
August 2011 | Exhibition Guru

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What do you expect?

It's a couple minutes till opening, customers are lined up, and there is a feeling of anticipation from both exhibitors and visitors – will you be a success? Have you done the pre–event work to stand out? Do you have something new?

Do you have a focus on the stand? Do your staff look the part?

First and foremost, clothing should be comfortable and suitable for the exhibition hall temperature, rather than the outside temperature. If you are exhibiting in an event that has outside space you obviously need to take this into consideration. Most settings will start cold inside until the opening, when the combination of people and lights then produce heat, so that all of a sudden the temperature will rise rapidly.

It's tough at present... and let's face it, we are all competing to extract that elusive dollar from buyers. What I find interesting though is the amount of people (i.e. companies) who think they are owed something and don't work their stand. More importantly, they do very little planning in advance and expect visitors will owe them something. They expect visitors to buy just because they are there, and if they don't, it's the organiser's fault for not delivering!

So what do you expect? Do you think visitors should automatically buy from you just because you are there?

More than ever, people want to feel good about what they buy, and to do that they need to feel good about the person they are buying from.

Never the less, it is very important for an exhibitor to set the right expectations for an event – or business generally- as this forms the whole base-line for evaluation.

I have previously covered the idea that all marketing strategies need to create a base–line to be able to fully evaluate the results, so this month it's back to the objectives and being clear about them.

Those objectives need to be smart;

- Specific
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Realistic
- Time bound

In order for you to achieve your expectations, it is necessary to proportion your time in the whole process. If we break up exhibiting into three stages; pre-show planning, time at the show and post show follow-up, what percentage would you apply to each part?

The greatest percentage should be applied before and after so the formula would be 40%, 20%, 40%.

If you simply expect good results as a passive exhibitor, don't exhibit. Like all good marketing and selling opportunities, you need to work the opportunity to its fullest to get the real return.

IN A NUT SHELL:

So next time you are going through the exhibiting process, ask yourself what do you expect and have you done everything to maximise the end result? From another perspective, think about what the visitor expects – as you are there for them. It could surprise you when you find out what they really want!

See you on the floor.