

AMERICAN --- ADVERTISING --- AWARDS

HOW-TO GUIDE

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO CONDUCTING A SUCCESSFUL
AMERICAN ADVERTISING AWARDS COMPETITION

AAEF AMERICAN ADVERTISING FEDERATION.

IMPORTANT

In addition to this document, you will need the current year's editions of the following, available at AmericanAdvertisingAwards.com:

Current year's editions:

1. American Advertising Awards Rules & Categories
2. American Advertising Awards Judging Guide

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INTRODUCTION

The American Advertising Awards is perhaps the most important event held for advertising clubs nationwide. The key to conducting an effective and successful competition is planning and organization. This manual will help keep you on track planning and organizing your local and district competitions.

For most clubs, the American Advertising Awards competition is the most important image/reputation maker, one of the largest sources of income, the number-one membership builder, and the largest social event of the year. On the district level, the District American Advertising Awards fund and support the efforts and mission of the districts to provide professional and club management programs.

Although the official name of the competition is the American Advertising Awards, use of the term ADDY or ADDYs is acceptable when referring to the actual award (trophy or certificate) or ceremony.

This manual is compiled from local and district manuals and the experiences of hundreds of American Advertising Awards experts nationwide. Since there are clubs and districts that range in size, from very large to very small, in markets of all sizes, you may find that some of the materials in this manual do not apply specifically to your particular market or region. You should therefore use this manual as a guide to help you through the process, as it applies to you and your area.

An important thing to remember is that you are never alone. Your District Award chair, the American Advertising Awards Committee and the American Advertising Federation (AAF) want you to succeed. If you have any problems or concerns, start by discussing them with your District Award chair, but feel free to ask the advice of any American Advertising Awards Committee member (there is one that represents your district) or the AAF. You will also find that other local Award chairs in your district may be able to give you advice and assistance.

Although this manual will give you directions on how to structure your competition, committee and show over the course of the year, the competition rules and categories are adjusted annually and the online software goes through regular review and updates. New and updated information will be provided to you by your District Award chair and is available at AmericanAdvertisingAwards.com. There you will find the most current Rules & Categories, Judging Guidelines and access to the Judges Portal.

What Is the American Advertising Awards Competition?

The National American Advertising Awards program is the advertising industry's largest and most representative creative competition, recognizing creative excellence in the art of advertising.

Sponsored by the AAF, the American Advertising Awards competition represents the broadest creative spirit of advertising by recognizing all forms of advertising; in all varieties of media; created by all sizes and types of entrants; and from all over the country. Nearly 35,000 total entries are entered and judged annually.

Three-Tier Competition

The American Advertising Awards are unique among advertising creative competitions. It is the only competition that includes three arduous levels of competition.

Entries are first judged at the local level through competitions organized by nearly 200 ad clubs affiliated with the AAF. Winners from the local level advance to the second level of judging and participate in one of 15 district competitions.

After district winners are selected, they advance to the third level of judging—the national finals.

ADDY Award winners truly represent the best of the best. With the American Advertising Awards, it is the size of the idea that matters most, not the size of the organization that created the work, nor the size of the budget behind it. This distinction elevates the American Advertising Awards over virtually every other advertising competition.

The Student American Advertising Awards Competition

The American Advertising Awards Student competition is held concurrently with the professional competitions and is the largest student advertising competition of its kind. Although there are fewer categories, the student competition mirrors the three-tier structure of the professional competition.

“Help! I Am an Award Chair. What Do I Do Now?”

To most new Award chairs, the task at hand can appear daunting. If you approach the process one step at a time, it can be made easier, very fulfilling and fun. Below are suggestions where you can start:

1. Read this manual.
2. Read the current American Advertising Awards Rules & Categories. This is important since there are adjustments and updates every year. Do not use the rules from a previous year. Go to the AAF website, AmericanAdvertisingAwards.com and download the new rules/categories, the software support materials and any other updates.
3. Talk to your District Award chair if you need assistance or have questions about the information and/or process.
4. Determine the date of your American Advertising Awards banquet or gala (use the timeline section in this book to determine the best date, backing out your timeline from the district American Advertising Awards competition and deadlines). Similarly, District Award chairs need to follow the same procedure (backing out their timeline to meet the national entry deadline of April 15) in order to fit into the schedule for the three levels of competition.
5. Build a strong committee to help you (see the committee section in this book for suggestions).
6. Meet with the former Award chair or club president for suggestions and advice.
7. Work with your local club treasurer and club president to build a local Award budget. District budgets will be largely determined by local auto-forwarding fees and expenses.
8. Meet with your committee and make assignments.

Remember, you are the American Advertising Awards expert in your market, so be sure that you have studied this manual, understand all of the rules and have reviewed all the rule changes.

COMMITTEES

One of the ways to increase the chances of a successful American Advertising Awards competition and gala is to build a strong committee to support the event. Unfortunately, in some clubs the entire weight of the American Advertising Awards falls on one person, while in other clubs/districts there are many people waiting and wanting to participate. The AAF strongly urges you to build a good working committee and not let this work fall to one person.

While this section assumes that building a large committee can be accomplished in your club, you may find it necessary to combine assignments, eliminate some tasks, and make adjustments as necessary, so that realistic goals can be achieved. It is always better to do what is realistically possible, and do it well, rather than try to accomplish it all and fail. Keep in mind that if your team or committee is small, you will have to start everything early so that you can accomplish more of your plans.

A Functioning Award Committee

Set your first meeting during the summer or in early September. Schedule monthly meetings during that first meeting. Monthly meetings should be adequate until entry deadline day. Your subcommittees should also be meeting regularly. It is a good idea for the Award chair to attend most, if not all, of the subcommittee meetings. Even when in attendance, however, the overall Award chair should never attempt to do the subcommittee chair's job.

As you get closer to judging day and the gala, you may want to increase the frequency of your meetings to make sure that you stay on top of things.

If you get an inkling that a subcommittee chair is falling behind, call him/her and see what the problem is; how you can help; and to remind him/her of the responsibilities and commitments. More often than not, the subcommittee chairs with problems have forgotten what they are to do and will welcome your concern and help. Do not offer to do their jobs. It is counterproductive, can be insulting and may result in extra work for you.

Conducting an Effective Committee Meeting

A few common rules will help you to conduct an effective committee meeting and keep your subcommittee chairs motivated and happy.

1. Set a time, date and place that is convenient for as many subcommittee chairs as possible. If a subcommittee chair cannot be present, then he/she will not be productive.
2. Start the meeting on time and have an agenda. This will keep you on track and limit discussion to important topics. It also will help to ensure that you review the items that must be covered.
3. Limit your meeting to no more than an hour; 45 minutes is even better. Allot time for each subcommittee chair to report and then allow time for discussion. Keep in mind that short, productive meetings get things done and they bring the committee members back.
4. Set a direction for the committee. Invite discussion and participation; listen to what committee members contribute; control discussion so that it stays on topic; and, in the end, make the decisions that need to be made, either by majority vote or executive action.
5. Do not allow meetings to descend into squabbling, personal attacks, excuses or reasons why things cannot be done. Focus on committee business and ask members to think about and suggest what it takes to get something done, rather than why it cannot be done.

Some committee chairs are uncomfortable with telling people what to do, however, it is important to delegate.

Subcommittees

In addition to having an overall committee, it is suggested that you have several subcommittees, all with multiple volunteers. Your club should do whatever it can to avoid one person committees. The subcommittees include:

- Design/Collateral
- Judging
- Venue
- Awards/Trophies
- Sponsorships/Ad Sales
- Public Relations/Promotions
- Gala/Show Production
- Student American Advertising Awards

As you look for subcommittee chairs that will form your committee, look for club members who have some skills or experience related to the committee's needs.

Suggested Committee and Subcommittee Assignments

Club Board of Directors

- Review annual budget.
- Approve committee pricing recommendations for: entries, sponsorship packages, program ads, tickets, trophy/certificate duplicate orders, decorations, venue, and production.
- Meet regularly with the Award chair.

Award Chair(s)

- Recruit subcommittee chairs and volunteers with your club president.
- Update overall timeline for the event.
- Develop budget, along with club treasurer for submission to club board of directors.
- Oversee all subcommittee budgets and insure that they come in as planned.
- Ensure that committees adhere to the timeline.
- Update the board at monthly meetings.
- Attend judging weekend and activities.
- Set a calendar of all committee and subcommittee meetings.
- Perform final proofing of all collateral and promotional materials.
- Conduct general supervision and problem solving.

