

#1 All Trade Shows Are Not Alike

Think back to your very first trade show - and all the preparation you likely put into it. You studied the layout of the exhibits, the schedule of the workshops, the location of the trade show and much more. You were most likely ultra-prepared.

As trade shows became more and more a part of your life, though, you may have gone on auto-pilot, treating October's trade show the same as November's, November's the same as December's. What would happen if you looked at the next trade show with fresh eyes, as if it were your very first one? What would you discover? What would you do differently?

#2 Use Email Marketing Appropriately

At each trade show, it's important to build your email list, perhaps by offering a giveaway at the show in exchange for signatures on your list. Segment your list appropriately, perhaps into customers, potential customers, fellow vendors and the like.

Then create an email marketing campaign before each show, segmented by audience, where you share what you'll have at your booth. Include what would make people want to stop by, even if they've already seen your products and know of your services. Encourage people who receive your email marketing messages to share them with other people, including those who will be attending the next trade show. What incentives could you offer to facilitate sharing?

#3 Offer One-on-One Time

In your email marketing campaigns, pre-show, offer to spend one-on-one time with prospects. Perhaps you could ask them to sign up for a 15-minute free consultation and offer them a spectrum of times that work for you, both during the trade show and during the off hours. In the messaging, share how you can solve commonly-held problems.

Consider also offering these free consultations with past customers, sharing information about new or improved products and/or services, ones that might entice them back. Also consider what you can offer current customers and schedule time slots for them, as well, to maintain a strong relationship with them. Remember that they will see your competitors' booths at the show!

#4 Staff Your Exhibit Appropriately

Time is money, yes, so you won't want to overstaff the trade show. But, there is a cost to understaffing it, too. If there is only one person at your booth, you will need to choose between always being available to answer questions and offering one-on-one consultations - and there is significant value in both approaches. How can you staff the booth so you can offer both?

If there is only one person at the trade show, this makes it difficult to scout out what competitors are doing and what's being taught in the workshops. So, carefully assess how many people should attend to maximize the impact.

#5 Use Video Loops to Capture Attention

Sixty-nine percent of consumer based traffic in 2017 is predicted to be video and a conclusion from Forrester research says the following: "If a picture paints 1,000 words then one minute of video is worth 1.8 million." And, listen to this. Do you know how many unique visitors there are on YouTube each and every month? Nearly one billion.

Bottom line: video is compelling. So, be sure to have a video that continually loops at your exhibit. This is ideal for people to watch while you chat with another prospect and for people who aren't yet ready to have a conversation with you.

#6 Scout Out Your Location

When you have an opportunity to talk to a prospect or customer, choose your location wisely. It's great to get that person away from the hustle and bustle of the conference, somewhere where you can sit down, stretch your legs and have a cup of coffee or drink. Know appropriate locations before the show starts. If you need to hesitate while you consider options, the moment might be lost, because it's so easy for potential customers to get distracted at noisy conferences.

Make sure the spot you choose isn't too far away, though. Someone who is willing to, say, use the elevator to go to a restaurant on another floor may not be willing to take the rapid transit.

#7 Become Known as the Person in the Know

If you gain a reputation as the person who knows what's going on, people will more naturally gravitate to you. What if you interviewed the event organizers ahead of time, asking questions with answers that will matter to trade show attendees and exhibitors? You could publish this information on your company's blog and share it through social media channels and email marketing messaging. Have flyers at your booth that contains supplementary information about the show and its location, information not easily found elsewhere. As your reputation as a knowledgeable, helpful person grows at trade shows, you will gain a more prominent presence.

#8 Promote Yourself Online Throughout the Trade Show

Be prepared to be active on social media channels throughout the show (another reason you'll want to adequately staff your booth). Use hashtags on your posts, tweets and the like, and participate on other people's social media channels, engaging in conversations about the trade show with them.

Consider using Facebook Live to report on what's happening, as it's happening, and make sure your customers and prospects (those who couldn't attend) know when they

can tune in. Ask trade show attendees if they're willing to share information about the trade show on your Facebook Live video.

Capture images and video that can strategically be used in follow-up messaging in upcoming email marketing and to other promote your company ahead of the next trade show.

#9 Plan Carefully - and then be Flexible

As tips one through eight clearly show, preparation is key. But, be ready and willing to go with the flow. Have you ever seen an interview where the person being interviewed gave a humorous, startling or otherwise memorable response - but the interviewer doggedly went on to the next question? You don't want to be that person. If your plan was to go on Facebook Live, asking multiple people one single question each about the show - but then someone begins gushing about your product and/or service, let that person talk! Testimonials are invaluable, even more so when the enthusiasm is clearly genuine.

#10 Assemble a Star Resource Team

If all this trade show preparation sounds overwhelming, that's normal. The best way to handle it is to determine what tasks you must do, and which ones you handle especially well, and keep those items on your own to-do list. Then look at the other members of your trade show team. Which tasks must they do? Which ones do they handle especially well? Assign those appropriately.

Then, for overflow items and those where specialized expertise is needed, choose the best vendors for your situation. If you need top quality trade show video expertise, we invite you to contact Media Zeus at 844-434-9387 or online at <https://www.mediazeus.com/contact.html>

We can help you to prepare video ahead of time, for social media and email marketing purposes, and for your own blog. We can be your go-to resource at the show itself, freeing you up to meet new prospects, discuss solutions and close deals. We can also take the raw footage that you take at the trade show and transform it into a polished piece to use to promote your company going forward. Let us help!