can also be linked to your Facebook account.

You should also have a separate email address for race queries. Website hosting services will provide you with unique emails, but you can also create a Google email address. If your activity is nonprofit, Google for NonProfits is free. This will allow you to keep race communications separate from your personal/business email, provide a more professional look to your event and allow you to pass on the email address if you one day decide to step down as race director.

Race Logo

Your logo should capture the spirit of your event. Careful thought to color and design are important, especially since you will want to use your logo for years to come. Keep in mind your race logo will most likely be used on t-shirts, print and electronic media, and letterhead. It is best to work with a professional graphic designer who can create your logo in formats necessary for hardcopy, online and t-shirts.

Vast majority of runners/walkers use the internet to seek running calendars. Brochures are no longer the standard marketing tool. Use brochures sparingly.



Registration

A streamlined registration process/platform will ensure a positive experience for both you and your participants and will enable you to create necessary reports and pull out critical information for race day.

Registration Fees

A number of factors are involved in setting your registration fee. You will want to have a price point that covers your costs, but does not deter participants. Factors that will determine your registration fee include:

- Purpose of your race (raise money or break even)
- Target audience
- Race distance (longer events are usually more expensive)
- Giveaways/SWAG (T-shirt, medals, hats, etc.)
- Competitive area race fees

Registration Discounts

Discounts can encourage participants to sign up early and provide an incentive for more people to come to your race. You will want to limit your discounts to ensure you cover your costs. Also limit your pricing to include no more than three pricing levels, with race day registration being the highest.

Discounts can include:



- Early registration price levels at least \$5 each below race day registration. Discount varies with race distance.
- Youth and children
- Family discounts
- Groups and Teams

Ways to Register for a Race

Virtually all registrations are handled online, even day of race registrations. You may wish to develop a paper registration for those wishing the option.

Online Registration

Online registration allows participants to easily sign up and for the race host to maintain a participant database that the timer requires. Online registration platforms are not free. The costs can be included in the registration fee, or more frequently, charged to the registrant when registering. RunSignUp, Race Roster and Ultima are three of the most popular registration platforms.

Communicating with Participants

At minimum, you should be communicating via email with your race participants three times prior to the event. That's where online registration platforms come in handy - they make this task easy with their software tools that come with their platform.

- Registration Confirmation - made easy by an online registration platform. It is built into their platform as an automatic service.
- Pre-Race Email – Ten days before the race, send out an email to all participants reminding them of the race, the time, instructions for parking and the race day schedule.



- Post-Race Email – One to two days after the race, send an email to all participants, thanking volunteers and sponsors, highlighting how much money was raised for your cause, and
- Ask runners to complete an anonymous post-race survey. (See appendix for information on post-race surveys)

Facebook and Twitter will also enable you to keep participants updated without being intrusive.

Refunds

In general, most registrations are considered non-refundable, and should indicate this on the registration form. However, there may be situations where you want to consider refunds:

- No Shows - If participants contact the race director ahead of the event and have a reason why they cannot come, you may decide on a case-by-case basis. You might offer them the chance to transfer their entry to another person or to the following year's race. However, in general, races do not provide refunds for people who contact you after the event.
- Canceled and rescheduled event - Refunds are usually given when an event has to be canceled or rescheduled
- Weather Concerns - For events not called off, but where there is/was a weather concern, in general it is at the race director's discretion as to when to provide refunds.



Transfers

Some races allow pre-registered runners to transfer their registration to another person; some races expressly prohibit it. The key issues being accurate results and liability. Ideally, the race director should be informed of any transfers (if allowed) and all transfers should sign waivers and

provide updated personal information. You might have a blanket policy or decide on a case by case basis.



Timing and Bibs

Timing is a key component of your race and it is important to advertise what timing method you will be using. When determining which timing system to use, consider how you are going to integrate and present the results.

Timing options for your event include:

- **No Official Timing**

No timing/No awards: Many fun runs work quite well without timing participants. You should have a race clock at the finish line so participants can see their time when they come in, but you will not keep track of finishing order or times. Non-timed races usually have lower registration fees.

- **Manual Timing**

A smartphone or iPad/smartphone can be used as a timing device. Manual timing can work well for smaller races and no awards/finishing times are required.

- **Chip Timing**

Chip timing is now the standard form of timing for mid to larger sized races. With a chip attached to their bib, the runner is recorded by a timing system when crossing the start line, a split or the finish line. The information is then immediately available on the system and to the runner/walker at the finish line.



