

2023 POPCORN SALE MARKETING GUIDE



THEODORE ROOSEVELT COUNCIL
SCOUTING AMERICA



in partnership with
CAMPMASTERS
GOURMET POPCORN

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BEST SELLER TIPS

Successful popcorn sales do not rely solely on “cuteness”. It comes down to:

- Establishing a clear goal.
- Organizing a plan to reach this goal.
- Executing the steps of this plan with determination.

Consistency -- not cuteness -- gets you to the finish line. This guide is designed to help you every step of the way.

In the following sections, you'll gain insight into the various tools and resources available to you. Remember to adapt these for the COVID-19 guidelines in your area.

TOP TIPS FOR SALES SUCCESS!

Show your pride for Scouting. Wear your clean, neat uniform. Share with customers why you love being a Scout and what the popcorn fundraiser supports. Be polite, professional and respectful towards others and the property you are on. You are an ambassador of the Scouting movement. Don't just sell popcorn. Show your customers what Scouting has done to help you grow.”

Set a clear goal. Whether it's an amount you need for an activity or a specific prize you want to earn, be sure to set a clear sales goal prior to the start of the popcorn sale.

Practice ahead of time. Know your CAMP MASTERS script and develop your skills in making conversation, greeting strangers and engaging others with your storytelling. Learn how to take a personal interest in people of all ages. Finally, be ready to address common objections like “I don't have cash” and “popcorn has too many calories.”

Give customers options. Know your products and be able to comfortably explain the value of larger products to your customers. This includes offering the military or food bank donation options for those who don't like or want to purchase popcorn.

Never give up. Ask those you meet to support the Scouts through popcorn. Help them understand you're earning your way to exciting opportunities. Don't be afraid of those who may say “no” because every no eventually leads to a yes!

Always be prepared. Have a filling meal, get a good night's rest and do something fun to energize you before heading out to sell. This helps you excite customers about Scouting and popcorn. Wear some bright, colorful shoes to spark conversations. You'd be surprised how well this works. And don't forget to stay hydrated!



ENGAGE THEIR SUPPORT

Fundraising is not a sales pitch, but rather a long-term partnership between your Unit and the people in your community. This effort raises money to help Scouts get started and to fund opportunities for new adventures. But it also builds support within the community.

Each Scout can earn their own way by selling popcorn, without the need for parental funding, to participate in the full program year. A strong dedication and work ethic improves not only their Scouting year, but also supports every other Scout within their Council.

Help Scouts get engaged by defining what matters most to them. Have them complete the following statement.

I'm feeling _____ to sell popcorn because I want to _____.

Ex. I'm thrilled to sell popcorn because I want to attend the National Jamboree

Here are a few more ways you can engage community support for your Scouts fundraising efforts and build these long-term relationships.

Ensure everyone knows the purpose of the fundraiser. Scouts, parents and Unit Leaders are tasked with helping the community understand where their donations are going. Be sure that everyone knows what the funds will support and why that is important to Scouting. Customers will ask questions and preparation means you'll have answers.

Give people a chance to connect. Promoting the Scouts fundraising efforts gives real people a connection with the stories of how their donation impacts Scouting. Encourage everyone in your unit to share their story and everyone in your community to share why and how they support Scouting.

Don't be afraid to advertise. It is not as cost prohibitive as you may think. You can place a highly effective ad on a social media channel or even a print ad in your local paper for a small fee (as low as \$5 even!). Be sure to call around and check these opportunities in your area. Many media outlets offer discounted or free ads to non-profit community organizations.



