

THE ULTIMATE
GUIDE TO
KICKASS DROP-OFF SERVICE



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Introduction

As a craft service provider, you're probably always on the lookout for a way to increase your income. One of the methods I've used over the years was to offer drop-off service. It's a great way to run multiple craft service jobs and not have to be physically present on set.

What's more, you can prep the job and then hire someone to make the drop offs.

What Is Drop-Off Service?

Drop-off service is the delivery of all the food and equipment (aka kit) a production company needs to provide craft service to its cast and crew. The food is delivered daily while the equipment is delivered on the first day and kept by the production company for the duration of the shoot.

I've found that drop-off service works best for production jobs that last from one day to two weeks and has a crew size of 15 - 40 people. For several years, I provided drop-off craft service for the Big Apple Circus LIVE event in New York City. It's a one day gig with a crew size of about 15 people and a great way to add an additional \$400 to my salary that week.

Read on to find out how to offer kickass drop-off craft service in 10 steps.

Let's Get Started

Step #1 - Commit

I see plenty of craft service providers on the Internet who offer drop-off service on their websites but may never actually execute. In other words, these providers list drop-off as a service but never push the idea to their potential customers. If you want to earn extra income via drop-off service, the first thing you must do is commit to market it.

Step #2 - Define Target Market

Who are the best potential customers for drop-off craft service? Any production with 15 - 40 persons and a short shoot schedule. Commercials, photo shoots, music videos, corporate videos, television specials, and live events are excellent candidates for drop-off service.

I suggest you pick one target and focus your efforts. Here's an example of one method you can use : Let's say you're interested in music videos. Compose a short sales letter like the sample one below then email to all the music video production companies in your city.

You can find contact information for production companies with a simple Google search of "music video production companies (your city)". Keep a list or spreadsheet of all the companies and the dates you contacted them. You may want to follow up with the companies in about 30 days if you haven't heard from them.

Alternatively, if you have personal relationships with any producers, you can ask them to put you in contact with any music producers they may know.

Step #3 - Email Sales Letter

We all get tons of email daily so it's important to make your subject line stand out. You want your email subject line to be catchy enough to entice the recipient to open, read, and respond.

Example: If you received the recipient's email address from a mutual friend you could write in the subject line: "(mutual friend's name) recommended I get in touch with you"

Example: Express a benefit to the producer or company: "A (list benefit) for (producer/company) The benefit could be: a "\$300 savings" (amount of money saved on an attendant) So the subject line would read: "A \$300 Savings For XYZ Productions"

Example: Ask a question: "Did you get the craft service you were hoping for?" Or, "Question about your craft service needs"

Once you have your recipient's attention and they've opened the email, get right to the point. Here's where you want to follow the Five Ws and one H formula: Who, What, When, Where, Why and How.

- *Who* is your craft service
- *What* is introducing your drop off service
- *When* is your availability
- *Where* is your city and neighboring suburbs
- *Why* to save the company money
- *How* describes how the service works

Putting it all together the email may say something like:

Subject: Did You Get The Craft Service You Were Hoping For?

Body: ABC Crafty, your local source for high quality craft services, announces our latest service. Our new drop-off service is designed to meet your needs without the added expense of a full time craft service attendant.

Ideal for shoots that last from one day to two weeks with a crew size of 15 - 40, our drop-off service is a producer's dream.

Here's a snapshot of how it works:

- We'll shop and prep high quality foods within your budget
- Deliver and set up the craft service station at your location
- Review the setup with you or your production assistant
- Deliver fresh food daily
- Pick up equipment on last day of shoot

And that's it. All you have to do is call, email, or fax your contact and project information to us. One of our reps will reach out to you to answer any questions and to finalize the details.

We are committed to your satisfaction and would like to earn your trust.

Best regards

Step #4 - Equipment

In order to maximize your income, you will need at least two full craft service kits. One to use with your primary, full service and the other to use for drop-off. If you have the time and help, you can certainly put together additional kits to service more clients. Keep in mind that several productions may have the same shoot dates and you may not be able to handle more than one or two drop offs.

Here's a list of the minimum equipment you need for one drop-off craft service kit:

- 2 five foot folding tables
- 3 full size coolers. One to keep at the craft service station, one close to set, and one to keep perishable foods cold
- 1 tabletop cooler to keep milk and creamer cold
- 2 coffee brewers. One for coffee and the other for hot water. If electricity will not be available you will need to brew coffee and boil hot water ahead of time and place in Cambro Insulated Dispensers.
- 1 insulated polyethylene plastic food warmer or an thermal delivery bag with or without heating element if you are to provide hot snacks
- 1 5-gallon cold water dispenser if the set wants to "go green" and eliminate individual water bottles
- 1 toaster oven
- 1 cutting board with knife
- 3 large storage bins for delivery and storage of food. (Minimum)
- Assorted serving trays, bowls, containers, and baskets
- Serving utensils
- Plastic disposable table cloths for 1 or 2 day productions. Cloth for longer productions.

