



BDPA

Chapter Start-up and Governance Guide

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Overview

The New Chapter Interest Group Start-Up Guide provides information and guidelines required to start a new BDPA chapter. This information includes:

- Introduction of BDPA to prospective Chapter Interest Groups.
- Direction and guidance to prospective chapters.
- Information and assistance in setting realistic goals and objectives for prospective chapters.
- Organizational templates.

About BDPA

BDPA is a non-profit organization of professionals working in or having an interest in the Computer Science and Information Technology fields. BDPA has a diverse representation of information technology professionals. Included amongst the organization's members are programmers, analysts, engineers, managers, instructors, and entrepreneurs, to name a few.

Earl Pace and the late David Wimberly founded BDPA in May of 1975. BDPA was formed out of a concern shared by both men that minorities were not adequately represented in the information technology industry. The first BDPA chapter was organized in Philadelphia, PA. The second chapter was organized in 1978 in Washington, DC. Shortly thereafter, the third chapter was organized in Cleveland, Ohio. In 1979, BDPA was restructured as a national organization. Currently, there are more than forty active chapters across the United States.

BDPA Vision

'Be a powerful advocate for our stakeholders' interests within the global technology industry.'

BDPA Mission

'BDPA is a global member focused technology organization that delivers programs and services for the professional well-being of its stakeholders.'

BDPA Strategic Priorities

1. Operational Cleanup – Fiscally sound practices and improved productivity.
2. Transformational Change – Organizationally aligned for significant membership growth.
3. Value Proposition – A premier provider of programs and service for all stakeholders.

BDPA Strategic Objectives

- Transform BDPA to a regional structure creating a nimble organization poised for growth, enhanced leadership and regional specific services to all BDPA Stakeholders
- Enhance BDPA's effectiveness to attract, retain, reclaim, excite and inform members by providing relevant programs and services to each membership relationship
- Clearly position BDPA's brand as differentiated and preferred characteristic sixth members and sponsors.
- Revamp the infrastructure to support current technologies allowing improved communication, service delivery and operational efficiency.
- Improve BDPA's financial position by creating a model for sound financial gate keeping and reporting while repositioning the BDPA National Office.

BDPA Stakeholders

- Community – BDPA works hard to offer the community an opportunity to excel in IT careers.
- Students – students gain tremendous value from the SITES (Student Information Technology Education and Scholarship) programs.
- Educational Institutions – Linkage into talented students, internships and networking opportunities for employment.
- Professionals – BDPA is leading and respected provider of IT opportunities and development programs.
- Corporate Sponsors – BDPA is a leading and respected provider of diverse IT talent.

BDPA Benefits

To view a list of our current membership benefits - go to <http://bdpa.org/member-benefits.php>. These benefits include some of the following:

- Networking contacts and access to > 4000 IT Members
- Technical Training to Further IT Development
- Career Counseling and Coaching
- Help to Find a Job
- Professional Development and Leadership Opportunities
- National Conference Discount
- Training discounts
- Discount on National products and services
- Access to IT Workshops & Seminars
- BDPA Monthly Newsletter
- Web Site discounts to small businesses

Membership

Membership in BDPA is open to individuals and businesses with involvement or interests in the Information Technology industry.

Membership Dues

Individuals joining the BDPA will be required to pay BDPA membership dues. (There is a 50/50 split of dues payable to the local chapter and National BDPA)

- Full Membership -Annual Dues \$100.00
- Full 5-year membership at \$400.00
- Student Members -Annual Dues \$25.00
(Only persons enrolled “full time” at an educational institution are eligible for student membership).

Membership Dues Process

When dues are collected manually, (not using the database) the following process must be followed:

- A completed membership application must accompany the membership dues.
- A copy of the student’s college id must accompany the BDPA membership application.
- Make a copy of the membership application for the Local Chapter records.
- Submit all monies to National BDPA

When dues are collected via the database:

- The new member or vp of MM will enter all personal information into the database
- The system will generate an invoice for the membership dues
- The new member can pay by credit card or check. (if a check is used, the membership transaction will not be completed until the check is received at the local or national office.
- Once membership dues are collected the new member will receive a confirmation and welcome email from the National and Local presidents.

