



Exhibitions
Tips for taking your
campaign on the road

10 STEPS FOR MAKING THE BEST OF EXHIBITION SEASON!

You've planned your campaign with military precision and are ready to go! For many organisations the opportunity to bring their messages to potential supporters via exhibitions is of key importance because it's the one medium that enables interaction with people using all 5 senses. Here are 10 tips for maximising success before, during and after exhibiting at an event.

BEFORE THE EVENT

1. Booking your stand/exhibition area:

■ **Budget** – Know the funds you have available for the event and exactly what these must cover as this will enable you to consider which size of stand to book. Where possible aim to book a corner stand since this leads to increased visibility as your stand can be easily viewed when approached from more than 1 direction

■ **Size of stand** – Ensure that the size of your stand is fit for its intended purpose. If you need to provide opportunity for people to sit and chat to you, will there be space for this? Or, have you booked a shell that is too big and will appear empty even when you've added your exhibition equipment to it?

■ **Location of stand** – When you book your place, ensure that you review the floorplan of the event and book a stand that is in the most appropriate location your budget will allow. Consider sight lines (you don't want your stand to be obscured), where people will be entering and leaving the event, the locations of facilities such as catering and toilets and the locations of other organisations who may be promoting similar offerings to you – aim for the location that will result in the best level of "footfall" for you

2. Define your objectives:

■ Ensure that all staff who will be involved in the exhibition are aware of the reason for your organisation attending the event. Reasons for attending events could include the following:

- To be seen
- To get known
- To get business / support

(NOTE: All of the above reasons for attending events are likely to lead to different ways to approach visitors to your stand "on the day")

■ Have some specific, measurable targets for your team to work towards during their time at the exhibition. These could include gathering a certain number of new leads, scheduling meetings with prospective clients, or aiming for a specific number of orders to be taken

3. Know your audience:

■ When you are booking to attend an event decide who are you hoping to bring your product/appeal/campaign to the attention of during the event? If you can't identify that your target audience will be present at the event (or that there will be opportunities to get your

message heard by your intended audience) you may want to consider whether there is an alternative event which would be more beneficial for you to attend

■ Get in touch with your intended audience prior to the event – invite your own contacts to attend the event, advertise your involvement within exhibition guides and take to social media to notify your followers that you will be there

4. Design your exhibition stand:

■ Aim to design your stand so that it will communicate who you are, what you do and what this means for the person visiting your stand in the time that it takes them to glance at it

■ If your intended audience know you for a particular product or brand name will they be able to see this on your stand? People are drawn to things they recognise

■ Consider sight lines when designing the layout of your stand – people will only respond to things they can actually see, so ensure that important parts of your stand aren't going to be obscured from view

■ Consider designing your stand around an eye-catching theme with a focal point that will draw people in – a busy stand attracts even more people to it

■ Ensure that your stand illustrates key benefits of your product/appeal but does so with minimal text

■ Design your stand so that it will appeal to your target audience – you want it to be busy, but busy with potential customers/supporters

■ A huge flatscreen display, LCD curtain or projection can be dynamic, engaging and effective, but it can also be costly. Print's a versatile and cost-effective medium for filling any kind of space with your brand's identity and messaging

■ Consider what will make your space "stand out" from the crowd – Consider adding extra lighting (this can increase awareness by 30-50%), or offering activities/giveaways that will appeal to all 5 senses!

5. Design/arrange any literature or giveaways you will offer:

■ Get creative with your printed materials. Give your prospects tactile things to play with; to interact with and remember

■ Be clear, informative and eye-catching in your design of literature and any other takeaway items

- Ensure that any call-to-action included on your literature is clear and that any contact details given are spelt correctly
- If your call to action is a call to donate, ensure that any methods of donating are set up, and working, in advance of the event
- If you intend to giveaway any items at your stand consider whether they should be fun and attention grabbing on the day, or should they have more long-term usefulness – be innovative with what you offer
- If you intend selling any products from your stand, ensure that you have checked event rules and regulations about this. If you are able to proceed with selling items, ensure you have the appropriate methods in place to take secure payments etc.
- Check feedback and statistics from previous events and ensure you prepare to have an adequate supply of resources available during the event

6. Plan your method for collecting data:

- Know in advance what sort of data you will collect from your visitors and ensure that this is communicated with your team who will be working at the event
- Decide how you will record this data, how it will be kept secure during the event and what it will be used for
- Will visitors be invited to subscribe to receive news/updates?

DURING THE EVENT

7. Select your staff:

- Ensure that team members who will be representing your organisation at the event are knowledgeable about the organisation and the product/appeal you are specifically there to focus on
- Ensure that your team are enthusiastic, open to conversation with members of the public, confident and approachable
- Ensure that you have enough staff to cover the stand appropriately at all times
- Ensure your staff team are aware of, and prepared for, any requirements regarding clothing (if there is a dress code/uniform they must wear), language and behaviour on the stand (brands can be reflected in the way people speak and act)

8. Logistics during the event:

- Ensure that your team members arrive with adequate time to set up the stand and know who is responsible for which elements of set-up
- Ensure that any health and safety instructions are adhered to during set-up and throughout the duration of the event
- Ensure that you have any required (public liability) insurance in place for your stand

- Ensure you have adequate quantities of literature/giveaways available – or can access more if required during the event
- Team members should be trained to ask open questions and keep conversations short and concise (to maximise the number of opportunities for discussion)
- Team members should be asked to keep their mobile phones switched off and to refrain from eating whilst at the stand as it's important to give full attention to your visitors
- Rota your staff (if possible) to give team members some time away from the stand – this can help people to feel refreshed and re-energised during the event, and there may also be other exhibition stands they may wish to visit during the event

AFTER THE EVENT

9. Follow up your leads:

- Time at an exhibition is not a stand-alone event. You will have been collecting contact details during the event and therefore it's vital that you plan time afterwards to respond to these leads
- Guidelines say that you'll need to contact your leads at least 6 times, so don't give up if they don't respond straight after the event – it's likely that they're being contacted by lots of the exhibitors that they spoke to

10. Review:

- Soon after you have returned from the event and whilst it's still fresh in your memory, spend some time reviewing it
- Ask your team for their feedback, observations and ideas from the event too – it can be helpful to have more than 1 perspective about the benefits (or not) of attending an event
- Aim to calculate any ROI as this will be helpful in deciding whether you wish to attend the same event again in future
- Decide whether you met your objectives for attending this event
- If you decide that attending the event was a success and want to book again for the future, do so early to ensure the best chance of getting the stand you require and to benefit from early booking discounts

For further advice on design and print of exhibition materials, literature and branded giveaway items please contact us and talk to Phil by phoning **01892 839280** or emailing phil.broad@weareyeomans.co.uk

References/acknowledgements:

Yeomans previous blog post, imagistic.co.uk, eventindustrynews.co.uk, marketingdonut.co.uk

we are yeomans/

t 01892 839280

e sales@weareyeomans.co.uk

weareyeomans.co.uk

Head Office and Reception: Suite 1 **Production:** Unit 12
Branbridges Industrial Estate, East Peckham, Kent TN12 5HF

