



# Ballot Best Practices Guide

How to create more revenue and engagement with 'Best Of' ballots

# 'Best Of' Ballot Overview

'Best Of' ballots are some of the biggest engagement tactics for your local businesses, and are used extensively by Second Street partners to drive revenue through advertisers and grow their database.

More commonly known as 'Best Of', Reader's Choice, Listener's Choice, or Viewer's Choice, Second Street ballots enable our partners to feature every business in their community. Your audience nominates and votes on their favorite businesses across many categories in your market.

A ballot should be set up in three phases:

## 1. Nomination Phase

This is where you get your audience to nominate businesses for each category

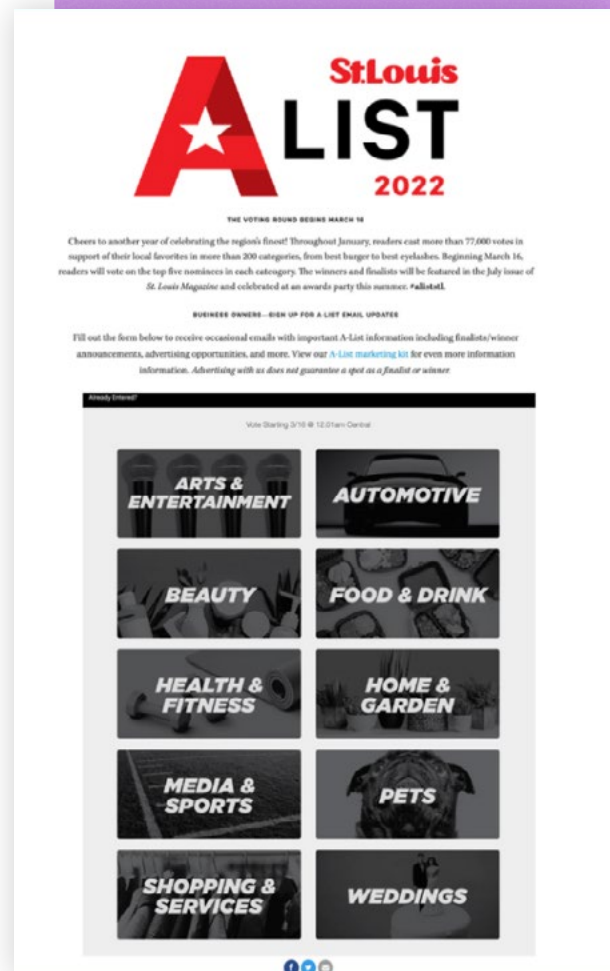
## 2. Voting Phase

This is where you push out the ballot for your audience to vote for who they want to win across your business categories

## 3. Winners' Phase

This is where you get to announce the 'Best Of' ballot winners

Planning for these three phases enables you to garner more excitement and more engagement with each round. So when it comes to revenue, this means you now have three opportunities to sell to advertisers instead of just one!





# Contents

## The Plan

Nomination Phase	5
Transition Period	6
Voting Phase	7
Winner's Phase	8
Planning Checklist	9
Audits	10-13



## How to Sell

What Can You Sell?	15-19
Sample Sales Scripts	20
Overcoming Objections	21

## Marketing your Ballot

Branding your Ballot Page	23
Call to Action Text	24
Media Kit	25-6
Registration Page	27
B2C Marketing	28
Email Campaign	28-9

## Additional Resources

# The Plan

## Run a 3-phase ballot

In order to have the most success you should start planning your ballot as soon as your last ballot is over. If you're new to 'Best Of' ballots, you should ideally start planning six months out from the launch of your Nomination Phase.

For example, if your special issue prints in June then your nomination phase begins in February, and you should start planning in August.

As part of this planning, you should have a checklist for each task.

**Need help getting started with your checklist? We created one for you!**

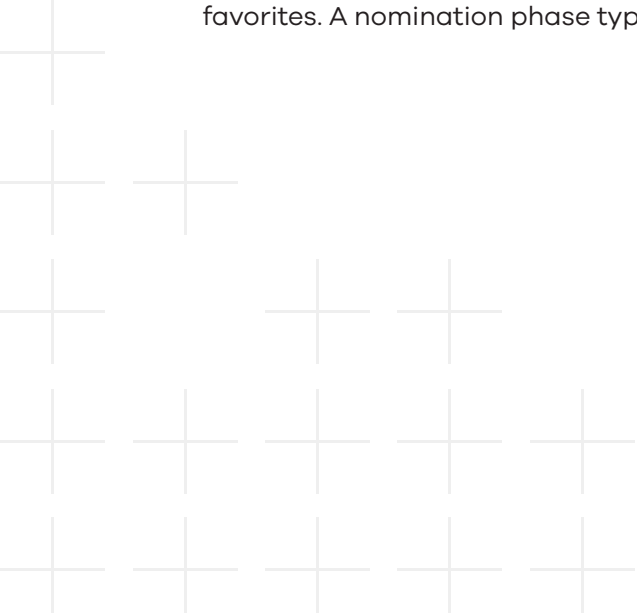
[Download the checklist](#)

# Nomination Phase

The Nomination Phase (or write-in phase) typically lasts 3-4 weeks. This phase is where you ask your audience to tell you which businesses should be on your ballot. Based on the number of nominations a business receives, you can determine whether it makes the cut for the final voting ballot.