Design/Collateral Subcommittee

- Develop theme for event and collateral materials.
- Secure a local agency or designer to design the pieces.
- Design and produce the following pieces:
 - Theme logo
 - Call for entry poster and envelope
 - Call for entry teaser, reminder card and e-mail or website elements
 - Program cover and interior sections
 - Invitation and RSVP card with envelopes

(Note: Invitations and RSVP cards may be optional in your market.)

- Slide template for show
- Trophy design
- Certificates
- Winner's book

(Note: Showcasing winners on DVD or on the Internet has been a nice complement to, or even a replacement for, the winner's book and should include audio, video and interactive winners. You may find that the same production house, which produced the gala, or similar one, could be used.)

- Solicit printer and paper donations for the collateral pieces or bid and select a printer.
- Oversee all printing and see that it is delivered on time.
- Proof all artwork along with the Award chair and Event Committee.

Judging Subcommittee

(For more details see judging section or refer to Judging Guidelines available at AmericanAdvertisingAwards.com)

Selecting a Judging Chair and Committee

One of the most critical steps in the American Advertising Awards process is the selection of the judging chair. If at all possible, choose a Judging Chair who has been a judge. As is the case with the overall Award chair, the one in charge of judging must:

1. Be experienced (a judging chair can never be too experienced).
2. Understand and believe in the American Advertising Awards competition process.
3. Know all of the competition rules.
4. Know what judges look for in a creative competition.
5. Be familiar with the market.
6. Be comfortable with the judges.
7. Be capable and able to make decisions.
8. Anticipate all questions; know all answers.

The judging chair will have the best chance of success if he/she has no relationships with those most likely to submit entries. Judging must be above suspicion, or it can damage your American Advertising Awards competition.

The Award chair should then select a committee to help with the process. It is preferable to create the following three teams:

1. **Drop-Off Subcommittee:** This group will be responsible for helping the Award and judging chairs receive all of the entries.
2. **Screening Subcommittee:** This group aids in making sure that all entries meet rules and requirements, are entered in correct categories and are legitimate and/or eligible contenders.

Note to District Award Chairs: At the District level, this committee will help sort the auto-forwarded entries and prepare them for judging. This should be done one or two days prior to judging. (District judging may require you to engage volunteers who are not local or from the city/club hosting the judging.) The biggest difference between local and district judging weekends is the number of entries. In some districts, you may have many more entries and judging may take two days, even if you send interactive entries out to be judged ahead of time.

3. **Judging Weekend Committee:** Selecting the appropriate judging weekend committee depends on how large your show is. A good rule of thumb is 4–6 people for every 400 entries. This group (led by the Award and judging chairs) should consist of the following: at least person who can enter scores into the system (that person should have good typing and computer skills), one person to oversee the AV portion and two runners. Getting students involved is a good idea.

Software/Technical Specialist: Among the people you bring on to help, make sure that you recruit a person with strong technical skills to work with and handle issues regarding working with the online software.

Venue Subcommittee:

- Identify suitable locations for the gala.
- Negotiate venue deal and secure an agreement (Award committee chair should oversee and sign the contract with approval of the board of directors).
- Handle tickets and seating.
- Coordinate with show production chair to see that show requirements are arranged and set up.
- Work with venue on food and beverage needs.
- Handle decorations.
- Set up any gallery display.

Awards Subcommittee:

- Request bids and trophy options from various vendors.
(See page 26 for information on the AAF's suggested award vendor, The Award Group)
- Secure trophies and certificates and ensure they are delivered in time for the gala.
- Coordinate with judging chair to receive a complete list of winners and winner information.
- Ensure award personalization is accurate.
- Prepare duplicate awards and certificate-to-trophy upgrades as requested.
- Deliver awards to gala.
- Prepare ADDY and citation duplicate order forms and place in award boxes/envelopes.
- Order and fulfill duplicate requests.

Sponsorships/Ad Sales Subcommittee:

- Prepare materials used to obtain/attract sponsors.
- Sell ads or sponsorships for gala, printed materials, awards book and other items in accordance with the budget.
- Secure all sponsor logos and provide them to the show production or gala committees as needed.
- Solicit donations for printing, paper and other items.

Public Relations/Promotions Subcommittee:

(For extensive details, see public relations section.)

- Distribute press releases to appropriate press for the call for entries, judging and for the gala.
- Distribute list of winners to the appropriate press.
- Make callbacks to press to encourage coverage.
- Arrange PR photography at judging and gala.
- Provide information about the American Advertising Awards to those at the club's monthly meetings/seminars.
- Work with club newsletter and website editors to ensure proper publicity in those places.
- Prepare copies of broadcast winners on DVD if radio or television will cover your winners.
- Distribute press releases recognizing local club winners at district and national competitions.

Show Production Subcommittee:

(For extensive details, see show production section.)

- Prepare the event script. (A personalized automated script is available in the software).
- Produce and direct entire production.
- Obtain the list of categories and winners from the judging chair.
- Coordinate with the venue chair to ensure all audio/video needs are met.
- Arrange for all photography, PowerPoint, and/or audio/video production as needed.
- Identify and secure master(s) of ceremonies and presenters.
- Procure and coordinate entertainment.
- Coordinate audio/video presentation at the gala.
- Hire staff or get volunteers to operate audio/video presentation.

Student American Advertising Award Subcommittee:

- Work with your club's education chair to obtain list of colleges. A list of schools statewide can be obtained from the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.
- Contact local colleges and design schools to encourage student entries.
- Contact previous NSAC entrants to encourage them to enter the previous year's work.
- Act as student liaison and point person.
- Visit AmericanAdvertisingAwards.com for more information on conducting the student competition.
- Contact the AAF Education Department with questions relating to college and university chapters.
- Encourage colleges/universities to incorporate the American Advertising Awards into their curriculum.

BUDGET

The key to having a financially successful American Advertising Awards competition is establishing a realistic and solid budget then sticking to it! Use the budget template included in this manual as a guideline.

Most clubs plan and realize a profit from the competition entry fees and the awards gala, which can often be a major fundraiser for the year.

Start by reviewing the final, reconciled American Advertising Awards budget from the previous year. Identify problem areas where expenses were too high, how you can minimize the expenses this year and identify areas of opportunity to increase revenue.

Two Important Budgeting Rules:

1. Estimate high on expenses.
2. Estimate low on income.

If you are losing money on the gala, consider adjusting the income by increasing sponsorships or raising the admission charge. Look at reducing the expenses by changing the meal, the location or what you spend on the other elements of the evening. Of course, a combination of all of these might be necessary.

Similarly, if you are not profiting from the competition, you may want to look at adjusting your entry fees or your expenses.

Budgeting Tips:

- Keep a running track of actual vs. estimated expenses as you go through each phase of the competition process and adjust as needed.
- Provide each subcommittee chair with his/her committee budget and charge him/her with maximizing profitability in every area.
- Be sure when you are budgeting food and beverage that you factor in sales taxes and gratuities.
- The Award chair should approve ALL expenses.
- Remember, the competition is more about the winners and their work than the show itself. So if you need to cut costs consider minimizing the extra features in the show production such as special lighting, decorations, entertainment or expensive sets and backgrounds.

If you find it difficult to do everything that you have done in the past and still stay within the budget, here are some additional suggestions:

Ways to Maximize Profits:

- Increasing the number of entries is the best way to improve your bottom line.
- Publicize the online entry URL.
- Hold an American Advertising Awards workshop for your local market.
- Don't limit your Call for Entries to just your mailing list. Have Call for Entries available at all meetings.
- Mail Call for Entries to your local Direct Marketing Association (DMA), Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Chapter, American Marketing Association (AMA) and other marketing-related clubs, in addition to your membership database. Don't forget the local Chamber of Commerce, Visitor and Convention Bureaus, etc.
- Check the credits on last year's winners for production houses, photographers, printers.
- Send Call for Entries to the creatives, as well as the account teams or owners/principals at advertising agencies.
- Promote! Promote! Promote!
- Get sponsors and donations. Your goal should be to get nearly 100 percent of your needs contributed or donated.

- Sell advertising and sponsorships in an awards book.
- Combine the local membership directory with the winner’s book to increase the value of both.

Ways to Save Money:

- Look at the budget line by line to eliminate or reduce certain items from your budget.
- Just because you always had something in the past doesn’t mean you have to have it again.
- If necessary, reduce or eliminate entertainment at the gala.
- Have a less expensive meal at the gala. Try heavy hors d’oeuvres or a dessert bar.
- Reduce the size of your Call for Entries to save on printing and postage.
- Move your gala to another location.
- Have items and services donated whenever possible.
- Try trading advertising space for services.
- Choose qualified judges from markets that have lower airfares to your market.
- If you are in an area with multiple markets within driving distance, have judges drive.
- Do not print a winner’s book, or reduce the size of it. A winner’s book on DVD or on-line may be produced for less than a printed book.
- Order enough certificates that will last for many years. Imprint the year when personalized.
- Reduce to three judges, if you have been using more.
- Reduce the amount of time the judges will have to stay in your market by having them judge interactive and radio in advance.
- Use a master of ceremonies you do not have to pay.

