



Great Trail Council, BSA Popcorn Sale

The Top Ten Responsibilities of a Unit Popcorn Kernel



**Even if you read nothing else...
Read This!**





First things first, get trained!

As the saying goes, if you've got 30 minutes to chop down a tree, spend the first 15 minutes sharpening the axe! Getting right at it may seem like a good idea at first glance, but figuring out what you want to do and how to do it first will pay off in the long run.

Personal coaching by your District Popcorn Chairman is a great way to get a fast start, especially if you missed the training session. Other resources are the Trail's End web site at www.trails-end.com. Click on "**Leaders**" then "**On Line Training**" where you'll find short videos on almost any topic you need. The videos are subdivided into "Scout Training, Leader Training & Special Features", and are great for both your Scouts and leaders to view. For information **specific to our council**, go to www.gtcbsa.org, and look under **Fundraising** where you'll find all the forms and information about our sale. Your District Popcorn Kernel and other popcorn personnel who can assist you are listed in the Popcorn Kernel Handbook and on our council website.



Create a budget and set youth & unit goals!

We know it sounds like loads of fun, but creating a budget will do several things for your effort.

It will tell you how much popcorn your unit needs to sell. It will tell you what goals to set for your Scouts. It will force you (not that any of us need forcing!) to create a calendar of events for a full year. It will spell out for the parents of your Scouts exactly what the financial needs of your unit are, and what it takes to meet them.

In short, creating a budget will get you organized for that "Ideal Year of Scouting" we keep talking about.

The very best method for creating your plan and budget is to take advantage of the Trail's End web site at www.trails-end.com, click on '**Virtual Sales Planner**' under My Tool Kit. You will be presented with a treasure trove of tools for creating your unit's annual calendar and budget.



Create your own unit prize package

In addition to the council and Trail's End prize program, develop your own Unit Prize Package that recognizes the weekly sales efforts of your Scouts. We have found that Scouts respond well to weekly incentives for their efforts. There are many good prize options available at the Scout Shop, or you can come up with your own. The type of plan that works best is to have a prize for the top seller or two in the pack/troop, the top seller in each den/patrol, and perhaps every member of the top selling den/patrol in the unit, as well as prizes for weekly sales efforts. This way you can get some positive competition going.

Another option that many of our units are beginning to incorporate is that of creating "Scout Accounts" which award a portion of the unit commission earned on any amount a Scout sells beyond his goal amount back to the Scout for unit Scouting activities. This way parents know that once their son has reached his goal, additional sales will go directly toward his Scouting activities with his unit, like summer camp, day camp, etc.



Have a super popcorn kickoff!

* www.Trails-End.com click on training videos—kickoff

Now that you know how much you'll need to sell to do all those things you've got down on paper, you need to communicate the plan to your Scouts, and just as importantly, to your Scouts' parents. This can all be done in one tremendous effort we call the Unit Popcorn Kickoff.

Putting some extra time and effort into this event will also pay off big in the long run. Having an event that is motivating, fun and challenging will set the tone for a great sale. You can find **a sample agenda for your kick-off on pages 9 & 10 of this guidebook**, and all the materials you'll need are in the "Kickoff in a Box" which you received at the Popcorn Kernel Kickoff.

The best way to hold a kickoff in Cub Scouting is to split your unit into Scouts and adults, where you discuss the blitz weekend & prize packages and role play with the Scouts, while you're discussing things like your unit budget and calendar with your parents and other leaders. Packs should hold their kickoff at their September pack meeting, and allot the last 30-45 minutes of the meeting for the presentation. That way if you run over a bit, you won't conflict with anything else that will be going on at this pack meeting.

Boy Scout troops should keep their Scouts and parents together to discuss prizes, goals and calendar items. Keeping your presentation to about 30-45 minutes will require you prepare ahead of time, and take advantage of handouts and the Trail's End on-line training modules.

Don't leave it to chance that parents will attend just because their son was supposed to tell them about it. Although we all know young people never forget to pass along information as important as this, the wise popcorn chairman takes out a little insurance by sending a letter or email home...and by creating additional reasons for parents to attend. Not that they wouldn't come in droves just to hear about why they should support the popcorn sale, but...having your meeting at a pack meeting or Court of Honor helps build your attendance.

A great popcorn kickoff, with lots of sizzle, door prizes and fun, is probably the single most important element to your unit popcorn sales effort.