The screenshot shows a nomination form interface. On the left is a vertical list of categories: Home Security, Insurance Agent (Person's Name and Company Name), Investment Firm, Landscaping, Law Firm, Mortgage Lender (Person's Name and Company Name), Patio Furniture, Pool & Spa Company, Real Estate Agent (Person's Name and Company Name), Real Estate Company, Retirement Community, Skilled Nursing, and Kids & Education. The main area contains three nomination sections: 1. 'Driveway and Paving' with a text input field for 'Nomination Name' and a green 'NOMINATE' button. 2. 'Estate Sales and Auctions' featuring an advertisement for 'Deja Vu Estate Sales and Auctions' and 'BEST Estate Sales & Auctions Furniture Store! Antique Store!' with a 'NOMINATE US!' call to action, followed by a text input field for 'Nomination Name' and a green 'NOMINATE' button. 3. 'Home Builder (Person's Name and Company Name)' with a text input field for 'Nomination Name' and a green 'NOMINATE' button.

If you are a mid-size or large market, we recommend a minimum of five businesses moving onto the voting round. If you are a small market, three businesses are sufficient. This means businesses and your audience will be motivated to drive up nominations for their favorites. A nomination phase typically lasts 3-4 weeks.



# FAQ

**In the nomination phase should we have write-ins only? Or approve nominations to the ballot as they come in?**

## Best Practice:

When collecting nominations Second Street recommends using 'Write In' nominations only. This allows for a better user experience on the front end as it allows your participants to nominate their businesses of choice, without needing to scroll through a list of businesses to find a specific nominee. We also recommend that you do not moderate and approve a nomination as it comes in because this can be an extremely time-consuming process, and best done later once nominations have been submitted and your nomination phase has ended.

## Transition period

The transition period is the time between your nomination phase and the voting phase, and typically should be a minimum of three weeks. During this time, you will:

- Moderate your ballot
- Merge entrants to determine the top nominees in each category
- Move these nominees on to the voting phase of the ballot

The screenshot displays the 'Moderate Nominations - Best Asian Fusion' interface. The top navigation bar includes a back arrow, the title 'Moderate Nominations - Best Asian Fusion', and the 'Second Street' logo with search, help, and notification icons. Below the navigation bar, there are three tabs: 'MERGE (12)', 'EDIT & APPROVE', and 'APPROVED (0)'. The left sidebar shows a 'Categories' section with a search bar and a list of categories under 'EATING AND DRINKING'. The 'Best Asian Fusion' category is selected, showing 123 nominations. The main area displays 'All Nominations' with a list of entries, each with a checkbox, name, nomination count, and a 'Pending Nomination' status. At the bottom, there is a purple button labeled 'ADD ALL PENDING TO BALLOT' and two navigation buttons: '← BEST WOMEN!...' and 'BEST AUTHEN... →'.

Entrant Name	Nominations	Status
Asian Fushion	2	Pending Nomination
Asian fusion	1	Pending Nomination
Aya	9	Pending Nomination
Aya Cookhouse	11	Pending Nomination
Basil	252	Pending Nomination
Co	71	Pending Nomination

Once you have determined the top nominees that are moving on to the voting phase of the ballot, you will want to provide this list of entrants to your sales team to sell the voting phase of the ballot.

Once the sales period is over, you will add featured entrant data to the entrant within the admin tool.

## Voting Phase

During the Voting Phase, participants will only be able to vote for entrants that have been added to the ballot for the voting phase. (i.e. the 3-5 businesses in each category that garnered the most nominations.) In this phase, participants will not have the option to write-in a vote, but instead simply place a vote for their preferred winner. A typical voting phase should last three to four weeks.

**Air Purification Company**

**Air Solutions**  
Your #1 Source For Keeping Cool

**Vote for us in Best of Sumter**

Breathe easy with AireServ. We care about your home. Indoor Air Quality Specialists. World Class Service.

**VOTE BEST OF**  
Air & Heating  
Air Purification  
Best Customer Service  
AireServ.com/Sumter  
Facebook.com/AireServSumter

**AIRE SERV**  
HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING  
803-720-5759

**Featured Entrants**

**AIRE SERV**  
HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING  
a neighborly company

**Aire Serv of Sumter**

Aire Serv provides residential and business clients with quality heating and air conditioning services that you can trust. We charge the job instead of the hour, so you'll never have to worry ab...[Read more](#)