Budget Line Items

Here are suggested budget categories to review when making your budget. Not all line items will apply to all clubs:

Income:

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| • Entries | – Judges Airfare |
| • Gallery | – Hotels |
| • Tickets | – Meals |
| – Individual | – Gifts |
| – Tables | – Ground Transportation |
| – Students | – Postage/Shipping to Judges |
| • Premium Member Credit | – Judging Location |
| • Underwriter | – Judging Day Expenses |
| • Duplicate Trophies/Certificates/Certificate to Trophy Upgrades | – Equipment and Table Rental |
| • District Entry Fees | – Producing Judging Reel |
| • Sponsorships | – Misc. |
| • Program/Winner’s Book Ad Sales | |
| • Miscellaneous | |

Total Income:

Expenses:

- Judging

Expenses:

- Collateral
 - Design
 - Printing
 - Postage
 - Misc.
- Show/Gala
 - Video/AV Production
 - Audio/Video Equipment
 - Emcee
 - Entertainment
 - Venue Charges
 - Food
 - Bar
 - Program
 - Decorations
 - Comp Tickets
- American Advertising Awards Winner's Book
 - Design
 - Printing
 - Distribution
- Gallery
- Trophies/Certificates
- Handling Fees Paid to AAF
- Fees Paid to District—Varies by District.
Check with your District Award Chair
- District Forwarding Fees for All Gold Winners
- Shipping/Packaging
- Thank-you Gifts
- Miscellaneous

Total Expenses

Net Profit:

SPONSORSHIPS

Sponsorships are one of the best ways to increase the profitability of your American Advertising Awards competition and gala. An effective sponsorship program accomplishes four things:

1. Allows you to save money on items you would have otherwise paid for.
2. Allows you to do additional things that you would have not done otherwise.
3. Allows you to upgrade to higher quality event elements.
4. Adds cash directly to your bottom line.

If your committee can find sponsors that will provide cash or in-kind donations that preserve your financial stability, it will take a heavy burden off the return you need from entry fees and gala attendance. Excellent prospects for sponsorships include suppliers and vendors to the advertising industry who can gain from the public recognition that sponsorships bring.

Media companies, in particular, gain saliency for their local brands and positive association with the industry that supports them. Media companies also can provide paid advertising space and time to promote your Call for Entries and your awards gala in exchange for sponsorship recognition.

As with anything else in the competition and show, you will be more successful in acquiring sponsors if you have a strategy and a plan.

Build a Sponsorship Structure

There are a couple of ways to structure your sponsorships. You can look at having companies sponsor specific aspects of the American Advertising Awards and you can also create overall sponsorship levels that help support the American Advertising Awards competition and gala as a whole.

In-Kind Sponsors

There are several in-kind sponsors that can save you a great deal of money. In-kind sponsors are likely to help you with products or services if they view the advertising community as potential clients and feel that exposure to that community will help their businesses. Some of them include:

1. Printers that can print your Call for Entries, program, winner's book, award certificates and other printed items you may need.
2. Paper Companies that can donate all the paper used to print everything.
3. TV/Radio Stations/Production Houses that can donate the production of a winners' reel and help produce the gala production.
4. Business publication or daily newspaper that can publish the Call for Entries or information about the gala to encourage ticket sales. They are also another source that can print the winner's book and other items.
5. Mailing House that can prepare all of your mailings.
6. Photographer that can shoot the winning entries.
7. Hotel that can house the judges or talent for the show/gala.

There are many other possibilities. As you create your budget, try to identify possible companies that might be willing to provide in-kind sponsorship.

Sponsorship Levels

When building sponsorship levels, try to determine what you can offer to a potential sponsor. Make sure that your highest sponsorship level includes the most items of attraction. Graduate the other levels down by having lesser sponsorships contain fewer items or items of less value.

You should be equally concerned about what each sponsor will receive as you are about what you ask for or need in return. If your sponsorship levels are not a worthwhile value to the sponsors, then you will not be successful because the sponsors will be more concerned about what they will get and less concerned about what you need (even if they are doing it primarily for good will).

You might call your sponsorship levels platinum, gold, silver, bronze, etc., or you might name them using some other terms, such as presenting sponsor, co-sponsor, etc. However you refer to them, make sure each package is enticing and a good value.

Sponsorships of Specific Items

In addition to overall sponsorships, you may want to have companies sponsor specific items and give recognition or name the items for/after the sponsor. Some items you may want to have sponsored are:

- Dinner Sponsor
- Stage Sponsor
- Center Piece Sponsor
- Program Sponsor
- Winner's Book Sponsor
- Category Sponsors (newspaper, radio, television, magazine, outdoor, interactive, etc.)
- Student Dinner Sponsor
- Student Awards Sponsor
- Best of Show Sponsor
- Bar Sponsor
- Gallery Sponsor
- Entry Day Sponsor
- Call for Entries Sponsor

What Can You Give to a Sponsor?

Before you create your levels, decide what you can give to sponsors. Although what you can give will vary from club to club, here are some items to consider:

1. Tickets to the gala, anywhere from a full table to two tickets, depending on the sponsorship level.
2. Mention, logo or ad in the Call for Entries. Ads can be of varying size, depending on the sponsorship level.
3. Mention, logo or ad in the winners' book. Ads can be of varying size, depending on the sponsorship level.
4. Mention, logo or ad in the program. Ads can be of varying size, depending on the sponsorship level.
5. Verbal recognition at the gala and at monthly events leading up to the gala.
6. On-screen recognition before and/ or during the gala.
7. Banner placement at the gala.
8. Display for sponsor at the gala.
9. Sponsor to say a few words at the gala.
10. Sponsor to present certain awards.
11. Recognition on the club's website.
12. Free club memberships.
13. Something about the sponsor at each table.
14. Something about the sponsor at each place setting.
15. Mentions in each e-mail sent out about the gala or competition.

There may be other things you can offer. Each club and market is different, so think about what you can offer and what would provide value to a sponsor.

Timing Is Everything

Start to contact prospects early in the year. You will have much more success if you can reach your prospects before their budgets are set for the year. You will also mitigate the “we-don’t-have-it-in-our-budget” excuse. It might be helpful, in some cases, to combine the American Advertising Award sponsorship with a sponsorship of other club events you have during the year.

Contacting Prospects

This is one exception to the rule about not doing your subcommittee chair’s job. Potential sponsors want to deal with people in charge. Try to have both the sponsorship chair and either the Award chair or club president visit potential sponsors. Any prospecting or thank-you letters that are sent should be co-signed by the sponsorship chair and either the Award chair or the club president.

But first, start with a list of potential sponsors. List them as “A,” “B” and “C” categories, based on your evaluation of how much your Sponsorship’s Subcommittee feels they can provide; how the sponsorship will benefit them; and how much persuasion the subcommittee or Award Committee members can provide. Base your list on worth and likelihood.

Assign Individuals to Manage Each Prospect

The best approach is to request a face-to-face appointment. It is easier to be persuasive (make the sale) when you are face-to-face and also more difficult for the prospect to decline. Face-to-face meetings also allow you to adjust your request as the interview progresses. Someone you ask to provide \$5,000 may decline at that level but may be willing to become a sponsor at a lower level. Always open by requesting the maximum amount you think you can get. No one ever offers more than the amount for which they are asked.

The sponsorship chair should have the responsibility of following up to get the check (if you cannot get it at the first interview, which is the preferred payment plan), or arrange for the provision of in-kind materials.

Be enthusiastic. Think of it as giving your prospects a unique opportunity to have a presence with an advertising industry that is important to them. “It comes around just once a year” and the club is “there to help them take advantage of it.”

A Cautionary Note about Sponsorships

Because the integrity of the competition is something that you need to guard carefully, you should maintain a sponsorship program that does not create any situations in which others question the credibility of the competition.

You may want to avoid having companies that enter the competition as sponsors, especially if the sponsorship is too close to the awards. For example, if your major sponsor’s name is on everything and also wins the most awards, people will question the credibility of the competition, no matter how honestly it was conducted. Setting up situations like that can ultimately cause a dramatic decrease in the number of entries in the ensuing years. So caution and sound judgment are definitely needed.

Always be sure that you offer sponsorship opportunities openly, and without favor, to your entire market.

FINDING ENTRANTS

Finding new people to enter the competition is the best way to increase your club's income. You should not depend just on your club's current contact list. Develop a strong outreach plan to other places in order to continuously build your competition.

