

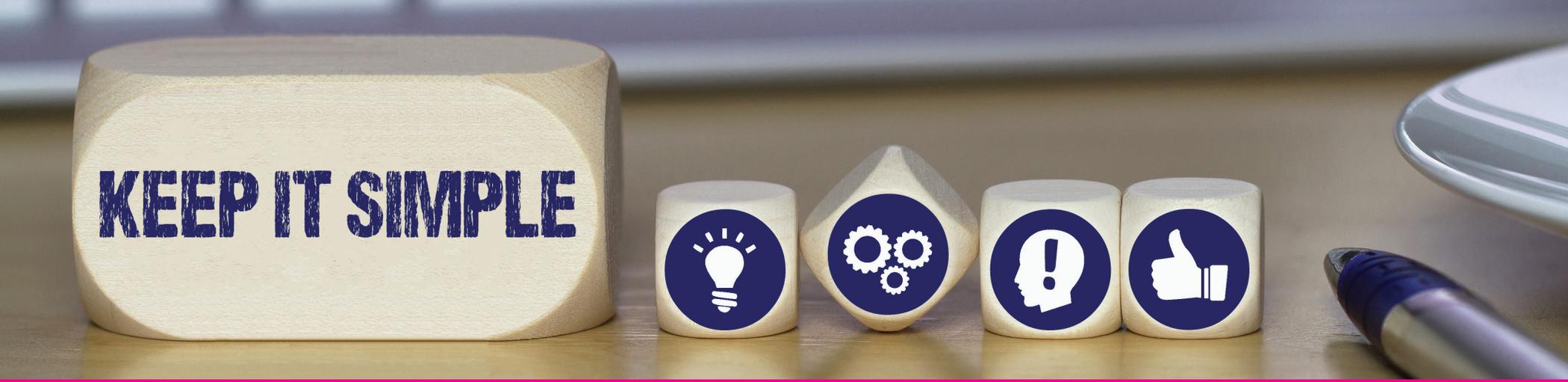


# A Business Professional's Survival Guide to Trade Show Marketing

When planning for trade show marketing, it is important to think about before, during and after show tactics that can be implemented towards your target market.

Think of it as a campaign where there's an introduction to your message, a way for trade show attendees to interact with your message and a follow up to your audience after the show to bring home that message with a final call-to-action.





**KEEP IT SIMPLE**

## Keep your trade show marketing message simple

Focus on one or two topics that you and your team can push at your trade show. Why? Even if you have multiple topics to discuss or want to touch on everything you possibly can, focusing on one or two topics in your main trade show marketing strategy can help your company stand out. What are your competitors saying and how can you say it better or be more interesting to get attendees to stop at your booth first?

These topics should be hyper-relevant to what your industry is currently talking about or something popular that your brand can lean on and grab attention. If you are in the manufacturing industry and attending a trade show, how is your company being innovative in the market? Are you creating a product using new technology or new techniques? Showcase those unique features and explain how they can help your existing clients or new leads by making their lives easier.

Once you have chosen your topics, brainstorm ways that you can visually show and tell about them with print marketing. You can keep it small and affordable or go big and make a lasting impression to attendees that will be sure to resonate with them beyond the exhibition show floor.



## Pre-show brand strategy

Many brands take advantage of trade show attendee lists to send out a pre-show mailers or eblasts that promotes why people should stop by their booth.

Here is where you announce your topics of discussion, a special “show only” offer or any other teaser info you can provide that will bring attention to the people attending the show.

This mailer/eblast should be branded with your company info and have links or options for the recipient to learn more about your brand before they visit your booth at the show.



Offer meetings or demonstrations during the show. Be sure to offer your potential booth attendees a way to schedule a meeting or request some one-on-one time with you during the show.

This builds a personal interaction which makes people feel more valued when you can set aside time just for them.



## **Grab attendee attention and retention with these popular large format print strategies**

There are many ways to grab attention during a trade show and what works best for a brand can vary by industry and exhibitor limitations. Most trade show hosts have rules on what you can and cannot do at your booth so take time to know the rules that come with being an exhibitor. Going against the rules or not know the trade show etiquette could get your company more attention than you would want.





## Corrugated cut-outs and interactive experiences

Corrugated cut-outs have become a very popular way to grab attention. Life-size cut-outs of mascots or brand ambassadors are a great way to get attendees' attention and get them to your booth. These cut-outs could be of team members holding funny signs, enlarged product displays to use as teaching tools or interactive games like a spin-to-win to create a crowd.

Offering a photo op with a branded photo frame or backdrop brings an element of interactive fun to both existing clients and new leads during a show. This type of interaction also boosts word-of-mouth at the trade show which will draw in more visitors and potentially grow your brand awareness with attendee buzz.



## A professionally branded booth

Once people are drawn to your booth, it's important to have the appropriate representation of your brand with the use of professionally printed backdrops and furniture. Designing your booth beyond the white company sign hanging on a black curtain backdrop is important, not only to stand out above other booths, but to also show that you invested into the visual attributes of your brand, message and important topics that you want to bring to the forefront of conversation.

A sophisticated backdrop sets the stage for your brand quality, while retractable banners bring life to your unique features and topics of discussion. A branded table cloth or custom printed table brings more life to your booth and allows for attendees to get a great first impression of your company in person.



## Leave a lasting impression with trade show booth takeaways

Everyone loves free stuff, and when it comes to trade shows, many visitors are there to fill their bag with SWAG. Promotional product giveaways are an easy way to get your brand in front of visitors and it also keeps your company in front of them beyond the time of the trade show.

The challenging part is knowing what to offer for free that isn't the same thing the booth next to you is handing out. Maybe a person is fine with picking up 10 pens during their time on the exhibition floor and a pen is an inexpensive way to get your brand out there. Offering a unique promo item like a custom printed tile coaster can prove to be more exciting and more memorable, but often times comes with a higher price tag that may affect your trade show bottom line.



A background of numerous white envelopes, some open and some closed, scattered across the top half of the page. The envelopes are rendered with soft shadows, giving them a three-dimensional appearance.

## Post-show brand strategy

Brands should always have a post trade show strategy that includes both their existing client interactions and potential leads that were generated at the event. This strategy can be in the form of a mass mailer or eblast that provides an overview of what your company showcased at the event, a raffle winner announcement from your drawing or even links to more information that can be found on your website. Produce something that can be a follow up to your attendees and leaves them with a call-to-action to venture further into learning about your company, your uniqueness and the main topics in your trade show marketing message.



You can treat your existing client visitors and new leads the same or put them in separate funnels that can be split into more than one message and call-to-action. The leads you gained from the raffle drawing may not be high quality leads to complete a transaction, but you could at least thank them for stopping by and suggest they follow you on social media or sign up for a newsletter for future updates.

If you do have hot leads or existing clients that would like to work more with your brand, you must have a plan of attack to accommodate those people and follow up with them sooner than later after the trade show has taken place.



Trade show marketing is an important and often times overlooked part of a brand's annual strategy. Knowing some basic tactics to draw in people to your company before, during and after a trade show can be very effective and does not have to be something that breaks your marketing budget.



If you are looking for new and effective ways to stand out at your next trade show or event, utilize this trade show survival guide as a way to bring new and effective strategies to your brand's marketing.

Need some help with your plan and budget? Contact us today!

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