

Effective Trade Show Exhibiting

...avoiding the common pitfalls and maximizing your ROI

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- I. Introduction
- II. Q: Who has exhibited? What was your experience?
- III. The purpose of exhibiting at trade shows
 - a. Maintain database
 - b. Development of new clients
 - c. Nurturing of existing clients (goodwill)
 - d. Showcase new products and services
 - e. Showcase new programs
 - f. Sell products
- IV. Why are trade shows so popular
 - a. Intense gathering of key buyers
 - b. Cost effective method of targeting key prospects
- V. Show planning
 - a. Show selection
 - b. Show analysis
 - c. Selection of booth parameters
 - d. Goals
 - e. Objectives
 - f. Budget
 - g. Show time table
- VI. Coordinating your show efforts
 - a. Develop a planning handbook
 - b. Coordinate the booth staff
 - c. Establish expectations and guidelines of staff
 - d. Lead retrieval and lead dissemination
 - e. Pre-show mailer and marketing
 - f. Staff training
- VII. Design and layout of the booth
 - a. Color
 - b. Booth placement (best flow)
- VIII. Ordering peripherals
 - a. Electric
 - b. Booth space
 - c. Drayage
 - d. Water (if needed)
 - e. Carpet
 - f. Booth
 - g. Chairs

- h. Tables
- i. Trashcans
- j. Security
- IX. Marketing your show
 - a. Trade show rule:
 - b. Pre-show mailer
 - c. Advertising in trade pubs
 - d. Telemarketing efforts
 - e. Publicity and promotion/Media Kits
- X. Pre-show and Post show analysis
 - a. Each evening after show; debrief of the day, 30 minutes
 - i. What could we do better
 - b. Strategy for follow-up
- XI. Evaluate your ROI
- XII. Cost per exposure (+)/(-) formula
- XIII. Track data
- XIV. Should we do it again

14 Greatest Mistakes of Trade Show Exhibiting

- Great booth Guarantees Success
- Distributing expensive literature at a show
- Too few staffers
- Rookies at the show
- Forgetting to review exhibitor list for prospects
- Failing to establish specific goals
- Failure to design powerful graphics, (you have 6 seconds to capture them)
- Establishing a physical barrier
- Requiring staffers to work the entire show
- Failure to identify the demographics of the show audience
- Lack of follow-up; #1 complaint from show attendees
- Exhibiting because your competition does
- Following up of unqualified leads
- Allowing key folks to leave early or staff showing up late

Pointers for a Successful Tradeshow

- Never open late
- Never close early
- Never eat, drink, smoke or *sit in the booth
- Maintain personal hygiene
- Be engaging with attendees
- Advertise, Market, Advertise

- Contact other exhibitors
- Follow-up early
- Define specific objectives and goals
- Coordinate all aspects of the show
- Work show with style and professionalism
- Train your staff early and often

*unless you have a section set aside for meetings/one-on-ones

Other Tradeshow Industry Educational Opportunities

Organizations

- CEIR Center for Exhibition Industry Research – 301-907-7626
- TSEA Trade Show Exhibitors Association – 703-941-3725
- EDPA Exhibit Designers & Producers Association – 404-303-7310

Publications

- Trade Show Week 800-375-4212
- Exhibitor magazine 888-235-6155
- Exhibitor Times 602-990-1101
- Exhibitor Marketing Magazine 800-746-9646
- Exhibitor Builder magazine 818-225-0100
- Sign Business Magazine 303-469-0424
- Digital Printing Magazine 303-469-0424

Events Shows and Conferences

- The Exhibitor Show
- TS2

Certification Programs

- CTSM Certified Trade Show Marketer 970-416-0055
- CME Certified Manager of Exhibits 703-941-3725

Sign and Graphics Substrates & Processes

Header Signs

- Front-lit: Polycarbonate with opaque vinyl, digital, Lambda architectural (dimensional)
- Back-lit: Polycarbonate with translucent vinyl, digital, Lambda, electrical

Secondary / Detachables

- Front-lit: Polycarbonate with opaque vinyl, digital, Lambda architectural (dimensional)
- Back-lit: Polycarbonate with translucent vinyl, digital, Lambda, electrical

Photomurals

- Front-lit: Polycarbonate with opaque vinyl, digital, Lambda architectural (Duraflex or C-print)
- Back-lit: Polycarbonate with translucent vinyl, digital, Lambda, (Duratrans)

Supergraphics

- Front-lit: Same as Photomurals plus Polycarbonate with opaque vinyl or paint
- Back-lit: Same as Photomurals plus Polycarbonate with translucent vinyl.

Signs and graphics should:

- Attract
- Inform
- Direct

Web Sites