

A GUIDE TO DRESSING YOUR STAND & CREATING THAT MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE

**Your stand is a significant investment
— securing your space is only a part of it.**

It's imperative you don't just "leave all that show exhibition stuff" until later. As the organiser, we are here to assist and advise you at any point in the process. In this training module you'll learn:

*"A man
without a
smiling face
must not
open a shop."*

— Chinese Proverb



**Best practice
stand tips**



**Staffing your
stand**



**Creating a memorable
experience**



**Choosing a
stand builder**

STANDING START

This series of Exhibitor Training Modules is for both those new to exhibitions and those who want to improve their results from events.

We've created six easy-to-understand Exhibitor Training Modules, covering why exhibit in the first place; who you need to know in the Exhibition Galaxy; how to plan for an exhibition including setting objectives; how to go about marketing; tips on dressing your stand and creating a memorable experience (this guide); and how to measure your Return on Investment.

For a full list of modules, see the end or contact the Exhibitions & Trade Fairs' team.

TIP: There are two aspects to your stand: the physical (how it looks) and the human (your staff). Both need to be right.





BEST PRACTICE STAND TIPS

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Your stand is a significant investment; securing it is just the first step — an important one, but not the last one!

As with many things, what you put into your exhibition is what you'll get out.

If you leave your stand design until the last minute or don't put much thought into it, then it's not likely to entice people to visit. It's the same with the people. If your staff put little thought into how they engage and act on the stand, then they're highly unlikely to entice visitors to stay long or let alone even stop.

Your stand needs to engage visitors. Put yourself in their shoes: what do they see when they look at your stand?

Be confident and think strong graphics. Be engaging! Create a memorable experience. And always be true to your brand.

First impressions count. How visitors see your stand will be critical to your exhibiting success.

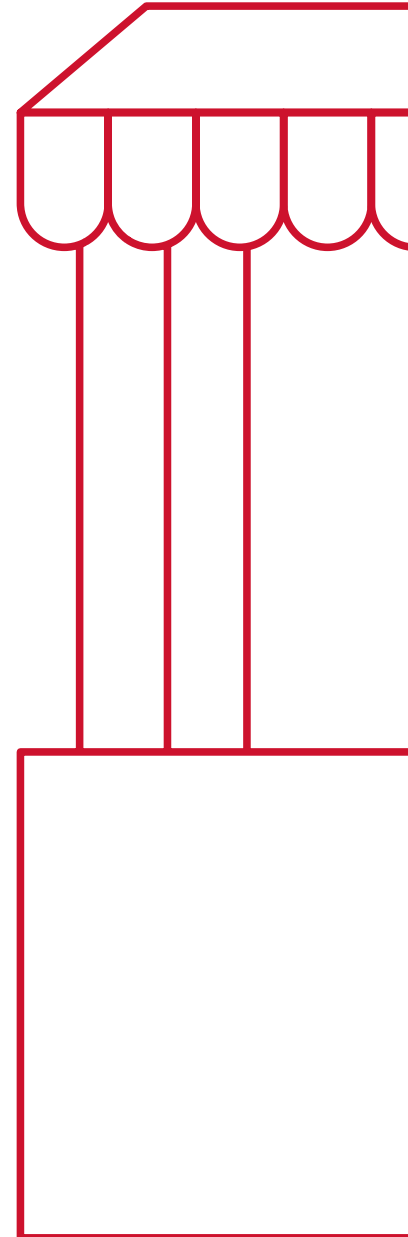
You don't need to spend mega-bucks; you do need to create a stand that "works".

What do you want to communicate to people? What do you want to achieve?

If meeting key accounts on-site is your goal, then maybe you need a coffee machine and small table with stools? If immediate sales are your goal, make sure people can easily see — and get to — your products. Or maybe you

want to communicate that you have new, fast machinery? Make it visible and capable of doing on-the-spot demonstrations with a variety of different products (you could even have some major customers' products on hand to show them how it will benefit them).

Don't try to achieve too much; in cases of dressing your stand, be clear about your goals and what you want to tell people — visually and verbally.





STAFFING YOUR STAND

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One of the biggest criticisms visitors have of events is a lack of etiquette from exhibitors.

Critical comments in post-event research include “it was hard to talk to them, they were all talking amongst themselves” or “they were more interested in reading the paper, so I kept walking” and the like. If that’s your stand, that’s going to hurt!

