

## Title:

Trade Show Exhibit Themes: Orbit Into Another World

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585

## Summary:

Trade show exhibitors often ask why they should create a distinctive theme for their trade show display booth. There are at least three good reasons. Themes set you apart from your competition, stimulate excitement and momentum for your staff, and dramatically increase traffic to your trade show display.

## Keywords:

trade show, trade show exhibit, trade show display, custom modular exhibits, trade show booth

## Article Body:

Trade show exhibitors often create magical environments to take you "out of the ordinary"—and sweep you away to another world. They can be filled with music (The House of Blues found at the Exhibitor Show 2006 in Las Vegas), or animals (live African blackfooted penguins at the Magnussen Home Furnishing's booth at International Home Furnishings Market's biannual trade show in April 2005), adventure or just plain fun.

Trade show exhibitors often ask why they should create a distinctive theme for their trade show display booth. There are at least three good reasons. Themes set you apart from your competition, stimulate excitement and momentum for your staff, and dramatically increase traffic to your trade show display.

Here's a good example: The International Home Furnishing Market's biannual trade show (April 2005) was spread over 12 million square feet in 188 different buildings with over 75,000 attendees. Magnussen Home Furnishing was exhibiting at this giant trade show and their theme was Jazz Age opulence featuring Irving Berlin's "Puttin' on the Ritz" with high hats, narrow collars, white spats and lots of dollars. They used pear shaped penguins that looked like sophisticated men in tuxedos as a whimsical tie-in to their trade show theme of elegance. A way to grab attention at this vast exhibit space was to have real penguins (intimately identified with the Magnussen exhibit) seen by thousands of visitors over four days in the 10 by 10 foot eye-level special habitat built in the trade show exhibit lobby. Magnussen enhanced their penguin theme by having their male staff wear tuxedos while their female staff wore white blouses and either

black skirts or black slacks. They also hired teenagers dressed as penguins to roam the spacious trade show floor to attract attendees to their trade show display. The fact that there was a Jazz age band playing with glamorous ballroom dancers showing off the ritz also pleased and thrilled attendees at the dramatic 35,000 square foot Magnussen exhibit booth. Their jazzy results: a 20-percent increase in show visitors over the year before.

In October 2003, Magnussen tabbed their trade show display theme the "Magic of Magnussen." Two magicians in the lobby acted like pied pipers drawing attendees to their trade show booth while performing riveting magic tricks. Magnussen staff handed out decks of playing cards and they had a stuffed bunny popping out of a black hat as a giveaway. Their magical results: about a 10-percent increase in attendance over the previous year.

Advanced Micro Devices Inc. (AMD) chose the theme, "Break Free" at the National Association of Broadcasters 2005 show. It hit the right cord for the market that wants to do things differently and think beyond restraints. AMD had five hip actors dressed in business suits wearing 3-D glasses spread the message of AMD on the trade show floor, the lobby and the trade show displays of their partners. The cool actors gave out entry cards and 3 D glasses to visitors who got to enter a contest to win an AMD processor-powered laptop each day of the show.

Result: exceeded their original goal of 1500 visitors by 33%.

Remember that by having a theme for your company at your trade show display, you create excitement, focus, and sales. Your trade show themed message becomes a mantra and a hypnotic magnet.

Dick Wheeler is President of Professional Exhibits & Graphics, headquartered in Sunnyvale, California. The firm is a full-service premiere trade show exhibit, graphics and management services company. For additional information, go to [www.proexhibits.com](http://www.proexhibits.com).

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