

Title:

Trade Show Exhibitors - Tips For Newbies

Word Count:

991

Summary:

Trade shows are anything but a walk in the park, even for experienced exhibitors but if you've never "experienced" one it can certainly be a daunting task. However, as big as the mountain appears you know that you must include trade shows into your marketing mix.

And finally, after months of angst and planning you finally decided to take the plunge and attend your first consumer trade show as an exhibitor - the day of reckoning has arrived. But wait a minute, which show wi...

Keywords:

trade show promotions, trade show giveaways, trade show displays

Article Body:

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And finally, after months of angst and planning you finally decided to take the plunge and attend your first consumer trade show as an exhibitor - the day of reckoning has arrived. But wait a minute, which show will give you the biggest bang for your buck because trade shows are not cheap. You could pay as little as \$500 - \$700 or up to \$2,500 even \$3,000 for a simple and relatively small 10 x 10 space and so you want to do everything possible to make the experience a successful. If not, it may be your last.

Keep the following tips in mind as you put together your trade show plans you should avoid any major surprises and be well on your way to a successful show.

Realistic Expectations

Don't go into the trade show expecting to make enough in sales to cover all of your expenses. Most people attending trade shows do so to simply gather information and to learn what's new in their industry and market - not to go on a shopping spree. Rather, take the approach that this is a way to develop

contacts and get some good solid leads. Develop a small marketing kit that contains small samples of your product (if possible), brochures and coupons for those attendees who are willing to provide you with their name and email address or business card.

Renting Versus Buying

In most instances, since this is your first exhibit you'll want to rent your booth. Your company is new and wants to make an initial big splash with a smaller budget. When first developing a trade show program to supplement or diversify your current marketing mix, it can be difficult to determine the best exhibit and making a large financial commitment on an exhibit under these circumstances can be a daunting task.

Until you've been to a few trade shows, renting is normally the best path to follow. Even after you've done your research and decided on the best exhibit to fit your needs. This way, you get the opportunity to "test drive" your exhibit.

And if things go well and you start to attend more shows you can look into the economical benefits of purchasing an exhibit. Typically, it takes about four shows of renting a booth to cover the cost of purchasing a new exhibit.

Exhibiting At First Time Trade Shows

First time trade shows have no track record, no guarantees and it may just turn out to be a waste of your time. Many shows don't start to take off until their second year and since your goal is to build relationships with your target market; in most instances, you'll be much better off if you stick with shows that have an established track record.

Selling High Cost Products

Like I mentioned earlier, most trade show attendees attend because they want to gather information and to see what's new and so if you expect to sell dozens of gift baskets or whatever your product is at \$50 a piece you will probably go home with full set of inventory. A better option, if you decide to sell anything, is to sell a product that's low - less than \$20 because people are much less hesitant to part with a \$10 or \$20 bill.

Incentives

Trade Show organizers hate empty booth space. Therefore, a good way to capitalize on this fact is approach the show organizers a few days before the show and ask them if there's anything available. If there is and in many instances there are, you are in a perfect position to bargain for discounted booth space or perhaps, even get it for free. In addition, don't forget to ask what comes with the booth. Some organizers will supply a few chairs and a table

but many will only supply an empty space. Just remember that everything is negotiable and if you don't ask you won't receive but always ask so you don't run into a big surprise the first day of the show.

Market Yourself As An Expert

Offer to lead a seminar in your field of expertise at the show as a way to showcase your expertise. Simply choose a topic that you're familiar with and that ties into what you're promoting at your booth. However, don't make your presentation a 30 or 45 minute pitch. Offer genuine, good information for the bulk of your presentation and only utilize the last few minutes to pitch your product. Follow this simple and common sense formula people will flock to your booth and the mob that gathers will attract other attendees.

Look Alive

Nobody will stop at your booth if you are just sitting there looking bored. Get off your behind and greet attendees with a smile. This is much more inviting. On the flip side, just standing there with a smile isn't enough. You need to entice people to stop. Bring energy and enthusiasm to your booth and attendees will want to stop and really take a look at what you're promoting.

Focus On Just One Product Or Service

If you focus on too many products you will only confuse people and if people are confused, they won't stop at your booth and they certainly won't buy or provide you with their contact information.

Display A Banner

Even if they people are not familiar with what you're promoting, they need to know who you are. Therefore, having a banner that prominently displays who you are will invite people to at least checkout your booth.

Follow these simply rules and remember the primary reason most people attend trade shows and your first (and your 21st) trade show experience will be a positive one.

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