“How To Exhibit ***Successfully***”

What Every Exhibitor Needs To Know

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I. Effective Pre-Show Planning

- Companies that utilize Trade Shows effectively plan their strategy long before the Show begins, sometimes as much as one year in advance.
- The lesson here is that you can never start thinking about your next Show too early. You must start planning now to maximize your investment and to ensure your success.
- The following are the six critical areas that must be addressed in the Pre-Show planning process.

I. Effective Pre-Show Planning

A. Set Specific Goals and Objectives

Thorough planning and goal setting is possibly your most difficult task – yet it is by far the most important element of your participation. Without setting specific objectives, you will never know whether this Show was a success for you. Therefore, you must set SMART goals:

Sensible
Measurable
Attainable
Realistic
Truthful

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For Example:

- I want to generate 500 new leads. I want to make 4,000 attendees aware of the benefit of my new product. I want to demonstrate my services to 2,000 people. To determine if these expectations are realistic you must ask yourself these questions:
  - How much booth space will we require?
  - Who do we want to talk to ?
  - How many prospects can we expect to see?
  - How many salespeople will be staffing the booth?
  - How many hours are in the Show?
  - How many sales presentations can each person make in an hour?
  - What percentage of these prospects should we close?

- By going through this process, only you can determine what goals make the most sense for your company. Because your product is unique, and because there is no perfect formula, we recommend that you write your plans down on paper, discuss and debate them with your associates to refine them, and execute each detail carefully.

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B. Decide on the Image you want to project.

- ✓ Think about the impression you want to make. Use appropriate corporate an manufacturers' identification, proper and adequate lighting, and establish a visual focal point that attracts the right person to your booth. But most importantly, keep in mind that quality, service, and fair pricing are the keys to selling. In this economy, the most successful exhibitors are those who present themselves as value marketers. How can you be a value marketer?

  - Offer products that perform.
  - Give more than the customer expects.
  - Give guarantees
  - Avoid unrealistic pricing
  - Build relationships.

- ✓ Value marketing means much more than slashing prices or offering Show "deals". It means giving more: an improved product with added features and enhanced service – all at a better price. This is the image you should be striving for in order to best achieve your goals as an exhibitor at a Trade Show.

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C. Decide On The Content Of Your Exhibit

- ✓ Keep in mind that in a busy Trade Show you have only a matter of seconds to capture an attendee's attention. In that short time frame you must convey three critical pieces of information:
  - Your company name – Who are you.
  - Your product/service – What you do.
  - Your image and/or company slogan – How you can help them.
- ✓ Keep the concept simple. Use clear, strong, graphics and direct your message to your customers. You can use working products, hands-on demonstrations, audio-visual, and other special effects, but everything should draw attention to your products and/or services.

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I. Effective Pre-Show Planning

C. Decide On The Content Of Your Exhibit (Continued)

Determine whether you will be exhibiting specific products from your complete line. If so, which ones? If you are having trouble figuring out which products to take to the Show and how this will effect the size of your booth, the following guidelines can help:

1. Feature new products. Place them towards the front edge of the exhibit or in any other highly visible location.

2. Feature hot products. As previously stated, give them a spot in a high traffic area. Call attention to them with extra signage, color, sound, and lighting.

3. If you have a slightly mature product, Show it, but don't feature it. If it is the only product you have, think about featuring a new application or a new and interesting use.

Also, will you be demonstrating any new products or offering new services at this Show? Will you require photographs, ad blowups, handout literature, incentives, contests, specialty advertising or gifts?

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C. Decide On The Content Of Your Exhibit (Continued)

If you find yourself struggling with these questions, we suggest you work with a professional exhibit designer/producer to provide a design and build simple displays or elaborate structures. You can also rent or buy stock exhibits, modular units, or self-contained units or units or contact your manufacturer or distributor for available displays. Whatever you ultimately decide, now is the time to determine the content of your exhibit and how it will be displayed.

D. Decide How Much Space You Will Need

Booth size depends upon your Show budget, the product selection that you want to bring to the Show, desired objectives, the available Show space, and personnel capabilities. Keep in mind that the size of your exhibit will have a direct bearing on the results of your Trade Show. For example, if your major objective at a Show is to generate new leads, the amount of actual leads you can generate will be affected by this limited space.

