



2014 Indoor
Host Guide

Updated December 2013

Introduction

USBands, formerly known as the USSBA, has a proven track record of providing quality performance and education experiences for high school performers in both fall marching band and winter indoor colorguard and percussion. USBands provides educational, creative and exciting performance opportunities for marching program participants, unit staff, event volunteers, spectators and parents.

We strive to achieve uniformity across all USBands-sanctioned events with regard to adjudication criteria, performance environment (including flow, time and announcing), signage, awards, scheduling, etc. This manual seeks to assist you with attending to the many details associated with hosting a USBands event.

Event Overview

Pre-show (at least three weeks prior):

Information packets should be sent to **all** participating units **and** the USBands Office, including directions and special instructions (parking, band guides, etc.)

Show Day

- Check for balance of payment to USBands if you have not already paid. (You will receive an invoice & receipt.)
- Photocopier available to copy scores & recaps
- Computer & printer available for tabulator
- Wi-Fi Access
- 110V power at the front and back of performance area
- Sounds system that will have cd/ipod capabilities
- Have runners available to take tapes from judges to field (at least one).
- Appropriate Room for judges' pre-show preparation and post show critique.
- Arrange for food and drink for judges.
- Ten copies of the event program for USBands administrative team & judges.
- Have ample indoor available for warm-ups
- Trophies

After the Event

- Be sure to thank the participating bands for attending - begin to build good will for next year.
- Complete and return the USBands post- show survey.

Pre-Show

Recruiting Indoor Programs into Your Show

Although your event will be advertised on the USBands website and publicized in several USBands e-mails, phone calls and mailings, **it is your responsibility to sign units up for your show**. Odds are that your band director knows a good number of fellow directors whom he/she can personally recruit. Sending out personalized mailings and e-mails and making phone calls are highly effective as well. Remember, we are looking for both colorguard and percussion, so each e-mail could potentially bring in two performing units.

Show Scheduling

USBands is committed to service. In order to alleviate worry and allow the office staff to better communicate with all units on a daily basis, USBands will take on the task of assigning and communicating show information, after discussion with directors. *As in the fall, the USBands office will be responsible for ALL SCHEDULES during the indoor season. USBands will provide show hosts and participating units with a schedule no less than 14 days before the event.*

All special scheduling requests such as performance order, intermissions and opening/closing ceremonies must be submitted to the USBands office at least **one month** prior to the date of the show. USBands reserves the right to set the schedule for any show whose sponsor did not communicate the appropriate information the office.

Show sponsors will be responsible for designating warm-up times and areas. Please allow for travel times between areas, especially if you have a large school. USBands will convey the schedule to the participating units and post it on the USBands website **31 days prior** to your event. Please contact USBands if you need a sample schedule of warm-up times. ****No changes to the schedule will be made after the Monday preceding the show****

Please communicate your desired starting and ending times, maximum number of units, performance order preference and intermissions you wish to include to USBands' staff. All colorguard and percussion units must perform in succession, so please also notify USBands of which unit type you would like to begin and end with.

While the USBands office will send out the schedule and directions for each event, it is important that the show sponsor communicate with the participating units regarding parking, ticket pricing and purchasing information, warm-up areas, gym flow and any other pertinent information.

A typical show runs as follows:

- Opening Ceremony: 5-10 minutes
- Colorguard/Percussion Performances: 8-10 minutes each
- Intermission: 15-30 minutes
- Percussion/Colorguard Performances: 8-10 minutes each
- Host School Exhibition: 15 minutes
- Awards Ceremony: 20 minutes

Committees

The vast majority of tasks involved in running a USBands event are completed far in advance of the show date. The show chairperson should handle pre-show coordination. It is important that someone be accountable for **each and every** task that will contribute to a successful event. If you cannot put a name to every task, you cannot be sure that each task will be attended to and completed.

Committees are a great way to ensure that one person is not responsible for the entirety of a show. Hosts are encouraged to set up and utilize committees throughout the planning process based on their needs and resources. Each committee should be led by a chairperson who would report to the show chair. Committees must be sure to coordinate and communicate with each other, as many of the tasks require joint effort of two (or more) committees.

