

## **Grand Opening Assistance**

Make your grand opening an event with impact! Let the Roanoke Regional Small Business Development Center assist you with your business' Grand Opening Celebration.

We offer assistance during your planning process. We have a welcome banner, ceremonial scissors and ribbon for the ribbon cutting. In addition, we can provide you with a media and dignitary mailing list for your invitations and press releases.

Below, are tips and guidelines for planning a successful Grand Opening Celebration. If you would like to schedule an appointment to discuss your Grand Opening, call the Roanoke Regional SBDC at 983-0717, ext. 239.

### **Lay a strong foundation**

Your grand opening is the opening phase of your marketing program. Planning and consideration will be key to your long-term success. Your business should be up and operational for at least two weeks prior to your grand opening. This will give you time to polish your business and to work out any unforeseen problems. Think of this time as your dress rehearsal. After all, your grand opening is your stage to showcase your expertise. Every person in your audience is a potential customer and has the opportunity to influence others.

### **Set the date and time**

Set a date that is convenient to your customers, suppliers and others. If you are having a special guest or dignitary as part of the festivities, you need to determine that person's availability. In addition, you need to allow sufficient time to secure and deliver invitations as well as obtain other items and supplies necessary for the event.

### **Timing is everything**

Your grand opening should not compete with any other events. Check with civic, organizational and governmental calendars.

### **Consider the invitations**

It is suggested that you send traditional invitations. Contact your printer to determine the cost and turn around time for production. Ask your printer to provide samples and suggest appropriate wording. If you have a firm commitment from a dignitary to attend your grand opening and his/her presence will attract attendees, include that on the invitation. Your invitation may read, "The XYZ-Company invites you to join Councilman Everyperson in celebrating our grand opening on July 4." Invitations should be distributed at least two weeks in advance of the event.