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D. Decide How Much Space You Will Need (Continued)

The physical exhibit (products and displays) generally occupy approximately thirty percent of your available space. In a ten-foot by ten-foot booth (100 square feet), your exhibit will cover approximately thirty square feet. That leaves only seventy square feet of personal space. If you have seventy square feet of space available for people, at less than twenty-five square feet per person, then approximately three people can fit into your booth, INCLUDING SALESPEOPLE! The rule of thumb is that no more than two salespeople should work each 100 square feet of space. With two salespeople in this booth and one booth visitor it could still be very crowded.

Avoid congestion! Your exhibit should be open and inviting to the attendees, not cluttered and claustrophobic. Booth visitors tend to stay away from areas they perceive as crowded or confining. A booth visitor will take approximately three seconds to walk past a ten-foot by ten-foot booth. However, a visitor will take eight seconds to walk by a booth that is ten-feet by twenty-feet. Those few extra seconds could be the difference between someone seeing your message and buying your product, or walking past you to see the competition.

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D. Decide How Much Space You Will Need (continued)

Perhaps the size and number of your products, your demonstration requirements, and/or your selling process has already dictated your booth size. Regardless, it is a good idea to mark off the space you are considering on the floor(in your warehouse, Showroom, living room, etc.) and try to actually fit your products, equipment, battles, chairs, etc., into this space. This procedure will act as a “dress rehearsal” for the Show and will allow you the opportunity to catch any potential problems with your display before you get on-site. You may realize that you need to reserve more space and that you cannot possibly fit everything you planned in this display area. Needless to say, this is the time to find out and make any adjustments.

I. Effective Pre-Show Planning

E. Plan Your Pre-Show Promotion

Advance planning is a key tool in getting the word out about your participation at the Trade Show. Not only will you alert existing and prospective customers to be on the lookout for your exhibit ahead of time, but you will also establish yourself as a major player in the industry. Pre-Show promotions will significantly enhance the final results of your exhibition efforts by increasing the number of qualified visitors who will seek you out at the Show. The following are some basic Pre-Show promotional techniques commonly used by successful exhibitors:

* Free Discount Coupons - Provide free exhibitors upon request, these coupons save your customers and prospects time and money and increase the likelihood of their visiting your booth at the Show. Aggressive use of discount coupons is perhaps the most important and effective promotion device to draw attention to your exhibit. They can be distributed through:

- *Direct mailings to customer and prospect lists.
- *Your sales representatives and distributors.
- *Your stores and retail outlets.
- *Promotional mailings and customer newsletters.
- *Statement stuffers in monthly invoices.
- *Other unique methods your company decides upon.

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I. Effective Pre-Show Planning

E. Plan Your Pre-Show Promotion

Direct Mail - Direct mail cannot only become an effective awareness tool for your participation at the Trade Show, but it should also be consistently and repeatedly applied with your best prospects to generate commitments to your product after the Show. That is why it is so important to plan your direct mail campaign well in advance. Your Pre-Show direct mail effort is designed to create interest and excitement about your company and your products. Your Post-Show direct mail effort is designed to motivate buying decisions and deliver sales. Don't wait until the Show is over to develop the second phase of your direct mail campaign. It should be ready to roll the day the Show closes (see Section III). Some helpful Pre-Show mail tips:

*Add special lines of invitation to the Show to company stationery.
*Add stickers about the Show to company envelopes.
*Prepare special literature for mailing to key prospects.
*Offer incentives or giveaways to those who visit your booth.

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E. Plan Your Pre-Show Promotion

Telemarketing - A telemarketing campaign from your sales staff can also increase booth traffic substantially. Extend a personal invitation to visit your display and follow-up with discount coupons to encourage attendance.

Fact Sheet - Prepare a printed fact sheet for your employees (not just your sales staff) detailing your participation. Encourage everyone to "pass the word" to current and potential customers.

Advertise - Advertise your participation in the Trade Show in all magazine and newspaper advertising appearing during the month before the Show. Also, advertise in Show supplements and directories.

Sponsor - Become a sponsor of a special Show event and increase your on-site exposure. Investigate the availability of literature bags, aisle banners, you are here boards, etc.

Press Release - Alert your local media and Show Management about any new products/services that will be on display in your booth that might be newsworthy.

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I. Effective Pre-Show Planning

F. Establish A Budget

Obviously, to track your return on investment you need to track your costs. By preparing your budgets well in advance, you will be in a better position to control your expenses and avoid any unnecessary surprises on-site.

