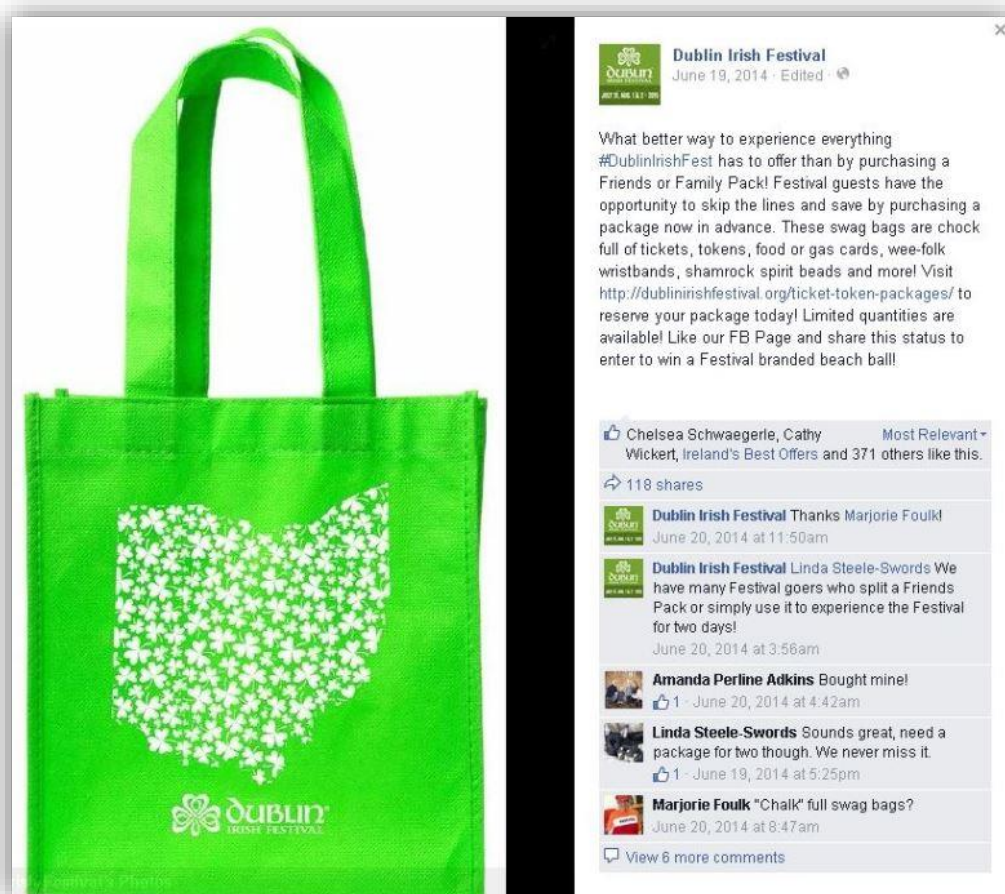




# DUBLIN<sup>®</sup> IRISH FESTIVAL



**Category 56**  
**Best Money-Making Idea**  
**Dublin Irish Festival Friends and Family Packs**  
**Budget \$750,000 – \$1.5 Million**

## Category 56

### Best Money-Making Idea

#### Friends and Family Packs

Budget \$750,000 – \$1.5 Million



### Overview Information:

#### **Introduction & description of the main event**

For 28 years, the first weekend in August has been reserved for the largest three-day Irish festival on the planet. The Dublin Irish Festival, hosted annually in Dublin, Ohio, a city just northwest of Columbus, is one of the nation's premier Irish festivals and a Central Ohio tradition. More than 100,000 guests visit the Festival each year to experience the best of Irish dance, music, art, sports and culture. Located on 39 rolling acres in Dublin's Coffman Park, the Dublin Irish Festival brings guests from all over the world together in celebration of all things Irish.

The Dublin Irish Festival works to create a festival that is enjoyable for guests of all ages and interests. Through innovative marketing and creative promotional efforts, the Festival strives to bring families and friends together to explore the magic of Irish heritage and culture.

#### **Description of money-making idea**

The Dublin Irish Festival friends and family packs were created as a way for families or small groups of friends to experience the Festival in an unforgettable way. The packages were specially created to include everything a group might need to fully enjoy the Festival weekend. The items included in the two types of packages varied based on their intended audience.