Types of Entrants

Try to expand your thoughts about who might want to enter the competition. Of course, you think of advertising agencies, media and graphic designers but look beyond them to others associated with advertising. A good source of ideas for prospective entrants can be found in the competition categories. Go down the list of categories and think of what kind of people are engaged in each category's line of work.

Here are some prospects you might wish to target as possible entrants:

- Advertising Agencies
- Graphic Designers
- Marketing Agencies
- Radio Stations
- TV Stations
- Newspapers (daily and weekly)
- Magazines
- Online Publications
- App Developers
- Website Designers
- Website Hosting Companies
- Photographers
- Promotional Item Companies
- Public Relations Firms
- Direct Mail Companies
- Nonprofit Organizations
- Theaters, Symphonies
- Amusement Parks
- Companies with In-House Marketing Departments
- Audio/Video Production Houses
- Independent Commercial Producers/Directors
- Voiceover Artists
- Companies That Make POP Displays
- Companies That Make Trade Show Displays
- Billboard Companies
- Bus Shelter Companies
- Cable TV Outlets
- Music/Sound Production Houses
- Copywriters
- Printers
- Colleges
- Design Schools (for Student Awards)
- Social Media Specialists
- Illustrators
- Animators
- Government Agencies

Where to Find Entrants

Here are places you should explore when soliciting new entrants.

1. **Your Current List.** This is the most obvious place to start and the largest source of entries for your competition. Make sure you have the most current list from your club and all of the contact information is correct.
2. **Online Research.** There are many ways to research potential local entrants online. Some specific suggestions are below.
3. **Companies Currently Advertising.** Look at/into the media for advertising/advertisers and contact those companies if they are not represented by an agency.
4. **Other Local Professional Organizations.** Often, other local clubs that do not have advertising competitions might be willing to send out information on your American Advertising Awards competition as another service to their members. You should check with marketing clubs, public relations clubs, other creative clubs and other business organizations where you might find marketing professionals.

5. **Chamber of Commerce or Economic Development Council.**
6. **Your Monthly Events.** Your monthly events may have prospects attending that are not on your list.
7. **Book of Lists.** Many local business publications, economic organizations and others develop lists of the largest employers, largest companies, etc., that might be helpful in identifying potential entrants.
8. **List of Entrants From Last Year and Previous Years.**
9. **Where Agencies Go.** In addition to contacting people directly, ask local printers and production studios if you can leave some Call for Entries on their counters. Any place that possible entrants frequent is a good place to leave your Call for Entries.
10. **Take It With You.** Give a stack of Call for Entries to all members of your committee and subcommittees and ask them to distribute them as they meet prospective professionals during their business dealings.

Go Further Than “One Deep”

Once you have identified the types of entrants and where to find them, do not assume that only one person from the company would be interested in entering. Sometimes, the top person does not have an interest, but lower level employees may have more interest and can still enter. Here are some examples:

- **Television/Radio/Newspapers.** You should contact the marketing director, promotions manager, production or artwork director, production or artwork staff, the graphic designers, advertising sales manager and the advertising sales staff.
- **Colleges.** Public relations director, marketing director, extended education manager, production and art professionals that service those mentioned. For Student American Advertising Awards you should contact the deans, professors and any marketing or advertising clubs.

A list like this can be made for almost any category above so you should look at expanding your contacts to multiple people within each organization.

Suggestions on Searching for Entrants Online

There are many ways for developing and locating potential entrants online. Methods of searching can be endless, however here are a few ways that might be helpful for you.

You should note that not all prospective entrants will have a web site. Some of them market themselves exclusively on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn or in other ways online.

1. **Search Engines.** Use search engines to look up the types of entrants listed above along with the different cities in your competition area. Don't forget to include smaller surrounding cities in your area. For example, "Graphic Design," "Glendale."
2. **Facebook.** Develop a Facebook page for your competition (or use the one for your club) to distribute information and to become friends with possible entrants.
3. **Twitter.** Develop a Twitter account specifically for the competition. Many people will follow your account if you follow them first so start by following prospective entrants from your list. As you follow others or they follow you, see who they are following or are following them to locate further prospective entrants.
4. **Yelp.** You may find prospective entrants by conducting searches on Yelp, the way you would use a search engine.
5. **Other organizations.** Sometimes other organizations like the local chapter of the AMA, PRSA, AIGA or other organizations may have a directory online where you can find perspective entrants.
6. **Other contests.** There are dozens of other contests that your entrants may enter (such as the Telly Awards). Often times, these other competitions will list winners from previous years or have a directory of names and those lists will also give the city name. By searching for winners in your competition area, you may find people who will want to enter your competition.

7. **Who built their website.** On the bottom of many websites are links to people who built that page. As you are doing research, press those links and you may find more entrants through that.
8. **Analyzing websites.** By looking at the websites of perspective entrants beyond the contact page, you often find other information, such as names of key people.

Adding Local Addition or Local-Only Categories

While there are over 200 national categories, you may find that you can increase local entries by creating “Local Addition” or “local only” categories. These can be categories that do not forward on to the district competition (local only), or they may be categories that can “roll up” (fit into) into a national category (Local Addition), making it eligible for the district and national competitions.

If you have a large number of printers in your market, you may consider adding some local-only printing categories. Of course, since there are no corresponding national categories, the winners from these categories would be eligible only for your local awards and would not be forwarded on to the district and national competitions. This would be an example of a local category that does not “roll up” to the next level.

An example of a local addition that does “roll up” to the district or national competition could come from your expanding the television categories into additional local subcategories, based on production costs. Such a breakdown would prevent advertisers with smaller budgets from competing against advertisers with larger budgets, at least at the local level. Should you decide to expand the television categories, based on production budget, all of them can “roll up” and fit into the “local television” category for the district competition.

For more information on how to add local only or local addition categories, read the Software Support Materials.

Tools for Encouraging Entrants

There are many tools that you can use to build entries, including:

- **Call for Entries.** The Call for Entries is the basic tool for most clubs to solicit entries. If your budget can support it, you may want to consider sending it out more than once.
- **E-Mails.** Friendly, instructional, humorous and different e-mails will help keep people informed and reminded about entering. If your website is up before the Call for Entries are printed, send out an email. Send out an e-mail about the new categories; send out an e-mail about changes in rules. Give friendly reminders at four weeks, three weeks, etc., all the way until the deadline, the late deadline and the gala.
- **Phone.** Pick up the phone and call large agencies, people who entered in the past, or anyone else. A personal phone call can be very encouraging to the prospect and successful for the club.
- **Monthly Club Functions.** Spend a few minutes at each of your monthly functions to remind people about the American Advertising Awards competition and encourage them to enter. Be sure to have your Call for Entries available.
- **Website.** Make sure you have a lot of information about the American Advertising Awards available on your club website and it is easily accessible and understandable.
- **Social Media.** Encourage a dialog with prospective entrants through social media. Create accounts specific for your competition and follow local agencies, designers and anyone who might be an entrant.
- **Videos.** Create videos to encourage entries and for disseminating information about the competition. Place them on your website, post them on social media and promote them via email. Communications with videos often make a bigger impact.
- **Distribute Entry Envelopes.** Purchase clear entry envelopes and place a card inside that gives clear directions on how to enter the competition. Then hand deliver the envelopes to those who entered the last year, previous years and to those who you think should enter. Give them more envelopes than they had entries in the past. Many clubs report that hand delivering envelopes and talking to prospective entrants results in a large increase in entries.

ACCEPTING ENTRIES

With a little extra work, the way you receive entries can make a big difference later on in the process. While this is written as if your club has a specific drop off date/time, the same concepts apply if entries can be dropped off over a longer period of time. First, make sure that you have the right people to help and all of the tools and supplies you will need. Since money is involved, have your club's treasurer on hand to manage the finances. You will also need a good supply of strong hands to carry the work to a central location, where it can be sorted. Calculators, permanent markers, a variety of clear plastic and paper envelopes, blank labels, tape and some spray adhesive are always handy for this part of the event. A computer and printer are also needed for corrections and printing entry forms or manifests if not brought by the entrant. If your club has separate pricing for members and nonmembers, have a list of paid members available, along with membership enrollment forms. This can help determine if the entrant is paying the correct price and can also increase your membership on the spot.

As the work is dropped off, confirm the following:

1. The manifest matches entry forms and money equals manifest.
2. Each entry is clearly labeled with a label.
3. Each entry has the form(s) inserted into the clear plastic or paper envelope.
4. Make sure the entry was created in your market and is entered into the proper American Advertising Awards competition.
5. Check each entry for the date it ran or was distributed to make sure it is eligible in this year's competition.
6. A sample of use is included for all Element of Advertising entries.