The following list of committees and tasks is not all-inclusive; it is a guide. Each show will have its own unique set of tasks.

Facilities Committees

- Reserve building usage
- Check bathroom availability
- Reserve kitchen if necessary for food preparation
- Reserve adequate parking facilities
- Assign & reserve classrooms to serve as dressing rooms for each participating unit
- Arrange for electrical power in the front & back of gymnasium
- Obtain access to copy machine room
- Arrange for Wi-Fi access; passwords or guest account access is a *necessity*
- Make sure warm-up spaces can be cleared (e.g., libraries, secondary cafeterias, auxiliary gyms, large classrooms, etc.)
- Obtain operation of lights/stands/dividing walls in gym

Pre-show Coordination Committee

- Get program information from participating units
- Communicate with USBands' host coordinator
- Compile list of tasks for running show
- Compile list of volunteers and assign to tasks
- Purchase trophies (donations?)
- Secure announcer (USBands will provide script)
- Assign special guests to present awards
- Arrange for ambulance/EMT on premise
- Arrange for police/security if necessary
- Obtain necessary insurance
- Arrange for cash collection and control

Ticket Committee

- Set reasonable ticket prices
- Print tickets
- Arrange ticket sale outlets

Show Operations Committee

- Coordinate with USBands' coordinator
- Host judges (provide food, seating, runners, etc.)
- Assist USBands' show coordinator & staff
- Supervise cash collection & control
- Post-show cleanup

Fundraising Committee

- Locate trophy sponsors
- Coordinate & implement ad & booster sales
- Compile program information from participating units
- Layout program book
- Arrange for printing
- Supervise program sales at show
- Arrange & implement all other fundraisers (e.g., air grams, 50/50, flower grams, etc.)

Food Committee

- Arrange equipment & facilities needed for food sales & relay needs to appropriate personnel
- Prepare menu
- Purchase food or arrange for donation
- Set food prices
- Research health codes for school food service if necessary
- Supervise & operate food service area
- Arrange & serve food for judges/director hospitality (in collaboration with Show Operations Committee)

Publicity Committee

- Design, produce & place ads
- Design & distribute flyers
- Direct mail to bands, residents, parents & previous ticket buyers
- Contact potential special guests for awards presentations, etc.
- Obtain show sponsors (in collaboration with Fundraising Committee)

Obtaining Necessary Approvals

Securing the necessary approvals of the appropriate authorities is the first step that should be taken in the planning process. This guarantees that you have the facilities to run a successful event and will help you discern whether the space requires additional resources. The number and nature of approvals varies from school to school but typically include obtaining written permission from the municipal government, police and fire departments, school board, principal, and sometimes the residents in the immediate area of the facility.

It is important to gather all written approvals as early as possible. This guarantees that you have the space, as many spaces are booked months in advance, and the approval process can take a long time. Finally, remember that it is always better to acquire permission to use an area but not need to use it during the event, than to need a space and not have obtained access to it.

Equipment & Facility Requirements

This is a partial list of necessary facilities and equipment. Add to it as other needs become apparent:

- Gymnasium/large performance area with regulation-size, high-school basketball court – minimum of 70 feet by 50 feet. Units may use floor covering no larger than 60 feet by 90 feet. The front boundary line shall be considered to extend the full width of the competition area and shall be clearly marked. There will be a safety zone of 5 feet from the audience on the front sideline.
- Classrooms or other warm-up areas
- Copy machine & computer with printer accessible to tabulator & staff
- Access to school Wi-Fi with user names & passwords
- Bathrooms & cafeteria/kitchen
- Traffic cones
- Parking lots for both spectators & participants
- Tables for registration/concessions/souvenirs
- Chairs in gym for judges, announcer & other personnel
- PA system & AC power in gym
- Walkie-talkies
- Trophies
- Area for judge/show staff hospitality (near performance area)
- Area for post-show critique with judges

Sound System Recommendations

The sound system should be one intended for musical sound reproduction and NOT voice-only amplification. These specifications are meant to be a starting point for discussion and not a final statement. Sound systems can be adequate and high quality without having these exact specifications. The system should also be operated by an adult with working knowledge of the system and the capability to troubleshoot in case a problem arises.