Hold weekly report meetings

One way to increase your Scouts' efforts throughout the entire sales period is to publicize and hold weekly report meetings for your Scouts. Plan your unit prize package around offering recognition for Scouts who sell a certain amount during each week. Typically Scouts sell hard during the first week of the sale, then again during the last week to meet their goals. The best way to ensure they sell during the entire time is to recognize them for their efforts with a prize!

Publicize your sale! Let people in your neighborhoods, and especially your church and local businesses, know that you'll be selling, and why you're selling popcorn. Try to think of new and innovative ways to advertise your sale in your community. Don't forget to place your yard sign at your meeting location to help promote your sale.



Use Show & Deliver and Blitz Days in your sale!

You can enhance the popcorn sales in your unit by adding Show & Deliver and “Blitz Days” to your program.

For **Show & Deliver**, the Take Order form is carried door-to-door and filled out by the customer—just like Take Order. Then, after making the sale, the Scout offers to deliver on the spot. This method eliminates the need to make two visits for every sale because the product is readily available for purchase.

Blitz Days are another way to get all your Scout families involved in selling popcorn through a Unit activity. Blitz days are really just group style Show & Deliver sales.

To learn more, watch the Popcorn Sale Training Video DVD and the online videos at www.trails-end.com.

Any leftover product from your Show & Deliver sales can be used for the Take Order sale. Just reduce the amount that you order for the Take Order sale by what you have left on hand. Units have no risk of being stuck with additional product.



Enter popcorn and prize orders online

All **orders for popcorn** must be entered into the Trail’s End popcorn ordering system at www.trails-end.com. You will want to set up your unit page before the due date for orders.

Username and passwords were provided in your Kernel packet. If you did not receive one, call or email your District Executive or Lisa Lambert at the council office, 330-773-0415, Ext 241, or llambert@bsamail.com.

Once you have your user name and password go to www.trails-end.com and click on the Leaders tab, then click on “Popcorn System.” This will bring up your log-on screen.

Enter your ID and password from your Kernel packet mentioned in the paragraph above. The first time you log on, you will need to verify your email & password. This will take a few minutes and you will receive verification from Trail’s End.

You can then set up your unit page. You should download the help documents for popcorn ordering from the help tab of your home page. Make sure you read these instructions completely before you set up your unit site. As Unit Popcorn Chairman you’ll have many options concerning the use of this site. You may choose to grant access to individual adults responsible for a den or patrol so they can enter Scout’s names and popcorn orders (you can do this by entering their information under the “users” tab in the menu), or you may choose to enter all of your unit’s information yourself.

Once you have collected all of your Scouts take-order forms you can click on the “order form” tab next to each Scout’s name in the popcorn system. You have the choice of entering each Scouts total order on the first line of his on-line take order form or you may enter each customer on a separate line (very time consuming, but good for history purposes).

Once you have completed entering each Scout’s orders, and before you leave his take-order form, make sure to click in the “**approved**” box next to each order line item. Once all Scouts’ orders have been entered, the system will then calculate your total unit order. If you choose to allow individual den leaders or patrol Assistant Scoutmasters to manage their own group, make sure you review each take-order page and check the “**approved**” box.

***Ordering prizes**

Our council **prizes** are distributed from General Commercial Corporation. To place your prize orders go to their web site at www.boyscouts-gcc.com. If you are new to the site, you first must create a profile and login before any orders can be placed. Our Council ID is **433GTC** (as you see it in capital letters). Prizes will be sent directly to Unit leaders for distribution after final payment. If you need assistance, contact Lisa Lambert at the council office 330-773-0415 Ext 241, or llambert@bsamail.org.

The two important dates for ordering popcorn are:

Show & Deliver.....**Monday, September 19, 2011**

Take Order.....**Tuesday, November 1, 2011**

Orders are due in the Trail’s End popcorn system by 5:00 p.m. on these days.

Popcorn orders for the Show & Deliver sales are by **cases** only. This simplifies the product delivery for this sale. The Take Order sale is by **containers** so you only need to order what you exactly need with no leftover product.

Getting the Take Order Sale orders from all your Scouts is probably one of the most challenging feats of magic a Unit Popcorn Kernel will have to perform. Our suggestion on this topic is to inform your Scouts, regularly, that without their total order on your turn-in day, you cannot guarantee that they will get their popcorn.