NOTE: If entries are not labeled or identified properly, provide the necessary supplies to the entrants and have them fix them right there. This should not become your committee's burden. Also, make sure that your Call for Entry clearly states the following: "All entries become the property of the (your club name). No entries will be returned."

Once the work has passed inspection, quickly move it from that area and into a holding room where a separate team receives the work and begins to separate all entries into sections in numerical category order for easy review.

The Screening Process

After all entries have been received and categorized, invite a group of representatives (your Screening Committee) to help you review the work. These folks can be one of the single greatest assets to ensure that your judging goes smoothly. Make sure that they are seasoned industry veterans. Consider including representatives from a good cross section of your members (especially any groups that have expressed concern over the process in the past). Allowing these groups to assist in reviewing the work empowers them and makes the "judging mystery" seem less ominous and secretive. Prior to their arrival the judging and Award chairs should prescreen the entries and pull any questionable entries for early review. Also, make sure each committee member is provided with a copy of the most up-to-date Rules & Categories.

Once the Committee Arrives

Go around the room and quickly review each entry to make sure of the following:

1. Category can be clearly seen through the clear plastic envelope or is mounted on the front right hand corner of a paper envelope.
2. Entry label is firmly affixed to upper right corner on back of entry.
3. Entry fits the description (e.g., is it a B/W newspaper ad?).
4. If entry is an element of advertising (e.g. illustration, photograph), there should be a sample of use provided for reference.
5. If something seems questionable, pull it and discuss.
6. Make sure the entrant's company is not identified on the entry, unless it is in a Self Promotion category.

Develop a “problem list” and once it is established, the screening committee should make a recommendation, which generally falls into one of two categories:

1. The entry is in the wrong category and should be moved.
2. The piece does not qualify under the American Advertising Awards rules and must be removed.

When either moving or removing pieces in the competition, be sure to make the change both physically and in the online software. If not corrected, the error will appear on the judging sheets and the error will be duplicated at each level of competition.

It may be cumbersome to have the entire committee review all radio, website, CD and television entries; however, these must be screened before judging. It is extremely important that the entrants be consulted and informed of any changes. This does not mean that the entrant has the final word on eligibility. The rules are very specific, by design, and are always adhered to and followed. If it does not fit in a category, you have two choices: consider adding a local-only category for it or disqualify it and refund the entry fee.

Major Tasks

(once the work has been received):

1. Collating all entries into appropriate categories.
2. Screening to ensure pieces are in the right category.
3. Reviewing online data.
4. Separating the Print entry envelopes from the other categories that are judged online, on a screen or that need special handling during judging.

STUDENT AMERICAN ADVERTISING AWARDS

The AAF Student American Advertising Awards Competition is a unique national awards program designed especially for college students. The student competition mirrors the three-tiers of the professional competition, although it has its own set of categories. You may either conduct the student competition concurrently and in conjunction with the professional American Advertising Awards competition or you may conduct it as its own event. If you have an Ad 2 club in your market, you may wish to have them conduct the Student American Advertising Awards competition.

Entry Fees

For every student entry you receive, a fee is charged by AAF National. Check with your district to see if they have an additional fee before determining what your local fee should be. You will also be responsible for paying a district forwarding fee for all of your Gold ADDY winners.

Silver winners in the student competition can advance to the district and national judging if the entrant pays the appropriate district or national fees.

Entrant Eligibility

Any student can enter the Student American Advertising Awards competition as long as they are enrolled full- or part-time in an accredited U.S. educational institution. Those who recently graduated may also enter the student competition as long as the entry was created while they were a student and it meets all the other entry requirements.

Entry Eligibility

While the professional competition requires that entries be “real work” created for “real clients,” the student competition requires that the entry not be something that is used or created within a normal client-agency relationship. If the entrant is a student but created work that was used in the marketplace, then that work must be entered into the professional competition. For example, if the student worked within an agency as an intern or an employee, then the work that was created for that agency or that agency’s clients would not be eligible. However, if that same person created advertising for a class project or specifically to enter this competition, and was never used by any client, then the student may enter that piece. The only exception to this rule is work that the student created and was used within the school’s student newspaper, student radio station or student television station or work created to be used as a club fundraiser.

Entries that were created by more than one student can be entered as long as everyone who worked on the entry is aware and that all people are listed in the credits.

Categories

The student competition has a smaller number of categories than the professional competition and is geared towards what students are likely to enter. You can feel free to add additional categories that either roll-up into the national categories (Local Addition Categories) or create local-only student categories. Please see the Software Support Materials on how to do this.

Building your Contacts

When looking for student entrants, the first thing you need to do is compile a complete list of schools in your area. There may be more than you think.

Here are the types of schools that you should seek out:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| 1. Four Year Colleges and Universities | 6. Computer Schools |
| 2. Community Colleges | 7. Graphic Design Schools |
| 3. Art Schools | 8. Career Colleges |
| 4. Photography Schools | 9. Broadcasting Schools |
| 5. Film Schools | |

Once you develop a complete list of schools,

you need to develop contacts. Many schools will list their instructors (and their contact information) on the school's website. Try to develop as many appropriate instructors as you can. In addition to instructors, be sure to add department chairs, deans, advisors and production studios. If this information is not available online, you may need to contact each school or department to get contact information. Give this assignment to one of your committee members. An Ad 2 member would be best suited for this job.

Within colleges and universities, you need to go to many departments to find the right instructors since each school will place subjects in different departments. For example, you might find advertising within the school of business or communications. Graphic design might be in the art school or computer sciences. Try to be thorough in finding out where schools put the instructors you want to reach. Some suggested departments to look at:

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Art | 6. Advertising |
| 2. Business | 7. Photography |
| 3. Film | 8. Graphic Design |
| 4. Communications | 9. Computer Sciences |
| 5. Radio/TV | 10. Marketing |

Other places to look for entrants include on-campus clubs such as advertising, marketing, film, photography, and radio/TV. Talk to your club's education chair to see if there are any AAF affiliated schools in your area or if any schools entered the NSAC competition. Work that was completed for the NSAC competition is eligible to be entered into the Student American Advertising Awards competition the following year.

Developing Contacts into Entrants

When trying to build your student competition, you need to develop solid relationships with the schools in your area to reach their students. While in some schools a department chair or dean can help you reach all of the students, in other schools you may need to depend on one instructor or advisor to get the word out.

Here are some ideas that might work in your market to develop student entries:

1. If the college is within traveling distance, the Education Chair or Sub-Committee member can volunteer to speak to the students at various Communications/Advertising/Marketing classes and club. This proactive approach will not only motivate the students to send in entries, but will also be a great way for your club to recruit new student members. Be sure to take a stack of Call for Entries with you.
2. Meet with the deans or instructors to have an American Advertising Award entry be a part of the curriculum. The schools may be willing to pay for the first entry from each student. If they are not willing to do that, see if you can get them to encourage their students to enter.
3. Develop local posters, flyers and emails specifically for the student competition.
4. If possible, have an on-campus location for students to drop off their entries.
5. Make sure your deadlines coincide with their class schedules so you are not competing with finals or vacations.
6. Try to get a sponsor to offer a cash prize to the student Best of Show.
7. If you have your judges lined up, use the names of the judges as a way for the students to get their work in front of potential employers.

Judging

If the total number of entries does not make it prohibitive, you should use the same set of judges who judge the professional competition. The students appreciate that their work is viewed by the same high quality judges and the judges also enjoy seeing the student work.

If there are so many professional or student entries that using the same judges becomes impossible, you can use local judges for the student competition as long as they have no affiliation with any of the schools from which you will get entries.

Honoring the Student Winners

While most clubs honor the student winners at the same gala as the professional winners, the Student American Advertising Award ceremony does not need to be at the same event or need to be in a ballroom with a formal setting. It can be a fun, semi-formal setting with a viewing gallery with displays of the students' entries. This can even be turned into a semi portfolio review (without diluting the show). This can definitely be positioned as a way for the students to meet with ad industry professionals and "interview" with them in an informal setting.

But if you honor the students at the professional gala, it is essential that students be made to feel valued and part of the show. Although some clubs use paper certificates as awards, the American Advertising Awards Committee strongly suggests that students receive a trophy at least for Gold winners. In the past, some clubs have also given scholarships or a cash prize to the first place or the Student Best of Show.

If you honor the students at their own event, be sure to send out invitations to the ad industry to attend the ceremony, as well as to all the students who sent in entries and their professors/instructors/deans and to all colleges with a marketing/ advertising/ communications program.