Input Devices

- A. Mixing console** with an input of at least five channels (two for CD, two for MP3, one for announcer microphone). Stereo Output (two channels) with some equalization capability (some sort of control that will allow adjustment to bass, mid-range and treble). If possible, the mixing console should be located near the front side (spectator side) near the center line to facilitate easy communication with the event coordinator and announcer.
- B. Professional-quality CD player** with variable pitch control that can play CD, CD-R, CD-RW and MP3 discs. Please place the player in an area that will be free of disturbance during the performances.
- C. A safe location** that cannot be bumped by performers or spectators while a unit are performing
- D. A 1/8-inch stereo connector** that will allow MP3 players (iPods, laptops, tablets or similar devices) to be connected directly to the mixing console
- E. Cassette tape player** just in case a performing unit comes with only this media. This can be a boom box that could be connected to the mixer through the 1/8-inch jack mentioned in article D.

Amplification & Speakers

- A. High-quality PA system capable of 100db output, undistorted, 30hz – 18Khz, to last row of seating
- B. High-quality sub-woofer system with at least two (total) 15-inch or 18-inch drivers (one per channel)
- C. System should be configured in **STEREO** (two channels)
- D. System should cover spectator-side bleachers evenly with crisp, clear high end
- E. Location: Speakers should be located at the rear of the performance floor at least five feet behind the basketball sideline. They can be together behind the center line or split left and right as far as cabling will allow. Please do not distance apart further than 70 feet (the length of the basketball court).
- F. Wattage recommendation is approximately 1,000 watts per side. Again, this is only a recommendation; systems can vary greatly in efficiency and wattage with the amplifiers and speakers.

This list has been compiled to convey the intention of a high-quality system that provides the performing units with the best possible sound. If you have any questions about how your sound system compares to these guidelines, please call the USBands office with your system specs to see if what you have will offer a great experience to both performers and spectators.

Trophies

Trophies should be purchased or obtained through donation on your own. There must be 1st, 2nd, & 3rd place trophies or plaques awarded in each class (A, AA, AAA colorguard/percussion & concert series), as needed.

Potential colorguard/percussion classifications: Please remember that the Concert and Standstill classes, while judged on the same sheets, are two separate divisions.

- Elementary Colorguard, Middle School Colorguard, Novice Class Colorguard, A Class Colorguard, 2A Class Colorguard, 3A Class Colorguard, 4A Class Colorguard
- Marching Percussion, Elementary – 4A
- Standstill Percussion Elementary – 4A
- Concert Percussion – Elementary – 4A

Program Book Ads

USBands reserves a minimum of eight pages of advertising in the program book for your event. These pages will be provided to you electronically via our website or e-mailed to you upon your request. Advertisements should appear as far forward in the program book as possible. If you need additional advertisements to completely fill your program, please contact the USBands office and additional ad pages will be provided.

Internet, Printer & Computer

USBands will provide our Tabulators with a laptop and software to properly calculate scores. As a show host, you are required to provide an internet connection so that your scores may be submitted immediately to be uploaded to the USBands website and for recordkeeping purposes. Additionally, the means to print score recaps will be required, either through a direct printer connection to the tabulator's laptop or through another computer/printer accessible to the school's server. Multiple devices will need access to the school's Wi-Fi if available or other hot-spot connections.

Hosts are responsible for providing the following personnel:

Band Guides

These people will meet units as they arrive, guide them to the warm-up area and make sure they arrive on time for their performance. The best band guides are students; they know the layout of the school!

Judges' Runners

One to two people are needed to "run" the judges' tapes and sheets to the tabulator between performances.

Judge Hospitality

At least one person is needed to make sure the judges have enough food and beverages throughout the event.

Announcer

This person will introduce the units as they enter and exit the floor. USBands will provide a script that must be read according to the Sponsor Agreement Contract.

Working with USBands

As you work with USBands, please remember that our main goal is to provide the most positive experience for everyone involved, including spectators, instructors, volunteers, event staff and, most importantly, the student performers. This is our principle when making decisions that affect our member units and show sponsors.

