5 Critical Exhibiting Success Factors
You MUST Address to Generate Results & ROI
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Rent the space, get your booth together, figure out your product presentation/demonstration, determine who’s going to work the show, book the air, hotel, the show services, ship your booth and products to the show, make sure it gets set up and torn down, do all this on time and on budget...

*Does this describe your days and weeks preparing for a show?*

If so, it’s possible you are caught in the “Logistics Trap”.

Of course, all of these things have to be done to make sure your booth, products and people show up for a tradeshow... But here’s the problem: none of these activities guarantee you’re going to get results or a return on your big investment of time and money. The Pareto principle tells us that “80% of our results come from 20% of our activities”.

The big question we as exhibitors should be asking is, “What are the 20% of activities that will help you get value and a return on your exhibiting investment?”

This is THE question I’ve been asking and searching for answers for the last thirty years. I’ve worked with over 200 companies directly as a consultant and trainer. Here’s what my experience has found to be the top five critical exhibiting success factors. You’ll notice all five of these factors address the STRATEGIC side of exhibiting, not the logistical/operational side.

1. **Have Clearly Defined Outcomes**: Every exhibitor has “reasons” for exhibiting. But reasons are NOT enough! Unless reasons are converted to specific, measurable goals and backed up with written action plans, you will not have the clarity to provide the direction necessary to win in the highly competitive game of exhibiting.

2. **Selectively Attract the Right Audience**: Not everyone attending the show is the right visitor for you. The major questions you need to ask and answer are: “Who are the right people for you?”, “Why should they visit your booth?”, and “What are you going to do between now and show time to get “in their mind” and “on their agenda””. Developing and executing a highly targeted, highly responsive pre- and at-show marketing campaign is like winning the game before kickoff.

3. **Deliver a High-Quality Visitor Experience**: People attend tradeshows to do more than what they can do on your website. The visitor experience is a combination of your exhibit, your product/service presentation/demonstration, and your booth staff behaviors. Synchronizing these three elements will deliver a quality visitor experience.
4. **Capture High-Quality Leads and Follow Up**: What most exhibitors call leads are more like scans or swipes. A high-quality lead is information rich and has a commitment from the visitor to take a clear, visible next action. Following up to make sure that next action happens is what creates lead conversion to a sale. Both of these areas require deep thought on your part. Develop a lead qualification process and integrate into your capture device. Train your staff on the qualification process and how to use the lead capture device.

5. **Measuring Exhibiting Performance, Value and Return on Investment**: Have you done 40 shows or one show, 40 times? If you do not have a well-designed measurement plan that utilizes performance and financial performance metrics, then you don’t have the information and data necessary to create **continual improvement** in your exhibiting program. Remember the sage business maximum... What gets measured gets done!

If you thoroughly address these five critical success factors, you will win at every tradeshow you do. If you neglect any one or combination of these factors, your results, value and ultimate return on investment will be reduced... sometimes significantly.

**Jefferson Davis, President of Competitive Edge** is North America’s leading exhibiting productivity expert. Since 1991, his results-focused, process-based approach to addressing critical exhibiting success factors has helped clients generate over $800 million in combined exhibiting results. Jefferson provides highly-intensive exhibit consulting and training services guaranteed to deliver results. For a no-obligation discovery meeting, [schedule a 30 minute meeting here](#).