

First Time Exhibitor Tips

- Make sure your contact information and 500-character (including spaces) description for the online Show Directory are complete as early as possible prior to the show to maximize exposure on the Natural Products Expo West 2016 website:
www.expowest.com
- Know your shipping info! Take stock of the booth materials and samples you will need for the show and determine the best and most efficient way to ship them. You have several options: Advance Shipping or Direct Shipping? Freight carrier or small package carrier (FedEx, UPS or DHL)? Make sure to review the Shipping, Drayage, Material Handling, and Access Storage section of this Exhibitor Service Kit (ESK) thoroughly to understand the costs associated with each option.

Exhibiting Strategies

Your booth should be inviting to attendees and encourage traffic flow. Visitors do not like to feel trapped in a booth space. Be sure there is a natural flow through your booth. Check booth furniture, plants, product and staff to ensure they do not block traffic. Consider the following items when designing your booth.

- Lighting can enhance and highlight the aspects of your booth you want to emphasize and contribute to meeting your goals. A well-lit booth can create good moods and a positive atmosphere
- Consider the colors used in your booth. Typically the background is neutral and the brighter colors are reflected in the graphics
- Carpeting with a pad will provide comfort for your staff and booth visitors as well as add a clean, neat look to your booth space. Be sure to have your carpet vacuumed daily to keep it clean. Carpet/floor covering is not included in the price of the booth, but is required. You may choose to bring your own floor covering
- Plants and flowers are a great way to create an inviting atmosphere. Be sure that they are not obstructing booth graphics or traffic flow
- GES offers several environmentally friendly exhibit options to create a more natural and relaxing environment for attendees. Make an environmental statement about your company

A trained and friendly staff is important to your success. Consider the size of your booth and the appropriate number of people for your booth size. A good guideline is four people per 10' x 10' booth. Too many sales people in a booth are just as detrimental as not enough sales people

to handle potential clients. Plan a staff training session that includes information on the following topics:

- Sales goals
- Booth design and staff schedule
- Roles of booth personnel
- How to make the booth an inviting setting that clients will want to enter
- Location of Show Management, service vendor desks and floor managers
- Appointment time to select next year's booth and promotional opportunities
- Networking events
- Education schedule
- Promotional opportunities you contracted for this year's show, i.e. sponsorships, showcases, seminars

Tips for booth staff:

- Be enthusiastic—portray the image that you want to talk to everyone, and you are excited about your product or service
- Be proactive and approach attendees in your booth. Attendees will be less likely to approach you if you are ignoring them, reading, sitting, talking on the phone or to other booth staff
- Have a clean and neat personal appearance and booth space

Explore a variety of ways to present your product to attendees:

- Give live demonstrations and distribute samples within your booth. These are two excellent ways to educate and attract traffic. You may also consider contracting a Hosted Education Session or a Product Showcase
- Know your products. Be able to easily discuss the pros and cons of your product. Who is the intended audience for this product?
- Know your competitors' products. Be able to compare and contrast your product with your competition
- Be enthusiastic about your product. Remind your sales staff to be energetic about new products
- Talk with your Sales Account Manager about how and where you can offer your product outside your booth space. For example: Lobby Sampling Stations or a Product Insert in the retailer bag
- Educate attendees through the Hosted Education Session program. This is especially important if you are focused on the science and ingredients in launching a new product

TIP: Cover your products each night before you leave the convention center. Consider hiring security or renting a security cage if your items are of high value. If possible, take valuable items back to your hotel for safe keeping.