NOTE: Chapter Interest Groups must submit all membership dues to the National Office. Once a Chapter Interest Group becomes a chartered chapter of National BDPA, the local chapter portion of the membership dues will be distributed back to the newly chartered local chapter. See footnotes for local chapter distribution portion of membership dues.

Membership in BDPA is effective when National BDPA receives the National portion of the annual dues and has updated the National database accordingly.

Membership Transfer

- Any financially current member of BDPA may request to have his/her membership transferred to another active chapter in BDPA.
- The member must notify the national office in writing of their request for transfer. The document will be forwarded to the National Membership Management Vice President and the member’s request will be granted.
- The National Membership Management Vice President will notify the membership vice president of the local chapter and the member that the transfer has been completed. **Note:** Membership dues paid to the former chapter will not be transferred.

Local Chapter Startup Guidelines

Steps for Establishing a Chapter Interest Group

This section provides procedures required for establishing a Charter Interest Group:

- Recruit business associates and friends that are interested in BDPA.
- Contact the BDPA National Office to receive BDPA materials and identify the chapter closest to the Chapter Interest Group.
- Contact the closest chapter and develop a mentor relationship.
- Schedule an interest group meeting. The National Office, National Membership Management Vice President, and current BDPA members may assist with the presentation on BDPA and be available to answer questions.
- Prepare a project plan identifying a date to complete the Chapter Interest Group charter application package.
- Establish a meeting schedule identifying the Special Interest Group charter tasks/requirements that are to be completed.
- Provide monthly status reports to the National Membership Management Vice President on the Special Interest Group's progress.
- Access the Internet regularly to network and receive valuable information from the National BDPA Web site.

Chapter Interest Group Policy

To establish a new local chapter of BDPA, the following are required and must be submitted to the National Membership Management Vice President, 30 days prior to a quarterly National BDPA Board of Directors Meeting:

- Site of the proposed new chapter must be at least 50 miles from the nearest chartered BDPA chapter. If a BDPA chapter exists within a 50-mile radius of the proposed new chapter, the chapter interest group must submit a letter of support from each of the chartered BDPA chapter(s) nearest to it.
- A letter of intent (see attached form) signed by a minimum of 10 "full" paid members.
- A listing of the local chapter officers for the first year of operation.
- A copy of the local chapter bylaws (see national bylaws).
- A copy of the application for article of incorporation.
- Full dues for the 10 charter members -\$100 for full members and \$25 for students must be remitted with corresponding membership applications.
- A written action/strategic plan for the first year of operation:
 - The plan is to show what the proposed chapter's plans are for the coming year to further the mission of BDPA.
 - The plan shall reflect the programs that the proposed chapter will use to increase the knowledge and marketability of its members.
 - The plan shall show how proposed chapter will attract new members.
 - The plan shall show how the proposed chapter will further the knowledge of the information technology industry in the community.
 - The plan shall show how the proposed chapter will attract corporate sponsors.
 - The plan shall demonstrate how your chapter will field a team in the National High School Computer Competition.
- If any of the charter members are members of another chapter, their membership dues must be current. Their memberships will be transferred after the chapter becomes chartered.
- Once the chapter becomes chartered, the National Finance Vice President will forward the local chapter portion of dues to the new chapter Finance Vice President.
- If the chapter is not accepted, the individuals who are members of a current chapter will remain as such. Those individuals who are not currently members of an existing chapter have the option of becoming members of the chapter nearest to them or of any chapter of their choice.

Bylaws

A Chapter Interest Group must review the National Bylaws and either adopt them as their own or modify them to become applicable to their chapter proceedings. A sample local chapter Bylaws will be provided.

Elections

Each Chapter Interest Group must elect officers to manage the business operations of the chapter. At start-up, these officers should include: President, Vice President Business Management (President Elect) and Vice President of Finance. Chapter Interest Groups should also appoint a Vice President of Membership Management, Vice President of Business Management, Vice President of Strategy and Planning and a Vice President of Member Services. Before elections, it should be determined how long the term of office will be. Currently, the majority of chapters have two-year terms.

