

Tips on Running a Coin Show

Here are some basic suggestions for organizing and running your coin show.

1. Coin shows can be great revenue generators, but they can flop just as fast as they can succeed with poor or insufficient planning.
2. **Select a Chairperson.** This person will be the single-point-of-contact for the entire show and will need to be present for the entire show for any conflict resolutions.
3. **Planning.** Advanced planning is very important. This allows for a good venue, with timing for preparation, advertising and having enough volunteers.
4. **Get Insurance.** Make sure you have liability insurance. If your club is an ONA member Club, make sure your event location is added to the group rate club insurance as an additional insured. This can be done for free at the time of renewal, otherwise there is an additional fee. Most facilities today required proof of it before they rent out their facility.
5. **Pick a Day.** Saturdays usually work better than Sundays for attendance and that's why Saturdays are more expensive to rent than Sundays.
6. **Pick a Date.** There are many show dates established already. Conflict with these dates may be detrimental to a new show and may restrict certain dealers from attending.
7. **Pick a Show Time.** Most shows open to the public at 9:00am and close between 3:00 and 4:00pm. Noontime will usually tell if the show has been successful. If it is a good show, dealers will stay to the end, however if the attendance numbers are low, dealers may want to leave early. It might be best to set the end time at the early end, then extend it if business is still good. There is nothing worse for the show organizer to set a late finish time only to have customers show up with only a couple of dealers left, especially if they had to travel a long distance to get there.
8. **Pick a Location.** This is for two considerations. How close to the best travelled routes and therefore easy access and how far does a dealer have to travel, then unpack and set up and repack and travel home. Also, does this location support a large enough population base to draw enough attendants to make the show viable.
9. **Pick a Venue.** What does the location offer? Does the venue support the setup and takedown of the tables and chairs, or is that the responsibility of the renter? Does the venue support the electrical needs of the dealers (many lights)? There must be enough space to accommodate the dealer numbers you would like to have. Raw measurements must be taken of the venue and a scale plan will need to be drawn to support the layout. This space should include ample aisle room for customers to pass and sit in front

of a table, room for the dealer to maneuver behind the table, and a back table so the dealer can store his excess stock and other materials. A good restaurant is preferred but if that isn't available is there a kitchen that can be used to sell food, and beverage (be careful with food handling and don't violate local health regulations), or can food be brought in as most dealers cannot leave their table. Possibly a food truck could be used.

10. **Pick your Dealers.** This may be one of the hardest jobs, soliciting dealers to come to a new show or one that has been dormant for several years. Like anyone, the dealer must look at what profit is in it for them. Cost of travel, cost of meals, cost of fees, cost of accommodation all must be factored into sales to cover costs then come out with a worthwhile profit. This determines whether the dealer will return the next year or not.
11. **Security.** The Canadian Association of Numismatic Dealers (CAND) now requires some form of visible security, whether armed or non-armed, be at these Coin Show events. Clubs can use volunteers or hire outside contractors. Non -armed Security, mostly used for one day shows, usually runs about \$25.00 per hour per guard, while armed Security is significantly more expensive and therefore used in multi-day shows, where overnight security is required.
12. **Volunteer Support.** The more volunteers there are, the easier it becomes to setup, run the event, and do the take down. Volunteers don't need to be there the whole day, and most cannot, so if there are enough people to help, a placement of 2-hour intervals may work.
13. **Equipment Support.** The ONA does have some equipment rentals available, based on availability and accessibility to your event. This includes tablecloths, electrical cords, connectors, floor mats to cover cables in aisleways, and display cases.
14. **Table Costs.** Most shows generate revenue by charging dealers table space and floor admissions. Table sizes can range from 6-foot to 8-foot. Most dealers take about 2 tables so a good formula is about \$10.00 per foot or less, but this may depend on how much the venue is costing. The largest cost is going to be the venue and security so if it is all in at \$1300 for the venue and \$400 for security for the day, then you will need to sell 170 feet of table or about 22 8-foot tables or 11 dealers (average) to break even. The door admissions and food sales, if allowed, then become your profit.
15. **Hobby Support.** If possible, allow for one or more information tables that support the hobby. This would be a non-revenue generator but if you can spare the space, it allows for more awareness of the hobby. The ONA would be glad to set up a table to promote the ONA member clubs. A Kid's Table

dedicated to junior members as well as the local club sponsoring the coin Show. This gives the local exposure needed to the public in what may have been an unknown entity in the community. Flyers to upcoming coin shows as well as other clubs close to the area can be picked up from the table.

16.Incentives. A lot of small shows offer a free draw, with paid admission, on some numismatic item(s). These items can be donated by members of the local club.

17.Advertising. Social media is the best and cheapest way to advertise the event. If the venue has a marquee, you may get a week or more in advance of your event at the venue. Word of mouth and local flyers and signs will help but only closer to the event (be aware of any city laws about signage). Print media, except the trade papers, will probably generate the least amount of visibility. Make sure, once established, your Show information is updated with the Ontario Numismatic Association (ONA) Find A Club and Canadian Coin News (CCN) Collecting/Coin Clubs. This way people can plan their day.

18.Admissions Desk. Staff this desk with at least 2 people. Collect the admissions but also collect information about attendees by offering their name into the free draw. Find out how they found out about the show and use the information as a matter of record to improve changes for the next show.

19.Keep Records. Keep information about the show including weather, all advertising, attendance figures, dealer names and numbers, costs, and revenues as this will be key in determining success and improvements for the next show.

20.Plan for the Next Show. This means tentatively booking this venue for the next year right now. It also includes picking the Dealers that came this year as first pick for next year and collecting a Table down payment to secure them at your next show.