Don't overlook these basic categories when planning your exhibiting budget:

- Booth Space – Basic booth space is 10' x 10' or 8'x10'; customized island booths and larger inline spaces are available to accommodate your booth needs (i.e. increased staff, new product lines, giveaways)
- Exhibit Display Extras – This includes floral, demonstration props, samples of products, marketing materials and giveaways
- Exhibitor Services – Carpet (required) and furniture are not included in your booth space. This category would also include lead retrieval, temporary staff, refrigeration, phone lines, and electrical services
- Labor – Many cities require you to use a labor union to move your freight in and set up your booth
- Shipping & Material Handling – This includes the cost of drayage and shipping. Drayage (Material Handling) is delivery to your booth of display, product and promotional materials from the docks. The cost for this service is separate from shipping
- Staffing – Include the salaries and per diems you will be paying out for your staff to work this event
- [Marketing Opportunities](#) – Includes pre-show promotion, onsite marketing and post-show follow up
- Travel & Entertainment – Transportation, lodging, meals and entertainment

Save on exhibiting costs by:

- Planning ahead – [Book hotels and flights early](#)
- Ordering early – many vendors have discount deadlines
- Reviewing the labor guidelines and becoming familiar with the unions
- Researching all related costs
- Confirming all orders two weeks before the show

Promotion/ROI

The online Show Directory offers attendee outreach options, pre- and post-show-emails, and appointments.

Pre-Show Promotion

With so many exhibitors and products, you need to think about how to create company name recognition and brand awareness before you get to the show. The responsibility to differentiate your company from your competitors is yours, but we have many tools available to help make the show successful. Reinforce your brands, company and booth number over the months before and after the show. Timing is everything. Check early with your Account Manager regarding available [marketing and promotional opportunities](#).

Offering specials only available during show days helps increase buyers' interest in visiting your booth at the show. Show specials can be listed for free in the online Show Directory. The Natural Products Expo West logo is available for preshow promotion on our [graphics center website](#)

Consider Social Media

7 effective social media tactics to drive booth traffic

By Caren Baginski, associate editor, *Functional Ingredients*

For event exhibitors, it's all about the leads. No matter which conference you're attending, finding new ways to drum up sales is a welcome addition to your tried-and-true tactic portfolio. Enter, social media.

Whether you're already promoting your brand on free services like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube (or are just getting started), you'll find that ROI doesn't always necessarily mean dollars. But building brand awareness, relationships and buzz before and during the show will increase foot traffic, which translates into sales.

Why social media and why now? According to [EXHIBITOR magazine's 2010 Marketing Technology Survey](#), more than 72 percent of respondents use various technologies to specifically enhance their exhibit-marketing efforts, with social media as one of the most popular technologies.

Here are seven effective ways to increase booth traffic by hopping on the social media bandwagon.

1. Start a couple weeks before the event

Publicize that you'll be at the conference on all your social networks weeks in advance. Consider changing Twitter or YouTube backgrounds and descriptions to include your booth number. Or, create an event on Facebook and invite those who like your page to attend. A couple tweets a week about the event (and any giveaways or contests you'll host there) is appropriate.

2. Use the conference hashtag – and create your own

Find out what the Twitter hashtag is for conference and use it in all your tweets – before, during and after the event. Follow this hashtag throughout conference to participate in the discussion and talk directly to those who might be interested in your company. You can even create your own hashtag to surround a contest or giveaway. For example, use #tastetest to publicize free samples at your booth.

3. Offer swag or host a contest

By far one of the biggest drives of traffic while at the event is a contest or giveaway. Be sure to host it during exhibit hours and require event goers to stop by your booth to register or receive the prize. While at the event, post to Facebook and Twitter about what the giveaway is and how to win. Then, make sure someone is manning your booth and prepared to receive visitors. T-shirts, free product or larger items like iPads or iPods are great for giveaways.

4. Do something charitable at the event

Offer attendees the opportunity to give back while visiting your booth through a charitable cause that's of interest to your company. This could range from making cards for kids in a hospital, to signing an environmental pledge, to donating \$1 for every person who visits your booth. Use social media to get the word out about your cause, and highlight or personally thank attendees for stopping by. Also, if it makes sense for your event, offer a way online for non-attendees to get involved.

5. Respond to the conversation

The key to social media is not just listening, but participating. Anytime someone mentions you or your brand during the show, be sure to quickly respond. Plus, keep an eye out for those who are talking about similar brands or topics relevant to your company, and send them a tweet or message to stop by your booth. The more personal the better.