220 Kingsbury Dr Suite 3, Sumter, SC 29150, United States

(803) 998-0663

[www.aireserv.com/sumter/](http://www.aireserv.com/sumter/) VISIT

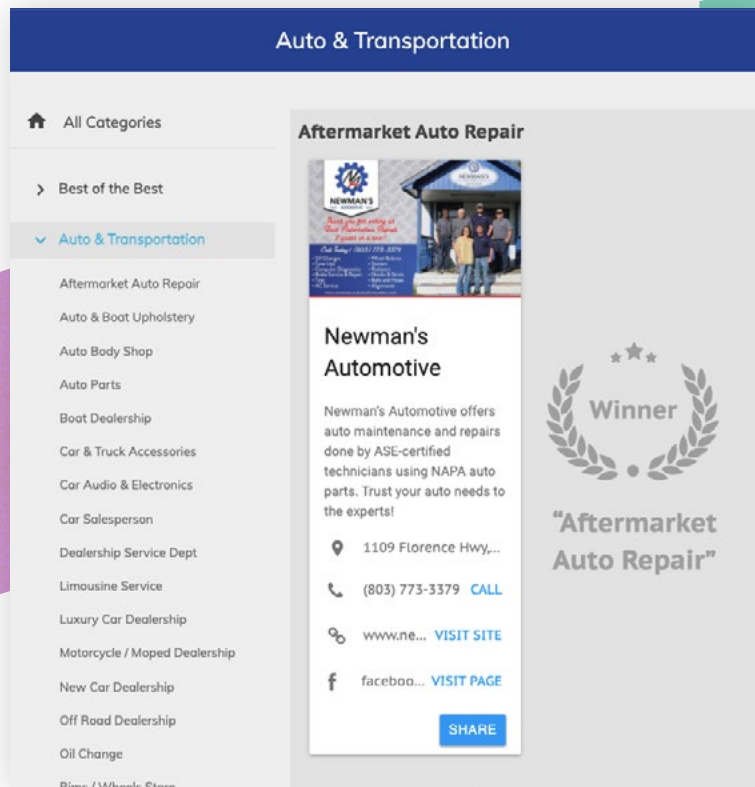
[facebook.com/AireServSumter](https://facebook.com/AireServSumter) VISIT

**All Entrants**

<b>Aire Serv of Sumter</b> 220 Kingsbury Dr Suite 3, Sumter, SC 29150, United States	<b>VOTE</b>
<b>Air Plus Services</b> 712 Bultman Dr #2, Sumter, SC 29150, United States	<b>VOTE</b>
<b>Air Solutions Heating and Cooling</b> 2190 Storage Rd, Sumter, SC 29150, United States	<b>VOTE</b>
<b>Boykin Air Conditioning Services</b> 845 S Guignard Dr, Sumter, SC 29150, United States	<b>VOTE</b>
<b>Hatfield Heating and Air Conditioning, Inc.</b> 1640 Suber St, Sumter, SC 29154, United States	<b>VOTE</b>

## Winner's Phase

The Winner's Phase is where you will publish the results from the voting phase of the ballot. Second Street recommends one winner and two finalists.



You should plan to publish/ recognize winners not only online, but also within your core product.

- Online Winners' Directory
- Special Issue
- On-Air mentions or production
- Live Event

After the voting phase is over, you will identify winners of each category, pulling a winners list. You will then provide this list to your sales team to sell winner packages.



## Use a Planning Checklist

Your 'Best Of' is a massive undertaking and requires multiple departments within your organization to work together. You will need a champion. Someone to "captain the ship" and hold everyone accountable for the part they play. 'Best Of' is a huge opportunity for growth in all areas. To keep you on track, we've created a [checklist](#) with everything you will need to execute your 'Best Of'.

## Audit and Prep your Categories and Audience

Categories

Search Categories

Counts are updated periodically.

DINING OUT

CATEGORIES	Count
Best barbecue restaurant (sing...)	192
Best chain restaurant	68
Best cheap eats	189
Best chicken wings (single locat...)	229
Best Chinese restaurant (single...)	128
Best coffee shop (single location)	105
Best Italian restaurant (single l...)	129
Best Japanese restaurant (singl...)	62
Best local brewery (single locat...)	65

## FAQ

**How far out should I start planning and what are the steps I need to take to ensure success?**

### Best Practice:

Start planning at least 6 months ahead of your nomination phase and utilize our sales and marketing **checklist** to make sure you don't forget anything.

## Audit your Ballot

Each year you need to review your previous year's ballot, reviewing the Groups and Categories and how they performed year-over-year

- What categories performed well?
- What categories did not perform well?
- Was the category relevant within the community?
- What categories need to be added?
- What categories need to be removed?

To help determine what categories belong on your ballot we have three Key Performance Indicators:

- 1. Did it drive engagement?**
- 2. How much revenue was generated?**  
Have competing businesses within the category historically purchased advertising, or not?
- 3. Is there a potential revenue opportunity?** Is there an emerging category that has lots of businesses and therefore potential revenue? Was there a reason a category might not have advertised previously but may do today?

Categories on your ballot MUST fall into one of the above buckets. If the category doesn't meet one of the above outlined KPIs, it's dead weight and should be removed from your ballot.

## FAQ

**How many categories should I have on my ballot?**

### Best Practice:

There is no magic number for categories on your ballot. As long as they fall into one of the three Key Performance Indicators, they should be on your ballot.

## Audit your Audience

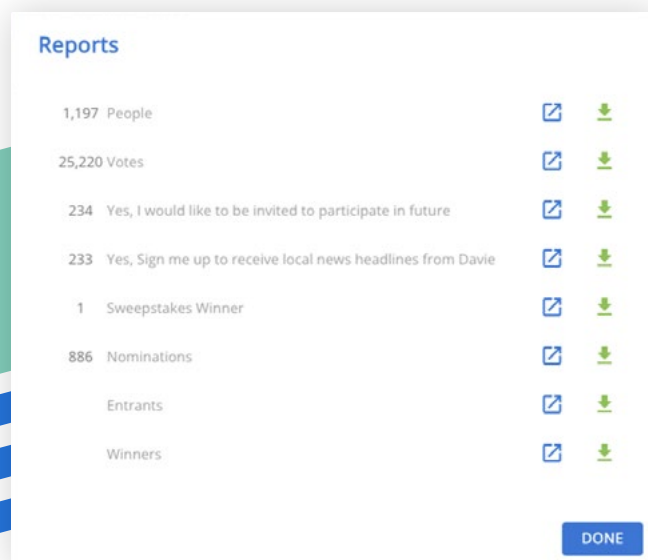
Similar to your ballot, you need to audit your audience in order to recognize trends in participation year-over-year. Use these trends to identify ways you can increase participation and generate more nominations/votes per user.

