

3 Investments Small Exhibitors Should Make to Attract Attention

Working in a 10 ft.×10 ft. pipe and drape exhibit booth may give you the feeling you'll be swallowed up in the sea of 10x10s. Will people notice you among all the other booths?

We have good news for you—your footprint isn't everything! While large sponsorships or eye-catching signs rotating from above may be out of reach, they aren't always necessary to achieve your goals. Small booth exhibitors can have great success by investing in a well thought out exhibiting strategy and presenting themselves professionally.

Three modest investments can enhance your image immediately, draw people to your booth and help you stand out from the crowd:

1. A professionally-designed exhibit booth that showcases your brand.

You never have a second chance to make a first impression. Invest in hiring a professional exhibit firm to design booth graphics that clearly display your brand message. Less is more. People walking by need to absorb your message and *take in your value proposition in seconds*.

This is an investment that can last. By keeping the graphics evergreen—promoting your brand and not focusing on a specific product or theme—they can be reused for several events over a couple of years.

At the same time, de-clutter your booth so that it doesn't distract from the design and allows for people to flow into the space with ease. Remove extraneous chairs and hide piles of handouts and products to make it easier for the eye to focus on your message. You can always pull out more samples or handouts when talking to potential customers rather than display everything at once.

2. A product/technology demonstration.

Invest in both a self-guided demo of your product (or a video presentation on a loop) and a way to showcase it. This could be on an iPad set up on an iPad stand or a computer that automatically flows through a short, looped presentation. Position the demonstration or presentation at the front of the booth so that it captures attention and people don't have to make a deep commitment to stop.

This set-up allows people passing by to experience your booth even while your team is busy talking to other prospects rather than walking by. It will also give you an opening to ask what they think of the product or if they have follow up questions you can answer.

3. A pre-show marketing strategy.

Attracting attention to your booth starts well before the Exhibit Hall doors open. Obtain attendee contact lists from show organizers and invest in sending an email or direct mail piece to your audience before the event (because of spam and cluttered email boxes, direct mail can work better than email when targeting prospects who don't know your brand).

The goals of your pre-show message should be to raise brand awareness and give attendees a reason to find you and make it easy for them to locate you. Plus, ask them to bring the postcard or mention the email to get an incentive for visiting the booth (and track if it's working).

Driving traffic to your booth ahead of time will both bring the people you contacted to you and create a buzz at your booth that will attract other attendees.

While there are many other possible investments exhibitors can make that range in price and value, small exhibitors can see marked improvements in their booth traffic with incremental investments. Plan your booth experience ahead of time and make small investments over time to create a positive first impression that will enhance your overall ROI.