Hiring a Timing Service vs Doing Your Own Timing

Chip timing systems are expensive to purchase and can cost upwards of \$20,000. For that reason, most event hosts hire a time service.

Timing services should cover such items as

- Banners/arch way for start and finish area
- All necessary electronic equipment including generator, computers, printers and iPads for finisher results
- Online day of race registration capabilities
- Chips and bib number assignment
- Creating and setting up a simple finisher chute
- Having a backup system in place
- Instant online finisher results that are posted to your site.
- List of award finishers

Plan on spending \$2-\$4 per runner, depending on the length of your race, number of runners and type of timing requested, with a minimum cost of at least \$1,000. The appendix lists local area timing services.

Results

Chip timing technology allows for immediate hardcopy and online results. Timers also provide iPads at the finish line for participants to determine their times and standings.



Most races have results divided into age categories in five year increments and broken down by gender. Ribbons or awards are usually given out for the top 3 finishers in each age category as well as to overall top male and female finishers and top master finishers (over 40). Having a separate walker category may also be a consideration.

Bibs

Race bibs allow you to compile race times and results. Using your registration platform or manual system, you will have captured personal information including name, birthday, gender, email, mailing address and distance (if event has multiple distances). Your timer will have access to this information in order to properly rank and report finisher times. With dynamic bib assignment that most timers utilize, you are able to keep online registration open until the event starts.

Race bibs can be customized with your race logo, sponsor logos, and even participants' names. See the appendix for race bib supplier and free race bib offers. Bibs also come with a tear off bottom option to be used for raffle or bag check. This option is infrequently used. Bibs should include your race event/organization logo as well as event name and distance, if multi-distances are offered at a single event.

Consider early bib pickup a day or two before the event. This will eliminate the mad rush of processing hundreds of running and walkers minutes before the event. Normally, up to 60% of those registered come to early bib pickup if offered.

Your timers can normally show up at early bib pickup with bibs and iPad type devices, used to assign bibs. It's quicker not to preassign bibs



numbers, but to assign bibs as they show up. The online registration platform loaded in timers' iPad-type devices make this job super easy.



SWAG

Why Do We Call It 'Swag'? Not just the swag that refers to free promotional items given to attendees, but also the swag that refers to stylish confidence. What better way to show confidence than wearing a finisher medal. It's likely that the sense of swag which means "loot" comes from a term thieves used to describe stolen goods. Gained its current use in the 1990s.

Medals

No better SWAG to give than a finisher medal, depicting an accomplishment to the world. Metals cost between \$4 and \$7, dependent upon the size, artistic design and number ordered. Various medals vendors are listed in the appendix.

Ordering time is at least 30 days for domestically produced medals after design proof is approved and number ordered established.

Shirts

If medals are number one swag, some say shirts come in a close second. This depends upon your budget should you include a shirt in the registration fee. Or sell separately during your online registration process.

Shirt cost can be between \$7 to \$14, depending upon the size, artistic design, material and number ordered. In addition, consider offering both male and female cuts. Hybrids don't always fit females that great. And they are the majority of your audience.



Suggest using a graphic artist to design a shirt front. Ensure that your race logo and/or organization logo are located on the front. Suggest putting your and sponsors logo/s also on the back of the shirt for best marketing opportunities.

Your T-shirt supplier will give you a deadline for ordering. You will want to include this date as well as size options in your online registration platform in order to guarantee each participant receives the size they order. You want to be careful not to order too many t-shirts as this can impact your budget. T-shirt ordering tips:

- T-shirts are not guaranteed for those registering the race day. This saves you from costly re-order.
- Initially order more women's sizes than men's sizes.
- Consider ordering both men's and women's cut shirts rather than hybrid.
- Include youth sizing if you race is a shorter distance.
- Once the order deadline is past and you run out of specific sizes, remove those options from your online registration.
- Only allow T-shirt size exchanges after the event.

Various shirt vendors are listed in the appendix.

Socks

Another SWAG option is full and crew cut socks. Less expensive than shirts, cost range from \$3.50 to \$5.30 depending upon length, number ordered and design.



Socks come in sizes, ranging from small to large. Your sock vendor can custom design your socks. Suggest not dating socks since extras can be used again at next year's event.

Various sock vendors are listed in the appendix.



Equipment

Hosting a running event is not just assembling runners and a timer. Hosting equates to totally supporting your runners, walker and volunteer needs, the priority being keep everyone safe.

