

GUIDE TO HALLOWEEN NIGHT

The California Academy of Mathematics and Science (CAMS) Robotics Team 687's most successful, annual fundraiser is Halloween Night – an event held for CAMS students. Halloween Night offers attendees refreshments, as well as activities such as video games, a movie, and our renowned haunted maze. Halloween Night has demonstrated to be a popular event, shown by the increasing amount of revenue. In fact, the CAMS Robotics team has recorded increased revenue from the event for the past four years. Furthermore, the event had, approximately, an increase of 29% of attendance in 2009 from its original attendance in 2005. The success of the fundraiser comes from the behind the scenes planning which makes the fundraiser run smoothly. The CAMS Robotics Administration team is split into subgroups which focus on one of the four main attractions of Halloween Night: Publicity, Movie/Video Games, Food, and Maze/Attraction committees. The subgroups prove to be an efficient way to run Halloween Night. The success of Halloween Night continues to rise with its growing popularity, setting the expectations and standards for future members extremely high.

In order to keep Halloween Night successful, the CAMS Robotics Team published the Guide to Halloween Night. This manual will show new members how to run Halloween Night, with examples from previous years, as well as giving tips on how to make it even more successful. In addition, we hope to share our knowledge with other FIRST teams, so that they may create and host their own successful themed-event.

Good Luck!

Team 687, the NerdHerd

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PUBLICITY committee

From small half-sheet paper pamphlets to huge banners that cover an entire building wall, every fundraiser needs publicity - this is where the publicity committee comes in. Not only is the publicity committee in charge of making posters, it is responsible for all the artistic aspects that transform the California Academy of Math and Science into Halloween Night. **LET'S PAINT THE TOWN!**

Creating a Theme

The first thing the publicity committee should do is to decide on an overall theme for your event. Whether it is an extraterrestrial theme or a zombie theme, the options are endless. However, be careful not to choose a theme that is too detailed or specific. The theme will affect not only the Halloween Night atmosphere, but the posters and tickets as well.



For the 2009 Halloween Night, Team 687 introduced their first themed Halloween Night – Carnival of Carnage. Team 687's event aimed to be a deserted carnival with evil creatures, such as an evil clown, creeping through the maze. Not only were the posters and tickets based on the Carnival of Carnage, the promotional video gave the theme a story and background.

Promotional Video

By uploading a promotional video of your event on popular websites such as Youtube, Facebook, and Twitter, you can network even further than just your school. Criteria for the video include:

- A time period of 45 seconds to 3 minutes
- An appropriate storyline that introduces the event
- The time, date, and price of event

Making Posters

Effective posters, fliers, and signs display relevant event information that convinces the community to attend. For Halloween Night, the CAMS Robotics team designs all the flyers and signs by using Adobe Illustrator, a graphic design program. For larger posters, big, bold, and colorful lettering is crucial to

attract attention. You may be asking, “What do I need on the poster?” Here is the following you should put on posters and flyers:

- Event title
- Who the event is supported/ sponsored by
- Where, when, and what time the event is taking place
- Relevant, Colorful pictures that grab a person’s attention

Place posters in the location where the target consumers will be. For Halloween Night, target consumers are CAMS students. Consequently, posters should be placed around the campus. In campus areas that have the most student traffic, a period of three weeks to one month preceding the event should have advertisement of Halloween Night. Remember that making posters is the fun part!



It is also wise to create one, huge poster that can be seen from across the campus. For the 2009 Halloween Night, Team 687 created a hand-painted banner that stretched from edge to edge on one of the building’s wall. As an attention getter, the Administration team painted a large-scale scary clown to publicize the event.

Creating Tickets

Tickets are designed on the computer using Adobe Illustrator to print hundreds of tickets. The tickets need to:

- Be small, yet legible (the size of a credit card)
- Show the location, place, event, and time
- Be on a colored background using thick, construction paper
- Have numbers on the back to calculate projected revenue (in non-erasable pen/marker).

- Adherent to the Halloween theme (For example: colors orange and black, pictures of ghosts, etc.)



Make tickets so that they cannot be duplicated. A very easy way to prevent duplication of tickets is to use any permanent marker and write ticket numbers. After creating tickets, you need to know how many tickets to print.

