SUGGESTED TIMELINE
| 12–24 Months | Begin planning, generating ideas, and looking at dates  
| | Recruit committee members and set initial meeting  
| | Have introductory meeting with the Alumni Relations staff to go over expectations  
| | Begin making inquiries about hotel, banquet/meeting space, etc.  
| | Request a mailing list of potential guests  
| 9–12 Months | Begin spreading the word (formally or informally)  
| | Update addresses and collect email addresses  
| | Send a “Save the Date” reminder  
| | Make reservations with hotels, facilities, caterers, photographers, etc.  
| 6–9 Months | Gather ideas for activities and entertainment  
| 6 Months | Finalize all reservations with facilities, photographers, etc.  
| | Finalize schedule of activities/events  
| | Determine participant cost  
| | Set budget and designate financial account  
| | Arrange for special tours of campus sites, i.e. residence halls, campus tour, facility tours, college visits  
| 4 Months | Continue to meet with committee  
| | Committee makes informal contact with potential guests and encourages them to attend  
| | Purchase gifts for speakers, takeaways for attendees, or game prizes  
| 3 Months | Design/Print reservation materials  
| | Meet with Alumni Relations staff to go over event and communication material  
| | Request name tags and additional supplies from the university alumni office  
| 2 Months 3– | Send reservation materials  
| 6 Weeks | Accept reservations  
| | Discuss details with caterers, photographers, etc.  
| | Re-confirm all arrangements  
| 2 Weeks | Assemble registration packets — include name tags  
| 1 Week | Call caterers with final number  

Please remember that no reunion is the same. This can be modified based on the size of the group and amount that the reunion committee is wanting to plan.
It isn’t always easy to keep up with all of your classmates and friends. The Mastodon Alumni Association can assist you by providing you with the most current addresses or email addresses of your former colleagues. A list and/or mailing labels can be generated by the Mastodon Alumni Association. Please allow four weeks to receive the mailing list. Again, it is never too early to start!

**Under no circumstances can alumni lists be used for solicitations or political purposes.** Please work with a staff member in Alumni Relations to obtain information on obtaining a list. List requests can be made by contacting alumni@ipfw.edu.
BUDGET AND FINANCE

Once you are ready to move forward with planning your reunion, you need to look at your finances and set a budget. This is one of the most difficult but important things to do. By calculating all of your costs initially, you can set realistic prices that will cover all of the reunion’s expenses.

**Step One:** Make a list of all of the expenses that you expect to incur. Don’t forget to include tax and gratuity, bartending fees, audio-visual fees, awards, photographer fees, etc. Consult the list on pages 10-11 for additional items to consider.

**Step Two:** Consider departmental or community sponsors and provide the opportunity for donations. Do any members of your organization have business or personal connections that could potentially alleviate the costs of the reunion? Even something as simple as having items donated for door prizes or receiving a discount on printing can be helpful in enhancing the reunion and/or cutting costs. In addition, you may want to consider asking group members who are unable to attend the reunion to make a contribution (monetary or otherwise) to further defray expenses. You might be surprised at how many people are willing to help. Also talk to the Alumni Relations office to see what if they are able to contribute to your event financially.

**Step Three:** Set the cost per guest. You may choose to put one price tag on the whole package, or you may choose to itemize the events. The package approach is simpler and is recommended for smaller reunions; the itemized approach allows more flexibility for your guests, and works well with larger groups and multiple-day reunions.

You may want to consider “padding” your prices by a couple of dollars and/or including a nominal registration fee, particularly if you are starting your reunion account with a $0 balance. Inevitably, no matter how well groups plan, one or two unanticipated expenses always seem to surface after the budget has been set. Adding a few extra dollars to the registration fee ensures that you will collect enough money to pay all of your reunion bills. Any extra money can be left in the account to encourage future alumni activities, used to thank your committee for their hard work, or donated to your corresponding student organization.
COMMUNICATION AND PUBLICITY

Nothing is more important than keeping members of your group informed about what is going on. Here are some different techniques:

• **“Save the Date” Postcard or Letter** – This early mailer/email can be sent out 9–12 months prior to your reunion or as soon as your dates have been selected. This works well with groups of all sizes and is easy and inexpensive. Simply include the dates, a theme, if applicable, and a promise of more information to follow.

• **Registration Material** – This is the most important piece you will send out. We recommend providing as much information as you can, including a schedule of events, locations, prices, and contact names and numbers that alumni can call with questions. Make sure you have designed the form to include everything you need to know about your alumni, their guests, and their intentions for the reunion. We also recommend setting a deadline for the reservation forms and checks to be returned 3–4 weeks prior to the reunion. Not everyone will make the deadline, so be prepared and know that some people may ask to sign up when they arrive for the reunion.

• **Confirmation Cards/Email** – Ideal for larger groups, confirmation cards or an email can be sent upon receipt of the registration materials. Confirmation cards/email are especially helpful if a time change occurs on your schedule or if there is a discrepancy between the registration form and the payment.

• **Communications Committee** – This is one of the most valuable forms of communication. Past experience has shown us that alumni are most likely to attend a reunion if they receive a personal contact from a friend who is also attending.
USING COMMITTEES EFFECTIVELY
Forming a reunion committee provides a number of benefits. First, it divides up the amount of work so that no one or two people feel like they get stuck doing everything and many people feel that they have a hand in the success of the reunion. Secondly, it provides for a checks-and-balances system. If there is something that you forget, chances are that someone else will catch it. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, using a committee is the best way to spread the word and thus, increase attendance.

