

TRADE SHOW & EVENT MARKETING

During and After the Event

You're on your way! You've set your event goals and all of your staff should know what it's going to take to achieve them. Simply showing up and setting up won't do. Here are some tips for what to do while you are at the event – and what to do once you get home – to maximize your participation.

It's Show Time!

Pump Up Your Marketing Team – Remind your team to sell instead of tell. Avoid overcrowding the booth with company representatives. Of course, you shouldn't eat or drink while in your booth. Be careful to limit your time with unlikely targets. Remember why you are there.

Qualify Prospects – Ask questions. Find out immediately who you are talking to, where they are from and what organization they represent. First you might ask, "Tell me about your current projects." Then, move on to more targeted questions like, "What are your top three criteria for buying?" Finally, to define your follow-up action, ask "How does your company decide which vendors to work with?"

Study the Competition – Use staffers who are not scheduled in your booth to collect information on the event floor from your competitors. Where else can you get a first-hand look at new products, services and pricing?

Watch For Press – Encourage your booth staff to be on the lookout for press badges so they can make a proper greeting. And don't let the press get away without a giveaway.

A Process-Driven Post Event

Follow Up – Don't be lulled into a post-event wind down. Develop a measurable, systematic follow-up campaign with timelines. Be sure to schedule face-to-face meetings immediately. If you receive an attendee list, contact people who did not visit your booth. They may not remember all of the exhibitors they spoke with and will welcome contact from you.

Evaluate – Based on your objectives, you should have a way to evaluate your results. Is it number of leads? How much press coverage you received? Was the event a good match? Take notes so you'll know what you can improve upon the next time out.

Poll Staff – Include staff experiences in your evaluation. Were they prepared to answer questions or do they need more training before the next event? Did they have enough printed materials and giveaways? Did they meet their personal goals?

DID YOU KNOW?

According to industry surveys...

- 95 percent of decision makers look for their current vendors at shows.
- 87 percent share information they learned at shows; 64 percent talk to at least six other people.
- 77 percent found at least one new supplier at their last show.
- 72 percent say show attendance influences their buying decision.
- 71 percent of attendees can authorize purchases.



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