Here are some facts to estimate the amount of tickets needed for the event: 74% of the CAMS population, or 440 people, attended Halloween Night during the 2008 Halloween Night. However, because of the economic recession, attendance for the 2009 Halloween Night dropped to about 47% of CAMS students attending Halloween Night. It is wise to print out at least 500 tickets for the upcoming Halloween Night.

Setting Prices

Prices determine the revenue made from Halloween Night. You want to set two types of prices:

- Pre-sale, cheaper for those who buy tickets in advance
- At-the-door, it is sold on the day of Halloween Night

Although prices are traditionally \$5 pre-sale and \$7.50 at-the-door, during the 2009 Halloween Night, Team 687 made a financially strategic strategy to increase prices by 50%. Because of this move, revenue increased by more than \$1,000. The goal of the 2010 Halloween Night for Team 687 is to raise \$4,000 in revenue.

MOVIE & VIDEO GAMES committee

The movie and video games committee is dedicated for the entertainment section of Halloween Night. If you have an interest in video games and movies, then you should consider being on this committee. Good communication skills and general knowledge of video games and movies are a must for any member in this committee. **GAME ON!**

Showing a Movie

By showing a movie, you will create a greater incentive for people to attend your event. Instead of going to a movie theater, attendees can find a cheaper alternative at Halloween Night. However, your movie must fit the following constraints:

- Have either two 2-hour movies, or 1 movie with short movies to follow
- Has an MPAA rating of PG-13 or lower
- A movie that someone already owns

For the 2009 Halloween Night, the movie and video game committee chose to play Transformers 2: Revenge of the Fallen because it fits all the constraints. The committee also chose to run short sequences of ghost/paranormal films to fit the theme of Halloween Night.

Video Game Planning

Video games not only attract “gamers” to Halloween Night, but also those looking for electronic entertainment. Similar to deciding on a movie, there are constraints when deciding what video games to choose:

- “T for teen” rating or lower (to abide by school rules)
- Multiplayer highly recommended (more players)
- Must be well-known (people will not want to play a video game they are not familiar with)

For Halloween Night 2009, for example, we chose was Super Smash Brothers Brawl and Mario Kart for the Nintendo Wii, and Rockband for the Xbox 360.

While selecting video games are extremely important, the consoles you pick are also important since they affect the games that will be played. Consider choosing consoles that have been released as recent as possible. For example, people would rather play the Nintendo Wii than the outdated Nintendo Gamecube. Ethernet cords are also a must for consoles that can hook up to each other to create multiplayer games up to 16 people at one time.

Contacting Teachers & Donators

Ultimately, important factors that determine the committee's success are the video game and console lenders and teachers. For the 2009 Halloween Night, Mr. Marquez and Mr. Almeida let Team 687 borrow their double room for the video game section, while Ms. Cerrahoglu let us borrow her room for the movie room. A good time to ask those teachers would be at no later than three weeks prior to the event.

Projectors and TVs are also important to get, as the projector is used for the movie and the TVs are used for the video games. You do not need to worry about the projector, as most schools have projector available for use. TVs, however, are much harder to get. Please ask school staff about obtaining televisions. If you are nice and responsible, they will let you borrow it for the night. Remember: all teachers like a couple weeks' notice.

Lastly, decided what consoles and video games are the biggest draws for potential Halloween Night attendees. Ask around to get a feel for what games students would like to play. If you do get people to volunteer their consoles, controllers, and/or video games, please tell them to write their names on the back!

Food committee

Like food? Every fundraiser needs to sell food to keep their attendees' stomach full and happy! Every member of the food committee must have organization and communication skills. If you are inherently organized and can talk to adults easily, then the food committee is the best committee for you. **LET'S EAT!**

Donations

Everything costs money except for donations! As a food committee member, you have to make sure that all necessary food and drinks are available for sale at Halloween Night. However, PTSO, one of CAMS Team 687's many sponsors, donates their time, effort, and money to guarantee Halloween Night's growth in popularity and profitability. Members of PTSO will act as room supervisors, runners (those who buy items on call), and food donors.

For the past few years, Mrs. Badakhasian, a fellow PTSO and CAMS mother, has donated food to help Halloween Night run smoothly. For the 200 Halloween Night, she bought and picked up our order of Lomeli's pasta that cost more than \$400. Because of her profound generosity, CAMS Robotics made 100% revenue from the pasta.