### Key data to review:

- Total number of users
- Total number of Nominations
- Total number of Votes
- Average number of nominations per user
- Average number of votes per user

### Key reports to review:

- **Entrant Report** – Export of your ballot that contains nomination and vote totals
- **Nomination Report** – Individual nominations by email address
- **Voting Report** – Individual votes by email address



Reports			
1,197	People		
25,220	Votes		
234	Yes, I would like to be invited to participate in future		
233	Yes, Sign me up to receive local news headlines from Davie		
1	Sweepstakes Winner		
886	Nominations		
	Entrants		
	Winners		

DONE

## FAQ

How often should I let people nominate/vote?

### Best Practice:

For maximum engagement, we recommend daily nominations/votes. This allows businesses to market the ballot to their customers daily, driving up nominations and increasing engagement overall.

## Audit your Revenue

How can you continue to grow your ballot revenue by at least 30% year after year? The most successful companies do two key things:

- They have a champion to oversee the project from start to finish.
- They audit their revenue from previous years to look for trends and opportunities.



## Ballot Champion

In markets with a ballot champion, we have seen as much as 50%-450% revenue growth year-over-year! The champion will work with departments across the organization to set the strategy, audience and sales goals. They will work closely with the sales leaders to coordinate training and sales materials. They will also work with the marketing team to develop the promotional materials for both the Business-to-Business and Business-to-Consumer marketing efforts (more on this to come in the Marketing section).

## FAQ

**How do I get more engagement/participation per user?**

### Best Practice:

Include a sweepstakes for both the nomination and voting phase of your ballot. This will incentivize users to nominate/vote in multiple categories for a chance to win a prize.

**The champion should essentially be your project manager and motivator to ensure maximum success.**

## Audit your Sales Efforts from Last Year

Again, the most successful companies running 'Best Of' ballots tend to have two things in common when it comes to their sales efforts.

- They have simple packages for their ballot that are easy for businesses and advertisers to take up.
- They look for creative opportunities that add value for their clients each year, and use case studies, testimonials and ROI statements from other advertisers to make the investment compelling.

### **When reviewing last year's sales efforts ask yourself these four questions:**

- What packages generated the most revenue?
- What packages did not meet your goals?
- Where can you increase the value in your packages?
- How can you simplify your packages? (both for your sales team and your clients)

## FAQ

### How do I grow my revenue YOY?

### Best Practice:

Keep your sales packages simple and look for ways to add value for advertisers. If you need help getting started, here is your [\*\*Revenue Worksheet!\*\*](#) It has sample revenue goals by ballot round and package suggestions.

# How to Sell

When you sell your 'Best Of' ballot to potential advertisers you need to do so with precision. To maximize your potential revenue, focus on setting goals, understanding what you can put in your packages, who to prospect, how to pitch and overcome objections. This section will cover each of these concepts for each phase of your ballot. You should have a checklist for the sales process to track each phase of the ballot.

**Need help getting started with your checklist? We created one for you!**

[Download the checklist](#)

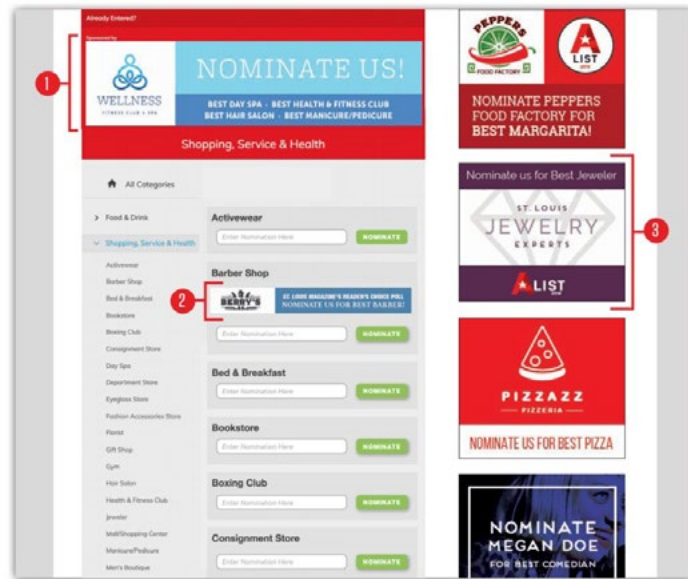
# What can you sell?

## Nomination Phase

In the nomination phase, you should sell both group ads and category ads within the ballot itself.

### SAMPLE BALLOT ▼

1 GROUP SPONSOR: 1,800x450 2 CATEGORY AD: 1,200x150 3 BALLOT SPONSOR: 300x250



- A group ad is a large leaderboard ad that is displayed at the top of each group (e.g. A hospital could own the entire "Health & Wellness" group of categories).
- A category ad is a smaller leaderboard ad that is displayed at the top of each category (e.g. A landscape company above the "Landscaper" category).

With both group and category ads you can sell as many as you would like to in these spots.

Our recommended best practice is to limit your group ads to 1-3 advertisers, and your category ads to 5. It can be tempting to sell more but keeping it to these numbers creates exclusivity and maximum exposure for your advertisers.