Additional equipment to support your race range from aid stations on the course, to directional and mileage signage, porta potties, sound systems, tents, heaters, food and replenishment drink. All these can be rented. In addition, you may consider renting a truck/van to transport your equipment. See the appendix for a more complete list of equipment considerations.



Start And Finish Areas

The running portion of same-distance courses are pretty much the same. If you're lucky, you may be in the forest or along a river. However, many events are not. Differentiating your event from others can be made easy should you have unique pre and post event activities.

Post-Race Activities

Most events have finish line festivals, with music, food and beverages, as part of the experience that you are selling. We encourage you to create a post-race finish area of your own. Keep in mind the purpose and/or theme of your race and have fun. Put as much feeling into this as you can, as it represents the personality of the race almost as much as the actual course. Remember this is your race and you should think outside the box.

- Food

Providing post-race food is expected at most races. This will encourage participants to stay for the awards ceremony and sponsors and volunteers love to help out in this capacity.

- Prize drawings

A raffle can be a fun way to engage your participants. You can hand out raffle tickets or draw bib numbers. Again, if you have sponsors involved, they'll want to provide you with items you can give away as prizes.



● Awards

For the actual race awards, there are a number of possibilities with ribbons, plaques, trophies, or anything within your budget you think is original and carries on the personality of the event. You may want to give out finisher medals, age-group ribbons, overall trophies, or any combination thereof. Participants enjoy receiving awards and having their names called out over the loudspeaker.

Photography

You may want photographs of your race to use for social media, future marketing and to allow participants to see themselves in action. Options for race photography:

● Professional Photographer

- Many professional photographers will want to sell their pictures to participants and then give you a small percentage of the sale. This allows you to have a photographer at your event at no cost to you. Others will take pictures for a fixed price, allowing you access to use the pictures as you wish.
- You may also want to include the professional photographer as a sponsor, thus reducing your costs.

● Do It Yourself Photography

- For smaller races, you can have volunteer photographers with their smartphones at the start/finish and on the course. Post photos online in social media or your website for participants to access.

Bag Check



If the parking area is not proximate to the start/finish line, you will want to offer a bag check. This provides participants a place for extra clothing

before and after the race. This is quite important for events held during inclement weather. The bag check area can be a simple tarp on the ground, and a tented area. Use bib numbers to mark the bags and to match bags to participants following the race.

Day of Race Registration

If you are offering a day of race registration option, you will need to have extra tables designated for same day registration, separated from that area designed for those already registered, who are picking up their bibs. Signage is important to direct participants to the right area. Be sure to have chairs available for the volunteers working the registration tables.



Volunteers

The physical and mental rewards of helping others is inherent in volunteering. You'll help make the run a smooth-running event. The chance to make a difference in other peoples' lives awaits all volunteers.

Having enough properly trained volunteers can make or break a running event.

Volunteer Assignments

Volunteers are needed for just about every task, from registration check-in, to setting up the course, to aid stations, to the start/finish line, to food preparation.

Volunteer Recruitment

There is no standard way to find volunteers but here are a few suggestions:

- Online registration platforms also include volunteer registration options, containing previous volunteer data. Email them, asking if they are willing to volunteer again.
- Contact local high schools or local high school coaches. Many high school students have a volunteer/community service requirement for graduation. Many high school sports teams also raise money.
- Contact local boy/girl scouts troops



- Invite sponsors to provide volunteers, and make sure you give them proper credit for their contribution.

Donating to Clubs/Charities

You might consider donating to clubs or charities if they provide a group of volunteers. While prices for groups vary, one suggestion for clubs/charities is currently \$7 per hour per person, four hour minimum.

Volunteer Task Assignments

Make a list of all the areas at your race where you will need volunteers. Write a brief job/task description for each area along with the starting and ending time for each task. This will allow you to give each volunteer a concise task description. You can then populate this information on your online registration platform that has a volunteer registration option. You can also use volunteers for more than one task if the times do not overlap.

It's important to match your volunteers with appropriate tasks. Younger volunteers may be better at handing out SWAG than at directing traffic and you'll want stronger people to help with set up and tear down.

Also ensure that each task area has the necessary supplies. For example, the aid station should have cups, water, replenishment drink, treats and garbage bags. Registration area should have iPads, bibs and pins.

Volunteer Communication

As volunteers arrive for their shifts, welcome and thank them for coming. Have them sign in with the volunteer coordinator. Provide them with a quick overview of the event as well as their volunteer responsibility.

