

# NO Exhibitor LEFT Behind

**YOUR GUIDE TO:  
TRADE SHOW  
PLANNING**



# Trade Show Planning

## Road Map to Success

We get it. Attending a trade show or event is one of your company's biggest marketing investments. That's why we've compiled some tips to help you get the maximum return on this investment. We've seen it work with thousands of exhibitors.

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### Set clear goals for your participation

What do you want to get out of it? How many attendees do you want to stop at your booth? How many leads do you hope to generate? How many products do you want to sell? Are you focusing on promotion or hoping to launch a new product?

You can have more than one goal, of course, but the point is that you need to be clear about what your participation in the trade show is going to achieve. Determine what your ROI would be – if one new customer helps you justify you being at the event, then focus on getting that customer.

### Research, Research, Research

You need to choose the trade shows that will give your business the best ROI in terms of your goals. If your goal is on-site sales, exhibiting at that big splashy trade show where your booth is among dozens that sell similar products may not be the best choice.

You want to choose a trade show that **best targets the audience that you want to reach, and best suits your participation goals**. Find out what the particular trade show's objectives are, and investigate and evaluate the show's audience.

### Budget and book your space

Discover everything you can about your space, including:

- Location on the trade show floor
- Other exhibits nearby
- Whether it's a high traffic or low traffic area

- Physical conditions of the booth space, such as lighting

Most shows provide a diagram to help you determine the best location for your booth. Contact [AGS Exhibition Services](#) for help.

## Plan your exhibit for your audience

*Who are you targeting with your trade show display?* The associations provide conference demographics to help you determine which audience might be best for your marketing plan.

If you are targeting multiple audiences, make sure you have appropriate information to meet the needs of each.

## Advertise before the event

Get the word out that you're participating in a particular trade show by inviting your clients, customers, suppliers, and other contacts to attend the show. Be sure you give them all the details, such as your booth number. Be sure to advertise your coming trade show attendance on your website as well.

**Some associations allow our exhibitors to purchase pre-registered attendees list.** The list will contain attendee's name, company, and address, and sometimes even phone numbers and e-mails. Contact the association to see if this information can be emailed to you, or if they can provide you with labels.

You can also advertise in conference programs published by the association.. Programs are handed out to our attendees and provide them with conference information, such as session topics, times, and descriptions.

## Maximize your exhibiting experience

Once you're ready to attend the trade show, it's time to focus on putting together a display that wows your audience and draws a crowd.

## Pull a crowd to your trade show booth

Use an interactive display, such as a quiz or game on a computer, a contest draw, or a scheduled demonstration. It doesn't need to be fancy to draw people's interest and get them to cluster around your trade show display rather than others.

## **Use a prize draw or contest**

Having some kind of prize drawing or contest is a great way to collect contact information from booth visitors. You can give away promotional items to encourage people to participate.

## **Have a stock of promotion items that you can use as giveaways at your booth**

Small items that people can take away and use (while being reminded about your business) are best. Be sure you place these items in a location where people will have to walk into or through your trade show display to get them.

## **Actively engage trade booth visitors**

Give people who approach your trade show display a friendly greeting and welcome their questions. Be sure that your body language is friendly. Don't stand there with your arms crossed over your chest, for instance. Chat with booth visitors, and find out what aspect of your business they're most interested in. Be prepared to offer specific solutions to their questions. The trick is to draw them in without intimidating or overwhelming them.

## **Make sure you have plenty of promotional literature on hand**

You'll want to have a good supply of color fliers and brochures as well as order forms, price sheets and business cards that you can hand out to booth visitors. Make it easy for them to find the information on your business later.

## **Have your trade show booth manned at all times by knowledgeable person**

Someone has to be there to greet browsers, engage them in conversation, and take their questions. If you can't be there every minute the trade show is open, you'll need to have at least one other person to help man your booth.

Many companies will send their "rookies" to tradeshow. Sending new staff people is not always the wisest decision, however, as they may not have all the answers about your products or services. If you do send a new staff member, be sure include an experienced employee as well. That way, newer staff will be able to watch and learn.

## **Get out from behind your booth and get off your phone/computer**

Often, exhibitors sit behind their tables while attendees stand looking down at them — get up and engage! Also, get off your phone or computer. Nothing is worse than watching one of our exhibitors miss valuable exhibitor time because he or she is on the phone. There are typically periods of down time during any conference to follow up on voicemail or e-mails.

## **Follow up promptly**

Follow up with contacts and leads you made during the trade show as soon as possible. The faster you send them out, the more your business will stand out from the rest.

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# GOT QUESTIONS?

AGS Exhibitor Services

Monday – Friday from 8am – 5 pm EST

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