Choose the right staff

Choose the right staff to be on your stand; they are the ones who understand what your exhibition objectives are and why they are there.

Staffing a stand is not a holiday or a great few days out of the office. Staff need to be always mindful of engaging visitors and then determining what they need from you: is it a quick answer to a question? Is it a detailed demonstration? Don’t push them off too early, but neither keep them chatting about the grand final/the weather. Do make sure staff know how to gather lead information. Don’t just hand out brochures; printed materials are expensive — by

all means hand out a brochure to give back-up information you’ve just discussed, but use the opportunity to gather lead information.

Get staff involved in goal planning

Involving staff in planning for the exhibition will help give them buy-in. All stands need friendly staff who have strong product knowledge and sales techniques, but they may also benefit from “stand

training”. Spend time telling staff what the company’s goals are for the exhibition and what is expected of them to contribute towards that. Make sure they are at ease with greeting, engaging and qualifying visitors, giving the desired response (verbal answer, demonstration), can cross sell if necessary, gather lead information and then thank and wave visitors goodbye.

TIP: Stands “stand there”. People don’t. Simple exhibition etiquette will go a long way to making your showing a resounding success.





STAFFING YOUR STAND

STAFFING YOUR STAND

The 'big ones' around food & drink...

Exhibitions can be hungry work, but eating on the stand is a big etiquette no-no. Staff may think no-one is around, so they'll grab a quick bite of a sandwich. Murphy's Law will nearly guarantee that's the time a visitor will come on stand. It looks incredibly unprofessional to be eating and drinking on the stand – unless it's a specific function you've set for that. Equally, it looks unprofessional to have cups, bottles and used plates sitting around! Keep your stand free of food and drink. Along with looking better, it means nothing can be accidentally

spilled to damage your products for sale, equipment or brochures. The only thing that really is okay here is bottled water. Nobody expects anybody to go without water. The other time it's okay is to invite a prospect to have a coffee if you have a coffee machine on stand. This can be a useful tool to draw them in.

Even if staff are tired, unless you're having a longer conversation with a prospect or account, don't sit down! By all means offer for them to sit down with you if the conversation becomes longer, but if they say no, keep standing!

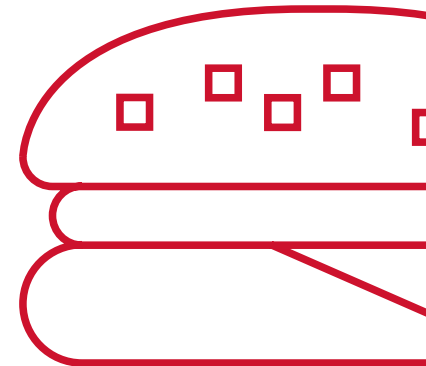
...and social media

Going back to one of the criticisms, just like no eating when you think no-one is around, don't pick up the paper to read while you're on the stand. Same deal with being on your mobile phone — even if you're talking to a customer or it's exhibition related, including uploading information to your company social media.

Any of this looks terrible to passers-by; who may keep being passers-by and not stand visitors if your staff are more engaged with the cartoons than with prospects.



If you do need to make an exhibition-related call, or update social media, move away from your stand.





STAFFING YOUR STAND

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Breaks and expertise level

However, clearly staff need breaks, so make a roster for them to come on and off the stand, with both start and finish times and break times. Standing and talking all day can be very tiring, so encourage short breaks throughout the day and a full lunch break. Similarly, don't skimp on staff or think that one person can manage the exercise all on their own.

Who will play what role? Do general staff need to hand over to staff with specific product knowledge at a certain point?

