

How to estimate the number of shirts you need

Estimating the number of shirts you'll need for your race is an inexact "art". Many things can impact it; the weather that day, how much in advance you have to have your order in, whether you are giving shirts to your volunteers and sponsors, etc. And with the rising costs of shirts, you'll want to keep your estimate conservative and yet not TOO conservative.

This methodology will help you closer to what you'll probably need:

- 1) the day you have to put in the order, make a copy of your master file of all entries. Do NOT use the original!
- 2) sort that copy by size and count the total number of shirts already needed for those entered.
- 3) Determine the percentage of that total that you need in each size; see example below

100 people pre -registered

Preregistered runners size needs

15 Smalls	15%
40 Med	40%
30 Large	30%
15 XL	15%

4) Now you'll need to estimate how many additional ones you need to entries that come in "after the order has been placed but before raceday" and people that sign up on raceday. Use the total number already needed for those that have entered (100 in our example above) and then multiply that number by the following, based on when you have to have your order in:

- 2 weeks prior: 35%
- 3 weeks prior: 45%
- 4 weeks prior: 50%

This will give you the number of "extra" shirts you'll need. These should be tweaked down just a few percentages if your cutoff date has already occurred prior to the order.

5) Then, take that number of additional shirts and multiply it by the percent you already need to order for each size. For our example above, we'll use a 3 week prior order. That means that we'll be ordering 45 extra shirts. The size breakdown for the 45 extra shirts should be:

- S: $45 \times 15\% = 6.75$ more smalls (round up to 7)
- M: $45 \times 40\% = 18$ more mediums
- L: $45 \times 30\% = 13.5$ more larges (round up to 14)
- XL: $45 \times 15\% = 6.75\%$ more XL's (round up to 7)

6) add these totals to the ones already needed for your entries that you've received

S: $15 + 7$

M: $40 + 18$

L: $30 + 14$

XI: $15 + 7$

7) Lastly, add to THESE totals the number of extra shirts you may wish to give to volunteers and to your sponsors. After doing this addition, if applicable, you'll have the total number of shirts that you need in each size.

8) Several things to remember about shirts ordering:

* the day of the race, set aside the ones that are already obligated and everything else is "unobligated": available to those that signup that day. Of those obligated, do NOT allow someone to exchange their size for a different size UNLESS you have that "new" size in your unobligated pile. If you do, give them their NEW size from the unobligated pile and then put the one that they turned in on the unobligated pile.

* the further out you have to put in your order before race day, the more "estimating" you have to do and the greater chance you have of either ordering TOO many shirts or not enough. Having "not enough" is the bigger problem.

* the shirt printer works for YOU, not the other way around. If they may say that they HAVE to have your order 3 weeks in advance but what they are really saying is that they'd LIKE your order 3 weeks in advance. If you say that they only get the job if you can order 10 business days in advance, miraculously, 90% of them will suddenly be able to accommodate YOUR demand.

* the more colors you have to the shirt, the higher your cost to print. Keep it to 3-4 colors in the front and 1 color on the back, at the most.

* the shirts that keep runners "coming back" emphasize the race, not your organization. Your organization should be on the shirt but if 90% of the graphic highlights the Rotary Club or PTO holding the event, it will not serve as a "draw" for runners in future years.

* you WILL have some extra shirts left over that day, even if you have obligated 100% of those that you ordered. Traditionally, approx. 10% of those that entered in advance will NOT show up. You are NOT obligated to get their shirts to them and most race applications will state "no mailing of shirts or awards". The fact that they did not show up and did not ask someone to pick up their shirt for them on raceday should NOT cause you extra hassle and expense. Many races, instead, will announce to those that did NOT get a shirt that you have some left over and they can get one AFTER THEY FINISH if paying the same price as those that DID get a shirt

* you are NOT obligated to have shirts for late entries. But the more shirts you distribute, the happier the runners AND your sponsors will be.

If you have any problems with doing this calculation, by all means, call us at 610-779-2668.

Pretzel City Sports