Sponsorships

While it may be challenging to get sponsors for your professional competition, you may find it easier to get sponsorships for your student competition. Here are some sponsors you might be able to secure:

1. **Entry Sponsors.** Have a company sponsor the first entry from every entrant. If you normally get 50 student entries and you charge \$2,000 for the sponsorship, you will make a higher profit, even if your entries go up.
2. **Dinner Sponsors.** When you send out the order form for your gala, include a line where people can sponsor a student to attend. Sometimes attendees will buy a table at your gala and end up with a few empty seats. Ask if they would allow a student to sit with them.
3. **Best of Show Sponsors.** You can have a sponsor for a cash award for the best of show winners in broadcast, web and print.
4. **Internship.** Try to get a local ad agency to sponsor an internship for the Best of Show winner.

Timeline

In order to best address the needs of the student entrants, you will likely need to have a separate Call for Entries timeline from that of the professional competition. Many competitions send out their Call for Entries at the end of December or the beginning of January with a January deadline; however many schools are closed during the last part of December and throughout January. The perfect timeline for your professional competition is the absolutely worst time for the student competition.

By using the materials provided by the AAF to help you promote the student competition, you can get started soliciting entries before your professional Call for Entries is ready. Start contacting the schools and setting up how you will get the word out to the students as soon as the fall semester begins. It is recommended that you have a submittal deadline that is coordinated with the end of the term so that students can enter their best work from the fall semester before they leave campus for the winter break.

Keep in mind that most schools don't make decisions quickly. So if you are just beginning to build a relationship with a school, you should be talking this fall and spring about incorporating the school into the American Advertising Awards program more and building entries into the curriculum for next year.

One important note about entries: Often students will enter their original work and they have no back up copy. Although you might have every intention of returning their work, sometimes entries get lost or damaged. If that entry wins a gold

award, it will advance to the district or national competitions and then the piece will be out of your hands and there will be almost no chance of getting it back. Make sure that the students understand that there is no guarantee that the entry can be returned and they should submit a copy or duplicate, not original art. All entries become the property of AAF.

JUDGING

Please download the latest American Advertising Awards Judging Guidelines from the [AAF website](#).

AWARDS

There are several decisions you need to make with regard to awards. You need to decide which levels of awards you want to present; the quantity of awards; and whether or not you present trophies or paper certificates. Clubs handle this differently, so your club needs to make decisions about what direction it wants to take.

If you present too many awards, then the awards lose their value. If you present too few awards, then this can adversely affect the number of entries you receive the following year.

Award Levels

The National committee strongly suggests the following parameters to determine your Gold and Silver American Advertising Award winners. In general, recognize approximately 20% of all entries with Gold or Silver ADDY Awards. Of the 20% approximately 1/3 should be Gold and 2/3 should be Silver.

Most clubs present two levels of awards. The AAF recommends that clubs name their awards Gold and Silver ADDYs. Some clubs present other awards such as Bronze ADDY, Citations of Excellence or Awards of Merit. Use the past year's awards as a guide to determine what your club wants. You should not change this yearly. Consistency is important in helping the entrants feel secure with the integrity of the competition.

Best-of-Show

Again, clubs approach Best-of-Show somewhat differently. Some clubs present one overall Best-of-Show Award. Others present Best-of-Show awards in Print, Electronic (Radio/TV) and Digital. Still others present a Best-of-Show in Print, Electronic and Web/Multimedia, and then choose an overall Best-of-Show. Of course, if there are too few entries in an area, or the quality of the work does not warrant a Best-of-Show in a particular area, you may consider not presenting a Best-of-Show. Credibility of the competition is paramount.

The National American Advertising Awards Committee recommends that local and district shows not allow work entered in the Industry Self-Promotion or Pro-Bono categories to be eligible for Best of Show consideration. The National American Advertising Awards Committee suggests the creation of a local, district and national Public Service Judges Special Award.

Special Judges Award(s)

Some clubs allow the judges to present an award to an entry that they feel exceeded the other Gold winners in some way, yet it did not earn a Best of Show award. This is sometimes called a Special Judges Award or Judges' Choice Award, or some other similar name. This award can be presented only if the judges feel it is warranted, which may not be every year.

Mosaic ADDY Award

The National committee suggests that your club consider awarding a local Mosaic ADDY Award. This should be awarded to an entry, from any category, that best exemplifies a spirit of diversity and inclusion. Criteria for this award is a demonstration of understanding of and sensitivity to the needs, concerns and buying practices of multi-cultural audiences. More than one Mosaic ADDY award may be given at the judge's discretion.

Trophy or Certificate

Another decision that needs to be made is which award levels get paper certificates and which get trophies. Most clubs present trophies for Gold Awards, Best of Show and Judges' Choice Awards. Silver Awards are trophies at some clubs and paper certificates in others.

Although it is nice to hand out trophies to silver winners, budgetary constraints may make it necessary to present paper certificates.

Regardless of which types of awards you select, you should personalize the awards with the category and entrant

information. Many clubs also include creative credits (as entered in the online software) on the certificates.

To obtain winner information that can be used to create personalized awards, work with the judging chair to download the information from the software that can then be used as is or mail-merge winner information on the certificates.

Where to Get Awards

The variety of styles of awards presented by different clubs varies significantly around the country.

The AAF has an approved vendor of awards, The Award Group, from which you can choose a variety of trophies and certificates.

The awards provided by The Award Group (similar to the ones presented at the national awards; see below) are optical-grade, crystal awards with 3D laser etching inside the crystal. It is mounted on a black crystal base with gold and silver plates and comes in a presentation box. Personalized plates can be left blank for local personalization, or you can have The Award Group personalize the awards for you.

The following is the pricing for various sizes and quantities of the awards:

Award Pricing		1-24	25-49	50-99	100-500
3.5" x 2.5" x 2.5"		\$45.00	\$43.00	\$41.00	\$39.00
6.75" x 2.5" x 2.5"	\$62.00	\$59.00	\$56.00	\$53.00	
7.25" x 2.75" x 2.75"	\$72.00	\$70.00	\$68.00	\$65.00	
8" x 3" x 3"		\$77.00	\$75.00	\$73.00	\$71.00
Personalization		\$10.00	\$9.00	\$8.00	\$7.00

Only NY and NJ shipments require sales tax. Shipping is not included in the above prices.



Visit the [AAF website](#) (American Advertising Awards > Resources > Trophies) to connect with The Award Group.

Many clubs around the country choose to purchase trophies from other vendors and have certificates printed specifically for their clubs from local

printers. If you choose to do that, be sure to download the correct logos and specifications from the [AAF website](#) (American Advertising Awards > Resources > Logos & Style Guide).

While some clubs have awards that match the theme of that year's gala, others choose to have the same appearance for their awards each year in order to have a consistent look and brand.

Award Duplicates/Certificate-to-Trophy Upgrades

After the awards are presented, be sure to send out an order form for winners to order duplicate trophies, certificates or to upgrade their certificate to a trophy. This can be a great source of additional income to your club, bringing in thousands of dollars or more.

If you print certificates locally, be sure to order enough to accommodate anticipated duplicate orders, as well as possible errors you may have during personalization.

Encourage your winners, through e-mails and with an order form they get along with their awards, to buy duplicate awards for their clients and for the members of their company who worked on the winning entry.

Cash Awards

Some clubs are able to encourage additional entries by having cash awards that are sponsored.

For example, maybe one TV or radio station (or all of them together) sponsor sponsors a cash award for the highest scoring TV or radio commercial. This award could also be sponsored by the local broadcasters association. The daily newspaper may want to offer a cash prize to the best newspaper ad. A large advertising agency in town may want to sponsor a cash award to the best student entry. You can have cash awards for public service, copywriting, photography or any other category if there is enough interest for that category in your market and a willing sponsor can be found.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Using accepted public relations techniques before, during and after your competition can add value to your competition and increase entries, attendance and membership.

You should vigorously pursue the public relations angle with a dedicated communications chair.

Try to recruit a public relations specialist from one of your member agencies to serve as public relations chair. If no one is available or willing, any dedicated person can do the job.

When to Send Press Releases

You should send press releases when your Call for Entries is sent out, as well as before judging, before your gala and after the gala (to announce winners). Send out the press releases several weeks before you want the story to run.

Where to Send Press Releases

Send press releases to the following people:

1. Business editors of local newspapers
2. City or local editors of local newspapers
3. Photo editors of local newspapers
4. Editors of business publications
5. Radio news directors
6. Television assignment desks and planning desks
7. Business and ad industry websites and blogs

Most media prefer e-mail releases; however, you should try to find a contact person for each of these and address it to him/her by name.

Follow Up to Press Releases

For most media, sending out a press release is not enough. You will need to call each of your contacts to tell him/her about the event and why it is important. After the winners are announced, if possible your press releases could include a DVD with pictures of the top winning print entries and copies of the radio/TV commercials. You can also post your top winning entries on a website with large enough files that the media can download for publication or broadcast.

