

Hosting a Senior Expo

Presented by

Gary L. Calligas

Publisher, Radio Show Host, and a Senior Expo Coordinator

The Best of Times (Louisiana)

April 14, 2026

Why should you host a Senior Expo?

- Allow your publication to diversify its operations rather than have only a publishing operation
- Potentially gain extra revenue and hopefully some profit
- Gain tremendous local exposure for your publication
- Provide an additional benefit and opportunity for your print advertisers
- Offers a positive impact on the senior boomers in the area to provide them a one-stop event to learn beneficial information from exhibitors.
- It is a major decision to host a senior expo. You should only host if you have the time to devote to it and are able handle the risk of potential failure.
- Yes, there are risks and setbacks – weather related, conflicts with other events or happenings, lack of exhibitors, and lack of sponsors.

What are the primary planning needs to host a Senior Expo?

- Selection of a date and times but try to avoid conflicts with other events in the area
- Selection of a venue and hopefully find a good venue which is FREE or Low Cost but plan for one day prior for setup and then day of expo.
- Selection of a Senior Expo coordinator and appoint some assistants
- Seek volunteers to assist during the expo.
- Selection of an exhibit company for obtaining and setting up booths, tables, chairs, stage, reservation area, etc. (Some venue offer these services rather than subcontracting with an exhibiting firm)

What to charge for Exhibiting and Sponsorships at the Senior Expo?

- Determine an estimated budget for income and expenses – venue cost, setup of exhibit booth costs, manpower costs, entertainment costs, special event insurance cost, publicity costs, etc.
- Determine a booth rate for Exhibitors – for-profit businesses, non-profit organizations, government agencies, and others.
- Determine the type of exhibit booths – Primary sponsor booths, Primary booths, or exhibit tables, etc. Special booths on corners, entry locations, and around the stage.
- Determine booth/sponsor rate along with perks for sponsors – sponsors could be asked for special door prizes, tote bags, entertainment, food/snacks, or motivational speakers.
- Determine if you are going to offer a discount to exhibit for current advertisers in your publication. Are you going to offer early submission to exhibit discount?
- Determine setup times and breakdown times
- Determine if all exhibitors must donate a door prize to the overall event

What to charge for Exhibiting and Sponsorships at the Senior Expo? (continued)

- Determine if exhibitors may sell products from their booths.
- Determine if exhibitors may host FREE health care screenings at their booth.
- Determine if exhibitors may have their own door prize drawing at their booth
- Determine a deadline to reserve exhibit booth spaces and sponsorships.
- Prepare to accept checks and credit cards for payment from exhibitors and sponsors
- Prepare an information document about the Senior Expo along with an application to Exhibit/Sponsor to be mailed or emailed or delivered to potential exhibitors/sponsors but make sure to include policies and procedures and legal notices.
- Determine if you are going to pre-assigned booth locations or wait until setup day of the Senior Expo to assign them.

How to promote to businesses and organizations to exhibit/sponsor at the Senior Expo?

- Design one or two page flyer to distribute via email, mail, delivery, but also via Constant Contact listings to invite to exhibit. Send out several times with deadline dates to respond.
- Include notices in your mailing of invoices to advertisers of your publication to consider exhibiting, especially if you offer discount to advertisers.
- Do notify ad agencies about opportunity for their clients to exhibit or sponsorships.
- Include a notice about opportunity to exhibit in your publication and on Facebook, on your website, and other means.
- Make follow-up calls and visits to businesses to consider exhibiting or becoming sponsors.
- Generate of a master listing of exhibitors and include a primary contact email address.

How to promote to persons to attend your Senior Expo?

- At least two months prior to the date of Senior expo, do include a promotional ad in your publications, your website, on Facebook, and other means. You might update the ad to included new sponsors and other news.
- Send out a news release about upcoming Senior Expo to local media. Seek TV and radio show interviews to promote.
- Send out notices to your listing on Constant Contact or other EBLAST systems to persons to attend the Senior Expo.
- Consider including in your promotional ad a request to Pre-register to attend your Expo with the perk of possibly winning a special door prize. Allow persons to mail, email, or go to your website to pre-register to attend.

How to organize the setup day for your Senior Expo?

- Provide master layout of Senior Expo to your exhibit company or venue person to setup prior to date and time of setup day for exhibitors.
- At least 5 working days prior to the setup day, email to the prime contact persons of all exhibitors detailed information about exhibiting and include any special rules.
- Generate a listing of exhibitors by exhibit type and then use the listing to print a full page with their business name or organization name along with certain color to denote exhibit type and sponsors.
- Bring these printed names of businesses and organizations to tape to exhibit booths (unless you have pre-assigned booth spaces). Try to avoid placing same type businesses next to each other.
- Using the listing of exhibitors, consider drafting a one page sheet with all exhibitors and a space next to each exhibit to allow for the exhibitor to check off if the attendee visited their booth. Determine the percentage of exhibitors must be visited by attendee for attendee to be eligible to win a door prize.

How to organize the setup day for your Senior Expo? (continued)

- During setup dates and times, you might have exhibitor who does not attend or wish to have more than one booth, or state that they pre-registered to reserve a booth, but no record of such. **BE PREPARED FOR THESE CRISIS!!**
- Ask exhibitors to donate a door prize for the Senior Expo and place their business name on the package or item and bring to the stage by start of the expo.
- Determine if exhibitor cancels or does not show up that you would refund exhibitor payment.
- Establish a registration desk at the entry for attendees where they will pick up a DOOR Prize entry sheet, a copy of your publication, a copy of your resource directory(if applicable), a tote bag (filled or not filled with items), and other special items.
- Seek volunteers to help exhibitors when moving into expo and seek volunteers to help at registration area, and seek volunteers to help distribute door prizes and assist the entertainers.
- Invite local TV stations to come to setup and also to the day of the Senior Expo. It really helps to get this last minute publicity.

Sample Program for Senior Expo

PROGRAM AGENDA of 2025 Senior Day Expo by The Best of Times

Thursday, October 30, 2025 at Live! Casino and Hotel in Bossier City, Louisiana

- 9:00 am Registration opens and continues until 2:30 pm
- 9:00 to 9:05 am Welcome, Greetings and Thank you to sponsors and exhibitors
- 9:10 to 9:35 am Performance by the *“Joint SPAR choirs”*
- 9:40 to 9:55 am Educational Presentation by AARP Louisiana & chapter anniversary
- 10:00 to 10:25 am Performance by *“Carson Family Singing Group”*
- 10:35 to 11:00 am Performance by the *“Foot Loose Dancers”*
- 11:05 to 11:20 am Announcement of Pre-registration **three winners** and Door prize drawings
- 11:30 to 12:15 pm Performance by *“LooseAssociation318”* hosted by LowKey
- 12:15 to 12:55 pm Door Prize drawings
- 1:00 to 1:30 pm Performance by *“Louisiana Dan Garner”* hosted by Haywire
- 1:30 to 2:00 pm Door prize drawings
- 2:00 to 2:25 pm Performance by *“Elvis Impersonator”*
- 2:25 to 2:45 pm Door prize drawings and announce exhibitors’ door prize winners
- 2:45 to 2:55 pm Announcement of the **three Winners** of the **Grand Door Prizes**
- 2:55 to 3:00 pm Closing remarks and Thank you to sponsors and exhibitors

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING THIS NAMPA hosted WORKSHOP!!

- Your questions and comments are appreciated!!
- Email Gary at Gary.Calligas@gmail.com
- Call Gary on his cell phone at 318-347-6839