The best way to save money is to READ THE EXHIBITOR MANUAL which will be sent to you 60-90 days prior to the Show. The manual contains all pertinent logistical information, order forms for furniture, electricity, labor, etc., and money saving deadlines. If any questions arise, do not hesitate to contact your Sales/Show Manager for assistance. We will be glad to walk you through the process.

A sample Exhibit Budget Form follows on the next four pages.

I. Effective Pre-Show Planning

Items	Budget	Actual
1. Booth Rental		
2. Exhibit Expenses		
a. Design and Construction		
b. Graphics		
c. Furnishings		
d. Products for Display		
e. Display Purchase		
Total Exhibit Expenses		
3. Shipping and Storage		
a. Freight		
b. Drayage		
c. Exhibit Storage		
Total Shipping Storage		

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I. Effective Pre-Show Planning

Items	Budget	Actual
4. Show Services		
a. On-Site Labor (set-up)		
b. On-Site Labor (breakdown)		
c. Electrical		
d. Furniture Rental		
e. Telephone		
f. Carpeting		
g. Signage		
h. Cleaning		
I. Security		
j. Insurance		
k. Computer Rental		
l. Imprinter Rental		
m. Florist		
n. Audiovisual Equipment		
o. Miscellaneous		
Total Show Services		

I. Effective Pre-Show Planning

Item	Budget	Actual
5. Personnel		
a. Wages/Salary		
b. Outside Help		
Total Personnel		
6. Advertising/Promotion		
a. Pre-Show Advertising/ Promotion		
b. On-Site Advertising/Promotion		
c. Post-Show Advertising/Promotion		
Total Advertising/Promotion		

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Item	Budget	Actual
7. Travel & Entertainment		
a. Airfares		
b. Housing		
c. Staff Meals		
d. Client Meals/Entertainment		
e. Hospitality Suite		
f. Miscellaneous		
Total Travel & Entertainment		
Total Show Expenses		

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I. Effective Pre-Show Planning

D. Developing An Effective Lead Card

Leads are the main reason why most exhibitors participate in Trade Shows. Some might actually write orders on the Show floor, but most take leads. The following are four basic concepts that will make the difference between being profitable at shows or just covering costs:

1. What is a lead Card
2. When to use it.
3. Follow-up
4. Tracking and reporting results.

Leads represent the return on your investment. When the Trade Show is over and everything is packed up, the only thing you have left for the money spent is the stack of leads in your hands.

I. Effective Pre-Show Planning

D. Developing An Effective Lead Card (Continued)

What is a lead card – A lead card is a simple piece of paper that causes many other things to happen:

*A lead card can initiate the qualifying process.

*A lead card can indicate the next step to take – i.e., sending literature or making sales calls.

*A lead card can provide research data about your attendee's interest and preference.

*A lead card can provide another name for your mailing list.

The physical attributes of a lead card are important. It it's too big, too small, too thin, or doesn't contain the right spaces to fill in FOR YOUR BUSINESS, then it will not do the job. The following are three simple steps to designing a lead card that your salespeople will use:

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D. Developing An Effective Lead Card (Continued)

- ✓ Make it small. A good lead card fits into your open hand. It is the size of a 3 x 5 index card.
- ✓ Put a backing on it. A card stock backing on it will give staffers a surface to write on when holding it in their hand.
- ✓ Make it multi-part. Multi-part forms can be especially useful. You can send one copy to the person who is sending out the literature, and another part to the person who is sorting leads for immediate follow-up, and the last to keep as a permanent record.
- ✓ The key to great leads is having a place for all the right information. A sample lead card on Page 24 is an example of a well designed lead card. Take a look at it and consider all of the information and its relevance to your business.

- ✓ Customize your own lead card! Make it work for you! Just remember that attendees will answer just so many questions and no more. The design of the lead card will shift slightly depending upon how your company sells its products and services.

I. Effective Pre-Show Planning

D. Developing An Effective Lead Card (Continued)

When to use it – Use the lead card often and early. When a salesperson uses the lead card at the beginning of the sales process as a place to write notes, he or she is working as a consultant. If a salesperson really cares about solving the attendee's problems or serving a need, he or she needs to fully document it on the lead card. Taking the time to fill out the lead card shows respect for your attendee.

Follow-up – A well designed and professionally executed lead card is worthless if follow-up is not done properly. Assign someone to collect all of the leads daily and see to it that they get to the next point in the sales process. If your lead card has multiple parts, be sure that they are distributed appropriately and expeditiously. See Section III of this manual for more information about follow-up.

