



Is Your Exhibit Worthy of Attendees' Time?

By Jefferson Davis, *Competitive Edge*

One of the biggest complaints from exhibitors is that they do not get enough booth traffic.

I'll admit, it's easy to blame the show organizer, or even the attendees for not spending enough time in the exhibit hall. However, based on 30 years of exhibiting experience and my company's evaluation of over 16,000 exhibits in action on trade show floors, I think I can share some insights as to why this problem exists and ideas to address it.

First of all, put yourself in the mind of the attendee. Think about why they really attend conferences and trade shows. They attend for three major reasons: 1) to learn, 2) to network, and 3) to source products and services for both current and future needs.

Keep in mind, between all of the educational sessions, social events, and hundreds of exhibiting companies, attendees have over choice of where to focus their limited time and attention.

And because they, like you, are under pressure to justify the time and money spent to attend, they are doing a much better job of pre-planning their agenda... before they get to the event.

If you want to attract more attendees to your exhibit, you have to think of your exhibit as a destination... a destination that is worthy of their time and attention.

One of the quickest and most practical things you can do to attract more attendees is to identify and promote what specifically they will learn by visiting your exhibit. Remember, you are the expert on your products and services, not them.

- Step away from your products. Identify what challenges, problems and frustrations they experience by not being aware of or using your solution.
- Identify specifically how your product or service problems.
- Then, design a quick, fun, interactive experience in your booth that delivers practical takeaways to help them address their problems.

According to CEIR research, the number one way attendees want to engage with exhibits is through interactive demonstrations and presentations. There are many ways to deliver interactive educational experiences.

- One-to-one personalized presentations
- Small or large theater presentations
- Use iPads or interactive touchscreens
- Hands-on products demonstrations
- Guided demonstrations
- Integrate gamification

By taking the time to integrate an interactive learning experience and effectively promoting it to the right attendees - before and at the show - your booth will be seen as a “worthy destination” and you’ll have a booth full of qualified visitors.

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