



Online Cookie Program Guidance & FAQs Updated December 2020

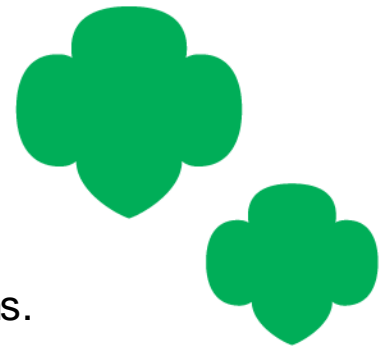
Girls may use the Internet to share their Cookie Program sales links, stories and learnings with the following guidelines:



- The Girl Scout Cookie Program is a girl-led program and online marketing and sales efforts *should always be led by a girl while also being supervised by her parents or guardians.*
- Girls engaging in online sales and marketing must review and apply the [**Digital Marketing Tips for Cookie Entrepreneurs and Their Families.**](#)
- Girls, volunteers and parents must review and adhere to the [**Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge**](#), the [**Digital Cookie Pledge**](#), the [**Supplemental Safety Tips for Online Marketing**](#), and Girl Scouts' [**Safety Activity Checkpoints**](#) for Computer and Internet Use and Cookie and Product Sales (with the exception that they may share beyond friends and family).
- Sales links should never be posted to online resale sites (eBay, Facebook Marketplace, Facebook Swap etc.).
- Be aware post on Facebook containing the use of a dollar sign (\$) may automatically move the post to Facebook Marketplace. To prevent this from occurring you must disable the automated function.
- Social media ads should not be purchased or donated to promote sales links.
- Girls should consider truncating or removing their last name when using social media sites to protect their identity.



Girls may use the Internet to share their Cookie Program sales links, stories and learnings with the following guidelines:



- Must adhere to all terms and conditions on Digital Cookie and Smart Cookie platforms. For copies of terms and conditions please contact GSUSA, ABC or M2 as needed.
- GSUSA reserves the right to remove or disable the link for any reason including violation of guidance, inventory fulfillment issues, safety issues, or if sales and marketing activity goes viral and otherwise creates unanticipated disruption.
- Parents, girls, and volunteers should contact and collaborate with their councils and GSUSA in advance on any national news media opportunities tied to girls online marketing and sales efforts.





Supplemental Safety Tips for Online Marketing

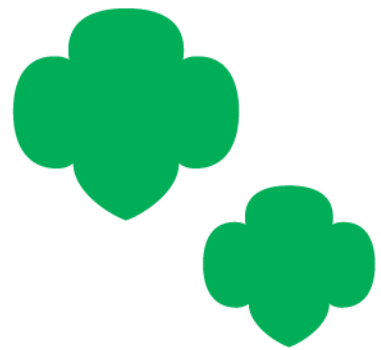
Supplemental Safety Tips for Online Marketing:

When engaging in online marketing and sales efforts beyond friends and family through the Girl Scout Cookie Program®,

- Review and apply the [Digital Marketing Tips for Cookie Entrepreneurs and Families](#).
- Continue to adhere to the [Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge](#) and [Digital Cookie Pledge](#).
- Review Girl Scouts' Safety Activity Checkpoints for Computer and Internet Use and Cookie and Product Sales on your council's website.

In addition, review and apply the below [Supplemental Safety Tips for Online Marketing](#):

- To protect your personal identity, NEVER direct message with people you do not know online or on social media platforms.
- Always use your Girl Scout online sales link for customer orders.
- Parents /guardians must approve all girl delivered online orders and supervise all communications and product delivery logistics with any customers girls don't personally know. As a reminder, girls should never deliver cookies alone.
- In person delivery cookie orders coming in from the troop link must be approved and deliveries coordinated by the troop leader/adult. As a reminder, girls should never deliver cookies alone and parent/guardians should approve all girl deliveries.
- If your Girl Scout sales link is posted on a public facing site, be aware the link is now searchable by anyone and could potentially appear anywhere on the internet.
- Never share your personal information (e.g., last name, phone number, email, or street address).
- Never deliver online cookie orders to the home of people you do not know.
- Only share booth locations online that are supervised by an adult and take place in a safe public space.