Tracking and reporting results – Tracking and reporting the results of your exhibit efforts are the final steps of participating in a Trade Show and are often the most overlooked. After all, the Show is over, the leads have been sorted and prioritized, and you are anxious to get on with other things. It takes relatively little effort to analyze the aftermath, and the resulting information is vital to determining whether your exhibiting efforts were a success or whether you need to change your focus. See Section III of this manual for more information about evaluating your Trade Show results.

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I. Effective Pre-Show Planning

D. Developing An Effective Lead Card (Continued)

Sample Lead Card

Name: ____

Address:____

City: ____________________ State: ___________Zip: _____

Telephone: ______________ Best Time to Call: ____________________

Product Interest: Product A Product B Product C

Current Client? Yes ______ No ______

If Yes, Representative's Name: ________________________

Time Frame: 0-3 Months 3-6 Months 6-12 Month 12+ Months

Budget:

Comments:

Decision Maker:

Rating: A B C D

Follow-Up: ____

Send Literature For Sales Call Needed Appointment Made

Lead Taken By: ____

Show: ___________________ Date: ______________________

I. Effective Pre-Show Planning

H. Selection and Evaluation Of Your Show Staff

You certainly would not want to send a green inexperienced sales trainee to call on a hot prospect in the field. For the same reason, you don't want to have a rookie working your booth at a Trade Show. You want the best salespeople you have to be there waiting for these qualified attendees. An extension of this rule is that a Trade Show is not a place for sales training. The atmosphere is noisy, crowded, intimidating, and highly charged – hardly conductive for training. Your investment in the show is high. This is simply not the place to risk that investment. You want your booth staff to be ready for action, to take advantage of every opportunity to reach your objective.

I. Effective Pre-Show Planning

H. Selection and Evaluation Of Your Show Staff (Continued)

There are many things to consider when choosing your sales show staff:

1. The staff should have similar interest as those of the audience.
2. Salespeople should have a good personality and excellent prospecting skills.
3. The staff should be technically knowledgeable.
4. They must be product knowledgeable.
5. The salesperson must make it easy for the attendee to stop and talk.
6. The salesperson must have a good attitude about Trade Shows and the role that they play in the company's marketing strategy.

I. Effective Pre-Show Planning

<u>H. Selection and Evaluation Of Your Show Staff (Continued)</u>

Booth staffers must feel responsible for the quality of the visitor’s time in the exhibit:

- Staffers should be punctual, arriving on time ready to work, staying for the entire shift, and returning from breaks promptly.
- Utilizing proper welcoming, qualifying, presenting, and closing skills is critical to the success of the staffer and to the company’s participation in the Trade Show.
- The staffer should commit quickly for follow-up action (whatever that might be), assure the attendee that follow-up action will be taken, and thank the attendee for visiting the booth.
- You may have an on-duty team of four or five in a 20-foot booth. In that team, there should be a mixture of ages, sexes, races, ethnic and technical backgrounds – and personalities.

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II. Effective At-Show Participation

Once you get to the Show, there are ***three primary ingredients*** to a successful, well-managed trade show experience. They can be broken up as follows:

A. Move-in/move-out.
B. Proper boothmanship.
C. Selling techniques.

This section will address each of these critical areas so that you will be better prepared to do everything right the first time in order to achieve the objectives you have now set for your company.

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II. Effective At-Show Participation

A. Move-In/Move-Out Tips

Once again, the first step toward a smooth move-in/move-out process is to READ THE EXHIBITOR MANUAL, and read it carefully. The most common exhibitor mistake is to put this thick stack of papers aside for later, but later never comes and important details will be overlooked. If you have any questions after reading the manual, call your Sales/Show Manager immediately for clarifications. Most importantly, you should:

- order all services prior to the deadlines. Keep in mind, anything ordered on the floor will cost 25-30% more.
- order everything you need in the correct size, color, and quantities.
- have as much work as possible done on your exhibit before it is packed or shipped.
- number and label your crates and boxes according to contents for easy move-in and set-up.
- put a diagram on each crate showing how it is to be unpacked or repacked.
- provide special instruction for your electrical requirements.
- arrive at the hall early to see your booth location and find the service desks.
- confirm, revise, or initiate orders for rentals and services that you will require.
- obtain work passes/exhibitor badges for yourself and your personnel.

II. Effective At-Show Participation

A. Move-In/Move-Out Tips (Continued)

In effect you will be setting up a temporary office for your company at the Show.

