



## Sample Calendar for a Party Program

Campaigns often aim to have one house party day per month. Non-profit organizations and other groups not on a campaign schedule may wish to do parties every other month or quarterly. Here is a sample timeline for organizers to use as a guide in planning their "Big Day" event.

### **T-6 to 8 weeks.**

The ideal time to begin working on a party event is six to eight weeks before the date of the event. Earlier is fine, but host recruitment, one of the critical elements of a successful event, is often difficult more than two months in advance.

#### **Set your date.**

**Goals.** Set reasonable goals with regard to (1) number of parties and (2) fundraising goal per party.

**Mass email.** Describe the program, give a link to your party page on your party site.

**Meetups.** Is there a Meetup or two that shares the same objective or some of the same objectives as your group? Then plan to attend as many as possible before the Big Day. Send staffers, board members, and other volunteers to Meetups to ask supporters for help organizing or hosting events.

### **T-4 to 6 weeks.**

Make personal contact with 25 to 50 of your best candidates to host parties. When making this list, consider personal friends and family, major donors to your cause, and long-time grassroots supporters. Approach them personally to explain the importance of this program and how their participation could assist in ensuring its success. If they cannot help you, ask whether they know of people who might be interested.

Brief conversations with such people, even if they don't lead to parties, can be of great help to you in gauging the level of support for your cause. Ask such questions as "what has made you a supporter for this cause?" and "what sort of events would you like this grassroots engagement program to sponsor?"

### **T-4 weeks**

**Mass emails.** Recruit hosts and volunteer organizers. Remember that using a different "voice" for each mass email will help it from being perceived as "spam." One mass email can come from the candidate or executive director of the group. One can come from a volunteer organizer or staffer. Another can come from a past host. Give brief quotes from such people

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in order to give it a personal touch. And give updates as to your progress in each email, e.g., "We already have ten parties in eight different states! Can you help us hit our goal of 15 parties nationwide by next week?"

**Phone bank prospective hosts.** Ask others in your organization to identify their list of the 25 or 50 people most likely to host an event. If possible, have regional leaders call people they know. Or, organize a phone bank and headquarters and go through your list of active volunteers or past donors. The more people you call, the more hosts you'll have.

### **Kick-Off Conference Call.**

#### **T-3 weeks**

**Organizational/Training Conference Call.**

#### **T- 2 weeks**

**Mass email.** Recruit hosts, invite all to join your Organizational Conference Call.

**Organizational/Training Conference Call**

#### **T-1 week**

**Mass email.** Recruit hosts, start to talk about "find a party near your" for attendees.

**Reserve conference call for the Big Day.**

**Begin daily emails to hosts.** Train your hosts with short emails that outline what they can do to prepare. For example, the day before the event you can remind them email directions and a last minute reminder to everyone they invited.

**Last day to mail to hosts via regular mail.** Make materials available online and avoid mailings altogether!

#### **T-3 to 4 days**

**Mass email.** Recruit attendees.

**If planning a conference call:**

- **Mandatory planning conference call for all hosts.** Give the dial in instructions for the Big Day call during this planning call.
- **Talking Points/Briefing Memo** for your featured speaker.

#### **T-1 day**

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If you have pre-selected parties with questions to ask for Q&A, then call them in advance to brief them on the program for the call.

### **T-0 day – The Big Day!**

Planning a conference call? The moderator or featured speaker should mention some key logistical things:

1. ASK!
2. Send contributions in ASAP.
3. All guests please fill in sign-in forms.
4. All contributions to be accompanied by a signed completed contribution form.
5. Consider hosting or helping to host for the next event, on [date].

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