Local Officers

The following local officers are required for a local chapter:

- President
- Vice President Business Management/President Elect
- Vice President Finance
- Vice President Membership Management
- Vice President Member Services
- Vice President Strategy and Planning

Responsibilities of Officers

The Local Chapter President:

- Preside over all meetings of the local chapter board of directors.
- Be responsible for seeing that the decisions of the local chapter are carried out.
- Be an ex-officio member of all business areas, both standing and ad hoc.
- Have the power to appoint task forces/committees with the approval of the local chapter board of directors.
- Serve as the official spokesperson for the local chapter.
- Serve as the chairperson of the local chapter board of directors.
- Ensure the local chapter strategic plan is updated and followed as approved by the local chapter board of directors.

The Local Chapter Vice President Business Management/President Elect:

- Serve as the Vice President of Business Management.
- Serve as the President in the absence of the President.
- Fulfill the duties of Assistant Vice President of Finance of the local chapter.
- Coordinate the activities of the local chapter's task forces/ad hoc committees.
- Be responsible for determining when a quorum has been reached at all meetings of the local chapter.

The Local Chapter Vice President of Finance:

- Manage all activities of the Finance business area.
- Maintain complete financial records of all monies received and distributed by the local chapter.
- Issue periodic financial reports in writing as required by the local chapter board of directors.
- Determine which members of the local chapter are financially current.
- Oversee the collection of fees and dues.
- Disburse funds as directed by the local chapter board of directors.

The Local Chapter Vice President of Membership Management:

- Manage all activities of the Membership Management Business Area.
- Define and manage the recruitment and retention processes for the local chapter.
- Provide member database administration for chapter.
- Participate in all National membership drive initiatives.

The Local Chapter Vice President of Member Services:

- Manage all activities of the Member Services Business Area
- Define and manage local member benefits and services
- Maintain list of national member benefits, discounts, products and services
- Maintain a profile and skill set database of chapter members
- Coordinate local career fairs and expos
- Coordinate chapter workshops and seminars for adult professionals
- Coordinate technology training for high school students (SITES Program)
- Coordinate chapter BFTAW (Black Family Technology Awareness Week) observances

The Local Chapter Vice President of Strategy and Planning:

- Manage all activities of the Strategy & Planning Business Area.
- Communicate to the local chapter the approved NBDPA strategy
- Identify local needs (members and sponsors) and incorporate into the local strategy
- Schedule and conduct planning and strategy sessions.
- Report progress on strategy and make recommendations to get back on plan
- Provide input into chapter quarterly report
- Review local chapter Budgets and aligns with Local and National Strategy

Chapter Mail

The Chapter Interest Group must establish an address to receive correspondence from National BDPA as well as their contacts in their community. A consistent chapter address is important to show stability in the community.

Voice Mail

The Chapter Interest Group should plan to set up a voice mail account or answering machine or service for inquiries.

Bank Account

Establishment of a bank account is important to collect and maintain dues, track account and pay chapter expenses. The name of the Chapter Interest Group (Charter Name) should be recorded on bank records. The account must require the signature of at least two Chapter Interest Group officers, one of which must be the President. The other required signature should be the Vice President of Finance.

Tax Status

A Chapter Interest Group may either adopt the National BDPA tax status or invest in incorporating themselves as a 501C6. There is an attorney retained by National BDPA for advisement on this matter. The Chapter Interest Group shall contact the National Vice President of Business Management via the National Office for more information.

Stationary

Stationary should be established for correspondence with the community, National BDPA, and other chapters. Stationary should have the Chapter Interest Group (Chartered Chapter) mailing address and phone number. Business cards and membership applications should be included in the inventory of chapter business materials.

Chapter Operations Policy

The following procedures are to be adhered to for ongoing chapter operations and are required in order for a chapter to be deemed a chapter that is in good standing:

- Each chapter of BDPA must have a representative attend at least two National Board of Directors meeting per year. A chapter proxy must be submitted to the National Office for meetings not attended.
- Each chapter of BDPA must submit quarterly reports, an annual report, an annual budget and business plan to the National Office addressed to the attention of the National Membership Management Vice President. See

the annual chapter presidents reminder list for due dates of all requirements.