You Should Bring And/Or Contract For:

_____Carpeting
_____Tables and chairs
_____Electricity
_____Telephone service
_____Plants and/or decorations
_____Linens and drapery for tables
_____Cleaning of booth

Exhibitor Office Supply List:

_____The product that you are selling
_____All literature, hand-outs, and pamphlets
_____Business cards and their holders
_____Free drawing slips and a drawing box, if applicable
_____Appointment books and calendars

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II. Effective At-Show Participation

A. Move-In/Move-Out Tips (Continued)

Exhibitor Office Supply List (Continued):

______Scotch tape, staples and stapler, stable remover, paper clips, scissors, rubber bands, clip boards, post-it notes, and other assorted office supplies
______Ball point pens, pencils, and markers
______Lead cards
______Order forms
______All show papers
______Office letterhead, notepaper, #10 envelopes, and stamps
______Extra cash, travelers checks, and/or credit cards

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II. Effective At-Show Participation

A. Move-In/Move-Out Tips (Continued)

Exhibitor's Supply and Tool Checklist:

______Hammer and a selection of nails
______Pliers and wire cutter, plus screwdriver assortment
______Tapes: rug, strapping, masking, double-faced, Velcro loop
______Tape measure (25 foot)
______Indelible marking pens and chalk
______Shims for leveling
______Fire extinguisher
______First aid kit
______Electrical supplies, including 25-foot industrial cord, surge protectors and extension cord, 4-way box, hot wire tester, and spare bulbs
______Touch-up paint (same colors as exhibit and graphics) and brushes
______Cleaning and repair solutions, such as lighter fluid, glass cleaner, fabric spot remover, plexiglass repair kit, and polish
______Portable vacuum cleaner
______Flashlight
______Plastic sheet to cover carpet during setup
______Wire (bailing) and rope

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II. Effective At-Show Participation

A. Proper Boothmanship

Trade Show studies have shown that 80% of show attendees remember MORE about the salespeople manning the booth than the booths themselves! This statistic tells us one thing – your success depends largely on the collective talent, product knowledge and energy level of your sales staff.

FIRST of all, every exhibitor should distribute an on-site manual that includes the following information:

- A staff schedule for who will be working the booth on a daily and hourly basis
- A staff schedule of daily Show activities
- A staff schedule for Pre-Show and daily "wrap-up" meetings
- Where they will be staying.
- A map showing the convention hall and vicinity to your booth location.
- A diagram of your booth layout and booth number.
- A list of products being displayed.
- A product pricing structure.
- Explanation of Pre-Show advertising and promotion.
- Corporate objectives and goals to be met at the Show.
- Sales goals and rewards for success

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II. Effective At-Show Participation

A. Proper Boothmanship (Continued)

SECOND, as you think about staff motivation, also consider how to avoid burnout. Here are some tips:

- Schedule an hour break after a staffing period of two or three hours.
- Check the Show and seminar schedule and anticipate peak traffic times. Let some staffers go on a break during slow periods.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Most halls are very dry and dehydration can feel like fatigue.
- Eat and drink sensibly: It affects not just your physical well being, but your mental attitude. This may sound like a simple thing, but you'd be surprised how many staffers ignore their own health at shows.
- Know your limits and take time to rest when needed.
- Avoid using a "canned pitch". This will numb your brain and your listening skills. Instead, ask a few good qualifying questions, listen to the answers, and base your demonstration on what you've heard.

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II. Effective At-Show Participation

B. Selling Techniques

The art of selling at a Trade Show is how well you can personally communicate and/or demonstrate your product or service, so that a Qualified Attendee can relate, understand, and respond to your presentation. Remember, selling at a Trade Show is much different than selling in the field, in a store, or on a telephone. It is much more intimidating. Even the strongest salesperson can have trouble selling at a Trade Show. Booth personnel should be knowledgeable, friendly, and approachable, not aggressive. Your ability to ASK QUESTIONS at the Show and distinguish between a Qualified Attendee and a Qualified Prospect, will determine the degree of success you will achieve. Your job will be to sell the Attendee on the BENEFITS of your product and your company in a minimum amount of time, to determine the attendee’s NEED, DESIRE, and AFFORDABILITY.

Tradeshows have an etiquette all their own. There are acceptable and decidedly unacceptable behaviors. For example, it is not acceptable to sit. It is expected that you will refrain from smoking in your booth. It is expected that very early in the conversation you find out exactly what the attendee needs.

