

Four reasons to attend a trade show

+ **Meet decision-makers**

According to Exhibit Surveys, in 2010, 80% of trade show visitors had "the power to recommend or make final purchase decisions." In addition, 31% of visitors claimed that "their purchase intention was stronger after visiting the trade show."

+ **Improve sales productivity**

According to the French Statistical Audit Bureau for General and Specialized Fairs and Exhibitions (OJS), customer contact at a trade show is "four to ten times less expensive than a customer visit." Contact cost for a stand averages at about 20 Euros, whereas this contact ranges from 80-200 Euros when made during field visits. Furthermore, a sales rep will meet with 15 customers daily at a trade show vs. an average of three customers during a field visit.

+ **Explore prospects**

Trade shows hold a wealth of opportunities and present many "hot" receptive prospects because visitors attend shows on their own accord. This makes it an incredibly effective way for exhibitors to expand their customer base.

+ **Communicate with the press and opinion leaders**

A company's trade show budget represents a significant investment: how can you optimize your budget?



Tips & tricks for making your trade show a success

Before the show

+ **Create a budget and set goals**

Trade show participation is part of a company's overall strategy, as well as its marketing, sales and HR strategies. It is very important to set specific goals and create a budget that includes purchasing of space, a stand, as well as personnel costs (travel, hotels, restaurants). It is essential to create a system for gauging the success of each trade show.

+ **Select trade shows that your company wants to attend, then choose your placement and area size**

A countless array of events exist, ranging from major international trade shows to local conventions. It is important that each trade show you attend corresponds to your company's challenges in terms of business. Many companies now prefer to attend local trade shows with small exhibit areas as they offer more returns on investment. Trade show organizers often offer pre-registration discounts, so it is best to reserve exhibit space in advance. Placement is also a very important factor. Opt for placement near the entrance, in the main aisles or near "locomotives" (leading companies that attract visitors).

+ **Seek assistance of trade show display and visual communication professionals**

Exhibits and event planning are very specific fields and require experience. Seek the advice of professionals, and do not hesitate to ask your service provider questions on how to set up your stand and who will be involved. You may also request references and contact them.

+ **Create a brief for trade show display professionals**

Clearly explain your objectives and your strategy. Several constraints may influence your trade show display specialist's recommendations, which can help you cut costs significantly:

What type of stand should you choose? We have divided stands into three categories based on their weight, volume and assembly time/difficulty. The categories are: ultra-portable, portable and transportable. All ultra-portable and portable solutions may be set up and dismantled by exhibitors without any professional assistance. Some transportable stands also have the "Do it yourself" label.

How many times will you use your stand? If you will only use your stand once, opt for a rental. If you will reuse it several times, specify the various spaces where it will be used and your desired configurations. It is possible to start with a modular system that uses shared elements, which will allow you to create exhibits ranging from 9 à 100m².

Which features do you need? Reception counters, storage, product displays, videos, customer meetings, brochure distribution... these are all objectives that influence how your stand is designed.

Going to a trade show? tips & tricks

+ **Invite your customers and prospective customers**

Trade show organizers provide free passes and distribute newsletters, which will allow you to easily inform your customers about your participation. Sales teams can also increase their scope of action by meeting with customers before and after the trade show for breakfast or dinner. Remember that these times are just as effective as field visits.

During the trade show

+ **Details make the difference**

Your stand is a reflection of your company's image. Make sure it is organized! A storage area is very useful for concealing packaging or for storing brochures. Portable Solutions come with a carrying case that turns into a counter, and modular solutions offer storage areas that are secured by a door. Lighting is very important as it puts the spotlight on your message. Environmentally-friendly LED solutions help conserve electricity.

+ **Brief your teams every morning**

Your team should be informed about your new products and services. A daily morning meeting before the show opens is a way to re-specify goals and answer questions that were asked the night before.

+ **Create buzz around your stand**

To capture visitors' interest, create buzz around your stand with training sessions, wine & cheese samplings and other attention-drawing events.

After the trade show

+ **Follow-up is the key to success**

A successful trade show is not just about meeting with customers and leads: follow-up will ensure that your efforts have maximum impact. Thank your customers after the trade show and follow-up on each request individually. Ensure that each lead has been processed with a objective follow-up. You will then be able to gauge the show's success and decide whether or not you will attend it again in the future.

+ **Reuse graphics after the trade show**

Exhibition systems like Panoramic allow you to use portions of your graphics, which can be cut or re-sewn. The single-sided frame can be mounted on a wall, and the double-sided frame lets you create fabric backwalls, which are like mini-exhibition kits.