- Each chapter of BDPA is required to have on file in the National BDPA office, a copy of their articles of incorporation, a completed SS-4 tax form, their chapter EIN, and a letter requesting inclusion in the National BDPA 501(C)(6) umbrella or a copy of their IRS tax exempt status.
- Each chapter must maintain chapter membership of at least 10 financially current members.
- Consideration for the BDPA Chapter of the Year Award will include chapter donations to the BDPA Education & Technology Foundation.
- The National Membership Management Vice President will review each chapter's status for compliance with the above requirements each year. Failure to comply will affect a chapter's participation in the National awards process.

Financial Planning

Chapter Budget

- The local chapter board of directors should determine the sources of revenue generation and expenses that will be incurred.
- The local chapter Finance Vice President will draft an operating plan for the chapter.
- The chapter budget shall be projected for the year and shall include the compiled budgets of all chapter business areas. See the BDPA web site for a sample budget.

Business Area Budget

- Each business area is responsible for creating a realistic budget to perform their task/duties for the year. The business area budgets should be compiled together to satisfy the local chapter budget.
- Checking Account
- The local chapter should establish a checking account requiring at least two (2) signatures (Finance Vice President and local chapter president).
- Safe Deposit Box
- The local chapter should secure a safe deposit box to keep chapter documents, tax papers, etc.

Forecasting

- Another way to set goals for future years is to forecast what the chapter would like to obtain in the next year. The chapter's forecast should serve as a guideline to measure performance as a new chapter and what can be done to improve the chapter's financial status.

Compliance

Tax Status

- Because each chapter should spend time and effort on programs and services for its members, each new chapter should apply for 501C6 Tax Exempt Status. With a 501C6 tax status, the BDPA Education and Training Foundation (BETF), the 501C3 'arm' of BDPA, will apply for non-profit grants and handle the financial paper trail the government requires for 501C3 organizations. In accordance with IRS Pub 557, "Tax Exempt Status for your Organization," to apply for a 501C6 tax exempt status the chapter must first acquire an Employer Tax ID (IRS Form SS-4), and complete IRS package 1024, "Application For Recognition of Exempt Under Section 501C." All forms can be downloaded from the IRS web site at www.irs.gov. Completed copies of this form must be sent to the National BDPA office.
- Income Taxes Without a 501C6 tax-exempt status, all income a chapter receives for programs and services is TAXABLE income. With a tax-exempt status, the income is non-taxable; however, each chapter must still

file taxes every year. IRS Form 990 or 990EZ must be filed every year, regardless of the chapter's amount of income. Notarized copies of these articles must be sent to the National BDPA office.

- Incorporation Articles of Incorporation for your chapter must be filed in your state. Notarized copies of these articles must be sent to the National BDPA office.

Form 990

- Each local chapter must file its own IRS form 990 regardless of how much money the chapter has generated. Completed copies of this form should be sent to the National office.

Membership Entry and Payments

Membership entry and payment is documented in the Payment Processing_GlobalDB document. This document will be included in the chapter toolkit.

Local Chapter Executive Board Meetings

A consistent meeting place, time and date should be arranged for monthly executive board meetings and monthly general body meetings. Meeting locations for business areas, seminars, and other activities may be flexible.

General Body Meetings

General body meetings are forums to inform the membership of official business. This is the ideal setting to network with the chapter members and find out what it is they are looking for technically and professionally. Support can also be solicited for the different activities that need to be accomplished within the various business areas.

Membership Orientations

A new member orientation is suggested shortly after each new member joins. New members need to be welcomed into the Chapter and become acquainted with BDPA and its goals and objectives. The orientation also familiarizes the new member with BDPA's community involvement and invites the new member's participation in local chapter activities.

General Membership Meetings

The general membership meeting is held at a frequency determined by the chapter. Its purpose is to conduct internal chapter business. This meeting is open only to BDPA membership.

Networking

This section lists networking opportunities that you can organize with your chapter. There are over 40 chapters in BDPA. You are urged to contact other chapters and draw from their experiences.

Seminars/Workshops enhance the technical and professional skills of the BDPA member and the community.