##### Included in the **Family Pack:**

- Two adult one-day admission tickets
- 24 beverage tokens
- Two Wee Folk wristbands
- Four \$5 Wendy's vouchers
- Four shamrock spirit bead necklaces
- One Dublin Irish Festival reusable "swag bag"

##### Included in the **Friends Pack:**

- Four adult one-day admission tickets
- 24 beverage tokens
- Four \$5 Giant Eagle gas vouchers
- Four commemorative mugs
- One Dublin Irish Festival reusable "swag bag"

Friends and family packs were available for purchase before the start of the 2014 Dublin Irish Festival on the Festival website. The packages were also promoted in all Dublin Irish Festival media releases, as well as on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Both types of packages were sold for \$100 each. This marketing strategy proved to be popular with guests because the purchase of the package guaranteed a small discount in goods and services and the opportunity to purchase tickets, tokens and other festival items in advance. Since the packages were picked up by guests prior to the start of the Festival, guests who purchased a friends or family pack did not need to stand in line to purchase tickets or beverage tokens on the Festival grounds.

The total value of a family pack for the customer was \$114. Since the packages were sold for \$100 each, this was a savings of \$14, in addition to the time saved at Festival by not having to wait in line for tickets or tokens. The total assembly cost of a family pack was \$54. The 24 beverage tokens represented a \$48 direct cost to the Festival, and the "swag bags" in which the packages' contents were housed cost \$5 each. The shamrock spirit bead necklaces cost \$1, the same amount for which they would be sold to the customer separately from the package. The admission tickets, which were a \$20 value, were provided with no direct cost to the Festival. Similarly, the Wee Folk wristbands, also valued at \$20, were provided with no direct cost to the Festival. The \$5 Wendy's vouchers were donated by Wendy's, a Dublin Irish Festival sponsor, so no direct cost to the Festival was required. By selling the package at a discounted rate of \$100, customers saved \$14 per package purchased and the Festival made \$46 per package sold.



Similarly, the friends packs were sold for \$100 each. The total value of these packages was \$121 per pack, representing a savings of \$21 per package purchased. The package cost \$57 to assemble. The four adult one-day admission tickets, a \$40 value, were provided with no direct cost to the Festival. The 24 beverage tokens were a \$48 direct cost to the Festival, and the commemorative mugs, valued at \$8, represented a \$4 direct cost to the Festival. The "swag bag" cost the Festival \$5 per bag; however, the \$5 Giant Eagle gas vouchers were donated by Giant Eagle, a festival sponsor, so no direct cost to the Festival was required for these gift cards. Customers who purchased a friends pack received a \$21 discount per package purchased and the Festival made a \$57 profit per package sold.

Since the Dublin Irish Festival is an outdoor event, much of the revenue brought in each year is determined by the weather. One of the Festival goals going into 2014 was to increase the availability and success of revenue-building aspects that did not depend on sunny skies. The sale of friends and family packs contributed to the Festival's fulfillment of this goal.

### **Target audience (if applicable)**

The friends and family packs were each designed with a specific audience in mind. Through the choice of items included in the packages, the Dublin Irish Festival hoped to appeal to members of two identifiable demographics who attend the Festival each year.

The family packs catered to families with small children and included items that wee ones would love. In a family pack, children were given two Wee Folk wristbands, which allowed them to enjoy the inflatables, games and rides located in the Festival's Wendy's Wee Folk Area. Hungry little stomachs could be satisfied with the four \$5 Wendy's gift cards included in each pack and lemonades could be purchased using the beverage tokens. Sparkly spirit bead necklaces gave everyone in the family a chance to play dress up and show off their Irish pride. The convenience of pre-paid tickets and tokens allowed busy families to make the most of their time at the Festival. Children could laugh and play in the bouncy house while parents grabbed a quick bite to eat, resulting in a relaxing day of family fun instead of a tiring outing spent waiting in long lines.

The friends packs were also put together with a specific audience in mind. By including tickets and \$5 gas vouchers, these packs made arriving at the Festival in a group of four close friends a breeze. Twenty-four beverage tokens and four commemorative mugs assured that guests could sample the Festival's diverse selection of Irish whiskeys and ciders without having to worry about the lengthy beverage token lines.

### **Attendance / Number of participants (if applicable)**

In 2014, the Dublin Irish Festival sold a total of 102 ticket and token packages. Of these 102 packages, 13 were family packs and 89 were friends packs. The discount was so appealing to some guests that they bought two or three of each pack to share with larger families or groups of friends.

