

AAA Great Vacations EXPO EXHIBITING TIPS & TRICKS



Design your exhibit to sell! Just a few days at an event like the AAA Great Vacations EXPO can mean several months of contacts and sales! But a big portion of your business' success – and the success of the show as a whole – depends on the look and feel of your booth display.

For your reference and benefit, following are some suggestions to help you create an exhibit space that works best for you:

Make your booth shout "WELCOME!"

To help you create a more inviting space, review these major findings about consumer behavior at large shows from behavioral studies published by *Trade Show Week* and INCOMM International:

- Open spaces attract people. A good rule of thumb is 60% open, 40% occupied.
- Your exhibit space is your territory: effective selling does not occur in the aisles where you are perceived to be invading guests' space. Leave room within your booth space for sales interaction by providing a place for guests to stand or sit.
- "Homey" translates as "secure" or "stable" to most consumers. Small investments in some form of floor covering, plants and furniture will go a long way toward building customer trust.
- The decision to stop at a particular booth is made in a few seconds. Be sure your company name and product identification are clearly visible from the aisle. This quickly answers the most important questions on attendees' minds: What is this company and what do they do?
- Careful lighting can make even a simple booth warm and welcoming. Use colored lights that match your décor or support your theme to add interest. Talk to a professional about how to light your booth just right.

Get your customers involved

The savvy marketer will take the exhibit booth up a notch by making it interactive; involving the customer in what you do or sell in a direct way. A massive 25% of consumers will remember your company and products/services when you conduct live demonstrations. Even if there's nothing to demonstrate, you can still get visitors involved in using your product. Following are just a few examples:

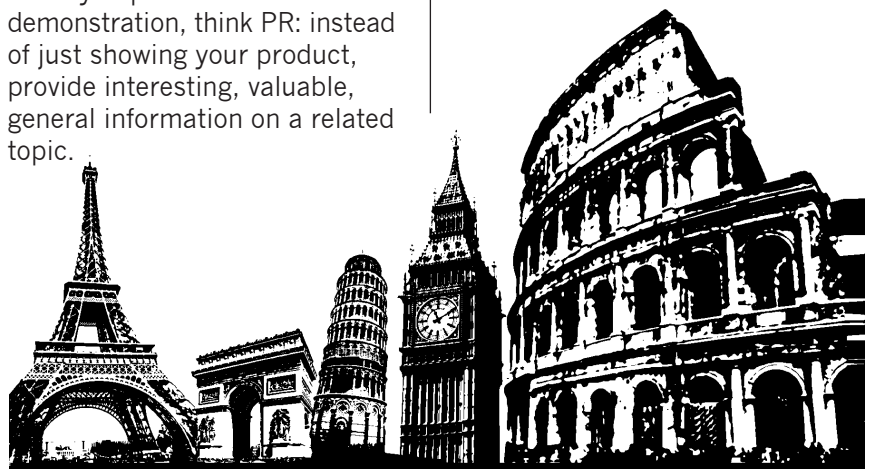
- Give visitors a chance to interact with the product on their own, without a sales pitch, in a new way.
 - ~ Entice their senses by recreating unique sounds or delicious smells from your destination.
 - ~ Highlight beautiful scenery with a slide show or larger-than-life graphic displays.
 - ~ Dress the part – coordinating outfits or costumes add an element of fun to your display.
- When you plan a lecture or demonstration, think PR: instead of just showing your product, provide interesting, valuable, general information on a related topic.

- For products conducive to children, why not bring in a storyteller or character to attract kids and parents to your area. Remember that interesting activities attract better media coverage, as well.

You have ninety seconds: Use them well

Once a visitor stops at your display, you have just ninety seconds from hello to ho-hum, according to Mark Smith, a Colorado-based trade show consultant. Our version of Smith's "QUICK" program (reverse side) can help maximize your results at the show and, more importantly, in the months to follow. Remember that post-show sales can be the most important benefit of your event participation.

Share this list with your sales team to remind them that selling at a consumer show is different from selling at a traditional retail location.



Q is for **Qualify**. Are you talking to the family decision-maker? What is the budget? Try to spend one-on-one time showing the right product to the right individual.

U is for **Understand**. 42% of exhibitors lose sales because the sales staff didn't listen carefully to the customer. Why did each person come to the show and stop at your booth? What is he or she specifically looking for? Tailor presentations to meet the customers' needs.

I is for **Identify**. Pinpoint how you can fulfill the customer's needs, focusing on the benefits of a particular product.

C is for **Create a plan of action**. Demonstrate the product that best suits each customer. Sell the product and your company. Offer options. If possible, close the sale. Most important of all, be sure to keep names and addresses of all customers who show any interest, including a note of the key barrier(s) to sale for that customer. That way, when you follow up, you can gear the right promotion to the right customer.

K is for **Know when to quit**. Every show visitor should feel welcome and well treated...but there are thousands of other people passing through the show who may be in search of your product or service. When a visitor has no intention of buying, shake hands, restate your plan of action and thank them for stopping by.

The most important week of the show is the week after

Acquiring sales leads and booking reservations is why you participate in the AAA Great Vacations EXPO. Establish a plan for following up on your leads and stick to it. A good plan of action can keep your business selling for the rest of the year. The plan has worked wonders for some of the top sales companies in the country. Mobilize your staff to put it to use or tailor a plan for your company's capabilities. This step-by-step approach will help keep that big fish from getting away:

1. At the end of each day, go through your list of names and separate them into prospect categories of Hot, Medium and Mild.
2. Follow up with your Hot prospects or pass them on to your sales staff ASAP. Depending on how much effort you can spare, contact the "Hot" prospects right away with a phone call or a letter.
3. Continue the sales effort with a post-show discount, a personalized demonstration or a gift incentive.
4. Immediately after the show, mail out your literature to the Medium and Mild prospects. For best results, place follow-up calls and ask:
 - Did they receive the mailing?
 - When (not if) do they expect to purchase?
 - Which product are they most interested in?
 - Would they like the chance to learn more about your products and/or services?



GOOD LUCK ON A GREAT SHOW!

We hope these tips are helpful and we look forward to seeing your outstanding exhibit at the 2012 AAA Great Vacations EXPO.

One last tip: we are searching for interesting new stories about exhibitors, events and products for the press. Good publicity comes from good information.

*As you plan events or promotions, or when you think of newsy or human interest information about your business that the public might find interesting, be sure to fill out the **Publicity Form** and let us know your ideas.*

Questions? Please contact:

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