

FIRST TIME EXHIBITOR TIPS AND TRICKS

As a first-time exhibitor, HFTP wants to make sure your exhibiting experience is as successful as possible. Below are some frequently asked questions and answers to help you navigate through the complicated process of arranging your company's exhibit space.

1. **Know the deadlines.** Knowing the show's deadline date information will ensure that your company will receive cost saving benefits by getting your forms in on-time and will help you stay within budget. HFTP offers an exhibitor check list that provides guidelines on when information is due.
2. **Read the Exhibitor Service Kit thoroughly.** This will help familiarize yourself with the show, vendors used, forms required by Show Management and deadline dates. The Exhibitor Service Kit is the place to order any additional booth furnishings and auxiliary services for your company's booth. Many of the vendors are exclusive to the venue and you will be required to use their services for certain services.
3. **Know the move-in and move-out schedule.** It is imperative that you know when you can access the floor for set-up, move in freight and when move-out must be complete. Knowing the schedule can help your company plan for any additional labor and freight costs. (Details on both below). Make sure to schedule inbound and outbound freight early!
4. **Arriving at Show-site.** Familiarize yourself with the entrance to the exhibit hall, where your company's booth is and where the Exhibitor Service Center is located (usually near the back or perimeter of the exhibit hall and identified with a hanging sign).
5. **Move-in.** HITEC Houston move-in should not be confusing. Review the guidelines below to help make this a smooth process for your company.
 - Know the schedule of HITEC and when you are allowed on the show floor. Know what credentials are required during move-in and when your badge will be required.
 - When making shipping arrangements, be sure to review the Material Handling charges in the Exhibitor Service Kit. Know when and if you want to send your freight to the advance warehouse or would prefer to send directly to show-site. *Different rates and dates apply so be sure to review carefully.*
 - Be sure to have all the paperwork from your carrier in case of any delays or challenges in receiving the freight to your booth.
 - Once the freight arrives to your company's booth and you have emptied the crates, put empty stickers on crates for the ease of return to your company's booth. Empty stickers can be found at the GES Service Desk.
 - Empties are usually picked up the last day of move-in towards the end of the day to begin clearing the aisles for aisle carpet.

HITEC HOUSTON

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6. **Move out.** One of the most confusing times for new exhibitors is move-out, which can be avoided with proper planning. Each show and venue is different and can come with its own unique set of challenges.
 - Plan ahead! Contact GES at least 6 to 8 weeks in advance to discuss the move-out process.
 - Pre-arrange outbound shipping with the GES or a carrier that is familiar with tradeshow.
 - Due the size of HITEC Houston, it may take 2 to 3 hours for your company to receive its empties from storage, so be prepared for the wait time and plan accordingly.
 - Label crates accordingly and have BOL (bill of lading). A BOL is a document that is used by you and your carrier to identify the freight, where it is going and how much it weighs.
7. **Material handling.** Material handling is the term used when handling your materials (freight). There is a charge for all freight being delivered and picked up from your booth based on CWT (weight per 100 lbs. in the United States). These rates may vary depending on advance warehouse or shipments delivered directly to show-site. Be sure to review material handling costs in detail and plan your budget accordingly.
8. **Additional Tips.**
 - Be sure to know the square footage of your company's booth and booth number. Plan accordingly when beginning to plan your booth layout.
 - Work Zones. Be aware that show-site and surrounding areas are active work zones. Always be careful and pay attention to what is around you.
 - No freight aisles. There are specific aisles that are identified as no freight, meaning no freight can be in these aisles during move-in. Identify where these are in case you need them to maneuver around the floor during move-in.
 - Train your company's booth staff. Know the show hours and dress code of the show. Working a tradeshow is exhausting but fun! Plan breaks accordingly, keep hydrated and wear comfortable shoes!
 - Put together a 'tradeshow survival kit'. Include office supplies, small tool kit, first aid supplies and bottled water.
9. **Marketing the show to your customers.** Be aware of any free promotional tools that come with the booth package offered by Show Management to increase your company's booth traffic and lets customers know where to find you. Take advantage of any marketing and sponsorship opportunities to help your company stand out from its competitors.
10. **Know who to contact.** Key contacts are listed below and you can also consult your Exhibitor Service Kit Directory of Services. HFTP is here to assist and help make your exhibiting experience at HITEC Houston as seamless and successful as possible!

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