Race Director Handbook

Appalachian Timing Group LLC

APTiming.com

Abstract

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1 How to Use This Guide

Awesome races need clear communication and cooperation among the race director, timing company, vendors, governement authorities, traffic control, and participants. This guide is created to help aid in facilitating that needed communication. This guide is intended to provide ideas, guidance, and a basic framework for thinking about your event. Let your own imagination and creatitivty run wild. The Appalachian Timing Group will proudly do what it can to support your ideas.

This is not a legal document and does not directly impart responsibility on any person or organization. It is to be considered as an informational resource only.

Please do not hesitate to contact The Applachian Timing Group directly using the contact information below:

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2 Our Services

2.1 What we bring to your event

With the Appalachian Timing Group, every race is treated the same. Each race receives top quality service from our friendly team, at very reasonable rates. The only differences are based on which package your race selected. The items listed are what we bring to EVERY event. For a full list of our services and prices please refer to our pricing guide.

I Online Registration (perferably on RunSignUp.com)

II Listed as an upcoming event on our calendar and homepage

III Chp Timing (utilizing MyLaps)

IV PA System (music playing and announcing)

V Finish Line Clock (Single or Double Sided)

VI Finish Line Structure (Finish Flags or APTiming Arch)

VII Personal sufficient to operate our systems and manage our equipment

VIII Race Day Registration (we ask for Volunteers to help with Registration/ Packet Pickup)

2.2 What Our Team Does Race Morning

It is important to remember that The Appalachian Timing Group has a lot to prepare for your race. We setup equipment, check systems, and enter race day registrations just to name a few. Unless otherwise agreed upon, you will be responsible for providing enough people to run the registration table, guide participants on the course, man the water stations, etc.

The Appalachian Timing Group Crews are well dressed, professional, and friendly at all times. We are used to the stress of race day and view it as our responsibility to help you manage those stresses. If you have any concerns on race day, please be sure to communicate these with our team. It is likely something that they have encoutered a situation like yours in the past.

2.3 Bib/Chip Preparation and Delievery

I The Appalachian Timing Group provides bibs (for a small fee), with the chip attached at the time that is agreed upon (packet pickup or race day).

II All Pre-Registered Participants have bibs with labels on them with the participants name, shirt size, age, and gender. This helps ensure everyone's information is entered into the system correctly. Additional information can be added to these labels at the request of the director.

III The timing chips that The Appalachian Timing Group uses are disposable, and therefore, do not need to be collected at the end of the race.

2.4 Event Marketing

The Appalachian Timing Group provides a great deal of intellectual support regarding growing participation and improving the overall experience for your participants. We have been timing for many years and have a great markerting system that will help promote your event!

I We use RunSignUp.com as our registration platform (coupon codes, teams, unique fields, course maps, live results, etc.). If you need help setting this up, we are more than glad to help!

II The Appalachian Timing Group provides each race it's own race page where you can post information, pictures, videos, etc.

III In race season, we send out a weekly newsletter that lists all of our upcoming events. This tactful and elegant email system is designed to help keep the running community up to date with races in our area (applicable to Silver and Gold Packages).

IV Optional Pre-Race Email. After we assign the bib numbers and prep your bibs, we will e-mail all registered participants providing race day details. You will have an opportunity to review and make changes to this email in advance.

V Optional Post-Race Email. Within a few hours of the completion of the event, we will send out a follow-up email similar to the pre-race email that contains links to the results, pictures, and finish line video. And a thank you to your sponsors if a list is provided to us.

2.5 What APTiming is typically not responsible for

It is important to understand our role in helping you produce your event. Timing a race is a difficult and intellectually challenging task and we focus on getting results right before all else. There are some things that we typically do not do unless specific arrangements are made othewise:

I We are NOT the Race Director nor are we we able to be hired to direct your event. This means that you will always ultimately be responsible for a safe, fun, and efficient event.

II Our focus is on Race Results (timing). We can provide guidance regarding volunteers, visual improvements, branding, and sponsor delieverables but are not ultimately responsible for these items on race day.

III We are not an equipment rental company. If you need tables, chairs, port-a-potties, lighting, power generation, etc. there are numerous resoucrces in your area for procuring what you need. We are happy to work alongside you and your organization to help you rent what your race requires.

3 Your Responsibilites as Race Director

I Volunteers.

