



GRAND OPENING IDEABOOK



GRAND OPENING CELEBRATIONS AND CENTER EXPANSIONS

PLANNING, PROMOTION, AND EXECUTION



MARKET RESEARCH AND LOCAL INSIGHTS

- Identify existing donors within a defined radius of the new location
- Develop look-alike audiences for digital and social media advertising
- Analyze traffic patterns, shopping behaviors, and high-traffic corridors
- Identify surrounding businesses and potential community partners
- Assess nearby neighborhoods, employers, and retail hubs for outreach

PROMOTIONS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- Align promotions with popular local businesses and shopping habits
- Offer a meaningful opening-day or opening-period gift for attendees or donors
- Extend promotions across the first weeks or months after opening
- Partner with local businesses to provide discounts, giveaways, or cross-promotion
- Leverage partner communication channels to expand reach

A grand opening is an opportunity to introduce a new blood donation center to the community, build trust, and create early donor engagement.

The following elements represent the core strategies used to support a successful blood donation center grand opening. These components are designed to be concise, adaptable, and easy to apply across different markets while preserving all major planning and execution considerations.

MOBILE BLOOD DRIVES TO BUILD A DONOR BASE

- Schedule regular blood drives within the target radius at least six months prior to opening
- Maintain consistency by hosting drives at repeat locations when possible
- Use mobile drives to introduce the future fixed location to donors
- Encourage donors to develop routine scheduling habits



CONTRIBUTIONS MADE BY:





ADVANCED MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

- Place physical advertising within the defined radius of the new center
- Use digital advertising with geo-targeting around the location
- Promote available mobile blood drives leading up to opening day
- Conduct postcard mailings to surrounding neighborhoods
- Clearly feature the grand opening date, location, and promotional offers

EVENT PLANNING AND ON-SITE COORDINATION

- Identify 1 to 3 activity zones near the center for photos, food, and engagement
- Plan stations for ribbon cutting, media, tours, and donor education
- Confirm catering, beverages, seating, accessibility needs, and parking
- Coordinate audiovisual needs, signage, and wayfinding
- Invite local city or regional officials to participate and speak
- Develop a minute-by-minute run of show with scripted remarks
- Assign staff and volunteers to manage each event area
- Confirm speaking order and official titles per protocol
- Include a creative engagement element to attract and retain attendees

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

- Notify mobile blood donors in the area about the upcoming fixed location
- Highlight convenience and long-term donor benefits
- Host an invitation-only preview or soft opening for top donors
- Recognize key donors with photos and acknowledgments when appropriate
- Communicate special donation perks with defined timelines
- Partner with local businesses to share messages through their networks
- Develop an internal communication plan and invite staff to attend

MEDIA COORDINATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

- Prepare a media alert with event details, leadership attendance, and timing
- Identify spokespersons and confirm titles and talking points
- Develop a press release announcing the new center and promotions
- Provide photo and video opportunities, including b-roll
- Conduct media outreach one to two days prior to the event
- Share coverage internally and externally following the event
- Tag media outlets, partners, donors, and businesses on social platforms

THE EXTRA DETAILS

GUEST EXPERIENCE— CUSTOM CANVAS TOTE STATION

A hands-on canvas tote station allowed guests to customize donated branded bags with iron-on patches, creating a functional takeaway that extended the event experience and reinforced brand visibility beyond opening day.



BRANDED BACKDROPS

Custom-designed branded backdrops were created to align with the event theme and overall visual identity, providing a consistent, professional setting for media interviews, speaker remarks, and photography. These backdrops ensured that all captured content, whether for press coverage or internal marketing, reflected a polished brand presence.

OUTDOOR TENTS & A/C

Due to limited interior space, an exterior event tent was installed in the parking area to accommodate guests and program elements. To maintain a comfortable and welcoming environment during peak summer temperatures, the tent was outfitted with air conditioning, allowing the event to flow seamlessly without compromising guest experience.



SPECIAL GUESTS

The event convened board members, elected officials, media representatives, recipient families, healthcare and hospital partners, industry supporters, first responders, educators, and community organizations, creating a meaningful opportunity to connect diverse stakeholders around a shared mission and strengthen the center's role as a trusted community resource.

