



# *Thinking Inside the Box...* **Creative Event Planning Strategies for PCCs**

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**United States Postal Service**

**Webinar**

**April 29, 2014**



# *Thinking Inside the Box...* **Creative Event Planning Strategies for PCCs**

## **PCC Webinar** **April 29, 2014**

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## Who We Are

**Amy Rocha – Time Customer Service, Inc.**

***Industry Co-Chair, Tampa Bay PCC***

- ***20+ years with TBPCC***
- ***Also served as Industry Vice Co-Chair and Secretary***

**Maddie Ahrens – United States Postal Service**

***Customer Relations Coordinator, Tampa Bay PCC***

- ***5+ years with TBPCC***
- ***Also served as Postal Vice Co-Chair***



## Who We Are

- 2013 Prestigious Platinum PCC**
- 2013 National Gold Education Excellence**
- 2013 National Bronze Innovation of the Year**
- 2012 Gold PCC Premier Award**
- 2012 National Gold Communication Excellence**
- 2012 National Silver Education Excellence**
- 2011 National Gold Education Excellence**
- 2011 Gold PCC Premier Award**
- 2010 PCC of the Year**
- 2010 Gold PCC Premier Award**
- 2010 National Bronze Education Excellence**
- 2009 Gold PCC Premier Award**



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# Agenda

- **Why Think Inside the Box?**
- **Defining the PCC Box**
- **Event Planning Challenges**
- **The six guiding questions...**
  - **Why, Who, What, Where, When, How**
- **Review**
- **Questions and Answers**





## Event Planning Resources available on usps.com



<https://www.usps.com/business/organize-a-pcc-event.htm>

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## Thinking Outside the Box vs. Thinking Inside the Box.....

- “Thinking Outside the Box” is to think freely, not bound by old, nonfunctional, or limiting structures, rules, or practices.
- “Thinking Inside the Box” is to utilize clearly defined components.
  - By leveraging these components you can benefit from the structure of the “box” and maximize its strength.

## Defining the PCC *Box*

### **Base or Bottom** – the PCC Mission

- the foundation of the PCC box and the mission statement

### **4 Sides** – what are the components?

- USPS
- PCC Network
- Corporate Sponsors
- Executive Board

### **Lid** – PCC Members (This is what holds the box together.)

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## Thinking Inside the Box allows you to focus on the Mission of the PCC.

- Promote, support, and foster close working relationships between the U.S. Postal Service and business mailers.
- Facilitate information sharing and idea exchange with business mailers about Postal Service products, programs, services and procedures.
- Help PCC industry members and their organizations grow and develop professionally through focused educational programs.

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# Event Planning Challenges

- **Limitations**
- **Resources**
- **Fears**
- **History**

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## Offer a Professional Certificate/Certification Program

- Increases event attendance and adds value to PCC membership
- Educational content can be incorporated into a series of educational workshops or offered at a full day expo event
- Recognize members who have earned certificates/certifications through recognition programs, newsletter articles, website announcements, etc.

# The Six Guiding Questions

## **Why**

- Why are you hosting the event?

## **Who**

- Who is your target audience?

## **What**

- What type of an event will it be?

## **Where**

- Where will you host the event?

## **When**

- When will the event take place?

## **How**

- How will you successfully tie it all together?

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## Why?

**Why are you holding the event? What is the main goal or objective?**

- Education, networking, recognition, National PCC Week, price increase, etc.

**Determining the desired outcome is critical.**

- Should be consistent with the PCC mission and be easily definable

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## Consider Premier Program Award requirements when planning your PCC Calendar of Events

- Depending upon the Level you are hoping to achieve (Platinum, Gold, Silver or Bronze) make sure you are offering the appropriate number of events and types of events to meet the specified requirements.

***Since the PCC fiscal year begins in October, this a great time to evaluate your planned calendar and determine what funds you'll need to execute your plan. This allows time to make any necessary adjustments.***

# Who?

## Who is your target audience?

- Is your target audience current PCC members, potential members or businesses?
- Make sure you include the benefit of event participation on all promotional material.
- You need to identify the target audience in order to effectively promote the event.



