



Ten Easy Ways to Attract Visitors to Your Booth

By Bob Thomas, CME

Are you ready to bring new life to your current exhibit? Or are you ready to chuck it because no one stopped to see you at your last event? Your answer is a few steps away with these tips to attracting visitors to any booth.

- 1. Improve your lighting.** Any booth will attract attention if it is well lit. The human eye is naturally attracted to bright lights. Be the brightest on your block and attendees will gather like moths to a porch light.
- 2. Color your world.** Bright colors are pleasing to our eyes and exciting to our brains. Bright, rich colors presented in high contrast attract visitors to your booth. But be aware of the mood you put people in with the colors you use. Green = nature, Red = excitement, Yellow = optimism, Black = authority, White = purity, Blue = serenity.
- 3. Use the soft touch.** Upgrade to quality carpet and padding. Your feet, your staff, and your attendees with thank you. The soft feel underfoot gives the impression of quality and class. Extra Tip: Match your booth carpet color to the aisle carpet and be sure there is no break between the two and you eliminate physical and psychological barriers to your booth!
- 4. Create an open atmosphere.** Eliminate all other physical and psychological barriers to your booth by making it open and inviting. Move the furniture to the back and sides to create space for attendees to come into your booth for discussion and ultimately sales!
- 5. Make something move.** Provide movement to attracts attendees' eyes and in turn their bodies toward your booth. If your product doesn't move, toss a giveaway into the air (and catch it), move your arms, play with a yo-yo, or blow bubbles. Activity attracts people's attention and piques their curiosity. Be sure to involve your product physically or through a sales pitch or anecdote.
- 6. Tickle the senses.** The olfactory sense is our most powerful sense. Smells often trigger the most pleasant of memories. Put a drop of vanilla on a light bulb, rent cookie baking equipment, warm brownies, or bake bread to attract visitors to your booth. When was the last time you weren't hungry at a show?
- 7. Personalize your exhibit.** Your exhibit doesn't have to be all work and no play. Put a table lamp in your booth, lay down an area rug, use props (holiday, seasons, sports, or regional), or decorate with items you plan to give to key clients — all to attract attention and initiate conversation.

- 8. Invent a corporate dress code.** Don't make the attendee search for your staff. Have corporate attire made so that everyone wears the same shirt, tie, scarf, vest, or jacket. Even a simple accessory will let the attendee know whom to approach in your booth or elsewhere on the floor.
- 9. Go high-tech.** Use all the tools at your disposal to provide information to your clients and potential customers. Use websites, email blasts, fax broadcasts, electronic product directory, web links, and PDA downloads. Don't pass up these inexpensive and effective opportunities.
- 10. Staff your booth with the best.** While steps 1-9 are great ways to improve your exhibit, nothing will increase your ROI like choosing the right people to staff your booth. Only send your best, happiest, and most outgoing staff — no matter what their position within the company. You need people willing and able to initiate conversation with anyone, answer questions about your product, and record lead information.

If the idea of implementing all ten steps seems daunting, take it slow. Try out a few ideas to see how they work with your product and within your industry. Whatever you do, have fun and be comfortable with your exhibit, your marketing plan, and your staff. Your confidence and faith in your decisions will make a difference with your staff and that potential customer.

Look around your home, favorite coffee shop, or pub. What is it that makes you feel welcome? Use the same tricks of the trade that retail use — they stay in business for a reason!