All volunteers should have the following information:



- Race start time
- Location of bathrooms/porta potties
- Who to go to for seeking answers to questions

- First aid/emergency number information
- Race director (or team lead) cell phone number
- Course map if on the course

Email volunteers seven days before the event to remind them of the race and their assigned task. Ask them to let you know if anything has changed. Ensure you have a list of volunteer names and cell phone numbers - from online registration - for day of race communications.

Volunteer Recognition

The most important thing you can say to a volunteer is “Thank you.” The second most important thing, “I trust your judgment” and the third most important, “I have your back.”

By providing information to your volunteers about their roles at the race, you are giving them the power to make decisions and letting them know you will support their decisions. Most volunteer tasks are pretty simple – “tell runners to turn right at this corner” – but you can give volunteers the power to stop runners if a vehicle ignores road closure signs.

If you can give volunteers event T-shirts, credit for a future event registration, or just a certificate of recognition, they will truly appreciate it. After the race send a thank-you note or email to the volunteers with how much money was raised - if a charity event - and/or how many people



attended. Let the volunteers know how they contributed to the success of the race.

Sponsors

A world renowned marathon race director once said that sponsors pay for the running events' cost. The registration fees go to charities and our bottom line.

Sponsors provide your race with either cash and/or in-kind products or services. While there is no one method for working with sponsors, you may want to create a standard contract for your race sponsors. For example, donations over \$1,000 receive a logo on the race T-shirt, 2 free entries into the race and a logo on the race poster.

By honestly evaluating what your race needs, you may identify potential in-kind sponsors that can remove items from your cash budget. For example, a local restaurant may be able to provide refreshments, reducing or even removing that line item from your budget. Make three lists to help you identify potential sponsors:

- What things you NEED for your race
- What things you WANT for your race



- What products or businesses you already have a RELATIONSHIP with.

When approaching sponsors, ask them, “How can we work to promote each other?”

- In-store signage
- Email newsletters
- Putting their logos on your website

- Allow them to donate prizes, if not cash
- Recruit among their ranks for volunteers.

Sponsors can be asked to take an active role in your race. Ask the sponsor to provide a pre-race packet pick-up site, staff an aid station or work at post-race awards. Getting a sponsor invested in the race will encourage them to come back for future events.

Finding Sponsors

There are no rules for obtaining sponsors. You can contact and approach local businesses or local sporting goods/running stores, local fitness clubs or sponsors of other local events

Keep in mind the interests of your participants and how those match with the local businesses. A community race may appeal to a local bank or credit union, real estate office or mortgage company. A women only race might be attractive to a salon or child care provider, or even a self-defense class instructor.



If someone turns you down for your first sponsorship request, thank them and let them know that you also are looking for any raffle prize donations – hopefully they’ll see it as a great way to be involved even if their budget didn’t have money for a cash sponsorship. Also ask if there would be a good time to get in touch with them for the following year’s race.

Thanking Sponsors

Post-race, thank sponsors with a formal letter or even photo or plaque. Be sure to include any copies of race publicity and highlight the amount of money raised for your cause/charity.



Marketing and Publicity

Marketing and publicity allows businesses to maintain long-lasting and ever-present relationships with their audience. The most fundamental importance of marketing to an organization is that it **helps build reputation**. Marketing is about connecting the right customers to the right product. Marketing, therefore, needs to be less about what happens *after* an innovation is ready to launch, and more about getting it to be ready *in the first place* -- by creating a new market or expanding an existing one; developing or understanding how it will fit into customers' needs, wants, values, and lives; and building a customer experience that turns the offering into a complete customer solution.

Social Media

The biggest challenge with social networking is that it's often contrived. However, if you are passionate about your race and your cause, you have nothing to worry about! Remember, if your race is in August, people probably won't care what you're doing in January – during the “off-season” you can communicate less frequently. Create calendar reminders to ensure you check in and respond to posts.

Facebook is a great tool for event directors. You can set your race as an event or a page. If you set your race as a page you can control the information and do the following?

- Communicate with fans – either all or a segmented group
- Track how your fan numbers and interactions are growing
- Create events and send updates to your members



- Have a more casual place to provide updates, encourage discussion among participants, or post photos

A Twitter and Instagram account will allow you to quickly update and communicate with race participants and the general public. You can set up your Facebook account so that every post you make on your event page goes out as a tweet on Twitter and on Instagram!