Don't forget to also include leaderboards or 300x250 ads in your nomination phase packages. These ads can run within your own website above and/or alongside the ballot.







# Winner's Phase

This phase typically generates 60-70% of your total ballot revenue, so when selling, don't forget to include the online winner's directory in your packages. Offer enhanced listings, group and category ads in the winner's directory, as well as leaderboards or right rail ads on the page where you are embedding your ballot.

Nominations and voting occurred in early 2021 and are now closed. See the 338 winners below.

If you have any questions about promoting your nomination or win, contact your Sumter Item sales representative - Karen Cave, Devin McDonald or Mark Petrus.

BEST OF SUMMER 2021 magazine is available in the May 1-3 Weekend Edition of The Sumter Item.

BEST OF SUMMER 2021: The Red Carpet Event will be held Tuesday, July 27 at Sumter Original Brewery.

See Best of Clarendon 2021 here.

See the magazine, videos and more from BEST OF SUMMER 2020 here.

Business

All Categories

Adult Day Center

Best of the Best

Auto & Transportation

Business

Adult Day Center

Air Purification Company

Auction Company

Ball Band Company

Beauty Facilities

Barber Shop

Building Design Company

Car Wash

Child Care Center

Children's Fitness

Commercial Contractor

Commercial Real Estate Company

Office Supply

City Cleaners

Employment Agency

Fire Extinguisher Service

Flowers Center (Florist)

Flood Company

Furniture Home

Golf Course

Hair Salon

Health Care Insurance

Heavy Equipment Rental

Home & Auto Insurance

Hotel

Internet Service Provider

Integration Company

IT Company

Jack Removal Service

Life Insurance Company

Lumber Company

Manufacturing Plant

Medical Arts

Message / Message / Transport

Mobile Device Repair

Active Day of Sumter

Winner

"Adult Day Center"

All Entrants

Active Day of Sumter

Magnolia Adult Day Center

Severely Keepers Home Care

Air Purification Company

AIRESERV

Aire Serv of Sumter

Why Aire Serv?

Chosen US as Your AC & Heating Experts

Aire Serv wants you to stay comfortable and breathe clean all year round! That's why our company focuses on excellence in customer service...[Read more](#)

230 Kingsbury Dr. S.

855-758-5759

www.aire-serv.com

Winner

"Air Purification Company"

# FAQ

How do I get my sales team excited/engaged to sell 'Best Of'?

## Best Practice:

Have a sales launch party that makes it fun for your sales team. Ask them to give you exact numbers of users, votes and revenue from the previous year, and reward team members that guess the closest to your actual number. This is a fun game that gets them excited and also helps them remember important numbers when selling this initiative.

If you need help getting started, here's your [Revenue Worksheet!](#) And here are the [sample sales packages](#) for each phase by media type.

## Sales Training

The most important part of sales training is to keep packages simple, have focused sales trainings, and make it fun for your team.

## Prospect Effectively

Prospecting effectively is the easiest way to level-up your sales efforts, and you should be spending 90% of your time focused on the top categories that generate revenue.

In order to prospect effectively you must target businesses that fall into these 3 buckets:

- They show up in 3 or more categories on your ballot.
- They are competitive in their categories.
- They historically purchase ballot packages.

These are the categories that we typically see as the best revenue performers:

- Home Services
- Real Estate
- Automotive
- Financial
- Specialty Healthcare
- Legal

## FAQ

**Who should I be selling ballot packages to? Who do I target and why?**

### Best Practice:

You should be spending 90% of your time focused on the top categories that generate ballot revenue.

## The Pitch

When selling your ballot, focus on the benefits to the advertisers. For example:

- o The value in advertising in a promotion that engages the entire community
- o Multimedia campaign that will not only reach our audience but will reach/engage the entire region
- o Audience reach is exponentially higher
- o Free to participate – not pay to play – but competition is fierce and your presence on the ballot helps your exposure
- o Remind community of your past wins – that you are the best
- o You'll find new clients, customers and supporters
- o It will help with recruitment efforts
- o Share stats from the previous year - for example:
  - Total Users - % increase
  - Nominations - % increase
  - Votes - % increase

## FAQ

**What is the value proposition of a 'Best Of' ballot?**

### Best Practice:

'Best Of' programs, at their core, help businesses thrive. It's a year-round celebration that reminds local consumers that these businesses are the BEST in their market.

# Sample 'Best Of' Ballot Scripts

## Nomination Phase

"Congratulations on being a winner in our 2021 Best of the Best! Now it's time to defend your title as we launch the contest for 2022. Be sure to get nominated again so you make it to the final Voting Phase where you'll have the opportunity to win the Best of the Best Title again! We have nomination packages available, let's set up a time to talk!"

## Voting Phase

"Congratulations on being nominated in our 2022 Best of the Best contest! Now it's time to begin your 'Vote For Me' campaign as we launch the Voting Phase of the ballot for 2022. We had a 75% increase in nominations from last year and expect voting to take off in the same way. You're so close to claiming or defending your title! We have integrated voting packages available to reach our growing audience, let's set up a time to talk!"