### **Mediums used to promote idea (if applicable)**

The Dublin Irish Festival friends and family packs were available for purchase on the Festival website several weeks in advance of the Festival's opening date. The packages were mentioned on every Dublin Irish Festival media release, which included a link to the online order form.



**Dublin Irish Festival**

April 3, 2014 · 🌐

#DublinIrishFest is only 4 months away! What are you waiting for? Skip the lines and snag one of our Ticket and Token Swag Bags now before they're gone! <http://dublinirishfestival.org/ticket-token-packages/>

Additionally, the packages were promoted on the Dublin Irish Festival social media accounts. The Dublin Irish Festival Facebook page currently has more than 32,000 likes, while the Festival Twitter and Instagram accounts have over 9,200 and 760 followers, respectively.

## **Tie-in of promotion to main event / organization**

The Dublin Irish Festival strives to connect with its guests through interactive and engaging marketing and promotional efforts. It aims to best serve the guests that make the Festival unique year after year. By creating packages that simplify the Festival-going process, the Dublin Irish Festival hopes to continue to give visitors an unforgettable experience each and every year.

Additionally, the marketing of the friends and family packs prior to the beginning of the Festival aided in the fulfillment of one of the specified goals for 2014: to increase the Festival's non-weather-dependent revenue.

## **Overall revenue and expense budget of specific idea**

Each family or friend pack was sold for \$100 each. The costs and values of the packages are broken down in the charts below.

### **Family Pack**

<b>Package Item</b>	<b>Package Value for Consumer</b>	<b>Package Direct Cost to Festival</b>
Two adult one-day admission tickets	\$20	N/A
24 beverage tokens	\$48	\$48
Two wee folk wristbands	\$20	N/A
Four \$5 Wendy's vouchers	\$20	N/A (donated)
Four shamrock spirit bead necklaces	\$1	\$1
One DIF swag bag	\$5	\$5
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$114</b>	<b>\$54</b>

With each family pack sold, the customer saved \$14 per package. The Festival gained \$46 per package as non-weather-dependent revenue.

In 2014, the Dublin Irish Festival sold 13 family packs, resulting in a \$598 profit from the sale of these packages alone.

### **Friends Pack**

<b>Package Item</b>	<b>Package Value for Consumer</b>	<b>Package Direct Cost to Festival</b>
Four adult one-day admission tickets	\$40	N/A
24 beverage tokens	\$48	\$48
Four \$5 Giant Eagle gas vouchers	\$20	N/A (donated)
Four commemorative mugs	\$8	\$4
One DIF swag bag	\$5	\$5
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$121</b>	<b>\$57</b>

With each friends pack sold, the customer saved \$21 per package. The Festival gained \$43 per package as non-weather-dependent revenue.

In 2014, the Dublin Irish Festival sold 89 family packs, resulting in a \$3,827 profit from the sale of these packages alone.

## **Overall effectiveness / success of idea**

In 2013, the first year the ticket and token packages were offered, the Dublin Irish Festival sold 67 packages to customers. In 2014, the Festival sold 102 packages and raised \$4,425 in non-weather-dependent revenue just from the sale of the friends and family packs.

**Supporting Question:**

**What challenges/obstacles did you foresee/encounter in creating the program/activity/idea, and how did you handle them?**

The Dublin Irish Festival first offered pre-sale ticket and token packages in 2013. In its inaugural year, the Festival sold 67 packages to customers. In 2014, this number increased drastically to 102 total packages ordered — 13 family packages and 89 friends packages. The increased workload required careful attention to detail when it came to assembling and organizing the packages.

A great help came from two festival sponsors, Giant Eagle and Wendy’s, who donated all of the gift cards and vouchers to be included in the packs. This donation allowed the Festival to generate more revenue per bag than if these cards would have been purchased at a direct cost to the Festival.

The events administration staff hand-stuffed and fulfilled the package orders about a week before the Festival’s first day. Bags were labeled with the appropriate list of what each pack contained and names of customers were organized on a spreadsheet sorted by package type and quantity. In order to remedy the challenge of distributing the packs to so many customers, the events staff sent out an email several days before the Festival asking for guests who had purchased packs to pick them up at a centralized location: the Dublin Community Recreation Center. A sign out system was created and patrons who were unable to pick up their packages during the specified timeframe were directed to Festival Operations in the Recreation Center will-call area. This system ensured that every customer was able to receive their package prior to the start of the Festival.



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family packs sold,  
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in non-weather-dependent  
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the 2014 Dublin Irish  
Festival