Another great suggestion is to send out a letter to all leaders and parents of Scouts the week prior. Knowing exactly which Scouts in your Unit are selling will help you avoid that Scout coming up a week late and saying he has a \$500 order.

If you know who is selling and you don’t get all the needed orders, you can get on the phone and track them down. The most troublesome ones come from a Scout who you did not even know was selling. (This is another place where the weekly drawings can help you.) If you’ve got sales figures from a Scout for weekly drawings, and you don’t have a final order, it’s a sure bet that you’re missing an order.



Pickup day

Order pickup and distribution to your Scouts can be a crazy ordeal, or it can be fun. For most of us it’s a bit of both. The key is to be organized, patient, and determined to have a good time throughout the process.

Popcorn pickup day is Saturday, **October 1, 2011** for the Show & Deliver portion of the effort, and Saturday, **November 12, 2011** for the Take Order portion. The Unit Kernel’s Handbook and the council web site has the locations and maps for the pickup sites. For some districts, the Show & Deliver pickup location is different from the Take Order location.

Some Districts have scheduled their units for pickup times throughout the day, so make sure you contact your District Popcorn Kernel to get your assigned time.

You also need to determine your transportation needs to pickup your order. Make sure you have enough vehicles to handle your order. Use the chart on the next page to predict how many vehicles you need. Deduct 4–5 cases from the numbers shown for each passenger (kid, dog, etc.) who comes with the driver. The warehouse is busy and potentially dangerous. For safety reasons, please avoid bringing small children and pets.

The very best way to handle the pickup day process is as follows: Pickup your popcorn at the assigned time and location. Take it to your meeting or predetermined location.

Allow no orders to be picked up by individual Scouts, including leaders, until you have re-counted your order and broken it down into individual orders.

We can't recall the number of times that whole cases of popcorn have disappeared when Units try to just let individual Scouts pull their orders from the total unit amount. Something always happens by the time you get down to the last order or two. The only effective way to handle this is to break down your unit order into individual orders all at the same time, prior to letting the Scouts pick them up. Use the Scout packing slips printed from within your unit homepage of the popcorn ordering system. This way, if you come up short on an order, you can look back through all your orders and often can locate where the error occurred.

Now, and not before, is the time to allow Scouts and parents to come into the room to pickup and sign for their orders. Trust us on this one! Make sure you have a phone available to call those Scouts who inevitably don't show up to pick up their popcorn. Also, don't forget to include the Scouts' individual order forms with their orders. This is so they remember whom they sold it to! Include a money envelope and a sheet of paper outlining the money turn-in times.



Vehicle	Cases
Car	20-30
Minivan (rear seats out)	40-50
Panel van	100
Moving truck (12 foot)	200



It ain't over till it's over, but you're pretty darned close! The money turn-in process.

Monies for the Show & Deliver sales are due in the Council office by **November 1, 2011**. For the Take Order sale, payments are due by **December 5, 2011**. Please pay with one check only to; *Great Trail Council BSA, 1601 S. Main St. P.O. Box 68, Akron, OH 44309 0068.*

The amount due will be your total sales less your commission amount, which will be calculated on your unit page of the Trail's End popcorn ordering system following the placement of your order.

The window of time for Scouts to deliver their customers' popcorn, pickup the money and turn it in to you so you can turn it in to the Council office is limited. You essentially will have two weeks for delivery and money pick up. We suggest you set two dates for Scouts to turn in their money to you. That way, if any of your Scouts do not make a turn-in on the first date, you can officially panic and still have enough time to recover and check out the situation before the second turn-in date. (Just kidding!)

Seriously folks, the purpose of the first turn-in is to alert you to any problems. If a Scout does not turn in any money on the first date, there may be a issue, but you will still have time to solve it. Contact any Scouts in this group and talk to their parents to find out if there is a problem with the delivery.

Units only have to turn in the amount due to the council, and may retain their unit commission amount, thus making it easier to settle on time and to cover Scouts who are late with their collections.



Is this really it? Prizes, prizes and more prizes!

Once your Scouts have turned in all their money, the only thing you'll have left is the fun stuff...passing out prizes!

