

Nine long months to get to your yearbook “baby” and all you do is pass them out in homeroom or the office? Shame on you. This year—CELEBRATE!

Celebrate your delivery

Over the years, many people have compared yearbooks to babies. It takes nine months to get to the delivery, and once you have the precious thing in your hands, you keep it for life.

So do you know any proud parents who would bring a child into this world and not celebrate the birth with a party, a shower or some other kind of celebration? We don't. So let's do the same with your “baby.” Let's find a way to celebrate the delivery of your yearbook.

When we were in Orlando last month at our Jostens meeting, we were shown some amazing statistics. In a nationwide survey of yearbook advisers, less than 45% of schools have any kind of delivery event. Most of the rest of the schools either passed out the yearbook during homeroom or they were distributed from the office at lunch, before or after school. How sad is that?

And more than 30% of those advisers who were polled said they not only did not do a yearbook distribution celebration event but they had no idea what to do if they were to do one. So we asked some advisers what they did to give out their books. Here are some ideas for you to use.

Concrete ideas for distribution

The first response we got was, “We hosted a yearbook signing party this year, and it really



helped with the distribution of the books. Anyone who bought a book and had paid in full two days before the date was invited. We had it the last two periods of the day. We started by calling out students M-Z, and when those were distributed, A-L came. As students were coming in, there were three bands that had played at the lunchtime jams during the year (sponsored by Student Council). For us for next year, one and one half periods will be enough to do this. It was fun, and the students enjoyed it.”

Another school told us, “We have a special breakfast for the seniors where their books are distributed. Years ago, in our town, the PTA had an evening with refreshments around 6 or 7 pm where the book was distributed to the seniors only. The next day, they were available for the rest of the school. Our yearbooks will be distributed during Senior Week at the Senior Barbecue. We will put the yearbooks in Class of 2007 gift bags with a Class of 2007 pen.”

A third adviser chimed in

with, “In the past, we've either done it as part of a REBEL field day, when the afternoon of the school day is filled with various 'field day activities' and about two to three hours into the festivities, we distribute the books. It's usually a little more than an hour before the end of the school day. We have four different entrances into our cafeteria and run one to two distribution lines at each door, then two lines from each window of the student store. It goes pretty fast. We've been able to distribute more than 600 books in less than a half hour for the last two years.”

And finally (for this article), I got this superb story of a distribution event that sounds like it was fun from start to finish. We would love to hear about what you have planned this year as well.

“We distributed the books yesterday. I thought it was a success in every way—everyone got to be a star. The kids got together for a party on Sunday evening and made big murals to decorate the sides of a moving truck belonging to one of the staff's parents. They carried on the theme of the Incredibles that was part of our yearbook assembly in the beginning of the year.

Each person dressed up as a superhero. They went to great pains to get a costume together—some rented them or purchased them online. My personal favorite was Dan's, who was some version of Batman. He made his appearance (once the truck stopped) by skateboarding down the ramp wearing black tights with BRIGHT yellow underpants over the tights. The staff had so much fun planning and carrying out this event we can't wait to plan this year's!”

A new distribution kit to help you plan your celebration

While we were in Orlando, we saw a brand new distribution kit that Jostens Marketing Department has come up with to help you plan your distribution event.



Inside, you will find all you will need to publicize and plan the event, including a booklet with plenty of ideas. You can order from Jostens Marketing Services on Yearbook Avenue by clicking Products in the main menu.



Don't dis' distribution

We mean it. Don't disrespect your yearbook when it comes time to pass it out. Do something big! Here are the facts about distribution. Use them to plan a cool distribution event today!

Who should be in charge of the distribution event?

- ✓ Your Yearbook Business Manager (YBM) should be responsible for coming up with a great event. If he or she is a senior, then make sure that your 2008 YBM assists with this important task so he or she know how to handle it next year.

What should happen at the distribution event?

- ✓ Plan on these three things happening. First, distribute the yearbooks. Second, students have a chance to sign their yearbooks, and third, provide some fun. If that means you hire a DJ so people who want to can dance, go for it! Or maybe you go all out and turn the place into a regular carnival. Have refreshments (that you can sell ... never hurts to make a little extra money for the yearbook staff) or show videos or slide shows of the school year during the evening. Whatever you do, make it memorable.

When should we hold the distribution event?

- ✓ Sometime between the books' arrival and the last day of school if your book delivers this spring. The sooner the better. Waiting until the last day of school is not always the best solution, especially if you have some extra books you ordered that are not yet sold. The more days between distribution and the last day of school, the more opportunities you will have to sell those books. So work with your administration to plan some type of event that happens as soon as possible.
- ✓ If your book delivers in the fall, a great time to schedule this is just before the first day of school. What a super way to get all the underclassmen together and bring the graduating Class of 2007 back one more time to pick up their yearbooks.

Where should we hold the distribution event?

- ✓ Somewhere where you can control a crowd. You need an orderly distribution of yearbooks that is also a bunch of fun! Your gym, an athletic field (weather permitting—have a backup), the cafeteria—almost anyplace that will hold a crowd but where you can control the distribution process will work well for this event.

Why should we hold a distribution event?

- ✓ This event will benefit you in lots of ways. Big ways! Benefits you may not have thought about before. For instance:
 1. It gives your entire year's yearbook campaign closure. If you have done a great job of marketing your yearbook all year, then why just let the distribution fall flat? A great year deserves a great finish.
 2. It is a great way to show the rest of the school how much fun it is to be on the yearbook staff and be a part of something that is very cool. This kind of event pays off in the future when you are recruiting potential yearbook staffers.
 3. It's fun! If you plan it right, it can be the most fun you'll have all year. Think of how hard you worked on this book. Nine months of slaving away to create your beautiful, one-of-a-kind yearbook. Celebrate the arrival. It's your party!

How should we plan our distribution event?

- ✓ Get imaginative! The sky (and your administration) is the limit. The point is not how you do it, but that you do it. Start planning now. You only have a short time left. ○