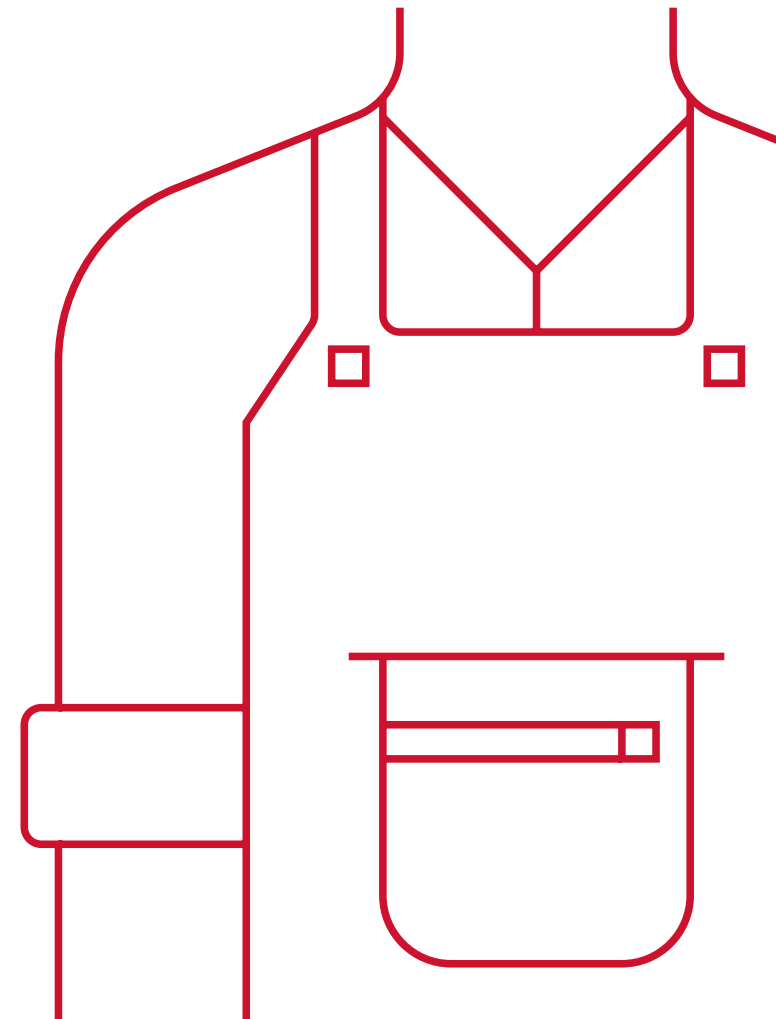
As for how many staff you need, this will depend upon your exhibition goals. If you want 1,000 on-stand sales, then you will need the appropriate number of staff. How long is the show? How many hours over how many days?

Also, make sure you train someone how to log leads. This is generally better off as a specific job for one person. Getting leads is useless without the ability to follow them up properly.

Make sure everyone has enough business cards, and that there is adequate brochure stock.

Uniform?

What staff wear is also important. Do you have a general uniform? Is your company recognisable from that? Would a special "exhibition outfit" be better? Ideally, you should be dressed the same or slightly better than your visitors. Selling 4WDs? A suit would probably scare prospects. Selling macaroons? Thongs probably won't cut it. So dress according to your industry as well.





CREATING A
MEMORABLE
EXPERIENCE

CREATING THAT EXPERIENCE

Your stand's design and the experience you offer visitors should align with the objectives you have set.

Do you want to get people in the mood for outdoor camping? Think about how you can create the calming, serene bush experience and how your camping products will make their next trip easy and relaxing.

Or do you want businesses to experience how your latest packaging machinery will boost their production? In this case think about what else you can do beyond taking them through a product demonstration.

TIP:
A stand is like a résumé: it gets you the interview. Once you've got people to your stand, it's up to you to engage them.



Exhibitions provide a truly interactive opportunity for both exhibitors and visitors, so here are some points to consider:

- **Stand design:** you want to create a “wow”, not a “whoa...” factor. And certainly not an “hmmmm” or a “what is that?” comment. Aim for interesting, not boring. Do make sure you go with your brand’s values: is it fun and a bit cheeky? Play on that. Is it a fantastically sensible financial product? Have colours and images that looks successful.
- **Can you do live demonstrations on your stand?** Maybe think about some seating. This can help to draw people to your stand; but make sure they are truly interested and not just eating your cheese and biscuits and drinking your coffee.
- **Hospitality area:** can you create a small hospitality area on your stand? If not, make sure you know where the hospitality area is and that you can take identified visitors there (such as key accounts or prospects).
- **Good layout and traffic flow:** think about how people will flow around your stand when you’re planning what to put where. Just like a shop, good traffic flow will enhance the experience and can encourage longer time on your stand.
- **Interactive screens:** these are great to attract attention from a distance. Can you show your latest product in action? Interviews of ultra-happy customers?
- **Relaxation space:** is a small area where visitors can relax appropriately?
- **Expert technical advice:** is it easy for prospects to locate staff who can help with technical expertise?
- **Competitions and giveaways:** use your pre-event marketing campaign to draw people to your stand, or you can run an on-stand competition or giveaway (this will be a way to get new prospects onto your database).
- **Celebrity appearances and book signings:** make use of any celebrities who use your products. Written a book? Sign it!
- **Use technology:** augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) are huge; use them on your stand.
- **Product sampling:** exhibitions are the ideal place for attendees to actually taste test your products. (You’ll remember in Module 1 we talked about the brand experience being king, with events being the ultimate place customers and potential customers can see, feel, hear and taste your offerings.) Events are also the perfect place to give away samples of your product. Always include where people can buy more; you can also include a discount/reward if they buy after the exhibition using a special code.
- **Stack them high and watch them fly:** If you have a great product with an exceptional deal and plan to move a lot of stock during the event, your stand should reflect “we are here to sell cheap”, consumers love this messaging at B2C events.
- **Promotional merchandise:** is a really effective way to create brand awareness, and encourage attendee engagement and then loyalty as customers. If it’s good, then people will keep it, meaning your brand will be under their noses for a long time. There’s also the “feel-good factor” of “that company gave me something nice/useful”. And on top of all that, promotional material can be a really great way to get event attendees to stop at your stand (who doesn’t want something for free?!) and if they’re still shy, your employees can use it to start a conversation with them.

TIP:
*Promotional material is ‘your brand in your (potential) customer’s hand’.
Make it good, and use it!*





CREATING A
MEMORABLE
EXPERIENCE

PICTURES NOT WORDS

Everyone knows the saying “a picture tells 1,000 words”. In the case of a stand, it could be “1,000 words squared”.

Use graphics to draw attendee’s eyes’ to your stand. Well-chosen graphics will convey your ‘big picture’ messages (no coincidence this phrase means ‘main message’). An exhibition stand is not the place for lots of explanatory text on the walls — that’s hard to look at and understand. Think about capturing attendees’ attention quickly.

Can’t do it all in pictures? Then use charts or videos, and draw passers-by to engage in a product demonstration.

Low-tech interactivity options can also be complete winners in drawing attention. Think physical games or competitions, puzzles and quizzes, or what about a graffiti wall?

While a coffee machine may do it for you, depending upon what you’re exhibiting, a big item such as a flashy car or bike can really be an initial crowd magnet!

Just remember, your stand is also the physical representation of your **brand**, so make everything you do best reflect this. In many instances, it’s the brand that drives the sale.





CHOOSING A
STAND BUILDER

CHOOSING A STAND BUILDER

Choosing a stand builder really comes down to what you need. Do you need the whole thing designed from scratch? Or someone who can turn your design, ideas and instruction into a business-ready stand?

Are you dressing a set space, such as a shell stand system? Or is the opportunity there to have a completely bespoke stand designed?

Then look at what your objectives are for the exhibition. How can you translate those into the space you have? Don't forget, your stand is your 'shop' in the

exhibition 'shopping centre'. (We covered this in Module 4; please ask your Exhibitions & Trade Fairs team for a copy if you don't have one.)

Once you've attracted exhibition visitors to your stand, traffic flow is vital to enhance their experience with you. Can they move through easily? Are things

placed logically? Using the services of an expert can really help you here. If you're unsure, please ask us for pointers on what to do or suggestions on who to use. It can also be a good idea to check out other stands that a designer has created; so if you can, go to an exhibition and see their work from afar and then up close.

Don't be afraid to ask lots of questions. You can also talk with other exhibitors about their experiences or recommendations.

**ALWAYS REMEMBER:
your stand is a reflection
of your business.**



TIP:
A well-dressed stand with polite, friendly, engaging staff will go a long way to helping you achieve your exhibition goals.





This Exhibitor Training Module is part of a series of six easy-to-understand guides:

1. **The Power of Live Events**
2. **A Guide to the Exhibition Galaxy**
3. **Steps to Get Started and Set Exhibition Objectives**
4. **A Marketing Guide for Exhibitors**
5. **A Guide to Dressing Your Stand and Creating that Memorable Experience**
6. **A Guide to Measuring Exhibition Success**

For more information, contact the Exhibitions & Trade Fairs' team. They can help you through the guides and answer any questions you have. After all, if you're going to ask a question, ask an expert!

Exhibitions & Trade Fairs has been creating and delivering award winning exhibitions and conferences since the 1970s. Around Australia and across the world. B2B and B2C. Large and small.

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