Hosting Crops / Retreats

Fun & Sales – a Perfect Combination

Crops offer guests time to get albums done, socialize and have fun. Some people say it’s girl time they don’t feel guilty about because their family loves having completed albums.

What makes a successful event/crop? Sales, completed pages, new people attending and people having so much fun, they don’t want it to end - and can’t wait to come to the next one.

For your first crop, start with a short one (a few hours or an afternoon). If your home will accommodate, you can do it there.

I charge $10 and offer to put $10 towards any purchases. I offer some education such as how to get organized and to complete a page, talk about new products and show how to use them. When I do a make & take or page it is at cost. – Advisor Mari Saenz

I find a hall with a kitchen and good lighting (that’s important). I invite people to come crop from 9-4. I supply a small snack, lunch, and a small gift. I charge them $30 (this cost will depend on if you are paying a fee for the space). I have a little cushion in my fee, but I don’t try to make money off fees...I prefer to make money off product. – Advisor Kim Bentley

How to make events fun and grow sales – Advisor Beckie Belote

- Show/feature new products. Display them prettily where people can touch/feel. For tools, ALWAYS offer a demo area where you can demonstrate the tool and guests can try it for themselves.

It can be fun to make a game of demos. Games are quick, fun, offer lots of laughs and guests learn to use the tools.
  - i.e., to feature the Border Maker, put it out with three cartridges and have guests form teams of three. The first person has to
punch a full page using one of the cartridges. The next person has to do a full page using the next cartridge, and the third person has to use the third. Time each team and award a prize to the quickest team.

- Utilize the POWER OF TICKETS. Decide on the prizes you would like to award, then offer a ticket for any behavior you want to encourage. I.e.,
  - Finishing a page
  - Sharing a finished page with the group
  - Trying out a new product
  - Buying products
  - Using a new product to complete a page (can hold up a tool you want them to use, and first person to complete a page using gets a ticket, or everyone who completes gets one).
  - Posting a photo of a page or product on social media
  - Bringing a dish to share
  - Bringing a friend
  - Asking a question

Depending on the number of prizes, you can do drawings throughout your event, or just at the end. Some Advisors put their prizes on a table with a little container in front of each and people can drop their ticket into the one they want to win. This works well if you have ‘older’ product too. To someone it might be new, and they may really want it and have dropped in the only ticket. They are happy, and you are happy.

- Rewards can also be verbal. “Wow, that’s beautiful, Jan! That is such a clever way to use ____.” Showing your customers appreciation in front of the group is a big part of any event. (Many women don’t get a whole lot of positive feedback in daily life (“nice job on the laundry, Mom!” – never happens). Be genuine and generous with your praise.

- Put people together (seated near each other) who you think would hit it off. When your guests are meeting new people and having a great time, they are more likely to come again and bring a friend.

- Enlist help from customers. You can offer them extra crop time if they come early to help set up tables, displays, etc. Be sure to recognize them for their help when everyone gets there. Don’t have to do it alone...people are often really happy to help, and you will be more excited about your next crop if you have energy left
over afterward.

- Offer delicious food. It does not have to be elaborate, just good. Think chili and salad, a baked potato bar, stew and warm bread, etc. Cookies, brownies, bars, etc. are always a hit, especially mid-afternoon.

- Have a trophy, or teddy bear, or beach ball (could be anything) ...that people get to put at their spot when they complete a page. It puts people into a fun, competitive mood, focused on album completion and gets them moving around. “Lynn, throw me over the ball...just completed another one!”

Gifts/giveaways
Generally, you’ll want to build the cost of gifts/giveaways you’re offering into the fee you charge for your workshop. If your business budget allows, you can shop the Warehouse Finds or Thank You Gifts section of the website for gifts. Another option is to purchase products and divide them (i.e., buy a pack of paper and slide-in pack) and each guest gets a few sheets). If you earn an Account Credit, you can also use that to buy gifts.