Be sure to put your name and/or company name and telephone number on the equipment. You can use a stencil and permanent marker or invest in a [labeler machine](#) for this purpose.

Step #5 - Equipment / Kit Rental Agreement

You will need to draw up a rental agreement with the production company in the event of lost and/or damaged equipment. The longer the shoot the more likely the equipment can be lost or damaged particularly if there are multiple locations.

The agreement doesn't have to be a long document but it must be sufficient enough to cover the repair or replacement of your equipment. I'm not a lawyer so I won't not provide legal advice. However, here's what I would make sure the agreement covered:

- The name of the project
- Name of person responsible for leasing the equipment
- The number of days of the rental
- A comprehensive list of the equipment
- Terms of replacement cost for lost and/or damaged equipment
- Additional charge for excessively dirty equipment

Make sure you and the responsible party sign the agreement and each have a copy.

Step #6 - Food Delivery Prep

Prepackaged snacks like chips, granola bars, candy, and cookies don't require much in terms of prep. Your biggest concern here is how these types of snacks will be presented on the craft service table.

Large clear plastic jars, preferably with a screw on lid, are great for loose candy. Empty the bag of candy, seal, and deliver table ready.

Some cookies come in a clear plastic containers or plastic trays that can go directly on the craft service table. If you buy cookies in a box, you should deliver with a tray marked "cookies."

For chips, pretzels, and popcorn you should deliver the unopened bags along with [large bowls](#) that you label.



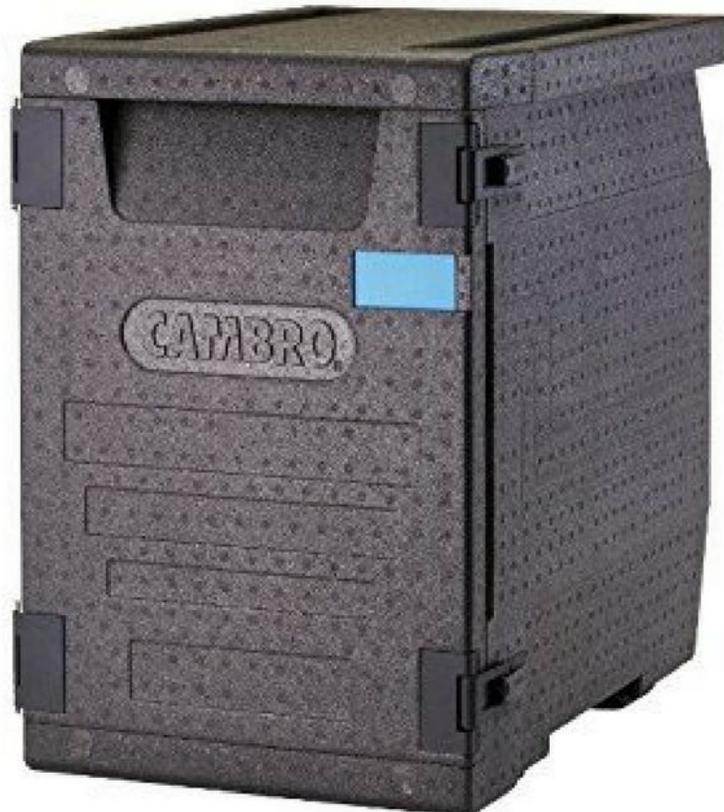
Label The Bowls For Use Identification

For snacks like granola, breakfast, and protein bars use a [compartmentalized picnic utensil caddy](#). A caddy like the one pictured is the perfect vessel to display the bars.



Shabby Chic Hammered Tin Utensil Caddy

You should deliver hot and cold perishable foods in insulated carriers. One type of [insulated carrier](#) you can use is made from a durable hard plastic that can keep food hot or cold for 4+ hours. See picture below.



Cambro Insulated Food Carrier

The other type of carrier you can use is made from vinyl and nylon. These carriers are more suited for food that will be consumed upon delivery. However, you can buy a [thermal nylon carrier](#) equipped with a electric heating element to keep food warm. You can also buy reusable ice packs to use in these carriers to keep foods cold.



Rediheat Heated Food Delivery System

Platters, fruit, and bread baskets should be shrink wrapped for safe transit. You can buy a [roll of shrink wrap](#) for under \$20 and you can use a handheld blow dryer to shrink the plastic. The only other supplies you need are: scissors, rubber bands, and scotch tape.

Here's how to do it:

1. Arrange the fruit and/or bread in basket.
2. Unroll the amount of shrink wrap needed to cover the basket and contents. Cut.
3. Place the basket in the center of the sheet of shrink wrap.
4. Draw the sides of the shrink wrap together at the top of the basket.