## Drill down your target audience and tailor your event to a specific group

- Market your educational classes based on the level of mailing expertise
- Label your classes as “Beginner”, “Intermediate” or “Advanced”

***This strategy will enable your membership base to make the best decision on which events to attend. It also enables your PCC to choose your speakers and content based upon the level of expertise in attendance.***

## What?

### What type of event will it be?

- Webinar
- Educational Workshop
- Certification Opportunity (MDP or EMCM)
- Facility Tour (USPS or Member Company)
- Networking
- Recognition Program
- Vendor Showcase
- National PCC Week

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## Combine event types to get the most bang for your buck

- Prior to a facility tour host a Meet & Greet of key USPS staff
- Combine an educational workshop with a roundtable discussion
- Add a vendor showcase to your National PCC Week event

You'll save time, money and capitalize on already allocated resources.

***This strategy will also help you accomplish Premier Program Award requirements faster and more efficiently.***

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## Where?

### Where will you hold the event?

- Online offering (webinar)
- USPS facility
- Customer facility
- Booked venue such as hotel, banquet hall or conference center

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## Details Matter

- Inquire about parking (availability, proximity to venue and if it's free)
- Make sure the location is comfortable (air conditioning, restroom facilities, lighting, seating, etc.)
- Don't forget the audio visual requirements

***Sometimes the little things are really the big things when executing a successful event. Attendees may not remember the content but they'll remember if the lunch was bad or the room was too cold!***

## When?

### When will you hold the event?

- Time of day
- Day of week
- Relevancy
- Survey your member preferences

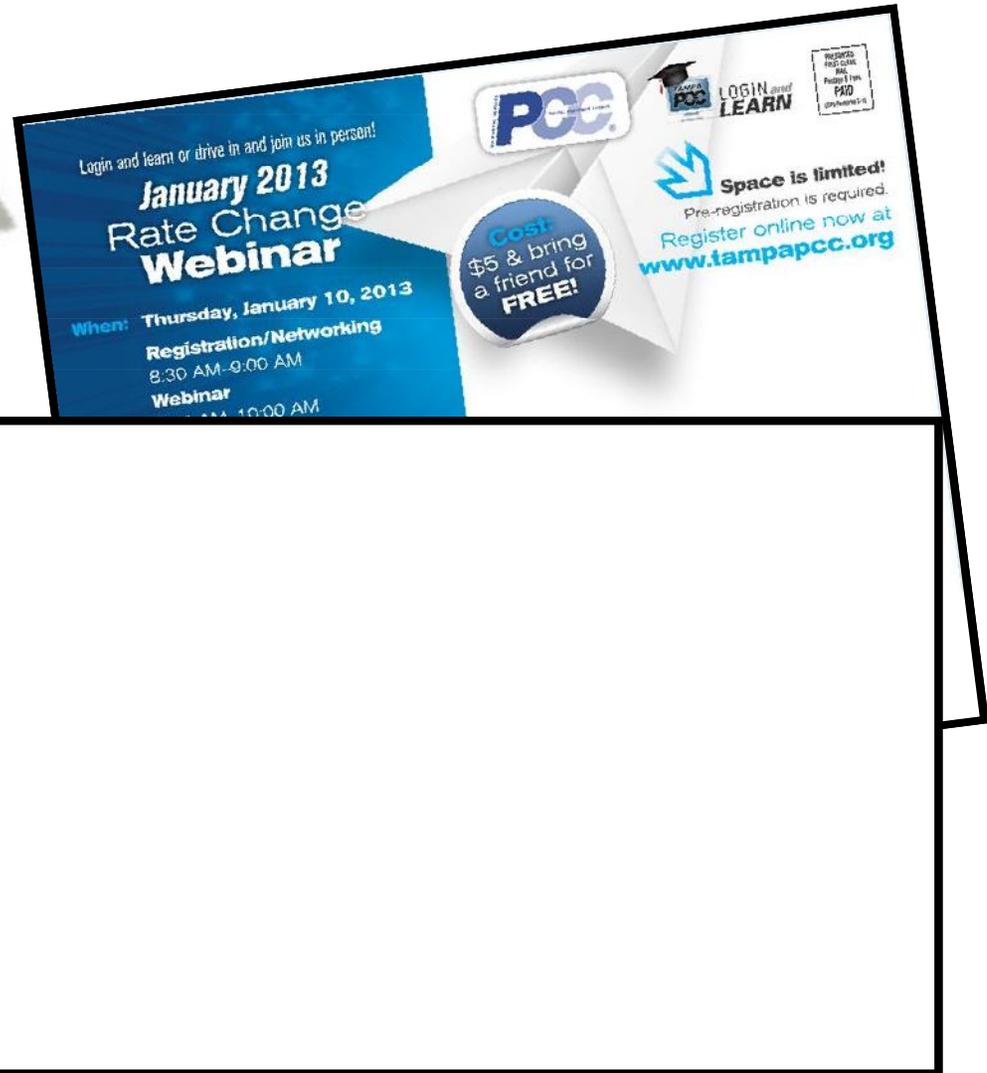
***Be mindful of high volume mailing days and consider holiday schedules.***



