



TRADE SHOW DISPLAY MARKETING Promotional Strategies

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Visual IMPACT!



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OVERVIEW

Generating sales from trade shows is all about getting qualified leads and converting them into purchasers.

It is a good idea to "presell" your booth by sending customers and prospects a note or an email with your booth number, inviting them to stop by and pick up a small gift, participate in a giveaway or take advantage of special show prices. If they take the bait and want to buy at the show, it's a good idea to have a separate location (or at least a quiet spot in the back of the booth) where you can close the sale.

Trade show or group selling is slightly different than other sales methods, but it's not complicated. Sales fundamentals still apply: Contact all the visitors you can. The more visitors you encounter, the more potential qualified leads you can identify. Develop a short list of questions to quickly separate the serious buyers from the browsers. Focus on the buyers. Prepare a 30 second run-down of the benefits of using your products. Get contact information and then move on to the next prospect.

Buyers are busy, too, and they'll appreciate your cordial efficiency. If you sense a big fish on the line, be prepared to go the extra mile. Rent a hotel suite to entertain small groups of VIP prospects. Invite qualified prospects for cocktails, dinner or perhaps breakfast the next morning. The object is to spend quality time with people who are most likely to place large orders.

Because trade shows pack a flurry of opportunity into only a few days, you have less time to spend with each prospect. That means show pressure can be intense and the hours long. Be sure to have enough people working the exhibit and rotate your staff to keep them fresh. Upbeat people with stamina make good booth staffers.

You might also hire a specialized trainer to prepare your best people for the challenge. Training includes preparation, coaching and then review. Training will help you pick the right show, select the right exhibits, assign the right staff and use the right follow-up system. Coaching really helps when you have different people working together for the first time. Review your marketing strategies, brush up your booth selling skills and remind everyone about intelligence gathering. A review is one of the most often neglected opportunities to evaluate how you did, what still needs to be done, and what you can do better next time. Use it to prevent recurring problems and missed opportunities.

Not every sale occurs at the show. Sometimes buying cycles are spread out over many months, so follow-up is very important to capturing those orders. Find a way to stay in touch with your show prospects. A letter or card might work. With email and fax machines so prevalent, a monthly electronic communiqué featuring your latest product information, new



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prices or new services can become as easy to produce as pushing a few buttons on your computer—if you have a current contact list. If you've got one, use it. If you don't, get busy!

PRE-SHOW PREPARATION

1. DEFINE GOALS/OBJECTIVES
 - A. Goodwill, make friends
 - B. Promote company image, corp. I.D. and name awareness (logo)
 - C. Generate names and/or qualified prospects
 - D. Introduce a new product/service
 - E. Distribution of company/product literature or coupons
 - F. Recruitment/Fundraising
 - G. Training/Demonstration
 - H. Destination/Attraction/Event marketing
 - I. In-Store or P.O.S. promotion
 - J. Sponsorship/Charitable event
 - K. Information Center/Mall kiosk
2. PERSONNEL
 - A. Select you most experienced or impressive company representative
 - B. Management should always be involved
 - C. Staff Characteristics
 1. Enthusiastic
 2. Outgoing, personable
 3. Knowledgeable and interested in objective
 4. Dress code with corp. I.D., and grooming
 - D. Staff up for peak hours of traffic flow
3. EXAMINE YOUR BUSINESS
 - A. What are your company strengths?
 - B. What makes your business unique?
 - C. Who/What is your market?
 1. Client/corporate demographic
 2. Venue
 - D. How do you measure up to the competition?
 - E. What are your product/service features and benefits?
Remember, you're selling the benefits, not the features!
4. CREATE A THEME
 - A. Create a unique event of your environment/venue
 - B. Colors, action, sound
 - C. Make it memorable for the prospects
 - D. Branding, slogan, guarantee, warranty
 - E. Specialty items, premiums, giveaways
 - F. Have some fun!



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5. PRESENTATION DESIGN

- A. High Impact Graphics
- B. Display should easily accommodate graphic changes
- C. Make your presentation brief and to the point—less is more!
- D. Pose a question, get them thinking
- E. Use of trade related 'buzz' words where appropriate
- F. Lead with popular and accepted company product/service or new industry related innovation
- G. Practice in advance
- H. Practice in advance
- I. Practice in advance

6. SPACE PLANNING

- A. Capture passersby or attendees attention and draw them in
 - 1. Bold high resolution graphics
 - 2. Keep space open and inviting—no blockage
 - 3. Literature and coupon distribution towards rear of area and well identified
 - 4. Take the time to illuminate your message, it is essential
- B. Demonstrate your goods and services wherever possible
- C. Include registration for drawings and prizes
- D. Provide premiums and specialty items for qualified prospects only—this is very important!
- E. Examine carefully the traffic flow of your area for greatest exposure
- F. Consider audio/visual aids

DURING THE SHOW

1. INTRODUCTION

- A. Welcome, meet and greet—stay diligent, keep smiling
- B. Qualify prospect to your goods or service—this is most important and must be thought out well in advance
- C. Call for questions and be prepared—knowledge is power

2. PRESENTATION

- A. Introduce your goods or service message—use the display as your focal point to reinforce product or service line—talking display graphics help
- B. Present features and benefits—try to include emotional benefits wherever possible in order to nurture prospects ego
- C. Be able to quote on your feet and know your competition's pricing
- D. Address customer needs and wants
- E. Trial close questions
- F. Marketing Tips
 - 1. Build interest and excitement through your enthusiasm
 - 2. Get your prospect involved



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3. Talk only with and hold qualified prospects attention with a premium or specialty item at the opportune moment
4. Practice escape phrases
5. Use language that is clear and understandable—avoid slang
6. Get prospects name, address and telephone number
7. Get referrals—identify networking opportunities
8. Listen closely and write down their questions, responses and concerns—look and sound interested
9. Dispense literature or coupon
10. Direct or provide them with your web site information using business card or premium/specialty item
11. Specialty item should be functional at prospect's place of business—especially their office desk

3. THE CLOSE

- A. Do not hesitate to ask prospect to buy your goods or services
- B. Schedule follow up appointment
- C. Try to 'smoke out' any objections
- D. Leave the 'door' open for future business

AFTER THE SHOW

1. REVIEW/CRITIQUE

- A. Promotional Strategy in general
- B. Your display
- C. What worked/what didn't
- D. Venue/Layout
- E. Make changes if required
- F. Build library of graphics for different target markets

2. CREATE FOLLOW-UP LIST

- A. Re-qualify all
- B. Prioritize

3. FOLLOW-UP PLAN

- A. Seminar invitation
- B. Direct mail solicitation with additional premium or coupon
- C. Telemarketing
- D. Respond to prospect's request
- E. Prepare quotation
- F. Attend prospect's location

4. QUALIFY AND CLOSE

5. KEEP FOLLOWING UP!



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[Since 1990, Visual IMPACT! has been a full-service 'multimedia' company with expertise in advertising promotions and marketing programs—specifically, in **print** collateral, **video** production, **web site** development, **trade show** exhibits, and **graphics design**—and the 'seamless integration' of them.

Our tagline, "***Ideas That Transform,***" refers to how we combine compelling design, a strong marketing strategy, and very innovative communications technologies to *change the impact* of a corporate message from commonplace to influential].