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5. Secure with a rubber band.
 6. Start at bottom of the basket and heat the shrink wrap with hair dryer. The shrink wrap will start to tighten around basket. Continue to work your way to the top of basket.
 7. Tape any areas that won't lay flat.

Once your food is prepped, place in [large plastic bins](#) for easy transit. Again, be sure to label each bin for easy identification by the person who will monitor the craft service station.

For example:



Step #7 - Set up the craft service station

This is what *really* makes your drop-off service kickass! Don't simply drop off a bunch of bins and equipment and leave. Take time to set up the entire craft service station for your client and make sure the person in charge understands how to maintain it.

This means you will:

- Configure the tables and drape them with table cloths
- set up the coffee service complete with cups, lids, stirrers, sweeteners and creamers
- Position the toaster oven near the coffee service for easy electrical hookup
- Unwrap and arrange baskets, snack containers, and platters on the table
- Group the utensils, plates, bowls, and napkins together

Step #8 - What to charge

How much to charge for drop-off service is always an issue for craft service providers. Everyone charges a slightly different fee dependent upon the job and geographic market. The prices I show here are the result of online research that I conducted. You may wish to charge these prices or adjust up or down accordingly.

- Shopping - \$150. If the job is one week or less you can probably complete shopping in one day. If the job lasts more than one week, you should charge \$150 for each week you shop.
- Food/Delivery - \$75 per day.
- Food - As per production budget. Since each job brings its own unique set of circumstances, it's best to negotiate this with the hiring producer.
- Cold Beverages - Same as above.
- Craft service station setup - \$55. First delivery day only.
- Kit rental - \$75 per day.

Be sure to discuss with the client the terms of payment. Will you be paid on the day of delivery? Will it be cash or check? Will you go on payroll? Also, find out if they will provide

petty cash for the food and beverage. If so, where and when can you pick the petty cash up?

Step #9 - Leave instructions

Once the craft service station is set up, you should explain to the person in charge of the craft service station how to maintain it. Make sure they understand how to use the coffee brewers, the toaster oven and any other small appliance you may have provided.

In addition, you should provide written instructions on when the craft service person should add certain foods to the craft service tables. See the sample I created at the end of this e-book. While it may not be an exhaustive list or be representative of your menu, use it as a guide for the type of information you should leave with the craft service person. You may also leave written instructions on how to use the small appliances in your kit.

Step #10 - Daily food delivery and equipment pickup



If your drop off service is for a multiple-day shoot, make sure you are on the production's email list to receive the daily call sheet. Without the call sheet, you will not know where and when to deliver the day's food supply. When you arrive on set, find the craft service station and place the food in the appropriate bins and thermal carriers.

If your drop off service is for a one-day shoot, be sure to make arrangements prior to the shoot as to where and when to pick up your equipment. Also, let the production company know that the equipment will be inspected back at your office and they will be informed of any damages or lost equipment. Make the same pickup and inspection arrangements for multiple-day shoots.

Summary

Drop-off service is one of the best ways to grow your craft service operation for a number of reasons: you can service multiple projects simultaneously, secure additional income, use equipment you already own, and increase your visibility within the entertainment industry.

So why not make the commitment today to offer drop-off service? I've outlined the steps involved and now it's up to you to market your service, compile a drop-off service kit, draw up a rental agreement, prep the food, set up the craft service station, and provide clear instructions for the craft service person.

You can do it, I know you can!

P.S. Get your free "leave behind" sheet on page 15.

P.S.S. As a token of my appreciation for your purchase of this e-book, I've included a bonus on page 16.

Don't forget to join the [CraftySnax Craft Service Facebook Group](#) and help build a crafty community.

How To Maintain The Craft Service Table

AVAILABLE ALL DAY:

- Fresh and dried fruits
- Assorted loaves of bread
- Nut butters
- Jelly/jam
- Gum, candy, mints

MORNING:

- Muffins
- Croissants
- Bagels
- Cream cheese
- Cereal
- Granola bars

MID MORNING ADD:

- Assorted finger sandwiches
- Assorted nuts, chips, pretzels
- Yogurt
- Vegetable platter with dip

AFTERNOON ADD:

- Dark chocolate
- Cookies

LATE AFTERNOON ADD:

- Salsa
- Hummus
- Guacamoe
- Hot appetizers

BONUS: Printable Drop-Off Service Equipment/Kit Checklist

___ Folding tables

___ Coolers

___ Coffee brewers

___ Insulated food warmer or a thermal delivery bag

___ 5-gallon cold water dispenser

___ Toaster oven

___ Cutting board with knife

___ Large storage bins for delivery and food storage

___ Assorted serving trays, bowls, containers, and baskets

___ Serving utensils

___ Cutlery

___ Napkins

___ Plastic and/or table cloths

___ Blender

___ Juicer

Notes: _____