It is a good policy to always overestimate the number of people you will need on race day. We recommend having 3 people per 75 race day registrations expected, 2 people for awards, 3 people for course preparation, and 1 person for each turn along the course. You can also create a volunteer committee and appoint captains to certain jobs (registration, sponsors, course, finish line, aid stations, awards, refreshments).

II Safety

III Event marketing

IV Registration and Packet Pickup

V Course Planning

VI Insurance

VII Communicating with the authorities

VIII Permitting

IX Non-Timing related equipment

3.1 Race Information

When you put on a race, please gather the following information (this is VERY useful information that we recommend putting on your race application/brochure/online registration.

I Race Date and Starting Time

II Race Distance - listing all events

III Start and Finish Site(s), Directions, and Parking Information

IV Course Description and Map

V Race Certification (if applicable)

VI Age Groups/Awards (list all age groups)

VII Awards/Prizes (with depth in each category)

VIII Team Categories (if applicable)

IX Time/Location of Awards Ceremony

X Shirt and Race Swag (with limits)

XI Packet Pickup

XII Race Contact Information - Address/Email/Phone Number

XIII Entry Fee (make sure to put NONREFUNDABLE), entry deadline, check payable to

XIV Race Day Proceudres

XV Mailing Address

XVI Race Limit - if applicable

XVII Refreshments and clinics at your race

3.2 Race Application

We strongly encourage you to solely use online registration for your pre-registration. However, you will still need a race application for race day sign-ups. Be sure to create a form that asks for:

I Name, Address (Street, City, State, Zip), Telephone, Email

II Age and Gender

III Shirt Size

IV If applicable - special categories/teams/clubs/estimated finish time

V Signature (parent or duardian if under 18) acknowledging Waiver of Liability

3.3 Promotion

Promote your race with help of the following methods:

I Distribution of entry forms through mailing, at running stores, gyms, and other races

II Posters/Banners/Flyers throughout town

III Press announcements to local newspapers, running magazines, APTiming.com (advertisements)

IV Running Magazines

V Television/Radio Public Service Accouncements

VI Press Releases

For help in creating banners, forms, or a race logo - please contact us!

4 Race Budgeting

4.1 Revenue

I Think carefully about how much you are charging participants. Keeping in mind that you are putting a great deal of effort into your event and do not underestimate a participant's willingness to support your cause.

II Charging too little for your event can lead to difficulty in earning enough revenue to meet your budget.

III Likewise, charging a large amount for your race will lead participants to expect a greater level of service including better swag and food.

4.2 Variable Expenses - expenses incurred per particiapnt

I Bib, Chip, Medal, Shirt, Food.

II Be sure to match your registration fee with the level of serve you plan to provide. Higher registration fees typically lead participants to expect more from your event but also communicates a greater level of quality.

4.3 Fixed Expenses - expenses incurred regardless of the number of participants

I Tables, Tents, Printing, Awards, Advertisement, Permits, Timing

II Keep in mind that the location of your race can greatly impact the fixed costs you will incur.

4.4 Residual Income

I Sponsors can often be as, if not more, important revenue earned from registrations.

II Consider contacting other race directors to join forces. Earn an extra few hundred dollars by offering to place marketing materials for their race into your pre-race swag bag.

III Consider offering food trucks or brewing companies the opportunites to sell their wares near the finish line in return for a percentage of their revenue.

5 Event Management, Techniques, and Ideas

5.1 Awards

I It is better to do one thing well than several things poorly

II Be clever- Bandannas, Ribbons, Handmade items, and many other creative ideas are much less expensive than customized finisher medals or other tradiional awards (trophies/plaques) and often have a superior emotional effect.

5.2 Shirts

I The one thing that almost every race offers is an AWESOME Race T-Shirt. However, you also have the option of having a lower registration fee and making the T-Shirt optional for an additional cost.

5.3 Course Planning

I The course matters. Runners like knowing the course is accurate and well marked. Be sure to reduce sharp turns, dedicate at least one volunteer to each turn, and make sure the course is marked clearly for your participants.

II Signage and Cones. City courses can often require a significant amount of road signage and safety cones. Be sure to work with local authorites to determine their requirements for street closure signage.

5.4 Race Day

It is important to have everything organized and ready to go on Race Morning. Always plan to be there earlier than expected because you never know what might pop up.