PROMOTE EARLY & OFTEN

My #PopcornNotes

- Choose a head spokesperson/cheerleader.
 - They are responsible for spreading the word and generating excitement for the sale.
 - An outgoing personality is helpful because they'll need to call, email and connect with different people throughout the sale.
- Give it a theme!
 - Create a theme like 'Adventure is Calling' and a slogan like 'No Mountain is too High'
 - This creates a story for customers, a mantra for Scouts and a more cohesive message for promoting the sale.
- Spread the word in every way possible!
 - Send letters home with your Scouts.
 - Talk to the parents individually.
 - Share what the money is used for and why it is needed.
 - Share samples at your Popcorn Kickoff and send samples home for Scouts and families to share.
 - You can do this with a small cellophane bag from a craft store, a piece of construction paper, and a stapler. Have the Scouts decorate the bag "labels" and the parents pack the samples.
- Give your Scouts "business cards"
 - Be sure to include their online purchase information.
 - A template for this can be found in your materials folder.
 - You can print these on a business card stock or a piece of copy paper.
- Build a website for your sale!
 - Encourage Scouts to create their own or build one as a Unit.
 - Squarespace offers an inexpensive plan and everything is drag and drop for building.
 - You also need a simple domain so it's easy to remember like "troop123popcorn.com" -- get one at namecheap.com (currently \$6.98 per year for the month of June!).
- Use different methods for reaching supporters
 - such as posters, letters, and phone calls.
(call after work and be considerate of time zone differences)
- Don't forget everyone's favorite: social media!
 - Wherever you have a social presence, make a post about the sale with the order link for your Scout or Unit.
 - Social media increases fundraising amounts by as much as 40 percent when utilized.

PROMOTE EARLY & OFTEN

My #PopcornNotes

- Spread the word early and often throughout your entire sale.
 - Most people who buy early finish their product before the sale is even over. That's a repeat customer who needs to hear from you again!
- Your local newspaper and TV / Radio stations are a fantastic resource
 - Contact them three weeks before your sale begins.
 - Don't forget to invite them to your popcorn kickoff. They'll capture some great pictures of excited Scouts to go with the printed announcement.
 - Ask for the Community Editor or Reporter.
 - Ask that they include you in print and on their website.
 - You can even ask about free advertising on your local TV or radio station! They are required to run a certain percentage of ads for non-profits every day.
- Visit your local Chamber of Commerce website.
 - They often have a community calendar or email newsletter for their members.
 - They'd be happy to help support these budding future entrepreneurs.
- Don't forget community leadership!
 - Local police, fire fighters, EMTs, the Mayor's office, local government.
 - Any place where the sense of community is strong and support can be found for your Scouts.
- Anywhere you plan to be in person.
 - Ask if you can hang banners, pass out flyers, put up yard signs or hang door tags beforehand. Be sure to include an ordering link!
 - You can pick up extra orders online and have folks in these locations ready to greet your Scout with a smile.
- Call relevant businesses in your area.
 - Send emails or letters, arrange meetings and cultivate relationships.
 - These community leaders can help add fuel to your promotional fire in more ways than one. They might even become a customer!
- Create a blog.
 - Document your moves and progress.
 - Bring a human connection to your fundraiser while also generating further support from the community.

EVENTS & STOREFRONTS

My #PopcornNotes

Meeting your community in person and asking for their support is a big part of successful fundraising. With COVID-19 guidelines, this may not be as easy to arrange as it has been in the past. Here are some tips and ideas to help you plan and adapt along the way as needed.

These are some locations where you might be able to fundraise. Be sure to call the owner or manager to gain approval and secure a date.

- Kids Sporting Practices and Games
- Community Banks
- Post Office
- Local Car, Boat and RV lots
(sometimes the sales team are your best customers!)
- During tailgating at high school, college and professional sporting events
(one Scout raised \$2,500 in the hours before a game started)
- Car Wash
- Local Parents Looking for Teacher Gifts
- College Campuses
- Truck Stops and Gas Stations
- After School Pick-up
- Daycares and Preschools *(best to go at pick-up time)*
- Grocery and Drug Stores
- Retail Locations
- Outdoor / Indoor Shopping Centers
- DMV and License Plate Agencies
- Downtown or Main Streets *(places with sidewalk foot traffic)*
- Hotels / Convention Centers *(if a conference or meeting is happening)*
- Local fast food restaurants *(most are owned by a local person)*
- Medical Centers or Hospitals *(check first for COVID guidelines)*
- Local Government Officials Offices

Here are some top tips for maximizing sales at these locations.

Laminate your take order form. A local print or copy shop charges less than \$5 for this service. Or there are other DIY options available too. Either way, by laminating, your take order form will last longer and be easily disinfected between customers to keep everyone safe and healthy.

EVENTS & STOREFRONTS

My #PopcornNotes

Create a plan for promoting each event or opportunity where someone can buy popcorn in person. This includes any storefront, event or neighborhood selling you plan on doing. A small online ad spend of \$10-\$20 can have a big impact on the day's sales totals for you.

Don't forget to use the power of your own network! Invite friends and family to come on down and support the Scouts wherever they'll be selling that day.

