



THE SCOUT GUIDE® *BEST PRACTICES* LOCAL DISTRIBUTION

Overview

What is the purpose of distributing guides locally?

Local distribution ensures that your current clients, prospective clients, community members, and partners see your guides in person and that you maximize the ROI promised contractually.

How does local distribution impact my business overall?

1. More than 50% of people said they saw a guide before becoming a client, so the more your guide is out and about in the community the better for your overall sales.
2. Placing the guide around town in highly visible locations increases brand awareness and reminds clients that you are actively distributing/marketing the guide.
3. The more your guide is available to community members, the more likely they will use/seek out those local businesses which in turn will help with your renewal rate.
4. Distribution drop-off and/or circulation check-ins create an opportunity to visit with advertisers (and prospects) further strengthening the relationship and helping with your renewal rate.
5. Taking advantage of the fact that TSG is complimentary and high quality is the best way to stand out from other publications; your strongest marketing piece is the guide itself!
6. You increase the chances of the guide reaching new audiences when distributed throughout your community instead of only direct mailing to the same audience/zip codes year after year.

Preparation

Decisions about your distribution locations should take place at the very beginning of your sales cycle. This allows you time to finalize an official distribution partner for your guide and the quantity of guides to print. A well-thought-out distribution strategy directly impacts your sales and future renewal rate. Don't be shy about including your advertisers (and prospects) in this conversation, they have creative ideas and know their audiences best!

How do I decide where and how many to distribute?

1. **Client businesses:** These are all of the advertisers in your current volume. All clients should receive at minimum one box of guides. Full cycle distribution amount depends on how many customers/guests they each see regularly (i.e. a private architecture firm may not need as many guides as a local grocer). Check-in monthly with each client and restock accordingly.
2. **Local favorites:** These are businesses that your target audience frequents that are not current clients including but not limited to: airports, art museums, large chain grocers like Whole Foods/Fresh Market, and Airbnbs. Distribution amount may vary depending on the businesses' permissions set forth by the Corporation or available display space.
3. **Community events:** This type of distribution is condensed and targeted to your ideal audience. Participation varies by market and whether you're focusing on business-to-business (B2B) or business-to-consumer (B2C). In order to have a greater presence, create TSG swag bags, a book bar, vendor booth, or other TSG display for events including but not limited to: Junior League benefits, small business conferences, home and garden shows, parade of homes, women's luncheons, chamber of commerce meetings, fundraising galas.
4. **Direct mail:** This is a service provided by a mail service provider to deliver guides to USPS, which is then distributed to targeted homes and neighborhoods in a territory. Direct mail can be a great advertising tool to build brand awareness for your clients and is distributed around the time a guide launches.

What is a recommended local distribution timeline?

1. Months 1-3: distribute at least 50% of your total circulation
2. Months 3-6: distribute another 25% of your total circulation
3. Months 6-9: distribute the remaining 25% of your total circulation

What are some of the suggested distribution locations?

- Clients/advertiser's place of business
- Prospects/potential advertisers
- Waiting rooms/lobbies (plastic surgery, dermatology, dentist)
- Hotels, Airbnbs, inns, bed & breakfasts
- Wedding planners (bridal party bags, shower party favors)
- Wedding dress shops
- Festival/conference/event goodie bags
- Golf tournaments
- Airports/private aviation
- Boutique stores: apparel/shoes, home decor, stationary, antiques
- Art galleries/museums

- Coffee shops
- Hair salons
- Grocery stores (Whole Foods, Fresh Market)
- Wine and specialty shops
- Restaurants
- Tennis clubs/pro shops
- Country clubs
- Spas
- Bookstores
- Fitness boutiques
- Pet grooming/daycares
- Realtor offices/open houses
- Relocation services
- Tourism/Chamber of Commerce

What can your display look like?



Where can you purchase display materials? Suggestions below:

1. Editor Store via thescoutguide.com → You must be logged in to the website to view
2. Acrylic countertop stands via [Displays2Go](#)
3. Wood floor stands via [Great Display Company](#)
4. Custom wood stands via [We Create Cool Things](#)

Success Tracking

How will I know if a distribution location is successful?

1. Being the point-person for original drop-off can help ensure the advertiser is set up for success from the beginning. However, if you aren't the one dropping off the guides then it's recommended to visit the business within the first week post-launch to help with the guide merchandising/display and promote the location/available guides on social media.
2. Create a spreadsheet to track success at each distribution location including the business name, date of guide drop off by month, and quantity.
3. Check-in monthly (or however often is desired) with each distributor for current guide stock and feedback on the customer experience including display/placement methods.
4. Reference your spreadsheet to track the flow of guides at all distribution locations to see where they are stagnant and where they are moving.
5. All guides should be distributed before your next launch, ideally 2-3 months prior to create a demand for your next volume.

How do I provide feedback to a distribution location(s) on promoting the guides, guide displays, TSG brand messaging, etc?

1. If any location isn't performing well, first analyze if it's because of the guide placement in their business, if fewer guides are needed in circulation, or if they need training/resources on TSG brand and overall messaging.
2. If the guides need to be in a more prominent or visible store location, kindly let them know you've been tracking the circulation and noticed a lull and would like to experiment with moving the display.
3. If the guides are in a highly desirable store location and easily accessible but are still not moving, consider providing additional resources such as a tent sign mentioning that they are complimentary and/or a mini training session to all customer service personnel on TSG mission/brand.
4. If guides aren't moving at all at any particular location, consider leaving fewer guides or relocating to another distributor.

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