We communicate with our hosts often to alleviate any apprehension or confusion that may arise in the planning process, and we encourage you to contact us with any questions or issues that arise. In running over 150 events each year, USBands has run into a myriad of scenarios and is more than willing to share our experiences and solutions with you.

USBands reserves the right to display products and information at all USBands-sanctioned events and may request that the host provide items necessary for promotional purposes.

Sponsorship Banners

USBands' staff may bring signs or banners to the show to represent our sponsors. These banners must be placed either on the back stands of the gymnasium or at another location with maximum visibility. The USBands show coordinator will advise as to where the banners should be placed.

Promotional & Information Table(s)

We may require up to 10 feet of space for tables/merchandise in a high-traffic area within the event marketplace. However, USBands' merchandise and information cannot be present at all shows. Office staff will inform the sponsor at least two weeks prior to the event if this space will be needed.

Staff Passes

USBands provides each participating unit with a set of staff passes for the season. We provide more than enough passes to satisfy the needs of all of the units participating in any USBands show. USBands requires hosts to honor USBands-issued staff passes. These passes can be given to staff members, pit crewmembers, prop movers and roadies.

Occasionally, a unit may require more parents/pit crewmembers/staff/volunteers than they have passes. In such cases, we request that you allow people with a prop or instrument in-hand into the performance arena for a unit's performance with the stipulation that they exit with their unit immediately after. If those people wish to return to the stands to see the remainder of the event, a ticket is required.

We recommend that you provide space for participating students who have already performed to view the show. Remember, this activity is designed to benefit the students. Barring re-entry to performing members is neither considered good etiquette nor good business; furthermore, permitting re-entry can result in higher revenue from concession sales. Many hosts choose to hand-stamp or wristband performers in order to distinguish them from the ticket-buying public.

Additionally, USBands will provide several personnel to run the performance aspect of the event. USBands' staff are either paid or volunteers and are trained in the processes and philosophies of the organization. The following information describes who, from USBands, will be at your event:

USBands Personnel

USBands will provide the following personnel at your show:

Colorguard Adjudicators (5)

- Ensemble Analysis
- General Effect (2)
- Movement
- Equipment

Percussion Adjudicators (3)

- Performance Analysis
- General Effect
- Ensemble Performance

Coordinator

The coordinator the performance aspects of the show and works with your contest chairperson. The coordinator acts as the liaison between the judges and other USBands personnel, as well as the unit directors and instructors. During the show, this person works with the announcer to keep the show running on time and will also direct the awards ceremony.

Assistant Coordinator

The assistant coordinator handles the show-flow at the entrance of the gym and in the hallway just outside. This person will work with the coordinator and announcer to keep the show running on time. The AC will also supervise the post-show judging critique. If an AC is not present, this position can be handled easily by a parent volunteer. If an AC is not present, the USBands office representative or show coordinator will step in during critique.

Tabulator

The tabulator is responsible for totaling each band's score, posting scores to the Scoring Recap Sheet and assembling score sheet packets for each of the participating units. S/he will also assist the announcer during the awards ceremony and make sure that the digital files of the judges' comments are appropriately distributed.

Public Relations & Advertising

One of the best ways to ensure that your show will be a success is to put a lot of time and effort into your public relations and advertising campaign. **People cannot come to your show if they don't know about it!** Below are some suggestions, both traditional and original, to help drive attendance for your show.

Press Releases

Write and submit press releases to your local newspapers and media outlets. Include photos if possible, and make personal contact with someone at the paper. Be sure to include complimentary tickets and invite him/her to the show. Follow up with them about a week later to see when the article will appear. Also remember to include the community papers of participating units as well.

Tie-ins

A tie-in is an arrangement between you as the show sponsor and another organization. If there is an arts festival or sporting event scheduled in your town for the same weekend as your show, you could work with that other organization to tie the two events together.

Special Guests

Involving a well-known person will draw the attention of the press and public. Enlisting prominent politicians, celebrities or local business-owners to present awards at your show will almost surely increase attendance and press coverage, both before and after the event. It will make them look good, too!

Complimentary Tickets

You will be surprised how much goodwill and support you can generate by giving someone free tickets to your show. Obviously, you can't give everyone a free ticket, but a few complimentary tickets distributed strategically to people who have access to many more people can generate a lot of advertising for very little money.

