

# BLACK BELT PROMOTIONS

PROMOTIONAL STRATEGIES FOR THE OWNER AND INSTRUCTOR

## Boost Your Profits with a Five-Day Spring Break Day Camp

*By Steve Stewart*

There are three significant breaks during the year for school-age children: summer vacation, the holidays at the end of the calendar year and the spring recess. Naturally, most students are occupied during the holidays with shopping, traveling, family gatherings and other special events. Children do not need additional activities to fill their time and many parents use a week or more of vacation time to be with their children and families.

It's the other two—summer vacation and spring recess—which require many parents to place their children in structured programs during the workday. Martial arts summer camps are profitable programs for many school owners and popular with campers and their parents.

Spring recess, or Spring Break, often finds many children with time on their hands. True, many families travel at this time of the year, but there are seldom other activities for children, and many parents are unable to be absent from work. Spring Break is another golden opportunity for school owners to generate additional profits from their facilities, provide staff members with extra income, introduce potential new students to the martial arts and create even more goodwill in their communities.

I recognized Spring Break as an opportunity to provide a structured activity that children enjoy, parents appreciate and is very profitable for my school.



### Planning

As with any children's program, planning is the key to developing a Spring Break Day Camp that is successful for all three interested parties: children, their parents and you. The sooner you start, the more details you commit to paper and the better you organize your instructors, the more successful your Day Camp will be.

My Spring Break Karate Day Camp is a five-day activity, which I schedule for the week during which the majority of students in my community are not in school.

My goal is to enroll 50 students for my Day Camp. Part of your planning is to research your local market to determine an average daily or weekly fee for daycare and use that information to decide what your fee should be for

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your Day Camp. Use that research of local daycare programs to help you also decide which activities to offer that may give you a competitive advantage over the average daycare center.

You may be able to justify charging more because you offer activities that other daycare programs do not and cannot provide, i.e., martial arts training. You may want to charge the average, but market it as an “added value” program. (“Parents, you pay no more than an average daycare program, but your child receives much more.”) You may want to charge less than the local daycare average to be competitive. (Although, I wouldn’t recommend that strategy.)

What you charge for your Spring Break Day Camp is really a reflection of local conditions and the socioeconomic level of your community and its residents. If your local conditions require you to charge less than I do, then your costs will probably be less than mine as well.

The chart below is an example, based on my experience, of a revenue/cost comparison for a Spring Break Day Camp. (I don’t typically spend \$250 to market my Day Camp, but I added that amount to the chart to represent marketing costs some schools may incur.) Obviously, your costs may be different and include other items, such as additional offsite activities, if you decide to offer them. I recommend that you create a similar chart for your Day Camp.

<b>Spring Break Day Camp – Revenue/Costs Chart</b>	
<b>Item/Description</b>	<b>Amount</b>
REVENUE: 50 students @ \$199/student	\$10,000
<b>COSTS*:</b>	
One Head Instructor	\$500
Four assistant instructors @ \$300/instructor	\$1,200
One offsite event/activity (Example: Laser Tag @ \$8.50/student	\$425
Bus transportation to offsite event/activity	\$48
Movie and pizza night	\$50
Marketing (varies)	\$250
<b>COSTS: Subtotal</b>	<b>\$2,473</b>
<b>GROSS PROFIT</b>	<b>\$7,527</b>
* To be totally accurate, your costs should include some portion of your rent, utilities and other hard costs.	

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### Marketing

Naturally, I start to promote the Day Camp four to six weeks in advance to pre-register my goal of 50 children. Remember, as with a summer camp program, you want to promote the Day Camp to more than just your martial arts students.

The NAPMA creative department has designed a newspaper ad, a letter to parents and Guest Pass to help you market your Day Camp. Customize and duplicate the ad as a flyer, distribute it to your students and area businesses that attract parents and children. Contact local schools and ask if they would permit you to provide flyers for their students, as well. The art is included on this month's *Media Master CD-ROM*.