Council Prizes. All Scouts who sell even one container of popcorn will receive a Popcorn participation patch. Scouts who sell \$100 or more will have the option of choosing a prize, or camping certificate, from a selection of several in fourteen graduated levels from \$100 to \$3,500 and more in "Rock Your Sales" or "Bust A Move" prize brochure. General Commercial Corp administers the prize program for our Council. To receive these prizes, we only ask that you have entered the prizes into their online ordering system at www.boyscouts-gcc.com by **November 1, 2011**. This is the same date that the popcorn orders are due in the Trail's End popcorn system. Prizes and patches will be mailed directly to the person listed in the ordering system, for distribution at a unit meeting.

Scouts who have **sold \$600 or more in popcorn** during the sale get to participate in the **BSA Q For a Day**, plus watch the **Lake Erie Monsters** take the ice at Quicken Loans Arena! They will also receive (with a purchase of 1 ticket) a free ticket to a **Cleveland Indians** game, a **Cleveland Cavaliers** game, a **Cleveland Gladiators** game, (Go to www.theqarena.com/boyscouts), a **Zyclone**, and a certificate and patch from Trail's End. This is in addition to the prizes from the "Rock Your Sales" & "Bust A Move" prize brochures. *See the Great Trail Council special \$600 Club for additional information and ticket qualifers.*

Any Scout who sells **\$1,000** or more of popcorn in the Trail's End Sale will qualify for **VIP University of Akron Football Day** and will be in a drawing to **win a guitar**.

Your last responsibility will be to make sure that:

1. Any Scouts in your unit who sold **\$1,500** or more in popcorn also turn in an application for the Trail's End additional \$50 gift card prize program.
2. Any Scouts who sold **\$2,500** or more also turn in an application for the Scholarship Program.

You can find applications for Trail's End prizes and Scholarship Program at www.trails-end.com. Turn these applications into the council office by **November 1, 2011**.

The take-order process to the money collection phase

A guide for leaders

1. Make sure the parents of your Scouts take responsibility for their son's orders. You may wish to prepare a short permission slip, indicating that parents know and approve of his participating in the sale, and have each parent sign it.
2. Insist on complete information on take order forms. Tell your Scouts you will not place orders for customers unless they have full name, address and phone number on their forms. **Also have them list their choice of prizes from the Great Trail Council prize brochure on the bottom of their Take Order Form before turning it in to you for processing.**
3. Before you transfer your Scouts Take Order form information to your unit page on the Trail's End web site, make a photo copy of their Take Order form and keep it in a safe place for the inevitable, "I lost my Take Order form and don't remember who I sold all this popcorn to," situation!
4. Set your order collection meeting (or time) several days prior to when your unit's order is due to the council so you'll have time to chase down the Scout or two who forgets and does something silly like goes on vacation or gets sick. We suggest having your regular meeting night on the last week in October as your order & prize selection turn in night.
5. During the popcorn delivery and money collection phase of the sale, make sure parents are once again present to pick up popcorn and take responsibility for it. **Never allow Scouts to take popcorn without having an adult initial a copy of their son's Scout packing slip indicating the amount of popcorn they are receiving.** Keep the initialed copy and give them an additional copy. This is the time to give out the money envelopes. Remember, Scouts should never collect money before they deliver the products.
6. Set regular money collection meetings and receipt any and all transactions so there are no questions about what's been turned in and when it was turned in.
7. Once again, set your final date for all money to be turned in several days prior to the council date so you won't be caught short.



How to conduct a 30-45 minute Cub Scout Pack Popcorn Kickoff

*www.Trails-End.com click on leaders—click on videos

Hey, what about Boy Scout troops & Venture crews? Well, this applies to them as well, except that you'll keep your Boy Scouts, parents and leaders together instead of splitting them into two groups.

For most of us the popcorn kickoff will have to be held during the first pack meeting of the season, which means you've got lots of things that will be going on – like welcoming new Cubs – that will make your pack meeting time very valuable. And that's the reason we developed the 30-45 minute kickoff. So save the last 30-45 minutes of your pack meeting for the popcorn kickoff, and with any luck you'll have gotten your new Cubs linked up with their dens so they won't miss out on the popcorn sale information. This will also close your meeting out with snacks and some excitement, and leave time after the meeting if parents have questions.

The key to a successful 30-45 minute popcorn kickoff is preparation before the event. By preparing packets for your den leaders/patrol leaders you can skip a lot of topics that would otherwise need to be covered and get them taken care of through handouts. This will allow you to concentrate on prizes, sales techniques and the fun stuff!