Website And Race Calendars

Make sure your website is user friendly, requires minimum clicks to obtain info, full of pictures, and the narrative is short and to the point. Also use your website calendar with links to your running events especially if you are planning multiple events.

There are a number of free online race calendars where you can post information about your race. Most have an online form to fill out, where you will provide the basic race information (when, where, and how much) as well as contact information. See the appendix for race calendars.

Print Brochures

Use print brochures sparsely. They are costly and not generally used.

If you do brochures, they can be delivered to local businesses and organizations and serve as advertisements. You can also distribute race brochures at/to:

-
- Local races



- Local running tracks and trails (perhaps nailing an entry on billboards if available)
- Local coaches (high school and college)
- Sponsors' place of business
- Local athletic clubs

Press Releases

Carefully creating a press release and targeting your market properly can promote your race in local news publications and media – including print, TV and radio. Send press releases to individual people at organizations that will have interest in your race and include regional papers near the physical location of your race. Also remember electronic communities that may have interest in your race. See the appendix for information that should be included in a press release.

Clubs and Organizations

If you are a member of a club or organization that has a website, Facebook page or magazine/newsletter, be sure to get the information about the race on the website and in the magazine. For example the Oregon Road Runners Club (ORRC) uses their website, orrc.net, the Oregon Distance Runner print magazine, Facebook and Twitter and feeds.

Include pictures and write a short engaging article about your race to increase interest.

Paid Advertisements

You may want to purchase advertising in local newspapers or running magazines. However, newspapers are not targeted for runners and might



not be cost effective as far as paid advertising is concerned. You may get a discount rate if the event is supporting a local charity.

Public Service Announcements (PSA)

Many newspapers have free listings in their local calendar of events and most radio stations, especially those in small cities, will provide free announcements about the race. Free announcements are called “Public Service Announcements” or PSA’s. Make sure you mention your race sponsors if you have the opportunity



Timetable Calendar

No project can afford to go without a timeline. If you don't have a timeline, how will you know how to schedule project activities? How will you know if you're on track to meet project deadlines?

The following is a suggested race event timetable calendar. Yes, some race directors start planning next year's race almost immediately after the current year's event is over. All depends upon the race size and complexity of the project.

10-12 months prior to the race

- Create race committee
- Determine race name
- Confirm date, location, distance and course
- Seek approval from authorities and purchase required permits (park, school district, police, etc)
- Apply for liability insurance policy
- Solicit sponsors (via letter and follow with phone or person contact)
- Review last year's post-race notes and make adjustments (if applicable)
- Create race logo
- Create a race budget
- Create race web site/page



- Seek placement on as many running web-sites as possible
- Confirm event with as many local running publications as possible
- Confirm race result timer

6-8 months prior to the race

- Continue to solicit or confirm sponsors
- Finalize race budget & set registration fees
- Set up volunteer responsibilities
 - Awards
 - Registration
 - Refreshments
 - Start, finish lines and aid stations
 - Course marshals

5 months prior to the race

- Secure sponsor(s)
- Meet with key volunteers
- Draft promotion “action items”
- Measure course, re-mark and certify (if required and approved)
- Start entry form lay-out (copy, camera ready art, sponsor logos, maps, etc)
- Order awards, plaques, ribbons and trophies

4 months prior to the race



- Flyer design complete and printer confirmed. Schedule printing for **at least two weeks** in advance of flyer distribution date
- Determine flyer locations and number of flyers for each
- Identify races that a volunteer can hand out flyers at finish lines
- Develop shirt design and order shirts
- Follow-up in writing to the key volunteers and confirm the road marshals

3 months prior to the race

- Take delivery of and distribute race flyers
- Design and order race bibs
- Confirm volunteers via phone and follow up in writing
- Confirm and make a list of race day supplies and equipment
- Confirm race day registration procedures
- Confirm that all permits, sanctions, and insurance forms have been received

2 months prior to the race

- Restock flyer locations
- Update list of race day supplies and equipment
- Confirm that all awards, plaques and trophies are on hand
- Confirm medical support (if required)



- Order portable toilets (if required)
- Re-check course markings
- Begin press releases and advertising

1 month prior to the race

- Meet in person (on location if possible) with timing service, race course marshals, aid station workers, start/finish line helpers.
- Distribute maps with volunteer locations marked
- Distribute race alert information to surrounding neighborhoods
- Contact local radio, TV and newspapers for PSA inserts
- Review shirt order and reorder if required (based on pre-sold)
- Confirm location of race day supplies
- Order signage
- Create parking plan

