

Tips and Techniques for Successful Exhibiting

The key to successful exhibiting is knowing what you want to achieve from your show participation. Set yourself goals, so you and your team know what you want to do and set objectives outlining how you will get the results you want.

Consider what you want to achieve

- Educate the public
- Project an image
- Recruit staff/volunteers
- Introduce new services
- Perform market research

Write down your goal, there is a greater commitment to written goals and it is easier to measure them. The **SMART** goal setting formula helps remember the individual components. Goals need to be.

Specific – in language stating quality and quantity of results wanted.

Measurable

Attainable

Realistic

Time framed, or have a deadline

For example:

To generate 100 new prospective users (quantity/quality) of the Health Advice Centre resulting in 20 visits (quality) to the Health Advice Centre by 30/7/2010 (deadline).



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Planning Guide

6 – 8 weeks:

- confirm staff/team recruitment
- check on production of display materials
- order promotional samples and literature
- confirm pre-event advertising and press releases
- order necessary show services: electrical supply, tables, chairs, etc.

3 – 4 weeks:

- send invitation letters to specific groups
- finalise any VIP guest events
- prepare support materials for staff at the show ie, ID badges, training materials, contact cards, questionnaires, parking permits

At the show before opening:

- confirm arrival of display equipment literature and supervise set-up
- conduct pre-show briefing and outline goals

During the show:

- assess progress & processing of leads
- make arrangement to dismantle the display at the end of the show
- reserve next years space

After the show:

- send thank you letters to staff and specific visitors, VIP guests
- distribute and follow up on new leads/contacts
- prepare a thorough evaluation of the show participation



Exhibitors Tool Kit

It's a good idea to have a checklist of exhibit supplies and specific show items that you can tend to forget.

Office supplies:

- File folders
- Stapler, staples and staple remover
- Scissors, paper clips
- Ball point and marker pens
- Calendar
- Appointment book
- Tape
- Envelopes
- Inquiry box
- Cleaning supplies
- Set up tools (Velcro etc)
- Rubber bands

Specific show items:

- Brochures/Leaflets
- Give aways/other promotional items
- Identity Badges
- List of staff
- duty schedule

General items:

- Refreshments (Tea, coffee, cold drinks)
- Cash for on-site payments
- First aid kit



On the Show Floor

The most crucial aspect of any exhibit is its people. The team chosen to represent you, are your ambassadors. Use the **PEOPLE** formula to select the most suitable personnel.

Choose **P**eople – orientated personnel, who are **E**nthusiastic, **O**bservant, have excellent **P**roduct/project knowledge, are keen **L**isteners and finally are **E**mpathetic to your visitors situations.

Staff members need to know:

1. **Why you are exhibiting:**
the purpose for your involvement and what you are expecting to achieve through participation.
2. **What you are exhibiting:**
the specific product/service you plan to exhibit. There should be no surprises when your team arrives at the display.
3. **What you expect from them.**
Try to encourage your team to set their own goals based on the overall exhibiting goals. They need to know what you want them to do on a daily basis e.g. How many contacts do you want them to interact with and what kind of information do you want them to give out and gather in.
4. **How to do what you expect from them.**
Train your staff to be more effective on the show floor.
 - Prepare 3 – 6 engaging questions before the show.
 - Create the right first impression, smile and maintain eye contact
 - Encourage visitors to want to spend time at your stand
 - Be friendly and non-threatening
 - Ask open ended questions – beginning with who, what, where, when, why or how
 - Relate the questions to the industry/service and its benefits or to a specific situation
 - Practice, practice, practice
 - Remember to use the 80/20 rule
 - 80% of the time listen to visitors
 - 20% of the time talk about your product/service
(Never talk for more than two minutes straight)
 - Ask questions about their level of interest/need for the product/service
 - Inquire into their decision making process i.e.
What influences the involvement / user decision



- Explore time and budget parameters as appropriate
- Don't hand out expensive literature. Over 60% of literature handed out at shows is thrown away. Instead have an inexpensive piece to give away
- Offer to send information. Remember to send materials in a timely manner. It should be with the visitor within 48 hours of the show.
- Only give literature to genuine prospects
- Before giving away promotional gifts try to get some qualifying information in return
- Use the gift as a 'thank you' for visiting the stand

Guidelines for closing:

- Change body position, minimize eye contact and shake hands
- Communicate follow-up action plan

Other Tips to Remember:

- Do not sit, read, smoke, eat or drink in exhibit area
- Avoid drinking alcohol or eating garlicky/spicy foods during the day/night before
- Try to dress one notch better than your visitor – dress in business like manner
- Wear very comfortable shoes
- Arrive at the exhibit at least 15 minutes before your scheduled time and complete any paperwork before your leave
- Let colleagues know when you leave the exhibit
- Do not use the telephone in the exhibit when visitors are around
- Avoid crossing your arms when talking to visitors
- Write down as much visitor information as possible if you wish to follow-up
- Use Velcro strips for fixing poster display materials – ask for a supply – do not use: drawing pins, staple guns, tape, blutak etc.
- Display items at normal viewing height – i.e. top display panels – unless specifically targeting children or disabled people in wheelchairs etc – use bottom display panel for leaflet holders
- Remove all display material at the end of the show
- Remove all valuable display items at end of each day
- Do not block walkways/exits with equipment
- Keep stocks of leaflets/paper products off the floor or store on a groundsheet to avoid dampness from grass spoiling them



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(source: Tips and Techniques for Exhibiting Success – Susan A. Friedmann 1995)