

EVALUATING THE EVENT (POST SHOW)

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90% of exhibitors fail to measure their performance at an exhibition against the objectives they set for it. In many cases, sales and management staff are more concerned with catching up on other developments unrelated to the exhibition than with evaluating how well they performed at the show.

Proper evaluation ensures that the expenditure of time, money and resources has been worthwhile. It often takes two or three years to gauge whether your product is suitable, whether there is sufficient interest in it and whether you need to change your selling style.

A post-exhibition evaluation to determine whether your objectives have been met should include the following activities:

- Interpreting and reviewing the organisers' post exhibition statistics
- Debriefing all staff
- Evaluating the results
- Following up sales leads
- Checking sales income against expenses

One of the greatest difficulties in evaluating the success of an exhibition arises because success is not just determined by the number of sales generated immediately.

As much as 69% of visitors at a trade exhibition will make a buying decision, and the purchasing decision process can last up to 12 months, a reasonable period of time should be built into your evaluation criteria.

If your staff have been involved from the beginning in setting the objectives behind your exhibiting, it is worthwhile getting feedback from them. You will find that they are more honest and probably more critical of your participation than anyone else. If done correctly, the evaluation of the way your exhibit was perceived and your positioning in the overall exhibition will lead to the kind of questions and explanations you should be looking for when you ask the staff to complete the evaluation.

An excerpt from: Exhibitions: A Complete Guide
by Gary-Fitz-Roy