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Exhibition Assistant

Exhibitions can be expensive so – The important thing about exhibitions is to understand the total costs and stick to your budget. If you have a unique service or product, an exhibition can provide an ideal launch platform, and inviting the press can give you much free publicity.

MAJOR tips that are crucial for a perfect exhibition showcase:

1. Ensure that you have sufficient budget, as what you think it will cost you will undoubtedly not be enough.
2. Make your stand exciting, informative and inviting.
3. Train your staff to approach customers professionally.
4. Don't ever say "Can I help you?" and don't stand to attention at the front of the stand as if you are guarding against marauders.
5. Make your stand a data collection point, as you are unlikely to sell on the day.
6. Follow up your contacts promptly and use a telesales operation if your response is large.
7. Don't neglect your existing business while you are exhibiting.

Tip:

Our advice is to take formal sales training on how to run an exhibition stand. That's right, there are special techniques to running a stand, and to get it wrong will be to throw away your opportunity to make exhibition pay dividends.

Why create an exhibition in the first place:

- Perfect opportunity to High-profile your new product
- Increase demand for the product
- Educate your selected customer / target market
- Obtain research from the target market
- Communicate a corporate image

Make the most of the space supplied:

- Use the back wall of your stand to hang your products. As well as creating an interesting backdrop, this frees up valuable space.
- Try to incorporate steps into your stand; you can then use them to display exhibits.
- Put some thought into the design of the booth. Elements such as drawers and stands can be used to mount products.
- Make sure literature is ready and available – Use Literature stands so the client can take one without you having to hand them out as you will need additional staff for this.

Should I promote my special offers?

- It is absolutely essential that any special offers be communicated with your audience.
- Place signs on the outside of your stands to tell potential customers of your special offers and they will come and see you. Everyone likes the idea of saving money!



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I need a dramatic stand and in the correct place:

- To get the stand you want, you really should book it well in advance.
- Tell the show organisers the size of the booth you would ideally like, work with them rather than against them.
- If you are late in booking your perfect stand tell them you are prepared to upgrade if the extra costs are manageable i.e. within your budget, bear in mind that moving stands at late notice can work be quite costly.

I need somewhere private to talk to potential clients:

- Consider wall dividers or use hanging printed material as screens, this will utilise every part of your space and create the ideal room for informal meetings. "They are not sound proof, but they don't have to be."
- Ensure that you have drinks available hot and cold - consider a fridge / kettle don't forget the water!

I want my stand to be different:

- Why not try talking to businesses that have already completed several events, this is a very good way of networking and every body loves to share good practical ideas.
- Don't rush in; try smaller, less high-profile shows to slowly introduce your changes.
- Make sure your management come to the shows and notice the difference between your stand and the rest. Once they see it standing out, they should be suitably impressed.

How do I get your customers to recommend me?

- Place relevant testimonials next to your exhibits and let your customers do your selling for you.
- Invite them to your event.

How do I make my invitations?

- So your spending lots of hard earned money of your event, so why not seek guidance from a graphic designer or a printing outlet - Remember they do this all the time so let them create your perfect invitations.
- Create your own emails and invite all of your clients also send a reminding email 48hrs before the event - This is also an opportunity to ask them for a testimonial.
- Why? - Well all the rest of the exhibitors are doing the same + the last thing you want is no visitors, inviting your own customers will populate your stand and show your clients that you care about them and value their attendance.



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How to maximise your allocated space:

- Digital images or video is a powerful option. Decide where to place the projector so it is not knocked or blocked when in use.
- Models of your products could be a better idea than using up valuable space; a scaled version can get the message across without the hassle of getting a large item within the exhibition hall.
- If you don't want to bring masses of product literature to the show, why not simply get a few thousand show-specific business cards produced. List all the details on how to obtain further information, so it's clear where interested parties can go to if they want to receive further information.

Is literature on the product a good or bad thing?

- Literature used should display your promoted product or all of your businesses products - Could a catalogue be better than a brochure?
- If you've ever seen the aftermath of an exhibition, you're probably aware that a very high percentage this literature ends up either in a bin or on the floor and this is your money being thrown away.
- Be clever. If you need to use brochures, stack them inside the booth or have somebody handing them out to people who LEAVE the booth rather than passer bys, if they spent time talking to you, even for 2 minutes then think of them as a potential customer.
- People will be a lot less likely to throw away a business card so include this.

Raffle Drum:

- You've got the stand and you want to give away a prize - Use a raffle drum and create the promotion at an agreed time - tell them when this will be - This is a show stopper as every body likes a lottery, if the prize is something fantastic ask your self this question: Would you make a point of returning to the stand if you were in with a chance of winning a major prize?
- Use collected business cards as the lottery tickets.
- Utilise all the business cards when you follow up your exhibition in the future.
- We will promise you this - If the prize event is handled correctly, every other stand will want to use your raffle drum.

Make sure all potential leads are followed up:

- It sounds a simple enough concept, but you would be amazed at the amount of leads that are never followed up.
- Sources put the un-used figure as high as 80 per cent, this makes you wonder why they exhibit.
- All good stand managers will ensure that as part of the preparation of the show, a follow-up plan has been decided upon.



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Getting the attention of the media:

- Your main target should be anybody that displays a badge saying press!
- Greet them positively and ensure that a demonstration is always available there and then.
- Do not ask them to fit within an appointment; it is quite likely they will never return.
- Have your key staff available at all times.
- Make sure they have their mobile phones switched on permanently.

Design your stand:

- By constructing your stand in such a way that there is only one entrance and one exit, you have a predictable traffic flow.
- Remember - You want your salespeople to be the correct location to greet potential customers.
- Remember - Always thank visitors - thank you does not cost anything.
- Design so that it is your products are visible close up as well as from a distance.
- Make it easy for a customer to browse without feeling pressured by salesmen or the sort of claustrophobic feeling an enclosed stand may give.
- Make a mock-up before the main event and ask your own staff or business networking chums to criticise - if they don't like it "will your new or old customers like it or more to the point what message are you giving to them at the event?"

Keep an eye on the competition

- It is important to make sure you know what the competition is up to.
- During the show a lot of spies are sent out on fact-finding missions. It is the best time to do this - most of the competition being under the same roof.
- Sometimes not all of the industry's leading companies are at the exhibition and it is important to find out why they are not attending.
- Maybe absent firms are suffering financial problems and that may present an opportunity.
- Maybe they have deliberately decided to avoid this particular exhibition. If so, why?

Enjoy:

- It is important to enjoy the event rather than treating as a chore - remember you are spending hard earned cash!
- Have a break - refresh your self and come back positive, if you are negative then this is what your customers will pick up!