

Motivating Cub Scouts to Sell Popcorn

I would like to offer that Cub Scouts do not need large incentives to be motivated. Sticker charts and public recognition week over week get them excited. I have broken the sale into step-by-step processes for Cubs that help tick all the boxes of all the best practices and make it fun while they are doing it.

- Simple sheets with squares/pictures of a product assortment that add up to common goals of \$500, \$700, or \$1000 in sales. The scouts get the satisfaction of checking off a box each time they sell. When they fill the whole sheet they get a simple prize from the dollar tree treasure chest we have had.
- Sticker charts for downloading the app, updating their profile, practicing their perfect pitch (the best practice suggested way), sending an email to friends and family sharing their pitch and their online link, signing up for 2 show n sell shirts, completing 3 take orders (wagon sales), etc. If they fill in the sheet they get a prize, or depending on the year each week we would do a “challenge” with those tasks and they would get a small prize, sticker, or high five. All were equally popular.
- Selling one of each of the products from the current lineup was also recognized.
- We’ve used bingo cards that hit on each of those and have fun added square, sell to a celebrity, sell to an elected official, sell to your teacher or coach.
- I had a pack of 65 at the height of my Cub Scout selling days and never spent more than \$200 on all the incentives spread across the entire season.
- One of our favorites was a length of duct tape for every \$200 you sold and at the end of the year, you got to duct tape the Cub Master or Committee Chair to the wall. They had a blast and it was safe according to the Guide to Safe Scouting (pie in the face is no longer allowed). That cost pennies per scout.

So, my point is, it can be fun and meaningful without large incentives, or actual belt loops earned. Pins/patches/stickers geared towards the sale are always a nice memento, but that's not what drives the behavior of Cubs to sell. They really thrive on the fun weekly challenges, the hype at every weekly meeting for a popcorn shout-out to those who met the challenge (takes about 3 minutes tops), and the silly cheap prizes. Immediate social recognition is what gets these kids thriving, so making it fun and exciting, then immediately recognizing them through praise and minor celebration keeps them coming back week after week with more sales and improved strategies, and the parents participate because their kid's behavior and excitement is driving the bus. That paired with a transparent budget and an ideal year of scouting worksheet shared with the parents helps them see the value of their scout earning their own way. Plus- who doesn't love to see their once shy and quiet child thriving in front of a storefront with an amazing sales pitch as if they were a seasoned salesperson?

I hope that helps gain some enthusiasm for this year's sale. PS- a fun theme is ALWAYS helpful!

Best of Luck!
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Yucca Council Popcorn Kernel