## Winner's Phase

"Congratulations! You've been named 2022 'Best Of' winner in your category (or categories) in our largest 'Best Of' ever – with more than 175,000 votes and 30,000 users! At no cost to you, you'll automatically receive a framed certificate and a window cling to display in your business. You'll also be listed on the Winners' List in the 2022 'Best Of' magazine and on the website for the entire year. Winners' Packages are also available. Here are reasons you might pick one:

- Thank your supporters
- The special issue/magazine will be everywhere.
- Unique and bold online distribution in our winner's directory
- You'll find new clients, customers and supporters
- It will help with recruitment efforts

# Overcoming Objections

Objections are buying signals and signify that the client has more questions for you in order to decide to purchase a package. Here are common objections and how to overcome them:

## **“It’s rigged”**

It's free to participate in 'Best Of'. We are presenting this package to you because it's truly good for your business. Our audience is exponentially bigger and more valuable right now - and always during 'Best Of' Season. We promote this program everywhere. We use a third-party software system and check IP addresses if we suspect fraudulent voting.

## **“What if I buy a package and don’t win?”**

That could happen. But as a sales rep you can help them spread the word with not only the presence on the ballot (as part of their package) but with how they can solicit votes from their current customers. The key is to explain that they aren't paying for votes. They are paying for an integrated package that reaches your audience when it's at its peak. For example we had a 300% increase in votes this year and 20,000 unique users! Share how many nominations you had in last year's ballot. Share success stories of other advertisers.

## **“ I don’t need to buy a package to win. I am the best. The winner last year was a joke.”**

That's correct. It's free to participate in 'Best Of'. But your competitors want to claim your title. We are presenting this package to you because it's truly good for your business. Our audience is exponentially bigger and more valuable right now - and always during 'Best Of' Season. If you win every year, would you like to thank your supporters for making you the best?

## FAQ

**How do I overcome objections from business owners?**

## Best Practice:

Be prepared. Have scripts ready for common objections. Know your stats and your value proposition/benefits for the advertiser.

**“Overcoming Advertiser Objections to Ballot Sponsorships”**

[Read Article](#)

**Don't forget your planning checklist!**

[Download kit](#)

# Marketing Your Ballot

Your 'Best Of' ballot is your pot of gold and the more audience you bring to it, the more revenue you'll generate each year. To get the best results for both Business-to-Business and Business-to-Consumer efforts you'll need a marketing plan and more importantly, a project manager. We see 50%-450% revenue growth year-over-year with our partners that have a ballot champion.

# Branding your Ballot Page

Make sure your ballot page is well-organized and has a header graphic, call-to-action text, and 6-8 maximum ballot groups.

Ballot page

## Elements should include:

- Ballot header graphic
  - Size ratio: 2:1
    - » 1200 x 600 or 1000 x 500
- Ballot logo
- Call-to-action
  - Define phases of the ballot - "Nominate Now"
- Change your promotional text for each phase
- Give information about sweepstakes or prizes if you are running one to encourage participation.



It's time to recognize your Emanuel County Favorites in The Forest-Blade's 2021 Readers' Choice Awards! Help us acknowledge the best of Emanuel County by letting us know who you think excels in each category.

**From March 17 - April 23, you can vote once per day per category. If you don't see your favorites nominated, you can write them in.**

**All registered voters will be entered to win \$250! Last day to vote is April 23.**

\*Nominees must be Emanuel County businesses or people.

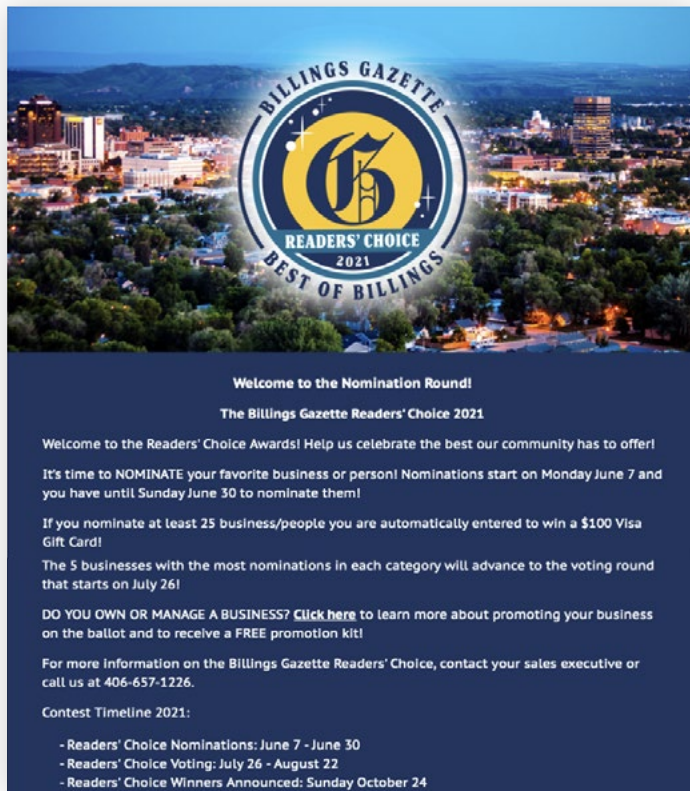
Already Voted?



Ballot header graphic



## Sample Call-to-Action Text



Here's a template to use:

- Welcome to the (insert year and name of your ballot here)
  - This is a celebration of the best of the best in our community
- Make sure you outline the nomination and voting process and timeline.
  - **Nomination Phase:** Dates. How it works: How often you can nominate, and the number of businesses that will move on to voting round
  - **Voting Phase:** Dates and voting frequency.
  - **Winner's Phase:** Date When they will be contacted & when they will be published.
- Link to your Media Kit for advertisers to promote themselves.
- Link to your FAQs page for business owners.

