



Your Tradeshow **Maximized**®

7 Tips to Maximize Your Trade Show Investment (Stop Leaving Money on the Trade Show Floor)

by Evelyn Flynn “The Marketing Innovator”

1) Develop a Theme

It doesn't have to be elaborate or expensive, it just has to be related to your company or to your sales pitch. For example, if your company sells coffee, you could have a coffee shop theme, complete with staffers dressed as baristas, and lattes made to order. Or you can tie your theme to your company's geographic location. If your company is based in Louisiana, consider going with a crawfish theme.

2) Purpose or Objective

What is the purpose of the trade show and what is your objective for attending?

In order to make your trade show experience an investment that pays off, set measurable objectives before the event and stick to them.

3) PROMOTE EARLY

People have this idea that a successful trade show is one where you have 10,000 people walking past your booth. Getting the right kind of traffic to your booth starts before the trade show, with pre-show activity such as e-mail blasts or marketing campaigns. Define who you want to come to your exhibit and target them specifically.

4) SET YOUR STAFF UP FOR SUCCESS

Train early and often. The No. 1 thing people remember about your exhibit isn't the great graphics, it's the staff. Even the most experienced or dynamic staff needs training before each trade show they attend. I have no doubt companies' sales staffs are terrific at doing what they do every day. But a well trained staff is the most important part of your trade show experience. Make sure your staff understands and agrees with the trade show objectives before attending—and offer refreshers on both goals and manners once there.

5) TRADE SHOW SHOULD INCLUDE:

- **Booth Design**
- **Graphics**
- **Signage**
- **Table Cover**
- **Retractable Banner**
- **Indoor Flags**

- **Promotional literature**, color scheme, and giveaways, must be united by a recognizable signature that is unique to your company
- **Giveaways** are a point of contention for trade show attendees. Giveaways provide a valid reminder of your brand. If you do use a giveaway, think critically about how that item represents your product or your company.
- **Promotional Items** such as imprinted pens, calendars, and t-shirts will keep your company's name and logo on people's minds every time they use them.
- **Scents and Aroma**
Go beyond sound and vision. Appeal to all five senses if possible. For example, real estate agents know that the scent of home-baked cookies can evoke sentimental emotions and promote sales. You may wish to consider this approach if your company sells kitchen appliances. Free cookies can't hurt either!

6) ENGAGING THE AUDIENCE

The most important piece of advice is to follow the Golden Rule and treat others as you would like to be treated. Engaging the customer can be a delicate business. A trade show booth's staff typically has only eight seconds to attract the customer's attention. Your staff must be vigilant in pursuit of each lead. Every person who browses a brochure or grabs a giveaway must be engaged, and treated as if they were the CEO of a company. After all they just might be!

7) FOLLOW-UP, FOLLOW-UP, FOLLOW-UP

Not everyone that attends a trade show is your client. Trade show statistics state that roughly 12 percent of show attendees are your potential buyer. **Don't leave thousands of dollars on the table after you leave a trade show-FOLLOW-UP with those clients and prospects.**



Evelyn Flynn
(225) 767-8762
Email: eflynn@me.com

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