The success of donations is possible due to communication between CAMS Robotics and its sponsors. To ensure that donations are final, the food committee member must do the following:

- Ensure that both you and the donator know what he/she is contributing, the time of the pickup, and cost for reimbursement.
- Maintain communication through phone calls, emails, fax, etc.
- Thank the donator! Remember that he/she willingly donated items.

Utensils & Supplies

Imagine a person who confronts you, wanting to buy a pumpkin pie. When you serve it, there's no pie cutter! Various supplies such as food utensils are essential for Halloween Night. However, you may question, "What do I buy?" "How much do I buy?" "Where do I buy all the items?"

First, you separate the purchases into two sections, one for food and one for items such as plates and forks. Your group must brainstorm ideas of what foods to sell and consider their potential profit. For example:

- Lomeli's Pasta (selected)
- Pizza Hut Cheese and Pepperoni Pizza (selected)

- Ice Cream
- Pumpkin Pie (selected)
- Soda, Water Juices, and Chips (selected)
- Candy

As a group, you decide must consider the costs of the items you want to buy. When predicting the purchasing quantity, you must talk to Tickets and Advertising Committee to know the event's expected attendance.

Once all food selections are agreed upon, your food committee group will decide who will pick up the food at what specific time.

Shifts

To have organized, efficient shifts, you must do the following:

- Make sure you know who can work at certain times (For example, Jon Mitsui had a cross-country meet that day so he could not work the later hours. It was important that Jon told the rest of his committee so others can take the earlier shifts).
- Make 20 minute, 30 minute, or one hour shifts.
- Give copies of the shift list to all volunteers.

Setting Prices

Another task is to determine strategic prices for foods. Create a price range that is affordable, yet profitable. Making a budget helps determine the price to sell foods and drinks. As aforementioned, it is wise to make a list of necessary items and state who is buying each item.

MAZE & ATTRACTION committee

The maze is the most eminent “attraction” Halloween Night has to offer. It is filled with volunteer monsters, creepy smog, and random lights. Though the maze committee requires the most work, Administration leaders and chairmen often see maze committee members as future leaders based on their commitment and hard work demanded by the maze. If you are interested at what the maze has to offer, then joining the maze committee would be a smart choice to make.
DON'T GET LOST!

Building the Maze

Building the maze is the most difficult task for Halloween Night. Though it sounds impossible, taking little steps will be more efficient than trying to build a maze all at once.

First, have each group member create a rough sketch of what the maze would look like. Both Mr. Gonzales' and Mr. Harder's room will be used for the maze which also includes the small conference room in between. Keep the maze short, but long enough for people to get scared multiple times. If it is too long of a maze, people will get bored; however, if it is too short, people will feel cheated and will not come back next year. Once a sketch is finalized, make a list of the items and decorations that will be used in the maze. Common machines used for the maze is the fog machine and light machine. After, ask for volunteers and make a shift list (both explained later). Allow about two weeks in advance to plan for Halloween Night. Once Halloween Nights approaches, confirm the sketch, decorations, and volunteers.

The Thursday and Friday of Halloween Night will be the most important days for the maze committee. With permission from both Mr. Harder and Mr. Gonzales, the maze committee should have the maze set up by Thursday leaving Friday to finalize the maze.

Volunteers & Making a Shift List

The success of the maze depends heavily on its volunteers. There are always students from the CAMS Robotics Team willing to dress up as monsters. However, the volunteers do not have to be Robotics members.

By making a shift list, volunteers should keep their assigned task for a certain period of time. Shifts should usually be 20 to 40 minute intervals, with the exception of the volunteers who are monsters. Seeing the "monsters" come out of the maze will reduce the scare factor that the maze has been known to offer.

The Attractions

Although Halloween Night has video games, a movie, food, and the haunted maze to offer attendees, Team 687 likes to add another attraction to entertain even the most critical attendees.

Because adding an attraction is not only new to the audience, but to the team, organizational skills and commitment are important to have. Unlike the movie and video game choices, the maze and attraction have free range within reason.

For the 2009 Halloween Night, Team 687 did a pie-throwing contest as the attraction. The real appeal came from the opportunity to pie teachers and well known students from CAMS.