Some daily newspapers and television stations will find the information too dated if you send it after the awards. You may want to give them an advance copy of the winners so they can publish it in the newspaper the next day or feature them on the TV news that night. Be clear to them that this information is off the record and not for publication until AFTER the awards presentation. Most major media outlets have websites with video so be sure to give links to winning videos and artwork to all media outlets

Trick to Getting TV Coverage

Television news programs like to cover an event if one of their personalities is involved. For this reason, you might want to use a personality from one or more of the television stations in town as a presenter, an emcee or in some other fashion. Then, when you call the station assignment editor, that person is more likely to want to cover your gala. Also, if they have a copy of the award-winning TV commercials, they might also be willing to show them on the air.

Sample Press Releases

(The following pages have sample press releases for your use.)

For Immediate Release

Date: [DATE]

Contact: [NAME, PHONE, EMAIL]

[CLUB NAME] Issues American Advertising Awards Call for Entries

[CITY, STATE] – The [CLUB NAME] will be honoring the best advertising created locally during [YEAR] and has issued its Call for Entries for the [YEAR] American Advertising Awards Competition.

The annual competition recognizes exceptional advertising created in the [CITY] metropolitan market. The American Advertising Awards honor advertising excellence in all media including online, non-traditional, print, broadcast and out-of-home. It is the first level of a three-level national competition that is the advertising industry's largest.

All entries must be received by [TIME] on [DATE], at [DROP-OFF LOCATION]. Entry fees are [\$ AMOUNT] per entry for members of the [CLUB NAME], [\$ AMOUNT] for non-members and [\$ AMOUNT] for student entries. Entries will be judged the weekend of [DATE] by a panel of advertising creative executives, who will select the winners from an anticipated [#] entries. Only new creative work created in the [CITY] market and published or aired between January 1 and December 31 of [YEAR] is eligible for consideration in the professional competition. Work created by college students is eligible for the competition's student track.

The [CLUB NAME]'s winners of the American Advertising Awards will be honored during a black-tie dinner gala on [DATE] at the [VENUE] in [CITY, STATE]. Work winning awards at the local level is then eligible to compete in the second level of competition, the District [#] American Advertising Awards, conducted in [MONTH]. District winners are then eligible for entry in the National American Advertising Awards. National winners are honored at the American Advertising Awards celebration during the American Advertising Federation's ADMERICA.

The [CITY/MARKET] competition is sponsored by the [CLUB NAME], a member association comprised of advertising and media professionals. Proceeds from the American Advertising Awards help support the [CLUB NAME]'s educational programs, public service projects and proactive government relations efforts.

For more information or to receive an American Advertising Awards entry packet contact [CONTACT NAME], American Advertising Awards chair, at [PHONE NUMBER] or [E-MAIL ADDRESS], or visit [LOCAL URL].

Enclosure: [CLUB NAME] American Advertising Awards Call-for-Entry

The American Advertising Awards is the advertising industry's largest competition for creative excellence in the United States. The three-tier national competition is conducted annually by the American Advertising Federation, advertising's only trade organization inclusive of all advertising disciplines. The AAF is based in Washington, DC, and boasts the largest grassroots network with more than 35,000 members spanning the nation. More information can be found at AAF.org.

[CLUB'S BOILERPLATE]

For Immediate Release

Date: [DATE]

Contact: [NAME, PHONE, EMAIL]

Judges Named for [CLUB NAME] American Advertising Awards

[CITY, STATE] --- The [CLUB NAME] has confirmed the [#]-member creative panel that will judge entries in its [YEAR] American Advertising Awards Competition. Open to entries throughout the [CITY] metropolitan market, the American Advertising Awards honors creative excellence.

Judging will be conducted the weekend of [DATE]. Judges will review entries submitted by the [CITY] market in all areas of online, nontraditional, print and broadcast advertising. All finalists will be notified by the week of [DATE], and winners will be honored at a black-tie gala [EVENT DATE].

Judges include: [NAMES AND AFFILIATIONS OF JUDGES].

All entries must be received by [TIME] on [DATE], at [LOCATION]. Entry fees are [\$ AMOUNT] per entry for members of the [CLUB NAME] and [\$ AMOUNT] for non-members. To receive an American Advertising Awards entry packet contact [CONTACT NAME], American Advertising Awards chair, at [PHONE NUMBER] or [E-MAIL ADDRESS], or visit [LOCAL URL].

The [CITY/MARKET] competition is sponsored by the [CLUB NAME], a member association comprised of advertising and media professionals. Proceeds from the American Advertising Awards help support the [CLUB NAME]'s educational programs, public service projects and proactive government relations efforts.

The American Advertising Awards is the advertising industry's largest competition for creative excellence in the United States. The three-tier national competition is conducted annually by the American Advertising Federation, advertising's only trade organization inclusive of all advertising disciplines. The AAF is based in Washington, DC, and boasts the largest grassroots network with more than 35,000 members spanning the nation. More information can be found at AAF.org.

[CLUB'S BOILERPLATE]

For Immediate Release

Date: [DATE]

Contact: [NAME, PHONE, EMAIL]

[CLUB NAME] Award Winners to be Honored [DATE]

[CITY, STATE] – The [CITY] market’s best in advertising will be honored [DAY OF WEEK], [DATE] at [VENUE] at the [CLUB NAME] American Advertising Awards celebration.

Initiations are out for the event, which recognizes and showcase the area’s outstanding advertising creative work for the previous year. The event begins at [TIME] with cocktails followed by dinner and presentation of awards.

Judges chose winners from [# OF ENTRIES] online, broadcast and print entries from agencies, businesses and individuals doing business in the [CITY] market as well as college students.

Tickets for the gala event are [\$ AMOUNT] for members of the [CLUB NAME], [\$ AMOUNT] for non-members and [\$ AMOUNT] for students. Tickets may be purchased in advance by calling [CONTACT NAME] at [PHONE NUMBER], emailing [EMAIL ADDRESS] or by visiting [URL].

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For media credentials to cover the [CLUB NAME] American Advertising Awards, contact [CONTACT NAME] at [PHONE NUMBER] or [EMAIL ADDRESS].

Enclosure: Invitation

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[CLUB’S BOILERPLATE]

For Immediate Release

Date: [DATE]

Contact: [NAME, PHONE, EMAIL]

[WINNER] Takes [CLUB NAME] Best of Show

[CITY, STATE] – [WINNER] took best of show honors for its work for [CLIENT] in the [CLUB NAME] American Advertising Awards presentation [DATE]. This annual awards presentation was attended by over [# OF ATTENDEES] members representing every segment of the [CITY]-area advertising industry.

Of the [# OF ENTRIES] entries received by the [CLUB NAME], [#] gold ADDY Awards and [#] silver ADDY Awards were presented. Entries were judged by a [#]-judge panel for their creativity, originality and strategy.

Following is a complete list of the [CLUB NAME] American Advertising Awards winners:

[LIST OF WINNERS - CATEGORY, AGENCY, CLIENT, TITLE OF AD]

Enclosure: Winners Book

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[CLUB'S BOILERPLATE]

SHOW PRODUCTION

The American Advertising Awards show is quite possibly the most visible and important program your club will conduct all year. For many clubs, it is the single most highly attended event. People who come to nothing else will come to the American Advertising Awards gala.

Because it is so important to most clubs, it is also an event where spending can get out of hand and turn a profitable competition and gala into one that loses money. While it is the financial goal to make a large profit from the competition, the gala should, at minimum, break even...under no circumstances should it lose money. Strict budget control must be maintained at all times.

The parts of the gala that you may want to include are:

- Showcase or gallery of entries or winners
- Food (dinner or hors d'oeuvres)
- Awards presentation
- Entertainment

Not all clubs do all four of these. Sometimes, the amount you can allocate will be restricted by the budget you have, the location or other logistics. It is better, though, to do fewer things and do them very well than to do all of them in a mediocre way. Keep the image of the American Advertising Awards as high as possible and, in the future, as your awards grow, you can add to the program.

Know the Venue

Before you begin staging the gala, be sure to visit the location where it will be held. You might get ideas on staging by seeing the location, and you will also know the limitations of the facility, if there are any. An embarrassing situation would be putting together a program that does not work well with the location or facility. It is a good idea for the person in charge of producing the show to work along with the person finding the venue, so that all of the needs of the show can be negotiated and realized.

Insurance

Be sure to ask the venue what type of insurance your club is required to carry in order to host the event at the venue. Secure the proper insurance well before the date of your gala.

Entertainment

Entertainment is not necessary for a successful gala; however, it can be nice if it is affordable and of sufficient quality for the event. You can have anything from a pianist playing in the background during dinner or during the showcase of winners beforehand, to a band for dancing afterwards. If budget is a problem, you can consider having a CD of music playing in the background. Whatever you do, remember that the American Advertising Awards and the attending creatives should be the stars of the evening. Everything else is there to complement them, not overshadow them.

