

The *How to Succeed at Trade & Consumer Shows* eBook is written by Fred Fox and is filled with tips and strategies

sure to improve the performance of any exhibitor, large or small.

Topics covered include: Show Selection, Purchasing or Renting an Exhibit Booth, Developing Your Exhibit Marketing Program, Setting achievable, quantifiable objectives, Pre-show Marketing, Booth Staff Training and much, much more.

eDemonstration Version - Four of 36 Pages

Exhibitor Institute eBook

HOW TO SUCCEED AT TRADE OR CONSUMER SHOWS

by

Fred Fox

Executive Director / Exhibitor Institute

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For More Information on our Success Centres:
info@exhibitorinstitute.com



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 HISTORY

Trade and consumer shows are probably the oldest form of marketing and selling, dating back to the camel caravans of the far east and extending to the farmer's markets of today. Although the modern day trade or consumer show may be larger in area and more sophisticated in its look and presentation, it remains essentially the same. It's a simple philosophy; motivated buyers traveling to touch, see, and experience the various goods being offered by the sellers.

The exhibit hardware of course has changed, progressing from the canvas of the tents in the Middle East to the wonderfully crafted oak and mahogany of the industrial revolution to the current extruded aluminum and plastics.

The fundamental philosophy and objectives remain unchanged: to meet potential purchasers of your products and services, to present and explain how your products and services will benefit them and to begin to build a relationship with these prospective customers (prospects).

In earlier times, exhibit marketing (where 'exhibiting' simply meant to exhibit or display your wares for public awareness and approval) was the only 'marketing' that a vendor could take part in, they arrived at the booth, stall, stand, what ever it was called and went to work meeting, greeting and selling. For centuries this was the only way to market and sell products.

As time passed, things began to change. A lot of the markets moved indoors out of what was often inclement weather etc. and vendors began to market differently. The 'marketing' objective now became to attract prospects to the individual stores. At this point the perception of exhibit marketing began to change.



1.2 EXHIBITING IN THE MARKETING MIX

With the appearance of what we consider to be more modern forms of marketing (printing, books, newspapers, outdoor billboards, radio, television, direct mail, database and now the Internet) exhibit marketing began to lose its appeal to many. After all it hadn't been much fun to stand in the rain or snow and sell at a farmers market. There just hadn't been any other choice. With other choices available (and they were all more exciting and easier) the effectiveness of exhibit marketing began to be questioned.



The greatest gift to mankind has been the ability to rationalize any situation to a point where it fits your objective.

We can make anything right if we analyze it long enough and from enough directions. I visit

probably two hundred shows a year. When I walk around these shows and talk to the booth personnel working the exhibits, there is one resounding message. Most of them would rather be anywhere but there. They give me all kinds of reasons that being anywhere else would be more advantageous. It's just hard for me to understand that sales-



people who spend most of their waking hours trying to get appointments with prospects for the purpose of presenting their goods and services, have managed to rationalize that being in a place where there are prospects in abundance, is somewhere they don't want to be.

Many organizations view shows as a 'special event' outside their usual marketing or sales programs. Rarely do they set objectives or targets, rationalizing that by simply showing up, the world will beat a path to their

door. History proves them wrong.

After over thirty years in the exhibit industry, my devout belief is that there is no better place for an organization to be, than on the floor of a well run trade or consumer show, face-to-face with their clients, prospects, competitors and their industry.

This 'eBook' is intended to outline the steps that are necessary for success in exhibiting. These are steps that must be implemented by your organization. When you decide to exhibit at any show, you are renting a piece of concrete floor space and a dream. It's your job to make the dream come true.

Exhibitors often like to leave their success up to someone else, their show manager, their exhibit builder, their agency, etc. No one else but your organization has the intimate knowledge of your clients, your prospects, your products and services and how they would benefit others. Therefore, the responsibility for success in exhibiting ultimately falls on your organization.

2.0 IS EXHIBIT MARKETING FOR YOU?

It is hard for me to imagine an organization that would not benefit from exhibit marketing. Let's look at some of the strengths of trade and consumer shows.

* Shows provide an opportunity for buyers and sellers to meet face to face, where products can be demonstrated, handled and ultimately assessed.

* The audience is pre-selected and is pre-disposed to learn about new products, services and ideas.

* By being in direct contact with the client base, new buying interests can be uncovered and buyers who are normally not accessible will appear at your doorstep.

* The normal buying cycle can be shortened because of the ability to offer solutions and overcome objections immediately.