THE EXTRA DETAILS

MEDIA SHOTS

Media coverage highlighted branded backdrops, themed photo ops, ribbon-cutting moments, and key donor center enhancements. Reporters captured speaker remarks, proclamation presentations, recipient family stories, and interviews with executive leadership, providing versatile visuals and content for future marketing and communications.



SPONSORED STATIONS

Local businesses and national partners supported the event through sponsored stations, including donated coffee, breakfast items, and branded tote bags, demonstrating strong community collaboration and shared commitment to giving back. Sponsored stations strengthen relationships with local organizations, provide opportunities for cross-promotion, and highlight the center's role as a valued community partner.



PROCLAMATIONS

Securing a formal proclamation or civic recognition from local or state leadership can elevate a grand opening by highlighting the organization's impact and reinforcing public trust. Designating an official awareness day tied to the event helps promote blood donation, generate media interest, and create a lasting moment of recognition for donors, partners, and staff.



BUILDING DETAILS

Guided tours, informational handouts, and visual demonstrations helped attendees understand the vision and purpose of the new space. Staff and leadership highlighted upgrades such as massage chairs, aromatherapy stations, AI donor support, and redesigned floor plans. Photos and videos of these presentations and tours provided compelling content for media coverage and future marketing.



Phased strategy to launch a new blood donor center, focusing on **early donor recruitment, targeted local awareness, and strategic community partnerships**. The primary objective is to build a sustainable donor base and community awareness before and after opening.

Phase I: Pre-Opening

Objective: Establish presence and capture early interest.

- Deploy bloodmobile to the new parking lot of the new site to introduce site to community, market blood drive.
- Distribute flyers with blood drive information and new location to local churches, organizations and businesses.
- Create a Google listing and update the website with "Coming Soon" messaging.

Phase II: Launch & Local Awareness

Objective: Drive traffic within 7–10 mile radius.

Paid Media (options based on need)

- Targeted social and boosted posts
- Digital display
- Streaming
- Direct mail (EDD) to surrounding neighborhoods
- Targeted paid email by zip and demographic

Physical Visibility

- "Opening Soon" → "Now Open" signage
- Interior branding installed prior to opening

Public Relations

- Press release and timed media alerts

Retention Activation

- Recurring email and SMS cadence for eligible donors

Phase III: Partnerships & Community Integration

Objective: Build credibility and repeat traffic.

- **Hospital Collaboration:** Partner with local hospitals for joint press releases and employee-facing announcements.
- **Special Promotions:** High-value center-specific incentives to encourage the first visit, encourage businesses and retailers to sponsor giveaways.
- **Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting**

Budget & Resource Allocation

The plan accounts for two distinct scenarios—**Existing Markets** (leveraging current brand equity) and **New Markets** (requiring higher awareness spend). Monthly allocations cover:

- **Direct Outreach:** Direct mail and targeted emails per month.
- **Digital/Streaming:** Digital ads and consider placements on streaming radio and CTV.
- **Social:** Targeted social ads.
- **Text:** Increased SMS frequency to drive immediate action.

Launch Assets



New Donor Center Ribbon Cutting/Grand Opening Celebration

- Determine date of grand opening and ribbon cutting with Chamber of Commerce or key community stakeholders
- Develop invitation list
- Create marketing materials: invitations, posters, flyers, social media graphics
- Send out invitations with follow-up plan
- Distribute press release with follow-up plan and send media invitation
- Coordinate logistics
 - Catering
 - Entertainment
 - Supplies
 - Decorations
 - Signage

Example of Run of Show

8 a.m. | Call Media to Confirm Coverage/Attendance

8:30a.m. | SetUp:

- Refreshments and supplies
- Decorations
- Signage, backdrop, stage area
- Fact sheets and press kits
- Giveaways

10:00 a.m. | Event Begins, Ribbon-Cutting Participants and Attendees Arrive

10:30a.m. | Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony

- Speeches
 - President and CEO
 - Hospital Representative
 - Patient Story
 - Chamber Executive
- Cutting of the ribbon
- Media interviews
- Refreshments
- Tours

11:00 a.m. Event Concludes



Join us as we celebrate the opening of LifeSouth's new Dothan donor center!

Dothan Donor Center Ribbon Cutting

New location at 1165 Commons Drive

**Thursday, December 7
11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.**

Ribbon cutting will commence at 11:30 a.m.

Refreshments will be served and tours of the new building will be available.