**To increase attendance plan your events around neighboring PCC events or partner to host a joint event. Be mindful of other business and industry events that may draw from the same base of members.**

***This is especially helpful when scheduling involvement from the AVP, District Manager, Marketing Manager or other PCC Network resources.***

***Hosting a joint National PCC Week event allows you to meet one of the qualifications for the Premier Award Program.***



## Offer a BOGO\* event or a FREE event/webinar

- Increases attendance
- Attracts new members

***Encourage vendors to bring their customers!***

\*Buy One Get One (BOGO)

## How?

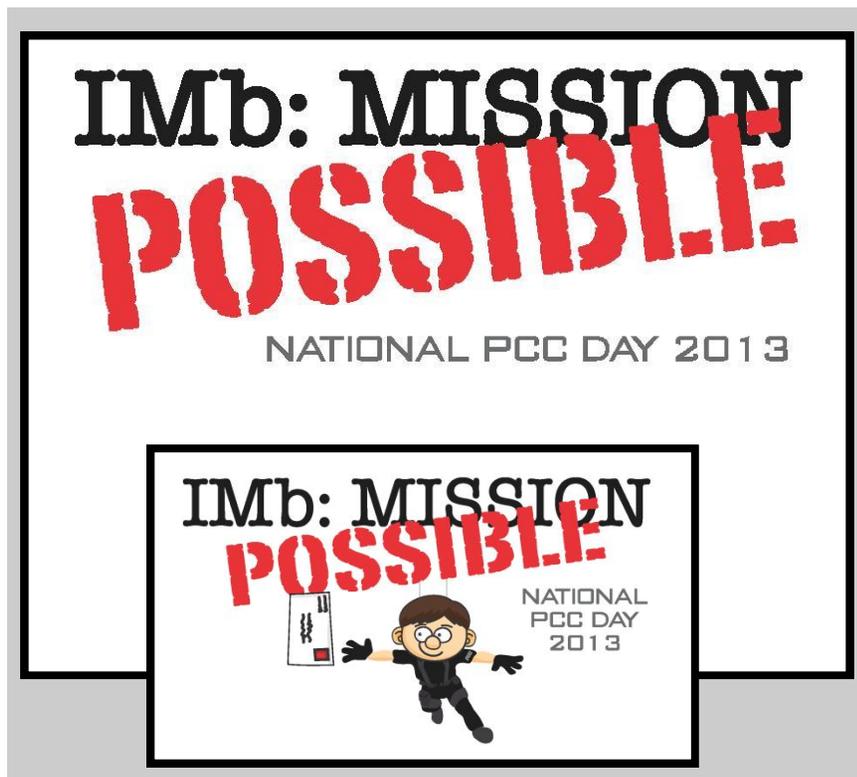
### How do you tie it all together?

- Brainstorm to create a theme/logo/tagline  
*(should be tied directly to the WHY?)*
- Logo should be used on all materials (mailings, email blasts, letters, posters, website, newsletters, event program, presentation cover page, promotional items, etc.)
- Should be simple, recognizable, scalable  
*(color vs. black/white)*
- Use other components that can be combined with logo and theme