Group Tickets

How will you grow the future of your program after the Class of 2014 graduates? By bringing in new members! Directors who are actively involved in both the middle- and high-school programs are few and far between. Offering group tickets to some of the middle- or elementary-school programs in your district is a great way to expose your programs to a wider range of younger students.

For example, if your ticket price is X, offer them at a pre-sale, discounted price to a group of 10 or more middle school students. Discuss the possibility of these groups performing in exhibition at the event as well. (If you would like an example of a group ticket discount form, please contact the USBands office.)

Flyers

Create flyers that contain all the pertinent information a potential spectator needs to know about your event.

Posters

USBands will provide your event with complimentary, full-color posters, with additional posters available for order through the office. Put posters up wherever possible, and they should be sent to the units participating in your event.

Traditional Advertising

If you have the money, you may consider placing an ad or two in your local paper. There is no quicker or surer way to reach a majority of your community. If you can work out a deal, you may get the ad at a very low rate. The newspaper may take something in exchange for the ad, such as complimentary tickets, an ad in your program, announcements at the show or banners advertising the newspaper at the event.

Media Sponsorships

The FCC requires most media – particularly electronic (radio & TV) – to provide public service to their community. The licensing process requires the media to document this public service. Co-sponsorship benefits both parties greatly. In this relationship, all advertisements, programs, etc. will list the media as a co-sponsor in return for a specified amount of free, public-service advertising time. Thus, your show might be named, “The WXYZ/Red Raider Marching Band Classic.” Don't be afraid to give top billing to anyone whose involvement might mean a larger ticket sale! This co-sponsorship is very easy for the radio or television station to document and helps bolster their image in the community.

Ticket Outlets

Once the public is aware of your event, make sure they can obtain tickets easily. Pre-selling is your insurance against unknown forces on show-day (weather, no-shows, etc.). To maximize pre-sales, sell tickets from as many locations as possible, including:

- Music stores
- Local fast-food outlets
- Banks
- Convenience stores
- Booths/tables at malls on weekends
- Grocery stores

Expenses & Fundraising

At first, expenses and fundraising may seem like unrelated topics or opposing forces. The former concerns financial outlay, and the latter monetary income. But the two are actually interdependent.

Expenses

There are many expenses inherent in the running of an indoor show. The most common and largest are:

- Food supplies
- Ticket printing
- Program purchasing and/or printing
- Trophies
- Advertising
- USBands fees
- Insurance (school may cover)

Maximizing Fundraisers

The basic procedure remains the same for each expense, so we'll use food as an example. To **sell** food, you have to **buy** food, right? **Not necessarily!** By bartering with merchants in your area, you may be able to get all or most of the food you need at no cost.

For example, you could negotiate a trade with your local supermarket: Free or low-cost hot dogs and buns in exchange for advertising in your program or short sponsor announcements between unit performances. By trading advertising for food, the cost to you is minimal, and the potential savings is enormous.

In addition, the larger your parent organization, the more good cooks you probably have! Donating baked goods, cases of water and soda go a long way when it comes to making a profit in food sales. Be creative. We have seen simple and silly things sell like crazy – ziti and chili are great staples, but cookie dough balls and tacos-in-a-bag spark kids’ interest.

Reducing or Eliminating Expenses

This is similar to the above example, except that we are addressing items that are traditionally considered necessary operating expenses rather than those used for raising funds. Trophies are one of the largest expenses associated with an indoor show. It is fairly easy to reduce or totally eliminate that expense by “selling” the trophy to a business, civic group or even an individual.

For example, ABC Manufacturing decides to “buy” the “First-Place” trophy for \$100. If the trophy only cost you \$50, you just made \$50! When announcing the “First-Place” award, the announcer mentions that ABC Manufacturing donated the trophy. Try to get a representative from the sponsor to present the award (*more good public relations!*). Don’t forget to list the trophies and their donors in your program – one more incentive for the local bank, dentist or rotary club to pitch in!

Show Sponsorship

With some legwork and a few good contacts, you may be able to get a business or civic group to foot the bill for all or part of the show. While this may seem far-fetched at first, the positive PR the sponsor gets from this kind of event may justify the cost involved. Several of USBands’ fall show hosts enjoy this type of sponsorship and have found it invaluable.