[Supplemental Safety Tips for Online Marketing](#)

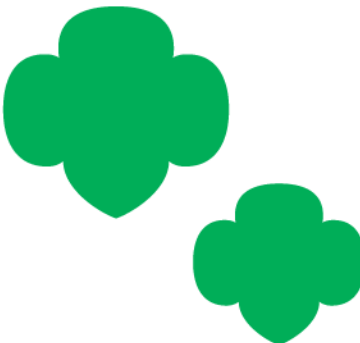


Available for download on
[Troop Leader Resources](#)
page of
[girlscouts.org/cookies](https://www.girlscouts.org/cookies).




Digital Marketing Tips for Cookie Entrepreneurs and Families


Digital Marketing Tips for Cookie Entrepreneurs and Families:



All girls in engaging in digital marketing and sales activity beyond friends and family must review and apply the [Digital Marketing Tips for Cookie Entrepreneurs and Families](#).



Digital Marketing Tips for Cookie Entrepreneurs and Families



The Girl Scout Cookie Program® offers girls unique opportunities to engage in online marketing and sales as they learn about ecommerce and how to think like entrepreneurs.

Follow these four steps as you run your cookie business, and take your marketing efforts to the next level by going online using your Digital Cookie® or Smart Cookie website and social media platforms.

1. As you set goals for your cookie business, think about how digital marketing can help you meet them. Imagine customers in your community who may not know a Girl Scout. Expand your reach by sharing your secure Digital Cookie or Smart Cookie link to reach them. Be sure to:

- **Be honest.** Yes, the Girl Scout Law also applies to your sales technique! From your Digital Cookie or Smart Cookie site to your digital marketing campaigns, be honest, straightforward, and approachable as you write about your cookie business.
- **Create a sense of urgency.** After all, Girl Scout Cookie season only comes around once a year! Countdowns to the last dates to order are a great motivator for driving sales. Use language that will encourage potential customers to buy from you right now.
- **Make an impression.** Use clear, eye-catching photos in your marketing materials. This may include pictures of the different cookies you're selling, yourself in your Girl Scout uniform, or something tied to your goal. If you plan to use your cookie earnings to go camping, tell your customers about it to show that the cookie program powers amazing girl-led adventures!
- **Highlight special features or products.** Share the top-selling cookies in your lineup or any special varieties. Do you have a new flavor available for purchase? How about a gluten-free option? Do your customers know that Thin Mints® are made with vegan ingredients?
- **Use a clear and prominent call to action.** Share your goal and exactly what your customer can do to help you achieve it.

Safety tip: Girls of all ages should partner with their parents or guardians to develop a plan to safely market their business online. Although your parent/guardian should do the posting for you if you're under age 13, all girls should have a hands-on role in marketing their cookie business.

Safety tip: Make sure your marketing materials don't reveal your personal contact information (like your address, school, or last name) or your cookie booth location.

©2019 Girl Scouts of the USA. All rights reserved.

2. Earn one of the Cookie Business badges, and put a digital marketing spin on it. Check out these prompts to get you thinking about how you can digitize your sales efforts.

- **Daisy Talk It Up badge:** Does your digital customer pitch include answers to commonly asked questions?
- **Brownie Meet My Customers badge:** How can you reach potential customers through digital marketing on top of traditional sales efforts?
- **Junior Cookie CEO badge:** How will you make a good impression on your online customers?
- **Cadette Business Plan badge:** How can digital marketing expand your customer base?
- **Senior Customer Loyalty badge:** How will you tell your cookie story to online customers?
- **Ambassador P&L badge:** How will you teach younger girls about business ethics in online marketing?
Hint: use the safety tips from this sheet!

