

Increasing exhibition footfall & ROI

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Your exhibition objectives will be wide ranging and there will be various internal meetings to justify spend. The tough thing is that exhibition stands have to make an impact in such a short period of time. Whether you want to; raise brand awareness, collect leads, open new accounts or engage with existing and potential new customers you will need to be aware of how to measure it.

As much as a freebie pen, entering a prize draw and branded chocolates are all very well and good there's more to it than that; people do more than just visit exhibitions now. So, what are companies doing to entice people to their stands?

Remember,
current
customers are
your easiest sell
& source of
referrals!



Recently we have seen a shift away from pull up banners and a table full of leaflets at exhibitions. Having said that, a unique, bespoke stand isn't always an option depending on budget restraints. There are many ways to make your exhibition stand out from the crowd for the right reasons, but it can be difficult to know where to start!

Ways to drive footfall

What is going to entice your customers and sought-after prospects?

Consider, if your brand is not as well known in the public domain, you may need to get creative.

Before the event begins, you should have access to a registered attendee list.

It's likely the event management has some pretty strict rules about what you can do with that list.

Many limit the email sends, as they don't want attendees' inboxes to be jammed with spam. For this reason, be strategic in your approach.

Keep the following things in mind:

- ***Scan the attendee list for current customers. Arrange meetings, appreciation cocktails or loyalty points.***
- ***Don't randomly spam all attendees with your one and only contact allowance. Use the data available to see if you can't spot your ideal customer. Then, send them a tailored message.***
- ***Email your current clients and potential clients in the region to inform them of your attendance and give them a personal invitation to join you***
- ***Partner with supporting media companies and exploit their mailing lists in the area with a bespoke email, letter or invitation.***

- **Promote your company in the supporting trade journals with your booth number visible and any offers you may have for the specific show.**
- **Take to social media and announce to people that you'll be in attendance. Create a contest they'll want to be a part of. You can even give away tickets to the conference. Remember to "hashtag" and tag the organisers and your clients/potential clients in the posts.**
- **Help market the conference or event. The organisers will appreciate it, and they might even share your social media posts.**
- **Start conversations on social media using the event hashtag to engage prospective attendees and promote the event.**
- **Provide worthwhile resources for attendees. Share blog posts, tips, and videos with useful information about the event and the host city.**

When we talk about stand engagement, this doesn't always mean additional items and extensive costs. Don't forget that your stand design is the initial engagement and should speak for itself. You want to give your customers and prospects the best opportunity to see your stand at the event.

This could be through design, stand visibility, graphics, elevation points or a designated product area. Then, where possible, you can add other complimentary variables, but it must be right for you and your objectives. There is no point throwing tech at a stand for the sake of it. It must add value!

The more visitors to your stand space, the more opportunities you have of converting a healthy number of them into prospects. But, with every other business trying to do exactly the same, this is no mean feat.

There are, however, several things you can try in order to attract positive attention and help you to secure those all-important leads:

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1. Display clear, sharp branding

When it comes to visitors to your stand, you may feel like ‘the more the merrier’ but a blanket approach will only waste your time.

Clear branding that positions the key benefits to your audience will ensure that visitors to your stand approach you in search of relevant services. And effective branding will help you to get noticed by your specific target audiences, increasing the number of potential prospects visiting your stand. Driving booth traffic is a job best shared by a data-driven event planner who can give vendors the information they need to make a wise investment decision, and vendors who understand how to draw a crowd. Aspects like booth design, exhibition stand attractions, and effective conversion techniques help both the event planner and the exhibitor feel like it’s been a worthwhile partnership.

2. Provide tasty refreshments

Trade shows and exhibitions are long and exhausting days so, naturally, serving coffees, drinks and other refreshments is a great way of attracting new visitors. Offering someone a drink creates the ideal opportunity for your sales team to break the ice and then get the conversation moving in the right direction.

A word of warning: if you are going to serve refreshments, make sure they are good quality as serving something cheap will only paint your brand in a bad light.





3. Host scheduled talks and demonstrations

During a busy conference, delegates are likely to tour the exhibition hall more than once. Hosting a scheduled event is the best way to ensure people come back round to your stand

for another visit.

Offer to teach them a new skill or conduct a live product demonstration; useful and engaging content like this will help entice delegates back over to your stand, hopefully bringing their colleagues with them.

An added bonus of hosting an on-stand event is that it creates a buzz around your exhibition space, which can help to increase footfall from the surrounding areas.



4. Create a communal workstation

Providing free wifi alongside a place to sit, check emails and re-charge devices is a great way of increasing the number of visitors to your stand. Sure, there will be a few individuals who visit purely to use the wifi, but plenty more people will be happy to take the time to speak with you as well.

A work station also provides the perfect place for your sales team to interact with clients and prospects on the stand, the comfort and privacy helping to facilitate more productive meetings.

5. Run a competition or provide entertainment

This one largely depends on what you're selling, as nobody is going to suddenly invest in a product with a huge cost or particularly niche appeal simply because they saw a good card trick!



However, if your products or services have a very broad appeal, entertainment can be a good way of attracting the passing crowds and introducing your offering. Equally,

hosting a competition is a great way to capture these passers-by as leads in order to increase your marketing base.

6. Create a video display

Video is increasingly prevalent within our daily lives and, as such, it has become a powerful marketing tool, with around 60% of business executives preferring video over text.

Moving images will and engaging content take a closer look. As catching, a well-made you to communicate speed to all passers-by.



catch the attention of prospects will help to draw them in to well as being initially eye-video on a big screen will enable your messages with ease and

7. A smart and enticing stand design

Think of your stand design as your shop front; delegates will walk past, take a look and decide whether they want to venture inside or not. Ultimately, a smart and visually impactful stand design is going to attract more attention. Equally, a dull or budget looking stand space will reflect negatively on your brand.

So, making sure your stand looks appealing, smart and well-designed is a must for nailing that first impression and attracting more new visitors overall.

Hopefully there are some tips and tricks to ensure that you make the very most of the events you are attending over the next 12 months.

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Contact Sean to learn more; sean@pimagazine-asia.com