Other Fundraising Ideas

The list of potential fundraisers is endless. A little time and effort spent brainstorming can produce some new and unique ways to raise a lot of money for your group. You’ve probably thought of most of these, but there may be a few you have not considered:

- Program ads & boosters
- Raffles
- 50/50
- Air grams
- Trophy sales
- Flower grams
- Advertising at the show (banners, etc.)
- Program sales
- Candy grams

Day of the Show

If you have done all the necessary preparations up to this point, the show should run itself. This section outlines the flow of a typical show day.

Before the Show

Volunteer Meeting

As it is almost impossible to get your volunteers together before show day, you should schedule a meeting several hours prior to the time doors open. Your volunteers should already know their assignments. Now is the time to review the show procedure and disseminate last-minute information.

Walk-through

The contest chairperson should ensure that all facilities are open and set up correctly. One locked door can have a major impact on a show’s flow. Check that all volunteers are in place and ready to go. **DO NOT ASSUME ANYTHING. CHECK TO BE SURE!**

Weather

No one can control the weather. The best you can do is plan for every possibility. If it is a nice day, most drumlines will prefer to warm-up outdoors, and most units will not be opposed to re-folding their floors in a courtyard. However, you

must provide a back-up plan in case of rain or snow. This should also be communicated with the USBands office personnel by the morning of the event.

Handling Cash

Hopefully you will be handling large amounts of cash. Review the cash flow, making sure that cash is collected frequently from every station and brought to a central location. Two people should accompany all cash transportation.

Arrival of Participants

Buses and Equipment

The guide assigned to each arriving unit should have all information available at the time of the unit's arrival, including warm-up locations and times, restroom locations, performance times, etc.

Arrival of Show Staff

Coordinator and Tabulator

The USBands show coordinator and tabulator will arrive approximately an hour and a half before the first performance. They will check to make sure there is power on the performance floor, that a photocopier, computer and printer are available, and that everything else is in order. They will need to be shown to the judges' room where they will set up the show materials (recorders and sheets) and await the arrival of the judges. The coordinator and tabulator (as well as the judges) must be provided with one program booklet each.

If payment has not been settled, a USBands office representative or show coordinator may ask to collect payment *in the form of a check or money order* from the sponsor.

Adjudicators

The USBands Adjudicators will arrive approximately one hour before the first unit performs. Upon arrival, they will need to be shown directly to the judges' meeting room. Each adjudicator should be provided with one program book.

Judges' Meeting Room

A room inside the school should be set aside for the judges to meet prior to the show. This room should also be large enough to hold staff members from several performing groups for critique after the show. **A photocopier should be available close to this room.**

Remember, the USBands staff and the participating units are guests at your event. Events spoken about most favorably are those sponsored by programs that are willing to put in the extra effort to help their guests feel welcome.

Show sponsors should provide complimentary food and beverages for USBands' staff and adjudicators throughout the day as well as for unit staff participating in the critique after the show. The hospitality area should feed roughly 10 to 15 people.

Opening the Gates

Open the doors about one hour before the scheduled start time. This will give early-comers enough time to pick their seats and buy food. It will also give you a chance to check your crowd control system before the crowd gets large.

Be Prepared

Be sure that all your volunteers know **exactly** what time the doors open. It is important for your show workers to appear prepared for the spectators.

USBands Judges

Judges will need to have a sectioned-off area on the stands as close to the center as possible. There should be two areas available, one on the third to fifth row of bleachers and the other at the top of the stands. Please be mindful of any items that may obstruct their view. The judges need two runners to collect score sheets and see to their needs. It is customary to provide complimentary food and beverages to the judges. **PLEASE ENSURE THAT STAFF AND SPECTATORS ARE KEPT OUT OF THE AREAS USED BY THE JUDGES UNTIL OTHERWISE NOTIFIED.**

Staff Viewing Area

If possible, set aside a small area on top of the bleachers from which unit staff can view their own show. This will prevent the staffs from disrupting spectators and impress the visiting units with your show preparations.