I just had my 1st NSD yesterday, and in the goodie bags was a reward punch card that I found in the files folder of the Advisor Facebook Group. I changed it up a bit: for every $20 spent receive a punch, after 10 punches receive 15% off your next order. My customers loved it! – Advisor Nicole Mullen

I offer a Toonie draw...this is a board I have that is numbered 1-10...each person pays $2.00 and puts their name on a number. When it’s full I pull a number and that person gets $10 off their fee. The other $10 is mine to put towards gifts /giveaways. For gifts for a crop day (I charge $30), I have done a Custom Cutting System hexagon shape with either a title bar or 4x6 mat. Challenge them to make a page, you will most likely sell the tool you’re featuring. Giveaways can be anything scrap related, old stock, make up little page decorations with mats and shapes, anything. If it’s free they will like it!! – Advisor Kim Bentley

Saying goodbye to “older” products:
If you or your customers have an abundance of products that are from ‘back in the day,’ you may want to use one of these ideas.

**Offer a Trade Table.** Everyone (including you) brings older product you no longer want. Guests can take whatever they want during the event, and at the end of the event, you collect and donate anything that’s left over. Everyone feels good that it’s going to a school, daycare, youth shelter, etc., it cleans out their ‘collections’ so they feel comfortable buying new.

Hint: if your customers have non-CM products, have two tables, one for CM and one for non-CM. (You can say you separated them because you can only guarantee the photo safety of the CM products.)

**Joan Marso** and team have a “lighten the load” area with a scale. People get a ticket for every pound of stuff they bring, and anything left over gets donated.

**General Good Ideas:**

- Encourage pre-orders for crops. You can message customers a few weeks in advance and include a link to the e-catalog or take orders at the current crop for the next crop. People love showing up and having their new goodies waiting for them at their table.
- Consider offering a Workshop Season Pass that has a discount off your regular fee. I.e., if you have six workshops a year at $15 each ($90), offer a yearly season pass at $75. It saves you collecting the fees every time and frees up your customers.
- You can also offer a “Come to five workshops, get the sixth free” when prepaid, so people are committing in advance.
- Have fun. When it’s clear that you are having a blast, your customers will too. And you are your own best testimonial to the Advisor opportunity. It could be one of your customers could really use some extra income (see Growing Your Team for more info).

**Consider Crop Clubs:**

If you have customers who want to crop more often than you are able to (i.e., you offer twice a month...they would do it weekly if they could), suggest that they start a crop club.

You supply the products in advance at the “Host’s” house, leave them some catalogs and order forms, and connect with the host to get any additional
orders for their next crop. (If you collect S&H from everyone and the order exceeds the free shipping threshold, you can use those fees to reward the host.)

**Retreats**

Once you’ve gotten your sea legs with crops, experienced scrapbooking customers may ask you about a retreat. Retreats are generally longer (a day or two or three) and often include an overnight stay and multiple meals, so the cost Advisors charge is higher. They can be held at a camp, a hotel, a Bed & Breakfast, etc.

*For our retreats, we do Friday night, Saturday & Sunday. We stay in a lodge, get 3 meals per day and accommodations. The fee is $210.00 per person. The gifts for this are bigger. Small gift Friday night...maybe a whole sticker pack (I bought the peacock stickers from Thank You Gifts) and Saturday a bigger gift. Cutting out shapes and borders is a good gift, as they are likely to purchase the tool you’ve used. – Advisor Kim Bentley*

Two things I do at retreats – when customers arrive, I’ve marked their table space with their name and have a bottle of water and some type of fun container or gift bag waiting for them. This bag/container is their retreat survival kit which will include items such as lip balm, purse size tissues, purse size lotion, chocolate, mints, gum, ear plugs (never know how noisy the roommate(s) might be) and either in this container or also on the table is some type of notepad and a pencil, ink pen or CM pen. In addition to their arrival gift, I leave a small gift at their space each day which may be a Tape Runner Refill, a border I made, small sticker pack or some other small gift to be used in their album.

Secondly, I offer tickets. I have a sign posted throughout the weekend with ways to earn tickets. I give more tickets for actions I like to see more of – 5 tickets if you purchase a F2F album bundle, 2 tickets if you purchase a minimum of 1 paper pack or it could be 2 tickets for each paper pack purchased. Decide what action you want from your customers and reward them with tickets.

As I always tell my team, think about your profit and what you can afford and what you might have on hand – add some extra in to your fee to cover some of the things you might want to give away. At my last retreat I had an album from the December incentive that I had earned free so
this was used as a giveaway, a small purse size cosmetic tote from the former CM never used and I added a gift certificate for $5 worth of product, I had another item that was in my stash and I tied a gift certificate for a paper pack to it. Be creative and think outside the box. Customers LOVE LOVE LOVE anything FREE! – Advisor Linda Hendrix