Your den leader/patrol leader packets should contain the following items for each Scout, plus a few extras. Make sure you don't skip any of these items.

- **Family Guide with Take-Order Forms & Prize Package Brochure:** All registered Scouts received one of these in the mail. You will have enough to give a copy to every new Scout and returning Scouts who misplaced theirs.
- **Parent Handout - Popcorn Sale Information Flyer:** This is a great customizable handout that you can access at www.trails-end.com. You can type in the information that pertains to your pack, like unit & youth goals, important dates, etc., and print one off, then make additional copies for all your families.
- **Council \$600 Club Handout:** This sheet will tell your Scouts about the BSA Q For a Day, and the free tickets for the Monsters, Indians, and Cavaliers games. This handout is available on our council website www.gtcbasa.org under the "Fundraising" tab.
- **Unit Prize Package Information:** Don't forget to put down in writing any unit prize offerings so your Scouts will know about any additional unit prizes they can earn.

Next you're going to need some adult help with your presentation to fill the following positions:

- **Goodies Person** to pop some popcorn and pour drinks. Their responsibilities will be pretty self explanatory. Just make sure you've got popcorn popped and in cups or bags of some sort, and that you've got drinks ready too. When the popcorn presentation starts your Unit Popcorn Chairman will direct the Cubs and parents to pick up a bag/cup of popcorn and a drink and be seated.
- **Youth Presentation Person** to take the boys aside to talk about prizes and sales technique. That person's responsibilities will be to cover essentially three things that the boys need to know.
 1. **What prizes are available for Scouts** (go over the Council Prize Brochure and the Council \$600 Club Flyer).
 2. **How to sell** (role play what a Cub should say when they knock on a door. "Hi, I'm _____ with pack _____ and we're selling popcorn to help raise money to go to camp (or other project). Will you help support us by buying some popcorn?")

- 3. What the unit and youth goal is and how important it is that each of them try to achieve their goal.** Heck, promise them you'll take a pie in the face if they achieve their goal, or think up something fun and original!

If you end up with additional time you can go over dates, etc, but they'll have that in a handout, and the youth meeting should be high energy and fun. They should leave ready to go sell!

- **Adult Presentation Person** to cover the boring stuff with moms and dads. Things like what the money will be spent for, what their sons will get out of the sale, etc. Have enough of the Unit Popcorn Sale Information Flyers to pass one of these out to each family as well. That way your Cubs have one and their parents will too. You'll need to cover:
 - 1. What's in it for their sons.** Cover the Council Prize Brochure and the Council \$600 Club Flyer.
 - 2. What the unit and youth goals are, and what your unit will do with the money that is raised.** Go over the Unit Popcorn Sale Information Flyer and tell them about specific projects and activities that the popcorn money funds.
 - 3. What the time frame is and when things are due.**
 - 4. What resources are available to their son and themselves to learn more about the sale.** Have the Trail's End & Council web site addresses listed on your handouts, and specifically tell them about the online video training modules on the leader's page of the Trail's End site. If you have any time left just be prepared to answer questions. The Unit Popcorn Chairman should probably be the one who covers the adult presentation.

Special Note for Boy Scout Troops & Venture crews: Your kickoff should be a bit easier than a Cub Scout Pack kickoff, in that you'll be keeping your Scouts, parents and other leaders together for the presentation. The element that will need to be covered a bit more in depth is that of Scout Accounts and/ or your Unit Prize Package.

So here it is in a nutshell: Keep it simple - make it fun!

- **Prepare in advance.** Pass out packets at the beginning of your presentation. Have popcorn, drinks, balloons and door prizes/giveaways.
- **For Scout presentation cover:**
 - Council \$600 Club Flyer, council prizes, Trail's End and unit prize packages.
 - How to sell. Talk about uniforms, safety and courtesy. Role play if you have time.
 - What unit & youth goals are and why it's important to achieve them. Tell them what the unit will do with its share of the profits.
- **For parent presentation cover:**
 - What's in it for their sons. Council \$600 Club Flyer, council prizes, Trail's End and unit prize packages.
 - What unit & youth goals are and what the unit will do with the money.
 - What they should do and when to do it. Cover the calendar.
 - How to get more information about the sale.