Videotaping

By federal law, it is illegal to record audio or video of any musical ensemble to protect the rights of the composers and publishers. The only exception is for creating an “archive,” which is a recording that may not be duplicated. It is suggested that you allow one representative from each school to record their own performance.

If external microphones are not used with the camera, take into consideration the location of the judges when deciding where the video-taping area will be. Chances are, a unit will not want to hear a judge’s commentary while viewing their performance. **The judges’ viewpoint takes precedence for the better vantage point over video recording.**

Please allow USBands Media Makers access to your show! They are volunteers who provide hundreds of photos and videos for our events. The best place to find pictures from our Media Makers is on the USBands Facebook page!

Starting the Event

Announcements

The USBands show coordinator will provide the announcer with a script for introducing each unit and getting them on and off the floor. Groups are accustomed to starting their performance a certain way. This is definitely NOT the time for ad-libbing. Hosts are required to use the USBands script.

The announcer should begin making announcements long before the actual start of the show. This will establish flow into the show and get him/her used to addressing the crowd.

The beginning of the show should be clear and obvious. Spectators should automatically give their full attention to what is happening on the floor.

Event Flow

Involvement with the Participants

As mentioned previously, your involvement with the participants will actually be quite limited during the show. Your guides will give them the necessary information when they arrive and guide them to the necessary facilities. The show coordinator will watch the step-off times and keep the units flowing onto and off of the floor smoothly. Your announcer will present them when they enter the floor and start their performances with the customary, “Are the judges ready?” series of announcements. All other responsibilities regarding the units’ activities once they arrive (penalties, etc.) fall to the USBands show coordinator.

Keeping the Event Moving

Once the show is underway, be sure that the crowd is entertained at all times by a performing unit, the announcer or some other special event you have planned. The USBands show coordinator will see to it that the units move on and off the floor in the time allotted. You should concern yourself with the five minutes between the end of one performance and the beginning of the next.

Communications

It is very important that you maintain constant communication throughout the show. Key people should be in radio contact at all times. Depending on the cell-phone service in the school, text messages may work better than phone calls. Services such as GroupMe are free and allow you to reach a specific group of people by only sending a message once. *Voicemails are virtually useless.* When it is crunch time, or an emergency arises, text messages are the easiest form of communication if you do not have radio access. USBands personnel will arrive with USBands radios.

Running Fundraisers

When the crowd is captivated by what is happening on the floor, they will forget all about your fundraisers (raffles, 50/50, air grams, etc.). Remind them of these often and in different ways so that they don’t forget.

Ending the Event

Awards Ceremony

The USBands tabulator will have the scores ready by the time the final unit finishes its exhibition performance. If there is no exhibition unit, the awards ceremony should be able to begin 15 to 20 minutes after the conclusion of the last group. All award ceremonies are for unit captains only unless otherwise specified. Please notify your announcer to follow the guidelines and script provided by USBands. This is also the time to recognize and thank your donors and sponsors.

A score sheet will be given to a runner who must make a certain number of copies (usually 25) to be handed out to the unit staff members who will be participating in the critique. You might have to send someone to the copy machine at least 5 to 10 minutes early to make sure it is warmed up. It is important that these copies are made in time for the critique to start.

Signing Off

At the conclusion of the awards ceremony, the announcer should make a closing statement, thanking the participants and spectators, and wishing all a gracious goodbye. This announcement should bring the show to a definite conclusion.

After the Show

Clean-Up

Once the crowd has departed, it is time to get one last effort out of your volunteers. Leave your gym and facilities in good shape, especially if you want to use them again next year.

Cash count and Deposit

Time to find out what the bottom line is.

Post-Show Party

A post-show party can go a long way toward thanking your volunteers for their hard work and reinforce the fact you want them to come back again next year!

Conclusion

This manual is by no means exhaustive in its coverage of the work that goes into running a successful show. Such a manual would be several times longer and take several days to read. However, we hope this will give you a good idea of what is necessary and make you a more confident show sponsor. Please remember that we are available to help you in any way that we can, so please do not hesitate to call or e-mail us with any questions or concerns.

Here are a few of the most important points to check to ensure good communication, no surprises and the smooth operation of your show. Of course, you should create your own list as well to ensure a pleasant and profitable show day.