A Facebook or Instagram live can really create excitement for getting folks out of the house and down to your location to support the Scouts. And don't forget to invite the media out as well (*good thing you've been building those relationships!*)

A local celebrity can also help to really draw a crowd. Find someone who's well-known and liked in your area to attend the event as a celebrity guest or even be an honorary Scout for the day. (*FYI - most individuals on TV or the Radio are considered "celebrities" in their local community. They can add to your crowd!*)

Businesses can help you raise more money and more awareness. Plus, they get a tax write-off and advertising out of the deal. So don't be afraid to invite them out to events as well as it helps make them look good too. Or have them sponsor your event at their location. Either way, they get to show good will towards the community and promote their business.

ONLINE SALES

My #PopcornNotes

CAMP MASTERS has free shipping anywhere in the United States!

Online sales are going to be a bigger part of the popcorn sale this year. And we want to make sure everyone is prepared to maximize their return from it. So here are a few tips for creating a great impression with your community *online*.

The most important aspect of your online presence is the Scout profile. It's important to see that smiling Scout face on every profile. And that their bios are well composed. This is the only thing some people will see before deciding whether or not to support your popcorn sale.

We recommend working with your Scouts to ensure everyone has a great profile this year!

One way to make this happen is to make creating/updating their profile as part of your popcorn kickoff. Create a fun backdrop, add some good lighting and take a headshot photo of each Scout in your Unit with a smartphone or digital camera.

Provide your Scouts with the Profile Bio worksheet to help them compose a strong bio. Then provide them instructions for how to place it on their CAMP MASTERS account.

Share the picture you took earlier for them to upload. Profile done!

Once they've set up their profile (*full walkthrough video in your drive folder*), there are links within the Scout profile to share their personal CAMP MASTERS ordering link. Make sure they know how to access this.

You can also encourage parents to support their Scouts as well using this link within their own networks. CAMP MASTERS has also provided a library of email templates, social media posts and graphics in your drive folder to make this easier on everyone.

Use your social channel's messaging feature to reach friends and family you know are active on social media. Send a private message about the fundraiser and ask for their support. Send an email to friends and family who might respond better to a more private request.

If there is anything specific we can help you with, please let your Unit Leader or Council know!



MANAGING MOMENTUM

Perhaps the hardest part in any fundraiser is keeping momentum up before and during the sale. Families are busy and Scouting may not be their only after-school activity. So we've compiled a list to help you keep excitement and spirits high throughout the popcorn sale.

These are resources CAMP MASTERS created to help you keep energy & sales strong.

- A game board for younger Scouts to help them reach their sales goal.
- A bingo board for Scouts to help them reach a Unit Goal of around \$400.
- Flyers promoting popcorn as a great gift for individuals, teachers and businesses.
- A personalized popcorn tag to put a local stamp on your popcorn.
 - This can be a slogan supporting the fundraiser purpose or a photo of your Scouts saying thanks for their support.
 - You can even hold a contest during your popcorn kickoff to choose the winning message or photo.
- An "Early Bird" award certificate for the first, second and third place Scouts to reach a specific objective you set during your popcorn kickoff. This is even better when combined with a prize of your choosing as well.
- Message templates to help you suit your message to specific people. Those who will be motivated by the cause, by their connection to you or by the incentive that comes with giving (*such as the tax write-off for a business*).
- A "Make a Difference" flyer that explains how a donation directly benefits Scouts and their Units. This helps make people feel good about making a difference.
- A goal guide with tips on keeping fundraisers motivated by setting weekly or monthly goals. You can also include bonuses or prizes for extra incentive.
- Social proof -- or testimonials from others -- can be an important part of securing donations. We've provided a handout with ideas for how to gather and share these.
- A popcorn hotline guide for setting up a way to support your popcorn sellers!
- A printable progress chart to keep Scouts and families informed.
- Social media posts and graphics that help you: thank donors, share stories, create awareness, ask for donations, engage conversations, and show impact.
- A guide on using bloggers and micro-influencers within your community to support your fundraising efforts. These are active social media users who are strong voices within your community. They typically have an engaged audience that wants to hear about your efforts.
- A customer database template that helps Scouts keep track of customers year over year including what they've purchased in the past.

In 2024, we want to help you create an environment both online and off where your community finds pride in their contributions to supporting Scouting. Did we miss something? Let us know by contacting your Council today.