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II. Effective At-Show Participation

B. Selling Techniques (Continued)

The issue is one of quality. Each of the following techniques can enhance the quality of the attendee's time with you. In very few other selling situations will your prospect leave your presence and within several minutes be in the presence of your competition. You must look better and act better than your competition. This is not the time to offend because you won't have the time to recover. The following suggestions will help you differentiate yourself from your competition:

- Be available – Don't leave your booth unattended.
- Be warm – Smile and make good eye contact. Use good nonverbal communication.
- Don't offend – No smoking, eating, drinking, or chewing gum in your booth.
- Make a positive impression – Dress upscale to your audience.
- Keep your clothes neat. Place your badge on the right side of your body (that comes forward when you greet your booth visitor making it easier to read).
- Be actively involved with your booth visitor – Take responsibility for engaging the attendee in conversation.

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B. Selling Techniques (Continued)

Your body speaks before you say a word. You use your entire body because you are standing, not sitting, as in most daily business situations. The Trade Show environment is public and every motion and gesture, no matter how slight, is a public one.

THE STANCE – When standing in the booth waiting for a qualified attendee, stand with your feet about shoulder width apart, weight evenly balanced, and your hands either hanging at your side or clasped behind your back. Such a stance is open and powerful. Never cross your arms or put your hands in your pockets. While talking, use open palmed gestures with your elbows away from you body. Keep your hands unclenched and visible.

THE HANDSHAKE – This measures each other's strength and purpose. Offer your hand to the attendee first, but wait for him or her to let go first. Never end a handshake too early. Don't use the two-handed shake unless you know the person well. Shake hands firmly but don't crush the person's bones.

EYE CONTACT – The salesperson at a Trade Show must make a special effort to maintain solid eye contact with the person to whom he or she is talking. There are many other interesting things to look at; however, maintaining consistent eye contact is crucial.

BY CONSCIOUSLY SENDING WARM, CONFIDENT, AND POSITIVE SIGNALS AT ALL TIMES, YOU ARE TELLING ATTENDEES THAT YOU ARE SOMEONE WORTH KNOWING.

II. Effective At-Show Participation

B. Selling Techniques (Continued)

The following are known at the "Four S's" of Trade Show selling:

Stop Them

Your first contact with a prospect is often made through a simple greeting and good eye contact. There are many polite and enthusiastic ways to greet prospects and introduce them to the features and benefits of your product or service.

Visitors should be welcomed with a firm handshake and a sincere smile. To start the conversation, your booth staff should be polite, professional, and respectful. Try some of these "openers":

"Let me show you some of the services we offer."

"We have many new features which you will find interesting."

"Our product has seen a great increase in popular acceptance, and I'd like to explain why."

II. Effective At-Show Participation

B. Selling Techniques (Continued)

Speak to them and Listen

After you have gained the prospect’s attention with an interesting, open-ended question and attentively listened for the answer, identify the prospect’s needs and qualify the prospect.

Ask the prospect to talk about themselves through questions which require more than a “yes” or “no” response. Listen carefully to their answers, and begin to develop your method and words to describe your benefits to satisfy their needs.

In order to establish the prospect’s need, buying influence, resources, purchasing time frame, and purchasing power, take 90 seconds to ask these open ended qualifying questions:

“How are you familiar with our company, our product, and our competitors?”
“What do you know about our product(s) or service(s)?”
“How do you intend to use the product(s) or service(s)?
“How much funds are available for what you are considering?”
“When will a purchasing decision be made?”

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II. Effective At-Show Participation

B. Selling Techniques (Continued)

Be careful not to appear solicitous. Apply extreme courtesy. And, LISTEN! If your product should satisfy their needs, move to the next step in your plan. Otherwise, politely and briefly summarize your sales presentation and thank the prospect for their interest.

Set up an appointment or
Sit Them Down, if Possible

By listening carefully and responding with polite and enthusiastic questions, you're ready to make your targeted presentation. You can describe your product's benefits verbally, with a demonstration, through sales and prospect interaction, or any of the many other sales techniques which have been successful for your sales staff in one on one sales calls.

Sell Them

While you have always been selling since first "stopping" the attendee with your opening qualifying questions, the final phase of achieving your goal with them should now be easy. Restate or summarize your product's prime advantages for the prospect, and have him acknowledge agreement with them. If appropriate, ask for the order; or gain agreement and commitment to the action you want them to take.