*[Note: The NAPMA creative staff has also modified the permission forms for the Kid's Night-In Party from the January package to use with the Spring Break Day Camp program. These are also included on the Media Master CD-ROM.]*

### Activities

The primary purpose of the Spring Break Day Camp is to provide children with a safe environment in which to participate in fun, learning activities, while their parents are working. It is important, therefore, to plan five days of activities carefully and thoroughly, so children have a positive experience, parents are happy they enrolled their children in your Camp and the program is profitable for you.

The number of offsite activities you choose depends on what activities are available in your community and the associated costs. My offsite activity (Laser Tag) is all fun, but parents will certainly look favorably on a trip to a museum or other educational experience.

Assign one of your instructors to do some research into community programs, such as police, fire and emergency officers who make safety presentations.

Include some of the specific activities that are favorites with your martial arts students and even create some new ones, keeping in mind that some of the children at your Spring Break Day Camp may not be martial arts students. Utilize the brain cells of your instructors to help you develop a day-by-day, hour-by-hour activities plan for your Day Camp.

To help you start, I've included some activities from NAPMA's Little Ninjas Drills & Games Program, which non-martial arts students will enjoy. It's also an opportunity for your martial arts students to practice some drills that can't be practiced too much. (See the document on the *Media Master CD-ROM*, which includes complete instructions for the drills presented below.)

**Focus Drill (beginner level): Student Target Practice**  
Toss a target across each student's strike zone. Each student must strike the target, without missing. During this drill, each student will begin to develop coordination as he learns to break the plane of lateral motion. Each student can improve his learning ability when using his left hand on his right side and vice versa.

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**Balance Drill (beginner level): Student Balance**  
Each student stands on one foot, while holding his other leg off the floor. He hops in place for a period of time or a number of hops and must also hop over obstacles, without falling. Balance and technique will improve with muscle development, as this drill develops strong leg muscles.

**Fitness Drill (beginner level): Student Fitness**  
Introduce this drill as an opportunity for each student to portray an animal: Cat sit-ups, Lion push-ups and Frog squat jumps. This drill promotes physical fitness and develops the basic motor skills that are necessary to perform martial arts techniques.



**Coordination Drill (beginner level): Student Boxing Drill**  
Students punch focus mitts to develop coordination with their left and right hand and foot. When performed properly, this drill will improve students' reaction times.

**Control Drill (intermediate level): Student Speed Control**  
Students learn how to control the speed of their punches and kicks, as they practice at various speed levels. This drill

help students to develop muscle control, which improves the safety of martial arts students during sparring and teaches non-martial arts students to be more careful when playing with friends.

**Balance Drill (intermediate level): Student Kicks**  
This drill enhances students' balance skills as it improves their ability to execute multiple kicks. Each student must perform kick repetitions without placing a foot on the ground between each kick.

**Memory Drill (intermediate level): Student Flash Cards**  
Students are shown flash cards with shapes that represent specific techniques. Students must then perform the technique from memory. This drill improves students' memory abilities as they learn how to associate abstract picture cues with martial arts movements and then execute them properly.

**Coordination Drill (intermediate level): Student Jump**  
Each student jumps from one target to another, while swinging his arms backwards and then forwards when exploding into the jump. As students practice using their arms to generate momentum, they will begin to jump higher and further, developing better jumping skills, such as agility, coordination and control.

**Balance Drill (advanced level board breaking): Student Flying Kick**  
Students execute a series of kicks to break pieces of paper, representing boards, without falling. They also practice those kicks with fun animal scenarios, serving as obstacles: "jumping over the alligator" with a side kick; "faking the snake" with a front kick; and "kicking an apple from a tree" with a round kick.

If you're a typical school owner, then a Spring Break Karate Day Camp can be a highly profitable and popular program in your community. This is also the kind of activity that boost enrollments and retention rates. Give yourself plenty of time to plan and then reap the rewards!

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