There are several ways to monitor conversation during the event. One is through the conference hashtag; another, though a search for your company name on networks like LinkedIn, Flickr, Facebook and Twitter. But that can take too much time away from exhibiting. Instead, aggregate them all in one place with a free service like [Netvibes](#) and have a laptop set up in your booth so you can quickly scan the chatter.

6. Organize a Tweetup in your booth

Tweetups are like reverse networking sessions where the goal is to meet face-to-face with whom you've been tweeting. Invite all your Twitter followers to attend a tweetup in your booth and offer some exclusive swag or an official tweetup sticker – something that differentiates them from other visitors. This allows other attendees to see the perks of following your company on Twitter.

7. Post photos and videos – not just text

Go beyond text to post photos and videos of your company at the event. Consider gathering video testimonials from attendees or shooting a photo gallery walkthrough of your booth. Use a

FlipCam or other digital camera to ensure quick and easy uploading of your multimedia online during the show or immediately after it wraps. This helps generate buzz for your brand and allows your social media audience outside of the event to feel connected.

Onsite Promotion

Onsite promotion is the most effective way to create name recognition and brand awareness for your company and products. Deadlines come early, but by taking advantage of these opportunities, you get the maximum marketing exposure pre- and post-show.

Whether you sponsor a show event or have an in-booth give away, onsite promotion is a crucial element to tradeshow success. When planning your marketing strategy develop integrated themes. Build recognizable branding that begins with pre-show promotion, ties to your booth design and marketing pieces, and is reinforced in your post-show follow up.

Post-Show Promotion

Even after the show is over, you have a crucial window of time to reach potential clients once more to ensure they remember you and your company. Obtain the attendee list from Greg Davis at greg.davis@penton.com and mail a simple, effective follow-up marketing piece.

Whether it is to market new products, brand your line, gather qualified leads, educate an audience or meet new buyers, identifying objectives will keep you focused while leading up to the Natural Products Expo West. Remember to make your goals quantifiable so you have a way of measuring your accomplishments. Hold a meeting with your entire sales and marketing team so everyone can identify your objectives and help reach your goals.

A sample list of objectives:

- Introduce and market two new products
- Educate attendees through Hosted Education Sessions on new product ingredients or applications
- Meet four new regional buyers
- Find a distributor for the area market
- Attend show receptions and/or parties to network with new prospects or industry contacts

Measuring ROI

There are many ways to measure the success of your tradeshow experience. Most exhibitors desire a certain return on investment (ROI) relative to their total tradeshow expenses. How you measure this and over what time period will vary depending upon the specific goals of your business. Here is an [ROI calculator tool kit](#) which you may find useful in evaluating your ROI.

The four most commonly used measures of success are:

Show Sales Volume: This is the most direct measure of success. Every exhibitor would love to cover their expenses with sales that are closed at the show. This certainly can and does happen, especially if your brand or product is well-established and your sales team has good long-standing relationships with retail buyers and distributors. However, if you rely on this measure exclusively, you may be overlooking the value of qualified leads that are generated from buyers that did not make an order from you at the show but will likely buy later. Following up on these leads post-show will allow you to keep in touch with buyers even after the show has ended.

Generation of Qualified Sales Leads: Order your Lead Retrieval unit through COMPUSYSTEMS early. After the show you will receive your list of leads scanned in your booth. This process is arranged when you purchase your lead retrieval unit from CSI. Then, make sure you have a post-show sales plan in place to do the necessary follow-up. It's up to you to take advantage of the year-round sales and marketing opportunity that the show provides.

Building Brand Awareness/Image: No brand or product will survive long without strong sales. But sometimes a tradeshow strategy is less focused on near-term sales and more focused on building a brand image or general brand awareness. This is a valid business goal to pursue at any event.

Gathering Market Intelligence: Schedule time to walk the show floor to attend seminars and networking events. These are opportunities to learn as much as you can about all aspects of the state of the industry and to incorporate the insights you discover into your on-going business plan.