

Exhibitor Tips:

FIRST-TIME EXHIBITORS MY FIRST EVENT



5 Tips For a Successful First Event

First-Time Exhibitors

There's no doubt that preparing for a trade is a challenge. While the rewards can be great, exhibiting at a show requires focus, work and commitment.

In this guide, we'll look at five simple tactics and principles to help make the process more manageable

Tip # 1. Prepare a detailed, itemized and flexible budget before the show

Preparing a detailed, itemized budget is the difference between running a smooth exhibit and dealing with a costly, stressful marketing nightmare.

The [Trade Show Institute](#) offers some practical tips for budgeting. The rule of thumb is that most will spend three times the cost of your exhibit space. You should also be flexible in order to avoid running into budgeting issues during the event, and be sure to produce an itemized budget so you know where your money is going. This will also help you prepare for every aspect of the event.

Tip #2. Understand your audience before you create your marketing

Trade shows attract a diverse range of people, from executives, vendors and purchasing managers to marketers, founders and freelancers.

Because of this diversity, it's critical to establish a target audience before the event so that you can identify the most promising prospects as they interact with your sales team. Develop an [ideal customer profile](#) so that your staff can quickly spot and engage the highest quality leads.

Tip #3. Pick space that matches your sales and branding goals

Did you know that more than 400 companies exhibit at the average trade show? Because of this, the location of your booth is just as important for success as the events you decide to exhibit at. If you position yourself in good spot, you'll gain a valuable advantage; position yourself poorly and you'll blend in with the crowd.

Key questions to ask yourself when selecting your exhibit space:

- Do you want to attract visitors as soon as they arrive, or after they've scoped out your competitors and what they have to offer?
 - What's the foot traffic pattern? Try visiting the exhibit hall ahead of time to learn more about the best spaces to exhibit.
 - Where are 'blue chip' companies that could attract a crowd going to set up their exhibits?
 - Will it benefit you to be close to your competition? If you offer a product or service that's a better deal, setting up near your competitors could be winning idea.
 - Are you sending the right message now that you found your ideal location? Make sure your booth and graphics are up to snuff. As a full-service contactor, [AGS Design Services](#) can help you with both.
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Tip # 4. Avoid serious logistical nightmares by being over-prepared

Setting up your trade show exhibit is not as simple as turning up and plugging in all of your equipment. Ask yourself the serious logistical questions ahead of time and you'll prevent common setbacks from occurring on the day of the trade show.

How far is your space from the nearest power outlet? What is the lighting like near your exhibit space? How long will you need to set up your exhibit? These questions might seem simple, but their answers can make or break your exhibit. Reach out to AGS Exhibitor Services with any questions, including how ordering [labor services](#) can help.

Tip # 5: Be realistic about the quality of the leads you're generating

With hundreds of leads coming in, it's tempting to think of your exhibit as a success before it's really proven itself. Many of the leads you generate at a trade show may have also talked to five, ten, or even more other companies, so it's important to be realistic about their value.

Use the entire event as an opportunity to generate fresh sales leads, and don't feel that you can scale back your sales efforts because you have several hundred phone numbers or business cards already. When you've exhibited at several trade shows you'll be able to assess quality on the fly – for now, just focus on lead generation.

GOT QUESTIONS?

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