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II. Effective At-Show Participation

B. Selling Techniques (Continued)

If you still don't achieve their commitment, explore, through polite and enthusiastic questioning, what is needed to satisfy the prospect's needs. And *LISTEN*! Keep questioning and responding with benefits (not just features) and advantages until you get the prospect to agree.

And keep asking for their commitment. Remember, if you have properly recognized the prospect's needs, your failure to gain their agreement may mean they still have an objection for you to overcome. Since their needs and your advantages are unchanged, keep on selling until you get their commitment to do what you have asked them to do. And, *LISTEN*!

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II. Effective At-Show Participation

B. Selling Techniques (Continued)

Lastly, remember these do's and don'ts when you are staffing your booth:

DO

- Be enthusiastic.
- Be carefully groomed.
- Use prospect's name.
- Know your competition.
- Keep moving in the booth
- Be on time for your shift.
- Get a good night's sleep.
- Appoint one person to work with the media.
- Wear your badge on the right (because you shake with your right hand).
- Keep the booth clean.
- Wear comfortable clothes and shoes.
- Have the exhibitor manual handy.
- Know the locations of the restrooms and restaurants.
- Sell the company rather than the product.
- Have money in your wallet.
- Use mouthwash.
- Establish a team atmosphere.
- Smile: The first impression is always the last.

II. Effective At-Show Participation

B. Selling Techniques (Continued)

DON'T

- Sit, read, or smoke in the booth.
- Eat or drink in the booth.
- Chew gum in the booth.
- Ignore prospects.
- Talk on the telephone, other than for Show business.
- Be a "boarder guard".
- Talk with other booth personnel, unless business related.
- Cluster – two or more booth mates.
- Drink alcohol during Show hours.
- Put a pencil behind your ear or in your jacket breast pocket.
- Display product literature – people take it and don't look at it.

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III. Post-Show

A. Follow-Up

According to the Trade Show Bureau: "The majority of Trade Show sales take place within 11 months after the Show."

Unfortunately, many exhibitors lose these additional sales because they fail to follow-up on a continual basis. Before the Show, you must develop a coordinated sales lead plan. Otherwise, you have wasted time, effort, and money. An effective follow-up system should be carefully planned as the rest of your Show activities. When you know you have a good follow-up system in place, then your qualifying and lead collecting activities at the Show take on far more meaning and urgency.

III. Post-Show

A. Follow-Up (Continued)

Here are several points for a good lead follow-up program:

- Set a realistic goal for the number of leads you plan to collect during the Show.
- Plan your lead follow-up system well ahead of the Show. It should be ready to roll as soon as the Show ends.
- Design or use a lead collecting system that makes recording and retrieval easy. Remember to prioritize and sort leads for easy follow-up. If large numbers are expected, make sure that the system will generate mailing labels without a lot of extra effort.
- Use telemarketing to find the best prospects. Telemarketing will ensure that you are putting the very best leads into the hands of your sales force as quickly as possible and in a time frame that positions you competitively with those big exhibitors. Taking the time to telemarket is especially important if you sales force is small in relationship to the number of leads.
- Set deadlines for all follow-up activities and brief all staff on the importance of meeting deadlines and their individual roles in the project.
- Set up a system to record and review the results of your follow-up program.
- Set a date for the final review.

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III. Post-Show

A. Follow-Up (Continued)

Most importantly, make sure your staff follows through on all leads, inquiries, and requests for information as quickly as possible. Attendees react most favorably when sales leads are promptly followed. You should have contacted all of your leads within two weeks after the Show with at least a 'thank you' or follow-up letter, and/or a telephone call.

B. Evaluation

If you are to extract the full benefit from the Show and maximize your investment, there are a number of things you should do in the days and weeks immediately following the Show.

- ✓ Conduct a post-Show debriefing – This should be done as soon as the Show is over. Whatever method is used – staff meetings or evaluation forms – the review should take place while memories are still fresh in people's minds. Valuable feedback can also be obtained from your customers and other visitors. You can do this by talking to them on the telephone, sending them a questionnaire, or employing an independent research company to do a survey for you.

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III. Post-Show

B. Evaluation (Continued)

- ✓ Analyze your immediate results – You should review the results immediately after the Show and compare them with the goals that were set. If your primary goal was to make sales at the Show, count the sales. Where lead collecting was the primary goal, you should have a stack of lead cards or printouts. Compare the number of leads with the goals you set in different categories.