3. Use digital marketing to expand your network and grow your people skills. Try some of the following strategies:

- **Think of your favorite brands, and then check out their websites and social media accounts.** What do they do to create a relationship with their customers on Facebook or Instagram? What can you do to safely build a relationship with your online customers?
- **Use platforms that potential customers could be on.** Think about your target customers and where they're most active online.
- **Engage your customers through email marketing.** Send an email through Digital Cookie or Smart Cookie to inspire potential customers to buy Girl Scout Cookies and help you achieve your goals.
- **Turn loyal customers into brand advocates.** Existing customers can be your secret sales weapon, especially with word-of-mouth marketing in digital spaces.
- **Use marketing to inspire, educate, entertain, and entice your prospective customers.** Share how you'll use your cookie proceeds, let people know about all the skills you're learning through the cookie program, and have fun while you're at it! Get creative in your communications—consider writing a poem or recording a video to educate and convince potential customers to buy from you.
- **Show off customer testimonials.** Collect and highlight enthusiastic testimonials from your customers through social media. This shows potential customers that buying cookies from you is a great investment. Make sure to ask if you can share their words!
- **Say thank you! Impress customers with a custom thank-you message via email or social media.** As your customer base expands beyond friends and family, find ways to maintain personalization while following Girl Scouts' Safety Activity Checkpoints for Computer and Internet Use.

Safety tip: To protect your personal identity, never directly message people you don't know online or through social platforms. And remember to always use your secure sales link for orders.

Safety tip: When creating marketing content or materials, remember to get permission to use any images, songs, content, or ideas that come from someone else. When in doubt, create your own!

4. Practice business ethics by safely marketing online. Before you get started, review the below safety standards. When in doubt, revisit these resources.

- You and your supervising parent/guardian must read, agree to, and abide by the [Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge](#), the [Digital Cookie Pledge](#), and the [Supplemental Safety Tips for Online Marketing](#) before engaging in online marketing and sales efforts through the cookie program.
- Review Girl Scouts' [Safety Activity Checkpoints for Computer and Internet Use](#) and [Cookie and Product Sales](#) on your council's website.

©2019 Girl Scouts of the USA. All rights reserved.

Available for download on [Troop Leader Resources](#) page of girlscouts.org/cookies.





FAQs

FAQs:



Q: Why are we changing online guidance for the Cookie Program?

A: Today's girls are tomorrow's entrepreneurs. In keeping up with today's digital age, we are excited to offer Girl Scouts more opportunities to utilize their digital marketing skills and ensure safety by offering programming that prepares girls for the future.

Q: When does New Online Guidance go into effect?

A: Guidance went into effect on 1/1/2021

Q: Is there a new badge for the *Digital Marketing Tips for Cookie Entrepreneurs and Families*?

A: Not currently. It is essential for Girl Scouts to review and apply the tips that are included in the [*Digital Marketing Tips for Cookie Entrepreneurs and Families*](#) to make the most of their experience.

Look for a badge one pager for each grade level to help leaders connect the digital experience to our existing badges.

Q: Some girls in my council are not on social media. Are they at a disadvantage?

A: Not at all! Using social media is just one of the many ways to promote their sale. Cookie booths and alternative to booths, door to door, email invites and more are all a way for girls in your council to participate in the cookie program.

Q: Will Safety Activity Checkpoints and Volunteer Essentials be updated with New Guidance?

A: GSUSA will be updating these documents to reflect the lift on Friends and Family. Councils must train volunteers, parents and girls on the [Digital Cookie Pledge](#), [Girl Scout Internet Safety Pledge](#), [Supplemental Safety Tips for Online Marketing](#), and Girl Scouts' [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) for Computer and Internet Use and Cookie and Product Sales. Councils should insert the Guidance in any council customized documents (Volunteer Essentials, Cookie Manuals and Trainings) when training volunteers, parents and girls.

