

MAKE YOUR STAND WORK HARDER

An exhibition stand gives you a space. What you do with that space creates the opportunity.

Exhibiting isn't about standing behind a table waiting for someone to ask what you do. It's your chance to start conversations, test ideas, build relationships, raise your profile, generate leads and put your business in front of people who may be able to buy from you, recommend you, collaborate with you or open a completely unexpected door.

Don't just turn up. Have a plan to be noticed, remembered and followed up.



Show Up. Stand Out. Follow Through.

EXHIBITING GUIDE

01 What Do You Want To Achieve?

02 Give People A Reason To Stop

03 Think Engagement, Not Decoration

04 Get Out From Behind Your Stand

05 Make It Easy To Remember You

06 Use Social Media While It's Buzzing

07 Capture Context, Not Just Contacts

08 Follow Up While They Still Remember You

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01 WHAT DO YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE?

Before you think about banners, brochures or what you're putting on the table, decide what you actually want to achieve by exhibiting at this event.

Is your priority to:

- Generate qualified leads?
- Make sales?
- Meet potential buyers?
- Find new suppliers or partners?
- Raise awareness of your business?
- Launch or showcase something new?
- Grow your email list or community?
- Have conversations with a particular sector?
- Build relationships that could lead somewhere later?

You don't need ten objectives. Pick two or three that matter. And make them measurable.

“Meet lots of people” isn't a particularly useful target.

“Have 20 meaningful conversations and identify five strong follow-up opportunities” is.

02 GIVE PEOPLE A REASON TO STOP

People make decisions quickly in a busy room. Your stand needs to answer three questions:

Who are you? What do you do? Why should I care?

Your logo alone won't do that.

Think about the problem you solve, the result you create or the thing that makes people curious enough to ask a question.

A strong statement can work harder than a wall of information.

Don't try to tell your entire business story on the stand. That's what the conversation is for.

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03 THINK ENGAGEMENT, NOT DECORATION

A beautiful stand is lovely. A busy stand is better. Ask yourself what will make somebody stop, participate or start talking.

A question or challenge

Pose something that makes people want to answer.

A quick demonstration

Show, don't just tell, what you do. Let people touch, taste or test it themselves.

An interactive display

Something to press, spin or explore.

A mini consultation

Offer a fast, useful diagnosis or audit.

Something surprising

Curiosity is what gets people to stop.

A competition

People love to win.

The best engagement ideas connect naturally to your business. You don't need a gimmick for the sake of having one. You need a conversation starter.

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04 GET OUT FROM BEHIND YOUR STAND

This one matters.

Stand up. Look around. Smile. Say hello. Don't spend the day sitting behind a table checking your phone while people walk past.

Don't make visitors feel as though they'll get a sales pitch. Start with a conversation:

- "What brought you here today?"
- "What are you hoping to find?"
- "What caught your eye?"

Listen first. You might discover an opportunity you would never have found by launching straight into what you sell.

You're part of the event too. If you have somebody with you, take turns to explore.

Meet other exhibitors. Attend relevant sessions. Speak to buyers. Join conversations. Introduce yourself to speakers. Find the people you've identified in advance.

Some of your best opportunities may be three stands away. Other exhibitors aren't simply "the competition". They can become referrers, collaborators, customers and connectors.

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05 MAKE IT EASY TO REMEMBER YOU

People may meet dozens of businesses during an event. By the end of the day, names and conversations can blur.

Give them something to remember. It could be your message, personality, expertise, demonstration, product, story or simply a genuinely useful conversation.

Printed material still has its place, particularly if people will refer back to it. But don't hand out paper simply because exhibitors have always handed out paper.

A QR code can take people directly to something useful:

- Your website
- LinkedIn profile
- Product catalogue
- Booking calendar
- Special event offer
- Download
- Mailing list
- Case study

Make the next step obvious.

06 USE SOCIAL MEDIA WHILE IT'S BUZZING

Don't wait until the following week to announce that you had a lovely day.

Post before the event and tell people where they can find you.

On the day, share what's happening.

Tag the event, speakers, businesses and people you've genuinely connected with. Comment on other people's posts. Share useful insights from sessions. Take photographs and short videos.

If somebody posts about visiting your stand, engage with it.

You're not just visible to the people in the room. You're visible to their networks too.

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07 CAPTURE CONTEXT, NOT JUST CONTACTS

A pile of business cards or a list of addresses isn't automatically a pile of leads.

The important bit is why you should speak again.

When someone gives you their details, make a quick note:

- "Interested in X."
- "Send case study."
- "Potential collaboration."
- "Call next week."
- "Looking for supplier in Y."

That tiny bit of context will transform your follow-up.

And, of course, make sure you're collecting and using personal data appropriately.

*The person standing in front of you may not look like your ideal customer.
Talk to them anyway.*

They may work with somebody who is. They may know the person you want to meet. They may become a customer in six months. They may have an idea, introduction or opportunity you hadn't considered.

Some of the best connections at events begin with conversations that weren't on anybody's target list.

Stay curious.

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YOUR CHALLENGE

Set aside time within the next couple of days to follow up properly.

- Avoid the generic: "Lovely to meet you at the event."
- Give them a reason to remember the conversation:
"I enjoyed our conversation about X. You mentioned Y, so I've attached/sent..."
- Connect on LinkedIn.
- Send the information you promised.
- Make the introduction.
- Book the coffee.
- Arrange the call.

Don't treat every connection as an immediate sale. Some opportunities move quickly. Others need nurturing.

**The event isn't over when the doors close.
In many ways, that's when the business starts.**

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