

PRE-SHOW

On average, trade shows account for 1/3 of a company's annual marketing budget. That's no small potatoes! You want to make sure you're going into the show with clearly defined goals and a fleshed-out action plan for achieving them. Below you'll find a few steps to help you get your head in the game.

Define Your Goals:

- What specific result would make your trade show a success?
 - Gathering X number of qualified leads
 - Securing a meeting with an important prospect
 - Getting featured in a specific trade publications
 - Find X number of new distributors
 - Nurture relationships with current customers

- What is your ideal target audience?

- Which shows will best reach your desired audience?

- Who are your biggest competitors at the show?

- Is your current budget sufficient to reach your goals?
 - Yes No

Evaluate Current Assets:

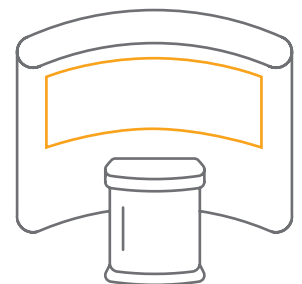
- If you have a booth, does it reflect your current brand and message?
 - Yes No
- What do you wish you could change about your current design?

- Does your current layout fit your needs?
 - Yes No
- How does your booth compare with competitors (size, quality, graphics, message)?

- Have your biggest competitors recently upgraded their booth?
 - Yes No
- If you stay with your current design, what message are you sending about your business?

- If it's time to upgrade, what is your budget?

- If money were no object, what would your ideal booth look like?



☑ PRE-SHOW

You have less than 7 seconds to attract the attention of someone walking by your booth.

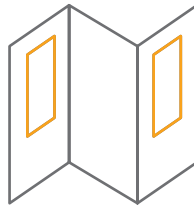
A custom booth is a significant and important investment. You want to make sure you're making the biggest impact possible.

Your trade show booth should reflect your brand at a glance. It should be designed to evoke a specific feeling based on the graphics, materials, colors and products displayed. Showing up with a pretty booth just isn't enough anymore.

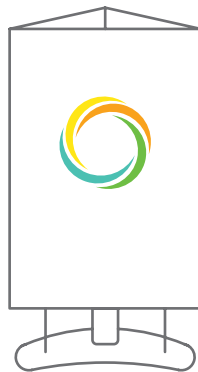
How can you create a display that represents your brand and commands attention instantly?

Designing Your Trade Show Booth:

- Make sure your graphics and message are clear and direct
- Create an eye-catching, on-brand booth design that:
 - Attracts attention
 - Incites curiosity
 - Has a specific message
 - Follows a natural visual hierarchy
 - Quickly qualifies visitors
- Determine how long you plan on using your new booth
- Create attention-grabbing activities or demonstrations
- Plan the layout of your booth space. Remember, form follows function.
 - Consider storage needs
 - Create places for meetings or demonstrations
 - Include video monitors or iPad stations if needed
 - Map out traffic flow



- Design and print:
 - Graphics panels
 - Hanging signs and banners
 - Desktop signage
 - Pop-up displays
 - Media stations
 - Posters
 - Flags
 - Additional booth graphics



Design/Print Event Collateral:

- Displays
- Show guide and maps
- Directional/wayfinding signs
- Brochures
- Flyers
- Handouts
- Notebooks and binders
- Presentation folders

Order Promotional Items:

- Apparel (t-shirts, hats)
- Tote bags
- Pens
- Water bottles
- Lanyards
- USB/Flash drives and phone accessories
- Magnets
- Towels
- Umbrellas



Showing up at a trade show is only half the battle. You want to make sure your top prospects, established clients and most valuable leads mark your booth down as a 'must-visit' on their itinerary. This is a foundation of your tradeshow marketing efforts, so don't leave it up to chance.

Pre-show Promotion:

- Launch direct mail campaign to promote your booth
- Consider sending special gifts to your most valuable prospects
- Schedule client meetings for the show
- Increase social media presence and marketing efforts
- Create a unique giveaway item
- Scrub your email list





HYBRID PRO
MODULAR ISLAND

- Launch your promotional email sequence
- Update and refresh your supply of business cards, flyers and handouts
- Send a series of postcard reminders close to the show date
- Create online and printed press kits to share with preregistered media lists

Employee Prep:

- Decide which staff members are the best fit for the show
- Make sure every attending employee is completely on board with your goals
- Do employee training to fully prepare (it may feel silly, but consider role-playing)
- Review any relevant set-up/tear-down procedures
- Purchase apparel—company shirts, hats, lanyards, name tags, etc
- Make travel arrangements

DURING SHOW


It may be a digital world, but people still crave face-to-face interaction. These personal meetings are invaluable, so make sure your staff is ready to fully engage during the show. You'll want to ensure your forward-facing employees are prepared to handle any questions, concerns and curve-balls that may be thrown at them.

This is also the time to gather as much information as you can about your visitors. Make sure you have a reliable system in place to easily track everything and keep it organized on the backend.

Engage with Attendees:

- Pass out freebies and product samples
- Set up engaging product demonstrations
- Host several giveaways at set times during the show
- Create a list of relevant questions to generate feedback
- Create a system for tracking new leads
- Have a system in place for transferring/backing up leads in real-time
- Do a quick 'yes/no' exit survey
- Check in on the booths of your biggest competitors (you want to know what you're up against!)

Promote and Share:

- Don't go silent on social media—share pictures of the event, tweet about giveaways and continue driving traffic to your booth throughout the event
- Include the convention's official hashtag in your posts
- Create a unique hashtag for your booth to track social media posts
- Invite guests to take a picture in front of a special backdrop or pop-up display 
- Capture video during the event to use in future promotions
- Upload a few Facebook live videos or Instagram stories during the event