I Signs Posted - Where Registration Is, Maps, Restrooms

II Pre-Registered Runners (entry list printed, number pickup, packet pickup, enough volunteers)

III Race Day Runners (entry forms, pens, cash box, race numbers/pins)

IV Notify your officials (police/course volunetters)

V If you have a Photographer, please inform where you would like the pictures taken

VI Start/Finish Line in Place (handled by the Appalachian Timing Group)

VII Water Stations/Aid Stations along the course

VIII Refreshment Section for after the race (trash bags)

5.5 Post Race

Although the race is complete, the post race duties are just as important!

I Cleanup the race site (course, start/finish, bathrooms). Leave it as you found it.

II Press releases with results (provided by The Appalachian Timing Group)

III Post race stories/photos to press - gets the word out for next year!

IV Thank you to sponsors, volunteers, contributors, municipalities, facility owners

V Postrace evaluation meeting to plan for the future

6 Timing Systems

6.1 Chip Timing

The Appalachiain Timing Group has parterned with MyLaps timing system to provide you with Chip Timing. This is the SAME timing system used by THE Boston Marathon!

Attached to the back of each participant's bib is a very small computer chip. As the chip approaches the finish line, the strength of the returning signal is measured. As the chip passes through the timing mat, the signal strength peaks at exactly the moment you cross the finish line. This is the time that the computers assign to your number. The result is a finish time accurate to within 1,000th of a second.

It is important to let the timing company take the lead at the start of the race as the systems must be turned on and activated at specific times related to the race start.

It is also important to understand the difference between chip time and gun time. Chip time is the time between when the person first crosses the start line and when they finish. Gun time is the time between when the gun goes off and when the participant crosses the finish line. In most cases fun time is the official timed used by USATF and other governing bodies. We use chip time for rankings in order to provide everyone an equal comparision unless the race is being reported to a governing body which requires otherwise.

Do's and Don't of Chip Timing:

I Don't do anything that will damage the chip in the bib like roll it up or fold it

II Wear the bib on the front to ensure the most accurate read/it also helps with picture tagging

III Do use four safety pins for the purpose of stopping the bib from flipping up into your face

6.2 Pull Tag Timing

We are no longer offering Pull-Tag Timing.

7 Sponsors

Sponsors are often the most significant financial benefactor to a race. It is important that you clearly communicate the value that you are offering.

Adding Value:

I T-Shirt Advertising

II Banner/Race Application Advertising

III Free Race Entries

IV Table on site for Race Day

For a sponsor letter example, feel free to contact us and we can help you build one or send our template.

8 Permitting and Certifications

8.1 Working with your city and venue

Each city will have it's own set of guidelines that must be followed to direct a race. Contact the local Police Department, Major's Office, etc to find out their specifics. Make sure you have received permission from the city, as well as, the location you are hosting the race (for example, if you are wanting to put on a race at a local High School - contact the administration of the High School). Taking the time to build a relationship with them will help your race succeed smoothly.

8.2 Course Certification

For the most part, courses are not certified. However, if you want your course to be eligible for records and/or become a qualifying event (Boston Marathon), you will need to have your course certified. For Course Certification, please find an active course measurer. Unfortunately, we do not currently offer that service. The process is complex but verifies that your

course is exactly the length that you stipulate. Courses that are too long or short WILL reflect poorly on you the race director. Therefore a great deal of care should be taken to insure that the length is correct. Especially for a 5K where a few yeards can easily be the difference between a personal record and an average day for many runners. Certifications are good for ten years. If you plan to use the same course over time, certification is a very good idea.

9 Payment, Fees, and Collection

If you are in need of an online registration page, The Appalachian Timing group will be more than happy to help!. We have partnered with RunSignUp which we have used since 2014. RunSignUp pays the event directly (therefore we do not touch/hold your funds) and you get full access to your race page and the tools they offer. There are Credit Card Processing Fees but those cannot be avoided.

All events that are timed by APTiming must submit a contract. If we do not receive a contract we will not time your event. In addition, there are no deposits required to reserve our services. However, we are very strict with our payment policies (including cancellations) and all invoices must be paid in full within 14 days following your event. There are some circumstances that allow for flexibility and all of our pricing policies willl be found in your contract.

We hope this handbook has helped you get started. If you have any additional questions please reach out to us. Or, if you think of anything that can be added to the handbook, please let us know.