Other Organizations

Other established organizations in your community can serve as mentors and a resource to information that your chapter may need to coexist within your community. They can be used as an umbrella to get information out in the community.

Social Events BDPA is a professional organization. However, we understand that social settings such as BDPA mixers or open houses are a good way of getting the word out about your chapter.

Membership Drives

This is a vehicle used by every BDPA chapter to increase membership. Suggestions for a successful membership drive:

- Publicize it!

- Solicit corporate memberships.
- Encourage each member to introduce and encourage a friend, business associate or family member to join. Encourage guests & speakers at your program meetings to join BDPA.
- Post a facility for member recruitment on your local chapter web page.
- Subscribe to a user group mailing list.
- Offer chapter membership gift certificates.
- Give prizes to the member who brings in the most new members

Product and Service Requirements

All BDPA chapters are required to have the following products and services:

Monthly Program Meetings

The monthly program meeting is a major sales tool to present BDPA to the community. Business areas are given an opportunity to describe their responsibilities and activities.

Goal: All chapters are required to provide program meetings each month with activities that participants can apply to their personal and professional development.

Structure: Monthly program meetings are held at the same location and at the same time of the month. Chapters will receive tremendous support from their members and the community if they practice consistency.

Remember you can't grow your membership if the public can't find you.

Members should be provided a calendar at the beginning of the year containing a schedule of the monthly program meetings and their topics for the calendar year.

Monthly Program Meeting suggestions are:

- A presentation on BDPA describing the mission, purpose, and membership benefits.
- A presentation on a topic pertaining to professional, personal, or technical development.
- An overview of upcoming events and introduction of the officers and business area vice presidents.
- Chapters should solicit feedback from their membership to determine the best format for their chapters.

Benefits: Monthly program meetings are an excellent vehicle for recruiting new members, recruiting existing members for chapter projects, providing a forum for members to network, and introducing the chapter to Corporate America to obtain support for chapter programs. Membership meetings also give a chapter the opportunity to discuss ideas and plan future events.

Customer: BDPA Member

Cost: This will be determined by the need for rental of a meeting location or if the chapter serves refreshments.

Public libraries may provide meeting room facilities at no charge to the community and nonprofit organizations.

Quarterly Newsletter

Goal: Chapters are required to produce a quarterly newsletter.

Structure: Chapter newsletters should highlight chapter accomplishments and communicate chapter events to the membership and other BDPA chapters.

- The articles should be technical and informational, describing the activities of the chapter and its members.
- A copy of each published newsletter should be sent to the National Office to the attention of the Membership Management and Membership Services Vice President.
- Consistency is key! Establish a schedule of when newsletters will be distributed.
- Prepare a project plan identifying the resources required.

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- Prepare a budget. The budget will identify the resources to be obtained to prepare the newsletter.
- Solicit members to work on the newsletter team.
- Solicit external resources to underwrite or produce the chapter newsletter.
- Solicit articles.

Benefits: Selling advertisements in the newsletter are a great source of revenue. Informed members become active members.

Customer: BDPA Member, Other BDPA chapters, Community and Corporate America.

Cost: Will be determined by the chapter newsletter budget.

High School Computer Competition

Goal: Chapters are required to sponsor a high school student computer competition team to the Annual National BDPA Conference.

Structure: A team must consist of a minimum of three students and no more than four students. Teams will be judged on their performance based upon their level of proficiency in:

- Visual Basic programming
- Presentation skills
- BDPA history
- Information technology terminology

Chapters should perform the following tasks:

1. Prepare a project plan
2. Obtain instructors
3. Obtain high school students
4. Prepare a syllabus
5. Prepare training material
6. Obtain a location with computer terminals
7. Obtain funding for expenses
8. Obtain a chaperone

Benefits: Corporate support can be obtained for computer competition teams. Corporations respond favorably to supporting the workforce of tomorrow. Members are mentors to community youth.

Customer: Community Youth

Cost: the resources identified in the project plan will determine cost.

Internet Access

Goal: An officer of the chapter should have access to the Internet to send and receive messages as well as access the BDPA National Web site for pertinent messages and files.

Structure: Internet access can be obtained through a local ISP provider.

