

Twenty Top Tips for Exhibiting Success

We want you to have a successful show when you exhibit at one of our events, so we have compiled this brief list of 20 tips to help you. If you contact us, we would be pleased to expand on any of these points.

Before the Show

1. Check out the exhibition before you book. Speak to the organisers, ask about the type of attendee, speak to previous exhibitors.
2. Decide why you are exhibiting and set realistic goals. Are you there to raise your profile and increase brand awareness, do you wish to generate leads or direct sales. There are many other very good reasons for exhibiting.
3. Define how your products and services can benefit your target audience and make that absolutely clear in the way they are presented.
4. Market your presence at the exhibition to your customers, your potential customers and to your entire database. Use emails, invitations, press releases and adverts to tell potential visitors what you are doing at the show. Your customers will expect to be invited.
5. Are you an expert? Offer to speak – but ask early. The programmes are often put together months before the exhibition.
6. Offer prizes and special offers. If they are really special, ask the organisers if they would like to promote them.

7. Prepare your stand design. Aim to capture visitors' attention fast. Keep the graphics bold and simple, emphasise your benefits. Have an attraction, a plasma screen, a competition, prize draw, giveaway – all preferably relevant to your business.
8. Order your furniture, lighting and power if needed. Create a buzz – a busy stand attracts more visitors.
9. Train your staff (and yourself if necessary). Bear in mind the targets you have set and make sure you tell the stand staff. If there are goals, tell them you want to achieve them and measure them after the event.

At the Show

10. Make sure you engage with the visitors. Use friendly, confident stand personnel. There should be no sitting around reading, telephoning, eating on the stand. No arms folded, daring people to come on to the stand. It happens – all too frequently. Make sure everyone is well groomed – clothes, shoes, teeth, fingernails, hair. Don't go out the night before and have a curry or drink too much.
11. Always have someone on the stand.
12. Capture the data. Have a prepared enquiry form and get the right information and qualify the leads – big order, small order, potential order, send promo material, follow up quickly etc.
13. Have a box or bowl to collect cards. Have sweets or chocolates or drinks on the stand – soft drinks are fine. At a public show, visitors probably won't have cards
14. Make your existing customers welcome but don't spend too much time with them although you may be able to up-sell or cross-sell. Existing customers can be your best ambassadors on the stand.
15. If the show goes quiet – and many do at some stage of the day – visit the other exhibitors, talk to them, get to know them, explore the possibility of partnerships and joint ventures.

After the Show

16. Make sure you contact all the priority contacts you have made at the show within 48 hours, referring to the notes you have made - but call everyone with a week.
17. Get your database up to date with the new information you have gained.
18. Assess how well you succeeded against the targets you had set. Discuss. Find out why you did or didn't achieve what you expected. If you failed, was it the show, was it the brilliance of your competition or did you miss a trick?
19. If it went well, be prepared to reserve a prime site for the next event.
- 20. Remember – no other form of marketing brings you face to face with your target buyer. It is the most 'direct' form of marketing available.**

More information is available should you wish to discuss any of these points in greater detail.

Contact: Paul Webster, Webster Consultancy,

E: paul@websterconsultancy.co.uk