# Sample Logos



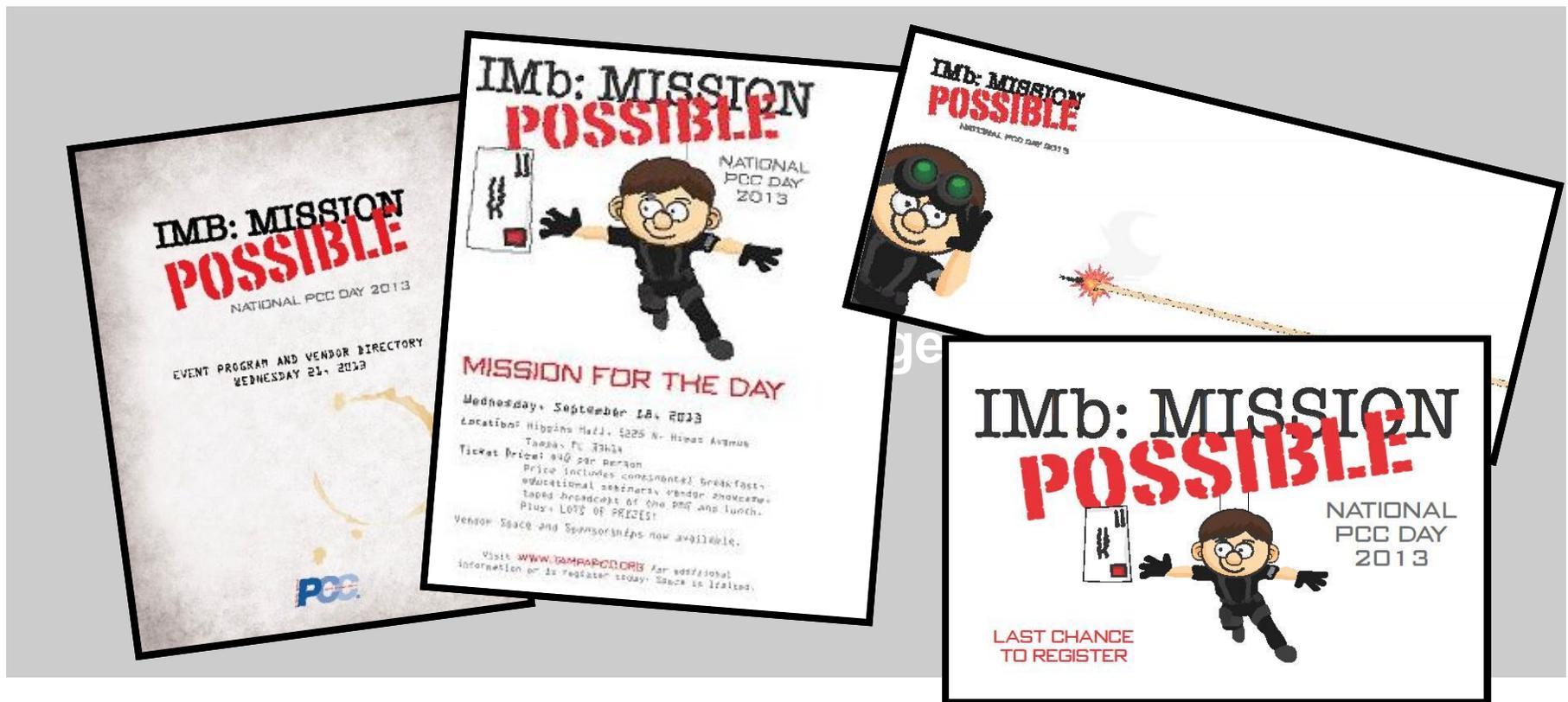
## Sample Event Logo Design



### Theme:

- Based on implementation of the Full Service IMb
  - Logos were used on all mailings, newsletters and event materials

# Event Logo Used on all Printed Pieces



# Theme Can Be Per Event or Year Long



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## Review

**Think “Inside the Box”**  
**Remember the 6 Guiding Questions**  
**Leverage the PCC Network**  
**Theme Your Event**  
**Brainstorm, Plan and Execute**



## Recap

**Visit [usps.com](https://usps.com) – Organize a PCC Event Page**  
**Offer a Professional Certificate Program**  
**Plan Calendar of Events around Premier Award Requirements**  
**Combine Event Types**  
**Market Classes as Beginner, Intermediate or Advanced**  
**Event Details Matter....parking, seating, etc.**  
**Schedule around other PCC/Industry Events**  
**Offer BOGO events...Bring a Friend for Free!**



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**Intermission**

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**Question and Answer Session**

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**The webinar is now concluded**

**A copy of this PowerPoint presentation will be posted on the  
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**RIBBS Website:**

**<https://ribbs.usps.gov/index.cfm?page=industryoutreach>**