Benefits: Chapters are provided with a facility to obtain information, share ideas, network and recruit members.

Customer: BDPA Member, Other BDPA chapters, Community and Corporate America.

Cost: Telephone and ISP charges.

Community Involvement

- BDPA has a commitment to provide our technical expertise to our community.

- Schools are a great resource to find speakers, hold workshops and to find students for the annual computer competition.
- There isn't a better place to find out what's going on in your community than the local church. Don't forget BDPA or local community entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs are a good source for small donations. Small business will allow your chapter to display notices about your chapter activities and give guidance on community events.
- There is a wealth of resources in local colleges and universities. Student members can be an invaluable resource to your chapter.

Corporate Support

- Resources Corporations are always looking for professional resources in an attempt to diversify their organizations. The local chapter should use this opportunity to provide employment opportunities for BDPA membership.
- Office Space Meeting locations may be made available for chapter use for your local board of directors and monthly program meetings, seminars and workshops. Ask, all they can say is no.
- Equipment Corporations may be willing to donate computer equipment or other products for local chapter use.
- Financial Support Corporations may be approached for financial support to fund local chapter activities and the chapter high school computer competition.

New Chapter Visit

All newly chartered chapters are entitled to a visit from a National Officer during the first year of existence. Expenses for this visit will be underwritten by the National organization.

New Chapter Visit Policy

- **New chapters** are entitled to a visit from a National Officer during the first year of existence. Expenses for the visit will be covered by the National organization.
- An **existing chartered chapter** that invites a National Officer or a designated representative to participate in a chapter activity will pay the expenses incurred by the National Officer or the designated representative.
- An unrequested visit by a National Officer to a chapter may be paid by the national organization.

Chapter Name Change Policy

The following procedures are to be followed when a chapter of BDPA wants to change the name under which the chapter was issued a charter.

- The chapter requesting the name change must notify the National Membership Management Vice President in writing of their desire to change the name of the chapter.
- Notification must contain the reason for the request and a copy must be sent to the National President.
- The National Executive Committee will decide whether or not to change the chapter name at the next scheduled National Executive Committee meeting.
- The chapter will be required to submit a check for \$75.00 payable to National BDPA to cover costs of processing the name change.
- If the request for name change is denied, the chapter will be notified in writing as to the reasons and their fee will be refunded. The requesting chapter may *not* begin using the new name until they have received in writing the approval of the National Executive Committee. The National Membership Management Vice President will notify all chapter presidents of the chapter name change.

Inactive Chapter Policy

- The chapter president will be notified in writing that the chapter has failed to comply and is considered inactive by National BDPA.
- The inactive chapter bank account(s) are to be closed and a bank statement indicating that the account was closed is to be sent to the National BDPA office. All funds remaining in the chapter bank account are to be

forwarded to the National BDPA office. Any accounts receivable for the terminated chapter will be deducted from these funds.

- All remaining assets of the chapter are to be donated to the BDPA Education and Technology Foundation Endowment Fund after all legal and National BDPA has satisfied just debts of the chapter.
- Notification in writing will be sent to the current members of record notifying them of the inactive chapter status and inviting them to become members of another BDPA chapter.

Letter of Intent Template

LETTER OF INTENT BDPA _____

CHAPTER _____

We, the undersigned, hereby indicate our intention to establish a Chapter of BDPA, in the location of:

_____ State of _____

for the purpose of the professional, personal and technical development of professionals interested in the field of information processing. We certify that we qualify for chapter membership. During our efforts to organize and establish this chapter, the following persons have been selected for office during the first year of the charter:

Position	Name
President	
VP of Finance	
VP of Business Management	
VP of Membership Management	
VP of Member Services	
VP of Strategy Planning	

We agree to conduct program meetings and seminars for the improvement of our members' technical expertise, and for enhancing their personal and business development skills. We agree to work with other chapters as well as with the National Board of Directors (NBOD) to further the mission of BDPA. We agree that if we do not complete the requirements for the establishment of a Chapter, or if we are denied acceptance as a chapter that we will not use the name BDPA and/or the abbreviation "BDPA" in any manner.

Name (Printed or Typed) Signature

Names of Chartered Members	



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