Salon Community Event Planning Checklist

In Episode 67 of Marketing 100 on The Salon Business Show, Mack from yellow salon shared how community events transformed their business into a neighborhood fixture. This checklist helps you create meaningful local connections that attract ideal clients and build your brand.

PHASE 1: CONCEPT (6-8 Weeks Before)

STEP 1: Define Your Purpose

Choose one primary goal:

- Client appreciation event
- New client acquisition
- Local visibility building
- Cause/charity support
- Team bonding experience

Action: Write a single sentence that completes "This event will be successful if..." Keep this purpose statement visible during all planning to prevent scope creep. Share it with your team to ensure everyone understands exactly what you're trying to achieve.

STEP 2: Know Your Audience

Who exactly should attend? Consider:

- Existing clients with friend potential
- Specific neighborhood residents
- People with aligned interests/values
- Local influence-makers

Action: Create a simple one-page profile of your ideal attendee. Include their interests, values, and what would make this event unmissable for them. Use this profile when making decisions about venue, timing, and activities to ensure everything appeals to this specific audience.

STEP 3: Spark Event Ideas

🔑 **MACK'S TIP:** "The event must genuinely excite your team or it won't feel authentic."

Brainstorm concepts that:

- Reflect your salon's unique personality
- Would appeal to your ideal clients
- Could involve a complementary local business
- Feel organic, not forced or overly promotional

Action: Hold a 30-minute brainstorming session with your team. Present 3-5 initial ideas and gauge their genuine reactions. Pay attention to which concept naturally generates the most conversation and enthusiasm. Don't force an idea that doesn't spark genuine excitement.

STEP 4: Set Clear Goals

Create 1-2 specific, measurable targets:

- "Connect with 15 potential clients from Riverdale"
- "Generate 25 social media tags/mentions"
- "Raise $500 for the local animal shelter"

Action: Create a simple tracking method for each goal. This might be a guest sign-in sheet, a social media monitoring plan, or a fundraising tracker. Determine how you'll measure success and who will be responsible for tracking these metrics during and after the event.

PHASE 2: PLANNING (4-6 Weeks Before)

STEP 5: Find Perfect Partners

- Identify 3-5 businesses sharing your audience
- Research their values and aesthetic alignment
- Create a simple one-page partnership proposal
- Make initial contact (use Partnership Starter Kit)

Action: Visit potential partners as a customer before approaching them. Experience their business firsthand, just as Mack did with the Portland Pickles game. Notice their clientele, atmosphere, and service style to confirm they're a good fit before making your pitch.

STEP 6: Lock Down Logistics

- Confirm date, time, location
- Create a simple hour-by-hour timeline
- Determine refreshments/activities
- Check permit requirements
- Assign team member responsibilities

Action: Create a single master document with all logistics details. Include contact information for all vendors and partners, exact timeline, supply lists, and team assignments. Share this with everyone involved and keep a printed copy on hand during the event for quick reference.

PHASE 3: PROMOTION (2-4 Weeks Before)

STEP 7: Craft Your Message

Focus on the experience, not just details:

- What attendees will feel/enjoy
- The connections they'll make
- Why this fits their interests/values

Action: Draft three versions of your event description: a 25-word elevator pitch, a 50-word social media description, and a 100-word email version. Test these with a few trusted clients for feedback before finalizing. Ensure each version emphasizes benefits over features.

STEP 8: Spread the Word

Choose 3-4 primary channels:

- In-salon conversations (most effective!)
- Targeted emails to relevant client segments
- Social media posts/stories (with partner tags)
- Partner cross-promotion
- Simple in-salon signage

💡 **QUICK WIN:** Create a simple event hashtag all partners can use

Action: Create a mini promotion calendar with exactly what will be posted/sent where and when. Include sample scripts for stylists to use when mentioning the event to clients. Schedule posts in advance where possible, and confirm cross-promotion plans with partners in writing.

PHASE 4: FINAL PREP (1 Week Before)

STEP 9: Confirm All Details

- Send final confirmations to partners/vendors
- Brief your team on roles and talking points
- Prepare a welcome area plan
- Gather all supplies and signage
- Send reminder to registered attendees

Action: Create a final pre-event checklist and assign someone to be your day-of coordinator. This person should be detail-oriented and able to handle last-minute issues so you can focus on connecting with guests. Review this checklist together 48 hours before the event.

STEP 10: Plan Connection Points

Design 2-3 specific ways to facilitate interaction:

- Conversation starter questions for team
- Simple ice-breaker activity
- Strategic introductions between guests

Action: Brief your team on specific people they should connect with or introduce to others. Create a small card with 3-5 conversation starters they can reference if needed. Practice these interactions in a quick role-play during your pre-event team meeting.

PHASE 5: EVENT DAY

STEP 11: Create the Experience

- Arrive 90+ minutes early for setup
- Hold quick team energy huddle

- Focus on genuine welcomes
- Actively make introductions
- Capture authentic moments (photos/video)
- Be fully present with guests

🔑 **MACK'S TIP:** "The main goal is for people to have a good time and feel that we're part of it."

Action: Designate yourself as the primary "connector" during the event. Set a goal to personally welcome each guest and make at least 10 specific introductions between people who should meet. Assign someone else to handle logistical issues so you can focus on being present and building relationships.

PHASE 6: FOLLOW-UP (1-7 Days After)

STEP 12: Maximize Momentum

- Send personalized thanks to partners
- Share photo highlights on social
- Follow up with new contacts
- Debrief with team
- Plan your next community connection

Action: Schedule a specific time for follow-up activities within 48 hours of your event. Create templates for thank-you messages but personalize each one with a specific detail or highlight. For new contacts, include a clear, low-pressure next step like "We'd love to see you at the salon - mention this event for a complimentary scalp treatment with your first service."

Success Checklist:

✓ Created an authentic experience aligned with your brand
✓ Connected with potential clients who share your values
✓ Strengthened local partnerships for future collaboration
✓ Generated social proof through photos/mentions

Looking for more strategies and resources? Check out the rest of our Marketing 100 series.