

# TRADE SHOW MARKETING

Pre-Show Promotions Increase the Results of Exhibiting!

## Connecting with Expo Visitors

To improve your chances of having a successful expo, exhibitors should consider doing pre-show marketing. Whatever promotional vehicle you use, make sure that you give visitors a reason to come visit you. Their primary interest is “what’s new!”. Visitors are eager to learn about the latest technologies, new applications and products, or anything that will increase their bottom line. Even if you don’t have a new good or service to promote, think about a new angle to promote your products.

Visitors are also looking to meet with their current suppliers. Nothing can replace the power of human contact for establishing and maintaining relations. While voice mail and the internet has made contact more efficient, personal interaction with your customers is still an essential part of the buying and selling process and helps reinforce customer loyalty.

Visitors are looking for ideas, solutions and examples. What benefit are you offering that will change your customer or prospective customer’s life? What solutions are you providing? Memorability is an integral part of a visitors’ show experience. Look at what makes you different and why a prospect should buy from you.

You can attract people to your booth by showing how somebody is actually using your products or services. Trade shows work because adults are visual learners and exhibits are a visual medium; the exhibit, products, promotional material and graphics should all combine to offer visitors a clear picture of what your company offers. When designing your booth, keep asking yourself “Am I showing what we do?” or “Am I showing how others have been successful using our products/services?”.

The most successful exhibitors are ones who have done pre-show marketing of their booth to their current and prospective customers and take time to interact with visitors beyond the exchange of brochures and business cards.

## GREAT LAKES BAY REGIONAL EXPO

### BE THE BEST AT PROMOTING YOUR BOOTH AND WIN A PRIZE!

Admittance tickets, each a \$5 value, will be provided to you, at no cost, so you can personally invite your current customers and the customers you would like to do business with. Stamp your company name on the back of tickets you hand out. The Exhibitor that has the most admittance tickets turned in, excluding employee attendees, wins!

(In the case of a tie, the winner will be randomly drawn)

### Win Your Choice of Prize:

- \$500 Cash
- \$500 Gift Certificate from the mall of your choice: Bay City Mall, Fashion Square Mall or Midland Mall

*Gift Certificates can be divided up into a reasonable number of individual gift certificates.*

# IDEAS FOR PRE-SHOW MARKETING

Besides the general promotion that Trade Show Managers do, a personal invitation from an exhibitor is the most important reason someone will visit a booth. Every invitation is a sales tool and, as such, needs to tell the customer what's in it for them. Constructive and imaginative pre-show promotional activities will reap great benefits and provide you with a more successful expo that increases your bottom line. Many of these ideas can not only be done through mailings, your salespeople can also distribute them. Mailings should be done three to six weeks before the show and include admission tickets, when possible.

## *Some ideas-*

- Mail out personal invitations that include free admittance tickets. The invitations should come from the most prestigious person in the department; don't make the letter too long. Include the name, date and time of the expo and why it would benefit them to come see you. Don't send them out via bulk mail; make them look special. Put a "teaser" line on the outside of the envelope— example: "inside you'll find a chance to win a prize" or "important information about the Great Lakes Bay Regional Expo".
- Give them a contest entry form to bring with them when they visit your booth.
- Give them a coupon they can turn in at your booth for a free gift/promotional giveaway that has been purchased just for them. Consider providing a premium gift targeted to your best customers or best potential prospects.
- Give them a coupon that they can have "certified" by visiting your booth.
- Be creative; do a 2 part mailer. The first part is sent in a pre-show mailer and the second part is waiting for them to pick up at the booth.
- Special expo show pricing; make sure it's not something they can get at your business the following week at the same price.
- Promote the fact that you'll be introducing a new product or service at the show-you'll also get instant feedback at the show on features, pricing and other competitive marketing components.
- Tell potential visitors that you will have live demonstrations of your product; practice so you give a flawless presentation. You have only a few minutes to make an impression; quick product demos are more effective than lengthy, in-depth ones.
- Do in-store advertising with flyers or posters-we'll give you a few posters for you to use.
- Do inserts in your billings to customers to promote the expo, a P.S. on all outgoing correspondence or an automatic e-mail footer (Example: We'll see you at the 20xx Great Lakes Bay Regional Expo, May xx at SVSU's Ryder Center), print or stamp a message on company envelopes, change your postage meter to announce the show; do something small that would not incur additional postage. Put a note on outgoing faxes about the expo.
- Use your newsletter to promote your expo participation.
- Have a link on your web site to ours ([greatlakesbayexpo.com](http://greatlakesbayexpo.com)).
- Have your sales team distribute free Expo passes to customers and prospects. Stamp your company name on the back so they know who they came from.

*Admittance tickets, a \$5 value each, will be provided to you for free so you can invite your current customers and the people you would like to do business with. Just let us know how many you want on your Exhibitor Registration form. If you need more tickets, contact Diane Card, Show Manager, at 989.964.0113, or e-mail [dianelcard@hotmail.com](mailto:dianelcard@hotmail.com)*