Week of race

- Meet with key volunteers and go over last key details
- Confirm registration information, race numbers, etc.
- Confirm food and aid station supplies

- Check weather forecasts and to see if tents will be needed
- Drive course to ensure no surprises (e.g. construction, etc.)
- Deliver race bibs to timing service



Day before the race

- Pick up race bibs
- Pre-race packet pick up
- Mark the course

Day of race

- Arrive a minimum three hours before the race
- Set up registration tent or area
- Assign a key volunteer to organize all volunteers
- Set up starting line early
- Set up aid stations
- Make sure that you and the volunteers are easily identified (bibs or vests)
- Manage parking from the first car
- Have all permits and insurance papers on hand at the event
- Have all of your race day supplies (have a checklist)
- Ensure all volunteers know what to do in a medical emergency
- Announce the start time every 15 minutes starting with 45 minutes prior to the event. Make one final announcement 5 minutes before the start



- At the start: announce to the runners any safety issues; thanks for coming; acknowledge sponsors; acknowledge volunteers; inform participants of the award ceremony time
- Conduct the race and HAVE FUN!
- Welcome/thank as many finishers as you can
- Announce award ceremony time several times while finishers finish

Week after the race

- Send thank you emails to all volunteers, sponsors, park officials and police
- Send out post-race survey/email to participants
- Review the race with key volunteers (any issues?)
- Make “action items” so that you will correct these issues for next year
- Prepare final income and expenses report
- Hold evaluation meeting with race committee and start planning the race for next year



Appendix A: The Course & Insurance & Permits

Insurance

- Road Runners Club of America (RRCA) <http://www.rrca.org>
- U.S.A. Track and Field (USATF) <http://www.usatf.org>
- K & K Insurance www.kandkinsurance.com

Permits

Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)

- Multiple contacts depending on location, typically 30 days turnaround to get permit (written request)
- Marlene Nichols 503-665-4006 tnichols@odot.state.or.us

Washington County – Road Usage

- Permit web page
<http://www.co.washington.or.us/LUT/Divisions/TrafficEngineering/Permits/event-permit.cfm>

Washington County – Henry Hagg Lake Park

- Permit web page
http://www.co.washington.or.us/Support_Services/Facilities/Parks/Hagglake/fees.cfm

Multnomah County Right of Way



- Permit web page <https://multco.us/roads/road-and-bridge-permit-applications>

Columbia County

- Permit web page <http://www.co.columbia.or.us/departments/columbia-county-counsel/counsel-road-events-ordinance>

City of Portland

- Permit web page <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/revenue/2997>

City of Vernonia

- Permit web page <http://www.vernonia-or.gov/living/parkinfo.asp#PERMITS>

City of Banks

- Permit web page http://www.cityofbanks.org/index.asp?Type=B_LIST&SEC={C42953C8-FA6C-49CD-882F-BC2CA142D1C3}

Oregon State Parks

- Call the park you wish to use
- Special event permit http://oregonstateparks.org/ckFiles/files/2014_Special_Use_Permit_App.pdf

Oregon Metro (Land use agency for Multnomah, Washington and Clackamas counties)



- Permit web page <http://www.oregonmetro.gov/parks/picnics-and-special-use/special-use-permits>

City of Portland – Parks and Recreation

- Permit web page <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/38280>

Flaggers (For Traffic Control)

- D&H Flagging, Inc. <http://d-hflagging.com>
- Affordable Safe & Professional Flagging LLC
<http://www.affordableflaggersnow.com>

Emergency Services

- HAM Radio, Hobie Baker 503-654-4197
- Metro West Ambulance <http://www.metrowest.fm>
- AMR Ambulance Service <http://www.amr.net>





Appendix B: Website And Logo

Logo Design

- Andrea Schwoebel <http://cargocollective.com/schw/Logos>

Website Hosting Services

- Google Domains <https://domains.google.com>
- Wordpress <https://www.wordpress.com>
- Blogspot <https://www.blogger.com>

Printers

- The Printery 503-359-4533
- Ad Graphics <http://www.ad-graphics.com/>

Information To Include On Your Website:

- Name of organization
- Name of race
- Logo
- Race distance – can be included in name
- Date and time of race
- Location – city, park, etc.
- Course photos
- Specify start times for each event



- Course description or map
- Directions to race site (include the street address so it can be map-quested)
- Awards

- Type of timing (chip, manual, no timing)
- What the entry fee includes (or does not include: shirt, pancakes, park entry fee, etc.)
- Kids run
- Walk
- Link to online registration
- Sponsor logos
- Request for volunteers
- Phone number for questions (and/or email)
- Time course closes

Website FAQs:

- Is the event entirely on road/trails?
- Will there be event awards?
- Are shirts sized for women and men?
- When and where do we pick up our running bibs and T-shirts?
- Do we need to bring our registration info to pick up our running bibs and T-shirts?