## FAQ

How do I market to my local businesses?

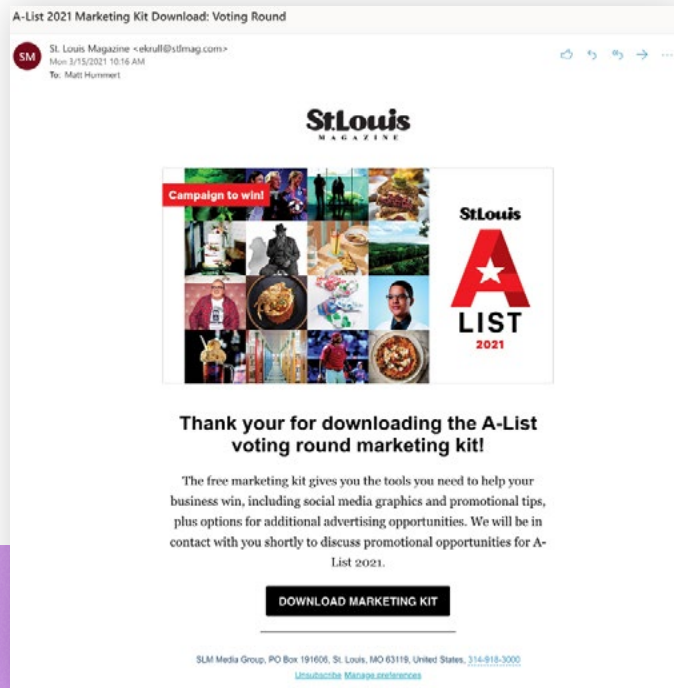
### Best Practice:

Create an FAQ page for business owners. This should explain what your ballot is and link to this page in the call-to-action of your B2B emails (as well as in the call-to-action text of your ballot page). It should include the following:

- Key dates
- Define each phase of the ballot (especially if it's your first time doing 3 phases)
- Provide an email address so business owners can ask questions and contact you
- Include a hashtag for your ballot
- Provide best practices for local businesses on how to promote themselves
- Link to your Media Kit (social media graphics)



## Media Kit



### Form should include:

- First Name
- Last Name
- Email
- Company Name
- Phone Number
- Job Title (drop-down)
- Opt-In
  - "Please send me information on advertising as part of 'Best Of'"
  - Use the HOT LEADS feature!
- Put a link to your Media Kit form on:
  - Call-to-Action Text on ballot page
  - FAQ page
  - In a B2B email to local business owners
  - The Thank You email after someone fills out the form to get the kit

## FAQ

How do I encourage businesses to promote themselves?

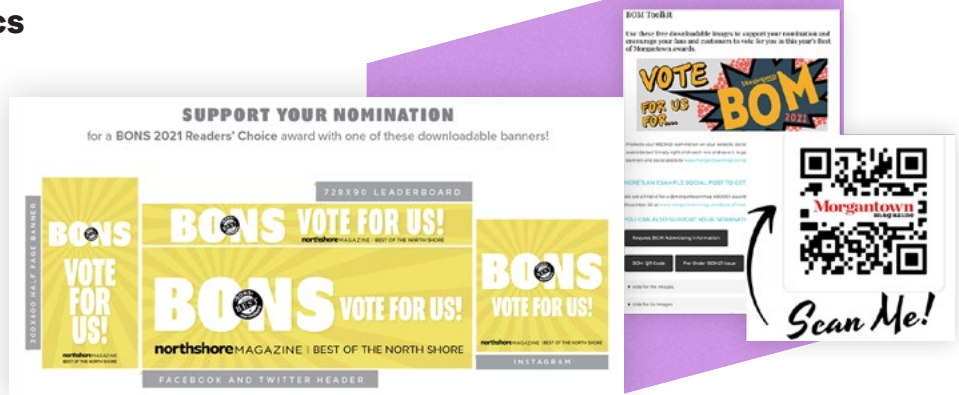
### Best Practice:

Provide a media kit that all business owners can download and use. This is a kit of graphics for business owners to promote themselves and the ballot. This kit should always live behind a form (you can use the Second Street survey tool for this) so you are collecting leads for your sales team.

## What is included in the Media Kit?

### Social Media Graphics that include:

- Your ballot logo
- CTA text:
  - Nominate Us
  - Vote for Us
  - Thank you
- Change up CTA when you move from one phase to the next
- QR code



**Bitly Links**

2021 Ballot: <http://bit.ly/cc2021ballot>

Lowcountry Favorites: <http://bit.ly/cc2021favorite>

Food & Dining: <http://bit.ly/cc2021dining>

Health & Wellness: <http://bit.ly/cc2021health>

Drinks & Nightlife: <http://bit.ly/cc2021nightlife>

Arts & Entertainment: <http://bit.ly/cc2021arts>

Automotive, Boat & RV: <http://bit.ly/cc2021auto>

Just for Kids: <http://bit.ly/cc2021kids>

Home & Garden: <http://bit.ly/cc2021home>

Pets: <http://bit.ly/cc2021pets>

Local Shopping: <http://bit.ly/cc2021shop>

Professional Services: <http://bit.ly/cc2021prof>

Real Estate: <http://bit.ly/cc2021realestate>

Recreation, Leisure & Outdoor: <http://bit.ly/cc2021recreation>

### Examples of elements to include (media kit socials):

- Instagram Post
- Instagram Story
- Facebook Post
- Facebook Cover Photo
- Facebook Story
- 8 ½ x 11 Poster
- Point of Purchase Display
- QR Code
- Bitly Links for each group on your ballot
- Give examples of how local businesses should use the graphics to promote themselves
- Example social media post scripts