FAQs:

Q: Can parents refuse an order that is placed online for girls to deliver?

A: Yes, parents can refuse any online girl delivered order.

Q: What do we do if a girl receives a large order that will cause a variety or varieties of cookies to be out of stock?

A: If a girl is receiving orders which causes a variety or varieties of cookie(s) to be out of stock:

If the order is a shipped order:

The cookie will show as unavailable for shipping to all customers

If the order is a girl delivered order:

ABC Smart Cookie and Digital Cookie Instructions:

Parents will need to secure girl delivered cookies from their troop leaders. If the leader or council cannot fulfill the order, troops, girls and parents should work in partnership to notify customers the order cannot be filled.

For Digital Cookie, additional options exist:

- Council can disable girl delivery for that girl
- Council can turn off a variety or varieties at the council level for girl delivery
- Parent can turn off girl deliver for the girl (if council has enabled that option)
- Parent can make a flavor or multiple flavors of cookies unavailable to her customers

For M2 – Digital Cookie Pilot Councils: Council should contact M2 for additional options.



FAQs:



Q: How does a council manage refunds for prepaid girl delivered cookies if council inventory is not available for fulfillment?

A: If an out of stock situation occurs (i.e. cupboards run out of cookies) causing customers to not receive their full order of girl delivery cookies follow these instructions to issue customer refunds.

For ABC's Smart Cookie: If the customer has prepaid for the order, the troop leader can refund the customer for that order.

For LBB Digital Cookie: Contact [GSUSA Digital Cookie](#) with information on customers that need full or partial refunds

For M2 – Digital Cookie Pilot Councils: Contact M2 with information on customers that need full or partial refunds

Q: Will GSUSA post or repost individual girl links?

A: No. In order to ensure the Girl Scout Cookie Program remains girl-led and fair, GSUSA will not post or share posts that contain individual girl links.

Q: Can councils post or repost individual girl links?

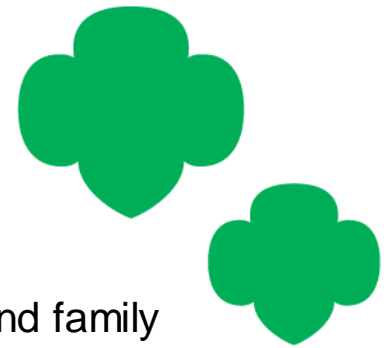
A: No. In order to ensure the Girl Scout Cookie Program remains girl-led and fair, girls should do their own posting with the supervision of their parent or guardian. Councils should not share post that contain individual girl links.

Q. Can I submit individual girl links to be shared by GSUSA/Girl Scout Councils?

A. No. In order to ensure the Girl Scout Cookie Program remains girl-led and fair, GSUSA nor Girl Scout Councils will share one individual girls link.

Girls may NOT use the Internet to share their Fall Program sales links beyond friends and family:

- The change in online guidance applies to the Girl Scout Cookie Program only.
- Online marketing and sales efforts for the Fall Program should be limited to friends and family only and not promoted on public facing web sites.



FAQ's for Fall Program:

Q: Why is the Fall Program limited to Friends and Family only?

A: There are three fundamental reasons to keep the Fall Program with Friends and Family:

The Foundational Girl Scout Experience: While the fall program is important to councils and troops to meet their goals, if girls are engaging large amounts of time in the cookie program AND the fall program it leaves little room for outdoor, STEM, life skills and other entrepreneurial experiences.

Press and Public Perception: The Girl Scout Cookie program is the foundation of our Entrepreneurship pillar and we don't want the public or press to get distracted by fall program media. Additionally, many councils are adhering to United Way Black out periods agreements which limit their Fall Programs to Friends networks only.

Volunteer and Parent Retention: The Fall Program at a larger scale has potential to put additional responsibilities on families and leaders. Reducing volunteer workload and potential burnout in all aspects of product sales should be considered.