We recommend giving committee members specific guidelines on what to include in their correspondence. It is also advisable to give committee members a deadline. Tasks of this type, while ultimately enjoyable, can easily get put off. When working with calling committees, we often make a formal list of which committee members have agreed to contact which alumni. This added bit of accountability will help ensure that your committee members get their contacts made.

The Communications Committee –
Communications committees are your best ambassadors for generating interest in a reunion. No matter how clever the theme or how exciting the schedule, the one thing that will REALLY draw your alumni is the promise of seeing their friends again. The idea of a communications committee is a simple one. Committee members agree to communicate (call, write, tag, or e-mail) information about the reunion to their former classmates, urging them to attend. In addition, assuming that they will be attending, they endorse the reunion on all of your correspondence. Thus, when your alumni receive an invitation, they are receiving it from a whole committee of people rather than from just one person. A dozen names on a letterhead indicates a great deal of support and thus a large number in attendance.

When selecting committee members, try to include the most active members of your group or organization. If your reunion spans many years, try to include at least one representative from each class year. Your alumni will want to hear from someone they know.

Planning Committee – Planning committee members are those who are available to roll up their sleeves and help get the job done. Most committees choose to divide up specific responsibilities among committee members. The size and structure of each committee will vary. Touch base often with the committee members to make sure everyone is on the same page. Committee meetings are a great way for those committee members who are in town to report their progress to each other as well as to generate enthusiasm amongst themselves.
FUN IDEAS
Here are some fun ideas that have been used by groups in the past to add a special touch to a reunion. Any of them would make a great project for a committee member!

• **Video/Slide Show** – Ask members of your organization to submit old photos to be made into a video or PowerPoint presentation to show during the reunion.

• **Biography Booklet** – Include a biography form in your registration materials. If you are planning to do online registration, please contact your alumni staff representative to set up an electronic RSVP form that will include this. Ask one person to be responsible for compiling all of the completed forms into a booklet to be distributed at the reunion and mailed to absentee members. The forms can simply be photocopied or the information can be typed for a more polished look. This allows people who are unable to attend the reunion to be included in the fun.

• **Photo Display** – Ask members of your organization to send photos (old or recent) to one individual to construct a photo display. This can be done very inexpensively with items purchased at a craft store, and allows for considerable creativity and humor!

• **Fashion Show** – Have current students model old t-shirts, athletic uniforms, or any past fashion that was a part of the group.

• **Prizes** – Create a contest for guests involving group member “trivia” and award prizes to the winners. Prizes can also be given for simple criteria such as the person who traveled the greatest distance or the person who has been a member of the alumni group for the longest time.

• **Rituals and Traditions** – Every group has different rituals and traditions. Try to incorporate these into your reunion in a creative way. If your reunion group spans many years, it may be interesting to learn how the traditions have evolved. This is particularly important when planning a reunion for generations of greek life.

• **Library and Archives** – Helmke library is a valuable asset when looking for university history and memorabilia. Please contact Associate Librarian & Archives, Denise Buhr for more information.
ITEMS TO CONSIDER

Here are some things to think about when making plans and setting your budget. You may or may not want to utilize all of these for your reunion, but it’s better to consider them up front than to do so after your prices have been set!

- Hotel/Accommodations
- Meeting Space
- Caterer
- Tax and Gratuity
- Bartender
- Audio/Visual Equipment
- Room Set-up Needs
- Table Linens
- Centerpieces and Decorations
- Photographer
- Videographer
- Name Tags
- Committee Recognition
- Transportation

- Takeaways
- Place Cards
- Awards
- Gifts/Favors
- Printing
- Postage
- Transportation
- Parking
- Emcee
- Entertainment
- Speakers
- Music
- Honorarium

Please contact alumni@ipfw.edu to discuss your reunion options.
The Mastodon Alumni Association’s staff is available to help you find the campus resources that you need. In addition, we work with many local and alumni owned businesses for our association-sponsored events, and we will gladly make recommendations for any of your needs.

Here is some frequently requested information:

**Campus Facilities:**
Walb International Ballroom - Accommodates 448 seated  
Walb Classic Ballroom - Accommodates 300 seated  
Rhinehart Music Center - Accommodates 150 seated  
**Steel Dynamics Keith E Busse IPFW Alumni Center** - Accommodates 72 people seated

**Hotels:**
*IPFW is proud to partner with Holiday Inn Ft. Wayne-IPFW & Coliseum for any guests traveling from out of town. You can make reservations at their website.*

**University Departments:**
- Admissions Office ............................................. 260-481-6812
- Alumni Association ............................................. 260-481-6807
- Athletic Department ............................................. 260-481-6643
- Athletic Ticket Office ......................................... 260-481-6372
- IPFW Center for Healthy Living ................................ 260-481-5748
- Chancellor’s Office ............................................. 260-481-6103
- Helmke Library ................................................. 260-481-6512
- University Police .............................................. 260-481-6827
- Academic Affairs .............................................. 260-481-6116
- Advancement ................................................... 260-481-6962
- Box Office ...................................................... 260-481-6555
- Special Events .................................................. 260-481-6612

To reach additional departments or individuals on campus, consult the university website at [www.ipfw.edu](http://www.ipfw.edu) or contact the Assistant Director of Alumni Relations, Victoria Sarjeant, via phone at 260-481-0241 or victoria.sarjeant@ipfw.edu.

**Alumni Relations Staff:**
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