- Will there be official timing and when will the running results be ready?
- Who benefits from the running event proceeds?
- Can I walk the event?
- Are jog strollers and/or dogs allowed in the event?



Appendix C : Registration

Online Registration Services

- [RunSignUp](#)
- [Race Roster](#)
- [Active](#)
- [SignMeUp](#)
- [Ultra](#)

Sample Registration Waiver

RELEASE: I know that running, walking and volunteering at races are potentially hazardous activities. I should not participate in activities unless I am medically able and properly trained. I agree to abide by any decision of a race official concerning my being allowed to participate in or complete this event. I assume all risks associated with participating in this event, including, without limitation, falls, contact with other participants, the effects of weather, including high heat and/or humidity, the conditions of the road and traffic on the course, all such risks being known and appreciated by me. Having read this waiver and knowing these facts, and in consideration of your accepting my entry, I, for myself and anyone enlisted to act on my behalf, waive and release **YOUR CLUB/RACE/ORGANIZATION HERE** [Business, School District or Park Entity where event is being held], [City or County whose roads are used for the event], & all sponsors, and their respective directors, officers and successors from all claims or liabilities of any kind arising out of my participating in this event, even though that liability may arise out of negligence or carelessness on the part of the



persons named in this waiver, and grant permission to them to use photographs, motion pictures, or other record of me in this event.

Signature: _____ Date:

*Obtain parent/guardian signature if participant is underage

Mass Email Communication to Participants

- [Mail Chimp](#)
- [Constant Contact](#)
- [Emma](#)

Post Race Survey

- Survey Monkey <http://www.surveymonkey.com>



Appendix D: Timing

Manual/Self Timing

- Web Scorer <http://www.webscorer.com/race-timing>
- Finish Line Clock Rental/ORRC <http://orrc.net/board/board.html>

Finish Chute (Self Timing)

- Make the finish line easily visible
- Encourage runners to keep going until they've crossed the line
- Have volunteers in the chute jump in front of the runners to gather and spindle tear tags, and then move them along to exit the chute.
- The width of the chute should be narrowed so that they can only move through one at a time, and another volunteer can make sure they stay in their respective finish position until their tags have been torn

Professional Chip Timing Services

- Timing by Zornick (chip and manual timing) <http://www.resultsdb.com/TBZInfo.html>
- Huber Timing <http://www.hubertiming.com/>
- Athletics Timing <https://athletictiming.net/>



- Uberthons <http://uberthons.com/>
- Eclectic Edge Racing <http://www.eclecticedgeracing.com>

Appendix E: Equipment & Supplies

Race Bibs

- Race Ready <https://www.racereadysupplies.com/>
- Marathon Printing, Inc. <http://shop.marathononline.com/> (Local, pick up to avoid shipping costs)
- Road ID <http://www.Roadid.com> Free basic bibs as well as coupons

Note: Your bib vendor will also sell you safety pins. Do not purchase pins from a fabric/craft store. Get a box of pins from your bib vendor

T-Shirts – Local Suppliers

- Leslie Jordan Apparel Design and Manufacturing <http://www.lesliejordan.com>
- Infinity Impressions <http://www.infinityimpressions.com/>
- Ellison Advertising <http://www.ellisonadvertising.com>
- Garment Graphics <http://www.garment-graphics.com>
- Greenlayer Sports <http://www.green-layer.com>



- Creative Touch Embroidery & Screen Printing
<http://www.creativetouch-embroidery.com>
- Acorn Marketing <http://www.acornpromo.com>
- Lone Mountain Sportswear
<http://www.companycasuals.com/lonemountain/>

T-Shirts – Out of Area Suppliers (May charge for shipping)

- Pacifica T-Shirts <http://www.pacificat-shirts.com>
- Crestline <http://www.crestline.com>

Porta Potties

- Honey Bucket <https://honeybucket.com/>
- United Site Services
<https://www.unitedsiteservices.com/acquisitions/schulz-clearwater-sanitation/>

