

COMMUNICATION EXHIBITS, INC

Check Your Thinking



TRADE SHOW
PLANNING
CHECKLIST



PRE-SHOW MARKETING



Don't drop the ball by not driving targeted traffic to your exhibit. Pre-show marketing can compound the return on your investment and allows your presence to extend beyond the four walls of the conference hall.

- Define the portion of your total budget that can be allocated to pre-show marketing campaigns specifically for this event. Challenge yourself to break it down per promotion channel so resources can be managed based on each channel's productivity.
- Formalize buyer personas and define the target audience. Impartial focus often yields impartial returns – focus your resources based on your strategic filter and conversion goals.
- Highlight the value of attending the event in your brand messaging on pre-show campaigns. Ensure alignment of business, brand and marketing message.
- Schedule social platform campaigns. Best practice: Promote a special offer if they register through your link. Take these registrants and try to schedule meetings for them at the show.
- Promote event presence on the website. Let all website visitors know where they can find you!
- Promote event sponsorships. Brag about those sponsorships!
- Invite key prospects to private events or dinners.

POST-SHOW FOLLOW-UP



Plan your post-show follow-up process before the event. Doing this correctly can make or break your entire investment.

- Set a defined follow-up process for handling event leads. Determine each role in the process and how leads will be delegated.
- Use your CRM to track each lead. Measure conversion rates and times spent in each stage of your process. Review this weekly with your team to make sure no lead slips through the cracks.
- Set conversion points with varying degrees of commitment. Based on their level of interest in your brand, is your goal to push for a facility visit or is it to register for your upcoming webinar? It's good to offer varying conversion points as prospects can be in different phases of the buying process.

ASSESSING YOUR TRADE SHOW EXHIBIT



Form follows function. Your exhibit should be designed around your selling process. Strong brand identity. Position products or services in a way that facilitates optimal engagement.

- Make a powerful first impression. Do you stand out and differentiate yourself in a matter of seconds? Having a strong visual impact and being memorable can influence follow-up post-show.
- Do you have the correct tools to sell or demonstrate your product or service?
- Define your Unique Selling Point (USP). Is the booth designed around this conversion point?
- Exhibit versatility. How easily can messaging be branded for different markets? Modularity for different configurations.
- Manage labor requirements effectively. What crew members and equipment are needed for installation and dismantle? Regulating these can be a great way to control costs of a show.

BUILDING YOUR TEAM



“The way a team plays as a whole determines its success. You may have the greatest bunch of individual stars in the world, but if they don’t play together, the club won’t be worth a dime.” – Babe Ruth

- Determine who should be on the team. Do you have experts or product managers that relate better to the target audience at the event?
- Properly train your team on the exhibit space. In addition to being up to snuff on your company’s products and messaging, we highly recommend having staff trained in the exhibit space and marketing tools being used prior to the event.
- Establish a consistent marketing message that your team is trained on. Make sure your team is educated on the company’s positioning at the event. How are you trying to position yourself against your peers for this specific audience/market? Does your sales team understand the competitive landscape?
- Understand the audience. Does your sales team know what the ideal buyer profile is? Wasting conversations on poorly filtered prospects presents a major opportunity for your event. Train your staff on buyer personas and key target prospects identified prior to the event.
- Make sure sales staff are efficient during show hours. Train your team to have the “right” interactions in the booth and know how long the preferred conversation should last. While having a high volume of interactions is important unless they are quality leads and with the target audience, they won’t have the follow-up potential you need post-event to hit your ROI goals.

UNDERSTANDING WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE



We all know this can be fuzzy, but gathering both qualitative and quantitative information at your event can go a long way in helping you assess the success. This data can also be very powerful in further optimizing your events going forward.

These are a few of the key areas we encourage our clients to measure:

QUANTITATIVE

- The volume of leads per show.
- Lead per RFQ.
 - This is a measure of lead quality. Are you having the right interactions? Is your messaging resonating with the target audience?
- The volume of 1:1 private meetings. How many of these were scheduled in advance?
- Behavioral analytics on interactive content and marketing tools.
 - This helps feed powerful data on prospects interests and interactions with your brand into your CRM. Utilize this information for more thoughtful post-show follow-up.
- Analysis of brand interactions via social platforms and event pages.
- Quality of overall show attendance.
 - What's the breakdown of the attendance? How many executives, purchasing agents, product engineers, etc.
- Always assess previous year's metrics and benchmark with new show objectives.
 - Note: Marketing and ad spend needs to be inline based on previous years and show objectives.

UNDERSTANDING WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE (cont.)

QUALITATIVE

- Don't underestimate the value of relationship building. Did you meet with key prospects and clients?
- Were you positioned in line with your pre-show objectives?
- How did the audience receive your messaging and product?
- Did your team take advantage of the speakers and conference networking events?



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BRAND EXPERIENCE STUDIO + SHOP

CEI's heritage of superior craftsmanship and desire to deliver outstanding products and services offers our clients a unique advantage in the world of immersive experiences across trade show, environment, and event services. We believe that cohesive physical and digital experiences built through strategic insight, leading-edge technology, and creative space fabrication deliver real-world results for brands.

STUDIO

From value engineering to graphic production to interactive technologies, we're an integrated group of experiential storytellers and technical artists. We design unique customer experiences that inspire, educate, and engage audiences to create lasting impressions and accelerate sustainable growth.

SHOP

We've built a team of artisan carpenters, metal fabricators, and project managers that allow us to further push the boundaries of exhibit design. Our full-service fabrication facility creates an agile environment, resulting in quality assurance, one-of-a-kind structures, and speed to delivery.