



THE ART OF DESIGNING A CARROTMOB

Indeed, it is an art. The core of the Carrotmob idea is utterly simple and elegant. It's a win-win. But in practice there are several complex factors that can change the likelihood of success in subtle ways. This page is meant to give you the perspective you will need to plan your own unique event successfully. Here are the sub-topics:

1. Define the Social Issue
2. Demographics of the Carrotmob
3. Type and Scope of the Businesses
4. Geographic Location
5. When You'll Hold the Event / Timing

DEFINE THE SOCIAL ISSUE

The Carrotmob model is flexible. Most of the events we've had so far have been focused on environmental issues, specifically concerning energy usage. Why? Well, I (Brent) set the example in the first event because in my personal opinion there is no more important issue than climate change right now. The other reason that it's a great fit for Carrotmob is that there are so many environmentally-friendly changes that businesses can make that actually save them money. Energy issues are a low-hanging fruit since the resulting cost savings are just icing on the profit cake baked up by our consumer mob. However, as we mentioned in the How to Guide, there's no reason that organizers can't explore using the Carrotmob model for other issues... education inequity? economic development? poverty alleviation? Endless possibilities. If you are trying to get a business to do something that will cost them money you have a slightly more difficult challenge ahead of you, but with a big enough mob you can still make the desired action become the profitable choice for the business. Again, if you are thinking of doing a type of Carrotmob that has never been done before, make sure to contact Carrotmob HQ to talk through the idea and make sure it's something we feel good about.

One other thing to consider is this: Do you have an extremely specific action in mind that you want the business to take? Or is this going to be an open-ended challenge where businesses can put together their own unique offers of what they are willing to do? This is linked closely to bidding types 1 and 2—explained in the Bidding Structure doc (Appendix 11).

DEMOGRAPHIC

Who do you expect to come out to your event? Who buys the stuff this type of business sells? What neighborhood are you in? Think like a business...will you promote this event to students, parents, grandparents, churchgoers, foodies, athletes, couch potatoes, hipsters...? What sort of tone do you want to set? Do you want a party atmosphere with people dancing in the streets to music you provide or do you see people just quietly going about their business? Consider whether the type of people you expect to turn out would prefer making it rain with Lil Wayne or sipping fair trade coffee from Sumatra with Frank Sinatra.

TYPE AND SCOPE OF THE BUSINESS

What type of businesses will you invite to participate? Will it be a retail store? How would it work to Carrotmob services, such as accountants, or massage therapists? What if you want to Carrotmob a small restaurant...does it make sense to have the whole mob show up at once? Or is it possible you would want to have the mob sign up for dinner reservations on different days so that the restaurant is totally booked up for a month? Just think through the logistics for the type of business you have in mind.

Another challenging issue to consider is whether or not you want small independent businesses competing against chain businesses that are owned by large global corporations. Many people prefer to support locally-owned businesses. So if a big chain makes a better offer than a local business, what will you do? Choose the strongest offer which will do the most to advance your goal? Would that hurt smaller businesses in your community? Is it fair to exclude big chains? Will the people in your community be equally excited about coming out to support a huge company such as, say, McDonald's? Does that inspire passion? Will your mob look at this in a logical way, or an emotional way? If the winning store is one that people won't want to support, your event will fail, and you won't be making a very big change. So is it worth compromising and settling for a smaller offer? What if you do one competition just for local businesses, and a separate competition for chains? Tough questions here, and we're not forcing any answers on you. Experiment, and let us know when you figure it all out.

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

What's the geographic scope of your campaign? A neighborhood? A town? The entire known universe? Will the mobbers be the same crowd, regardless of who wins? Or will different people come out depending on which business prevails? Are there enough competing businesses in the given area to make for a healthy competition? If there are three

stores each located 30-40 miles apart, is it realistic or desirable to ask mobbers to travel that far? Chew on that.

WHEN YOU'LL HOLD THE EVENT / TIMING

Using the Timeline Template (Appendix A) as a base, start thinking about when you want to have your event, and work backwards from there to get an idea for when things need to happen. Consider what days of the week people are most likely to turn out, and whether the target businesses are open that day. Think about the time of year and whether there are competing distractions such as Christmas, Tax Day or the Super Bowl. On the other hand, are there special events that might be great to piggyback on (such as Christmas, Tax Day or the Super Bowl, haha...but also stuff like local parades or festivals, Earth Day, Bike to Work Day, International Women's Day, holidays, etc)? Keep in mind that it may make sense to be fairly flexible about the date until you know which business you will be carrotmobbing.

Good luck designing your campaign!