- ✓ Analyze your costs and results in comparison with your goals – At some period, weeks or months after the Show, depending on your sales cycle, you should be able to bring together all of your costs, and the full results to date from the Show. These are tabulated against your goals and budget for each item. In addition to comparing the results with your goals, you should be able to come up with statistics which will indicate to you how successful the Show was for your company. By comparing results with non-Show sales costs, you will have a good yardstick by which to measure your current performance and that of future shows. For example:

  *Number of sales calls required to close a show lead
  *Cost of obtaining each lead (or sale) at the Show.
  *Cost of each sale made as a result of the Show.

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III. Post-Show

<u>B. Evaluation (Continued)</u>

- ✓ Compare these results with your non-Show costs of everyday business activities such as:
  - Number of regular sales calls required to make a sale.
  - Cost of obtaining a sales lead through advertising or other forms of promotions, such as direct mail, print or electronic media.
  - Cost of each sale made as a result of non-Show activities.

- ✓ <u>Prepare a final report</u> – Now is the time to bring together all of your information. It should be summarized in one final report that will act as a guideline for the planning of future shows, setting goals, and determining which shows are effective and which shows you should pass up.

III. Post-Show

B. Evaluation (Continued)

Your report should assess the following:

- The overall reaction of customers, staff, and others to your exhibit, highlighting strengths and weaknesses.
- Recommendations for extra training, new approaches, etc., should all be included.
- Make a comparison of actual costs to budget
- Compare actual results to corporate and individual goals.

We recommend that you confirm your booth selection for next year as soon as possible and that you consider sending a copy of your final report to Show Management. The information in your report can be vital to helping us make improvements to the Show and to better educate other exhibiting companies.

IV. Additional Resources

We sincerely hope that this brief guide to successful exhibiting has helped put you on the right track toward success at the Show. It is our firm belief that Shows are the most cost-effective vehicles available to companies competing in today's marketplace; and with the proper planning, Continuum Events will make the most of its investment. If you would like to seek further literature on this topic, we recommend any of the following resources:

Books

EXHIBIT MARKETING
Edward A. Chapman Jr.
McGraw Hill Book Company
1987

TRADE SHOW EXHIBITING
Diane K. Weintraub
Liberty Hall Press
1991

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IV. Additional Resources

The following is a publication through:

International Exhibitors Association (IEA)
5501 Backlick Road, Suite 200
Springfield, VA 22157
(703) 941-3725

EXHIBITOR WORKBOOK

The following three helpful publications listed are available through:

The International Association of Exposition Manager (IAEM)
One College Park, Suite 630
8910 Purdue Road
Indianapolis, IN 46268
(317) 871.7272

EXHIBITOR HANDBOOK

Designed as a primer for the new exhibitor, as well as a refresher for the experienced exhibitor.

IV. Additional Resources

TRADE SHOWS IN THE MARKETING MIX

Discussed tactics on how to increase your sales from trade show participation.

STEP BY STEP… HOW TO MAKE EVERY TRADE SHOW A MARKETING SUCCESS

A six-tape audio cassette program that gives step-by-step instructions on how an exhibitor can make a success of a trade show.

IV. Additional Resources

Checklist For Exhibitors

Before The Show

______ Research the attendees → Check the statistics of your prospect to that of the attendee.

______Set measurable goals → Clear objectives enable you to evaluate results.

______ Buy enough space Calculate for visitors, staff, displays, furniture, and equipment.

______ Assign responsibilities Assign specific individuals for each exhibit task.

______ Plan Pre-Show promotion Ask salespeople to call customers. Send invitations to prospects. Utilize your advertising.

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IV. Additional Resources

Checklist For the Exhibitors

At The Show:

_____	Inform your staff	Tell everyone in your booth what your objectives are and what their responsibilities are in achieving them.
_____	Train your salespeople	Agree on what constitutes a qualified lead. Make sure that all the staff can demonstrate equipment correctly and know what literature is available.
_____	Set up your booth	Check all signs; run equipment.
_____	Look at other exhibits	Make note of any new and innovative ideas.
_____	Monitor booth activity	Be flexible.
_____	Schedule staff meetings daily	Share experiences.
_____	Reward sales	Recognize those who make your exhibit successful.

IV. Additional Resources

Checklist For The Exhibitor

After The Show:

_____ Pack up exhibit Pack carefully. The booth is an investment in your company's future.

_____ Meet with all involved to Look for feedback for next Show. Evaluate progress

_____ Follow up leads Make telephone calls.

_____ Gather information Track all leads, appointments, sales, and Keep a record for next year's Show.

_____ Evaluate performance Did you meet your objectives?

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