

Did you know that on average, companies stay in business less than seven years? Hard to believe, but true. The companies that do last through the years—25, 50, 75, even 100 years or more—certainly have a lot to be proud of.

An anniversary milestone is a once-in-a-lifetime achievement that deserves recognition. This is the time to share the company's success with employees and the community at large, particularly if your company provides many jobs in the community or contributes to its success through charitable or other efforts. Your company, of course, may distribute products nationally or internationally, meaning that you can extend celebration festivities to an even wider audience.

Like any major event, there's much more to hosting an anniversary celebration than simply ordering the cake and mailing invitations. Before embarking on one of the most important projects in your compa-

Hint

Inviting the press almost always guarantees extra, free publicity for your company in local and regional newspapers and other publications. There's nothing local press love more than a good hometown human interest story. Your company's success story could have an even wider reach, especially if you distribute projects on a national or international basis or your pro bona activities extend beyond the local community.

ny's history, you should have a program in place and know exactly what you expect to gain in return for the time, effort and money you put into celebrating, whether it's publicity, goodwill, increased sales or any other goal that makes sense for your company. Here's how to get the ball rolling:

Why Celebrate?

The first thing seasoned business professionals do when they face a new project is reach for a pen and paper and set goals. It's the logical thing to do because it gives a project focus. Do the same by answering a few basic questions to help you define the goals of your anniversary celebration:

A. What new company direction deserves a promotion platform?

Is there a new plant, product or management team you would like to promote?

B. When was the last time you gave people something to be proud of?

Anniversaries are an opportunity to boost morale among employees, to strengthen support among stockholders, increase a community's awareness of the benefits derived from having you as an employer, a taxpayer and a neighbor.

C. How long has it been since you said "thanks"?

People react favorably toward organizations that show their appreciation.

D. When was the last time your advertising and public relations took a new track?

Anniversaries give you an opportunity to get out of a rut and put a fresh face on your image.

Who's on the Guest List?

Now that you've determined why you want to celebrate, decide to whom you want to direct the program and who