Detailed Supply List

Race supplies should be purchased or picked up a few days before the race

- Registration Area
 - Tables and Signage



Day of Race registration (with clipboards or tables to complete forms)

Pre-registered runners separated into groups

T-Shirt/socks or giveaway table, if applicable

- Chairs
- Bibs
- Safety Pins
- Timer iPad registration sign up devices
- Shirts (or other giveaways)
- Course Maps

● On the Course

- Mile Markers
- Direction Markers, flour or spray chalk to mark turns on ground
- Cones wherever needed
- Additional ODOT signage “Runners on Road”
- Course monitors and/or flaggers, if needed
- Volunteer safety vests
- Aid stations with water, nutrition, cups, pitchers, garbage cans with liners. (Longer races will need additional supplies.)

● Start/Finish

- Clock - provided by timer
- Tables for medals
- Medals



- Canopy
- Water/replenishment drink and cups
- Garbage cans and liners
- Finish area mesh and delineators shutes
- Sound system, if needed

● Post-Race

- First Aid Kits Awards (Make sure timer knows how many places are begin awarded)
- Awards for top finishers. For example:
 - First Place over and and master male and female
 - Age group winners ribbons
- Prize drawing tickets and items
- Refreshments:
 - Water
 - Fruit, bagels, treats

Appendix F: Start & Finish Area

Photographers

- Lester Tsai <https://www.tsaiphotography.com/>

Trophies/Plaques/Medals/Ribbons

Crown Trophy <http://www.crownfranchise.com> (Local)
Runolution <http://www.Runolution.com/directors.htm>
Ashworth Awards <https://www.ashworthawards.com/>





Appendix G: Sponsors

Local Running Stores (Packet Pick Up/Marketing/Sponsorship)

These stores have been used as retail partner options for ORRC races. They have the ability to cross-promote events, host packet pickup, provide prizes, etc.

- Foot Traffic - Sean Rivers sean@foottraffic.us
- Portland Running Company - Dave Harkin
dave@portlandrunningcompany.com
- Road Runner Sports -
<http://ww2.roadrunnersports.com/retail/portland.html>



Appendix H: Marketing and Publicity

Press Releases

Information that should be included in a press release:

- Name of event
- Date of event
- Start time(s) of event
- Distance(s) of event
- Registration fees and how to register, including deadlines
- What is included in registration fees
- A brief description of the course
- Is the race kid-friendly, family-friendly, and/or pet-friendly?
- What other activities will be available at the event?
- Will there be prizes at the event?
- Is the event a fund-raiser? If so, provide information on the beneficiary including contact info.
- Contact information for the event
- The names of your sponsors

Local Newspapers

- The Oregonian - <http://www.oregonianmediagroup.com/contact/contact-news-team/>



- Portland Tribune - <http://portlandtribune.com/>
 - Gresham Outlook - <http://portlandtribune.com/gresham-outlook-news/>
 - West Linn Tidings - <http://portlandtribune.com/west-linn-tidings-news/>
 - Lake Oswego Review - <http://portlandtribune.com/lake-oswego-review-news/>
-
- Walkabout Magazine - Pam Granata 503-287-6914
info@walkaboutmag.com

Race Calendars & Websites

- Oregon Road Runners Club – <http://www.orrc.net>
- Run Oregon Blog - <http://runoregonblog.com/>
- Road Runners Club of America -
<http://www.rrca.org/calendar/event/php>
- Race Center Northwest - <http://www.racecenter.com/race-calendar>
- Active - <http://www.active.com/>
- The Oregonian's Event Calendar – <http://www.oregonlive.com/events>
- Gallagher Fitness Resource - <http://activesalem.com/>
- Runners World Race Director Resource -
<http://www.racedirectorresource.com/>
- Running Network -
<http://runningnetwork.com/RNW/index.php/national-calendar>



- Running in the USA - <http://www.runningintheusa.com/Race/Default.aspx>
- American Trail Running Association (Trail Races) - <http://trailrunner.com/calendar/calendar.htm>

Regional Running Clubs

- Willamette Valley Road Runners - <http://www.wvroadrunners.org/events.php>
- Clark County Running Club - <http://clarkcountyrunningclub.org>

- Red Lizards - <http://www.redlizardrunning.com/>
- Central Oregon Running Club - <http://centraloregonrunningclub.org/>
- South Coast Running Club – <http://www.southcoastrunningclub.or>
- Coast Hills Running Club - <https://www.facebook.com/CoastHillsRunningClub/timeline>