Audio/Visual Needs

Make sure that you have an appropriate projection system and a large screen (or screens), so that the audience can view the winning entries as they are announced. You may also need a DVD/CD player or computer to present the radio and television winners. Your emcee will need a microphone, and you may wish to have special lighting or spot lights. Be sure to make a list of everything in advance so that you do not forget to order something you need.

Master of Ceremonies

Selection of an appropriate master of ceremonies is very important. It should be someone who is used to speaking before large crowds; has a good sense of humor; and can keep the night moving at a quick pace.

There are many options when it comes to choosing a master of ceremonies. It can be your club president, Award chair or another person from within your club. It can also be a local radio personality, TV news anchor, local sports celebrity, an entertainer, government official or anyone else who you think can keep the night moving.

Be sure to meet with your emcee after the script is written, so you can review everything and he/she can ask any questions. Ask him/or her not to adlib and to stick to the script.

Presenting the Winners

There are several ways you can present the winning entries to the audience. You can have a PowerPoint presentation and while each winner is announced, their winning entry is presented on the screen. When TV and radio entries are announced, you play the winning entry. With website entries, you can either show a screen shot of the home page or record the winning sites with sound and motion and play those. If your budget permits, or you have it sponsored, you can record all of the entries, in order, as a video presentation with music and an announcer and have the entire show produced.

Handing Out the Awards

If you have many award winners, you may not want all of them to come up to the stage to receive their awards. You may want only the gold Gold winners and Best of Show to come to the stage. Others can receive their awards after the presentation is over. If you have few awards, then it may not slow down the show to present all of them.

One way to handle the presentation is to show each silver winning entry on the screen while the emcee announces the winners and credits, but the winners do not come up to receive their awards. Gold winners and Best of Show winners should also have their entries shown on the screen although they should come up to receive their awards. Silver winners can pick up their trophies/certificates at the end of the night at a designated table or location.

Show Day Prep

Be sure you and your committee arrive several hours before the gala begins. This will give you and your committee enough time to display the winning entries, decorate the room, rehearse the show and make all the other necessary preparations. You will also need to set up a table to check-in attendees, tell them where their seats are (if you assign seats) and collect any money from people who may not have paid for their tickets.

TIMELINE/CHECKLIST

When building a timeline for your American Advertising Awards competition, the American Advertising Awards Committee suggests you start at the end and work your way backward.

1. **Find out the district deadline.** The first thing your club needs to find out is when the deadline is for your district competition. District entry deadlines tend to be mid to late March but may be earlier or later. If you do not have your awards gala early enough before the district deadline, you will not be able to complete everything in time to get the advancing entries to the district. Schedule your entry deadline, local judging and gala based on the district deadline.

Although you can do it in less time, it is recommended that you have your awards gala at least two to three weeks before the district deadline. This will give you enough time to encourage silver winners to forward their entries and ship them, along with the advancing gold winners, to your district Award chair. Plus, if there are problems in the forwarding of the entries, you will have enough time to correct the issues.

Note to District Award Chair: Deadline for submission of district winners to national is April 15, so schedule your district judging accordingly.

2. **How long will it take to get your awards and produce your winner's book?** Once you know when the gala will be, talk to the people producing and/or engraving the trophies and/or personalizing your paper awards and see how much time they need. One of the worst things you can do is have an awards gala and not have the awards. It is recommended that you add at least a week to their prediction on how long it will take, in case there are any problems. You also need to add the time you need after judging to prepare the personalization information for the people doing the awards. You will likely need at least a few days to prepare this after judging. Many clubs also have a winner's book handed out at the gala. Talk to your printer to see how long it will take to print and to the designer to see how long it will take him/her to prepare it for printing. If you decide to do a winners DVD or website, contact the appropriate production facility for its timeline.
3. **Schedule judging day based on the gala/trophy time frame.** Now that you know the day of your gala and how long it will take to get your awards and winner's book, you can schedule your judging day(s). Depending on the number of entries you expect to receive, judging can take anywhere from a few hours to all day, or even all weekend. Past experience should give you an idea on how many entries to expect. Although you may get more or less in any given year, most likely judging will not increase or decrease by more than an hour, or two, in any given year.
4. **Schedule entry deadline day based on judging day.** You should plan a deadline for American Advertising Award entries two to three weeks before your judging. By allowing yourself that much time, you will have the opportunity to go through the entries to make sure everything is in the correct category; all entries adhere to the rules; and you can organize them all to make your judging day go more efficiently. Many clubs have an additional late deadline with a late fee imposed. This option is supported in the on-line software. Since it is common for people entering a competition to wait until the last minute, allowing late entries may increase your entry total by quite a bit and allow for increased income for your club. By scheduling your deadline two to three weeks in advance of your judging, it allows entrants to be late and still make the competition without you having to run like crazy trying to organize all of your entries at the last minute.
5. **Schedule your Call for Entries, based on the entry deadline.** Schedule your Call for Entries to be mailed four to six weeks before your entry deadline. If this puts your time-frame at the Christmas/New Year's time, you may want to adjust the mailing, so that it does not get overlooked due to unusual holiday work schedules. It is recommended that you have a soft Call for Entries posted on your club's website as soon as your local rules are completed and the entry software is available for online entries. The more time you allow people to enter, the more entries you are likely to get.

6. **Call for Entries Design based on mailing time.** Be sure to give the people designing your Call for Entries enough time to prepare it, have revisions and get it printed before your scheduled mailing date. You should remember that you are probably having the design donated by one of your club members, so give him/her enough time to work on the project in between their paying clients. Do not make this a pressured burden on him/her, if you can avoid it.

Once you know these dates, you can fill in the times on the rest of these items below.

Start early. Mistakes can be fixed if you have the time.

Suggested Time Line

6–8 Months Before Judging

- Appoint committee
- Set goals and develop a budget and present to local Board
- Assign subcommittee tasks
- Set Call for Entries date(s) and secure a location for entry drop-offs
- Plan where entries will be stored
- Set judging date(s) and secure a judging location
- Set gala date and negotiate location
- Meet with committee at least once a month
- Decide if you will add any local-only categories

4–6 Months Before Judging

- Secure designer for Call for Entries, winner’s book and other materials
- Begin search for sponsors
- Update and expand mailing list and e-mail list
- Secure a production house/individual to produce your show
- Contact schools to coordinate student entries

2–3 Months Before Judging

- Secure judges and make travel and hotel arrangements
- Print Call for Entries
- Add local-only categories, if any, to online software
- Have American Advertising Award information posted to website
- Send out e-mails to prospective entrants when website has American Advertising Award information
- Secure host emcee for gala
- Learn and test the online entry software and judging software
- Get information to students regarding student competition

1–2 Months Before Judging

- Mail Call for Entries, 4–6 weeks before entry deadline
- Send out press release regarding Call for Entries
- Confirm judges
- Continue to send e-mails to prospective entrants
- Arrange for volunteers for judging day
- Print award certificates

After Entry Deadline and Before Judging

- Send out e-mails announcing acceptance of late entries (if you are willing to accept them)
- Review all entries to ensure they are in correct categories and are eligible
- Make sure all entries are properly entered in the online software
- If you will have online and audio entries judged prior to judging day, assign online judging in the software and send the link/password to the judges
- Organize entries by category

Day Before Judging

- Lay out entries for judging
- Organize room
- Print out judging sheets
- Download entries from software
- Confirm arrangements for food/snacks/transportation to/from judging venue as necessary

Days After Judging

- Make sure all awards are identified in the software
- Prepare winner information and get it to the trophy company and to the people who will personalize certificates and prepare the winner's book
- Send out letters to entrants encouraging attendance at gala
- Send out e-mails, invitations to entire club list encouraging attendance at gala
- Prepare press release announcing winners

Before Gala

- Prepare seating for gala
- Confirm guest count and any banquet/beverage arrangements
- Confirm A/V
- Pick up trophies/certificates
- Write gala script
- Meet with emcee to review script
- Make sure program and winner's book are prepared on time
- Print forms to reorder awards or upgrade from certificates to trophies or set up order forms on your local/district website
- Produce audio/visual presentation

After Gala

- Post winner information on website
- Send letters/e-mails to silver winners encouraging them to forward their entries to the district competition
- Advance winning entries in online software
- Prepare winning entries to send to district
- Send check to district to cover forwarding fees
- Send check to AAF to cover national fees for those entries paid by check to the club
- Send out press release announcing winners
- Send thank-you letters to everyone that helped
- Prepare financial report and recommendations for the board