"We are a finalist for a @morgantownmag #BOM21 award! Vote for us daily from November 30-December 20 at [www.morgantownmag.com/best-of-Morgantown-21](http://www.morgantownmag.com/best-of-Morgantown-21)"

## Registration page

This is where you are collecting information on users in your ballot. You will want to make sure to include the following on this page:

- Email
- First name/Last name
- Demographic Data. What demographic data is important to you or your marketing efforts? These are optional based on what is the most important to you:
  - Birth date
  - Gender
  - Postal code
- Core Newsletter Opt-ins. Make sure you include an opt-in to the lists that generate revenue for you. This could be your daily headlines, or your promotions list. Don't add more than two opt-ins to your registration form. One is ideal.

Email Required

First Name Required

Last Name Required

Postal Code Required

I'd like to receive the Dining newsletter, covering the food scene in St. Louis.

## FAQ

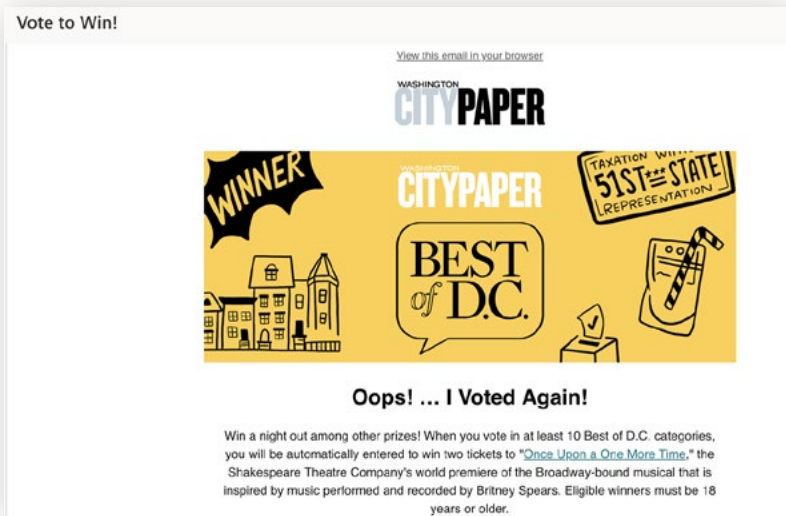
**Should I include my sponsor's opt-in on the registration form?**

### Best Practice:

Absolutely not. You only have 1-2 opt-ins that you should be adding to the form. Make sure they are growing your lists. Your advertiser has more opportunities within the ballot to get in front of your audience.

## B2C marketing

Make sure you are increasing participation each year by promoting to your audience.



## Email Campaign

Schedule three emails per phase:

- Invitation Email "Nominate/Vote Now"
- One week left to nominate/vote
- Last chance to nominate/vote



Only a few days left to [vote for your favorite businesses](#) in The Best of Forsyth 2021! The deadline is Saturday, October 31, 2020 at 11:59 PM. You can vote once per day.

Don't miss your chance to be heard!

Thanks!  
Forsyth County News

[VOTE NOW](#)

## FAQ

What are ways I can promote to my audience?

### Best Practice:

Include a sweepstakes (sweeps promotion) for users that nominate and/or vote in 25 or more categories. Also make sure you have an integrated marketing campaign.

## Digital

- Homepage takeover
- Ad Extension
- Social media posts (paid and organic)

## Core Media

- Article announcing launch
- Print/On-Air ads
- Use talent to promote
- Put QR codes that lead to the ballot on ads



## Publish a Winner's Directory both online and in print (if applicable)

Drive traffic to the Winner's Directory year-round:

- In daily headlines newsletter each month
- Look at categories to highlight for National Holidays

**Example:** Donut articles, bracket, etc. to drive traffic back to winner's directory on National Donut Day

## FAQ

**What are the steps I need to take to ensure success?**

### Best Practice:

Start planning for your ballot the day after this year's ballot is over. At the very least, plan six months out from your go live date. And don't forget to download the **Planning checklist** (again!)

# Additional Resources

## Ballot Calendar & Revenue Calculator

In this kit, you'll find everything you need to get the most revenue out of your 'Best Of':

- Planning Checklist
- Revenue Calculator
- Sample Sales Packages

[Download the Kit](#)

## On-Demand Ballot Webinars

[Marketing Your 2022 'Best Of' ballot](#)

[Selling Your 2022 'Best Of' ballot](#)

[Planning Your 2022 'Best Of' ballot](#)

## **Second Street**

Upland Second Street is an audience engagement software platform used by over 4,000+ companies. Our platform gives users the power to build contests, interactive content, and emails. This includes sweepstakes, photo contests, ballots, quizzes, polls, newsletters, drip campaigns, and more! Our partners use Second Street to drive revenue, database growth, and audience engagement. They do this by selling sponsorships to advertisers or creating custom solutions that identify hot sales leads, add new people to email lists, and attract new site traffic.

**Want to learn more?**

**Contact us.**



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