EXHIBITIONS & TRADE FAIRS

EXHIBITOR TRAINING MODULE 6:

A GUIDE TO MEASURING EXHIBITION SUCCESS

So, how successful was the exhibition?

Unless you measure it, you'll never know. In this training module you'll learn:

- ***Why it's important to measure***
- ***The importance of a lead tracking system***
- ***What to do on the day***
- ***Winning ways to follow up post event***

READY, SET, MEASURE

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; and how to measure your Return on Investment (this guide). For a full list of modules, see the end or contact the Exhibitions & Trade Fairs' team.

It's 'show time!' What happens now?!

Measuring sales at the end of the event is one way to measure your exhibition success. Data captured at the event will allow you to stay in contact with a potential customer, build loyalty and close potentially larger sales over time.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO MEASURE

WHY MEASURING SUCCESS IS IMPORTANT

Every time you evaluate an event, you're actually measuring many things at the same time, including the show itself, the market climate and your competitors' activities. It's dangerous to jump to a conclusion about an event based on only one experience. You might conclude that an event was wrong for your company when actually it was a competitor's special promotion that rained on your parade.

Similarly, you might think your pre-show mailing was a major success when it may have been due to the show audience doubling.

The key is to capture your learning so that you can improve your plans over time.

There are four reasons for measuring the results of every event you attend:

1. To justify your investment
Every item in your marketing budget needs to show a return on investment. Measuring gives you the facts you need to get the marketing mix right.

2. To help choose the best events for you
Not all shows are alike. Measuring helps identify your winners.

3. To improve your own activities
What you do before, during and after each event can matter as much as which shows you choose. Measuring lets you improve your own team's performance and results.

4. To encourage goal-driven activities
What gets measured gets done. If you want to see your team focused on results, tell them what results you mean – and show them you're measuring! Put it this way, it's easy to see why measuring your event results is not just important, it's essential. Marketing may be a science, but it's rarely a perfect science.

IT'S SHOW TIME! WHAT DO I DO?!

First of all, make sure everyone arrives early. That way they can get a proper feel both for your stand and the atmosphere of the whole exhibition.

Check staff are familiar with where things are on your stand (such as brochures, where different equipment is, where leads go). Run through the daily checklist; including when staff breaks are and who's on and who's back at your business premises. Do staff know where the nearest toilets and café are? Make sure everyone knows their role and reinforce your objectives and why you're exhibiting. Consider a daily briefing; it may be very worthwhile to get together on the stand before the show starts to discuss any issues (from the day before) and re-asses what needs to be done.

Importance of using a Lead Tracker to track

We can not stress the importance of using a lead tracking system enough. Tracking and collecting leads are vital and an important way to measure your **ultimate sales success and overall results.**

Purchasing a lead tracking system (available from the organiser; us) will help you do this, so make sure you speak with us well in advance to organise. At our B2B events, all our visitors wear badges with barcodes on them.These trackers log very important visitor data from these barcodes; data such as Full Name, Position, Company, Contact Details and so on. At our B2C events, all visitors receive a ticket with a barcode that can be scanned when registered. In this case, we record name and email address.

There is just no point rocking up to an event, collecting a whole heap of business cards and then hoping you'll remember who 'Jane Citizen' was and whether she was interested in buying a fully refurbished Jaguar XF or just a new badge for the bonnet. Collecting business cards is a very outdated way to gather data, not to mention having to manually enter these into your CRM systems and databases.

The lead tracking systems we provide, allow you to track and view all the visitor data in **real-time.** This means, you can start the follow up process with your leads straight away. This is exactly what you want to do with your high prospects.

TIP: Brochures don't sell; people sell. Sales literature augments a conversation; it doesn't replace it. Don't hand out material to avoid talking to people.

LEAD CLASSIFICATION

Collecting leads is vital; then classifying them is equally as critical.

Make sure stand staff understand your target customer and how to identify them. If visitors don't qualify as a prospect, don't be dismissive; just politely say, "I have a meeting in 10 minutes, could I take your details so I can send you more information?" Then make sure you note this in your lead tracking system.

Exhibitions aren't about spending loads of time with one contact. They're about sales sure, but events are also about leads. Need to do some in-depth follow up? Make a time to do so after the exhibition.

Make classifying leads simple for sales staff. Have tick boxes in your lead tracking system, rather than needing to write several sentences long hand. Have an area to dot point some goals or points in follow-up, such as "send Product X brochure", or "follow up on the 24th after their buying trip".

Here's a simple-lead qualification system that works well for many companies:

A: large money value, short purchasing time period.

B: small money value, short purchasing time period, OR large money value, long purchasing time period.

C: small money value, long purchasing time period.

D: send literature and/or add name to e-mailing list.

Another reason to have such a simple classification process is this: when the exhibition is over and everyone is exhausted, the only sales leads that need immediate attention are the **'A' and 'B' leads.**

TIP: Not a strong lead, but they still want a brochure? Have a lower-cost version you can hand out in this situation. Keep 'the good stuff' for the good leads.

Develop a customer database

Log all leads you collect at the exhibition into a database (a lead tracker system will do the hard work for you). But don't leave this until after the event, it's imperative to do it as the leads come in. Ideally, nominate one person – generally from admin – who will do this. This person is key in logging the information correctly, including any follow-up notes from the sales team.

SIMPLE, BUT GREAT WAYS TO FOLLOW UP

Just after an exhibition where a visitor has been in contact with you, they're still highly engaged and energised.

Keep them on a roll: follow up with the most important leads, your A and B leads first, **and within 48 hours.**

Now that you've met someone, or re-engaged with them, you can be more personal. Keep it highly event related though; this is the time to say "*I'm following up about the new colours/faster packaging machinery we spoke about at <event name>. Here is the information I said I would send...*"

Here are five great ways to follow up:

1. Send a personal thank-you email from the staff member that visitor met and spoke with at the event.
2. Use social media to thank all of those who visited you on the day, adding what a great success it was.
3. Do a call out to all the leads you generated. You can do this one, twice, thrice, does not make you a nuisance. 80% of sales are only made on the fifth to twelfth point of contact.
4. Send them a reminder of a show special you may have had on your stand. You may even want to remind them of the expiry date or extend for a limited time.
5. Does your company have a regular e-newsletter? If they're not on your e-newsletter database, then invite them to join.

Whatever you do, make it personalised and give the information they requested at the event.

TIP: Don't just add people whose business cards you collect to your newsletter subscription. This is bad form and will likely be perceived as spam or annoying.

WINNING WAYS TO FOLLOW UP POST EVENT

FOLLOW-UP TIMELINE – HOT, WARM OR COLD

24-48 HOURS AFTER

A and B LEADS:
Make sure you go for your hottest leads first. Send out a "great to meet you email" and link it to a web form asking people for more information about themselves. Having just met you, this is the time stand visitors will still be highly engaged.

WITHIN 1 WEEK

C and D LEADS:
Keep working through contacting leads gathered at the event.

2 WEEKS AFTER

Make general contact with all leads, especially if there was no initial response.

3 WEEKS OUT

Devise individual contact plans for all event leads.

1 MONTH OUT

Wrap up all costs, leads and action points.

4 MONTHS OUT

Measure ROI success, did you hit your objectives?

6 MONTHS OUT

Assess everything in a post-event report; this will be an excellent guide for the next event.

TIP: The email section from Exhibitor Training Module 4 has a great guide on how to use email after the exhibition to continue engaging and nurturing leads.

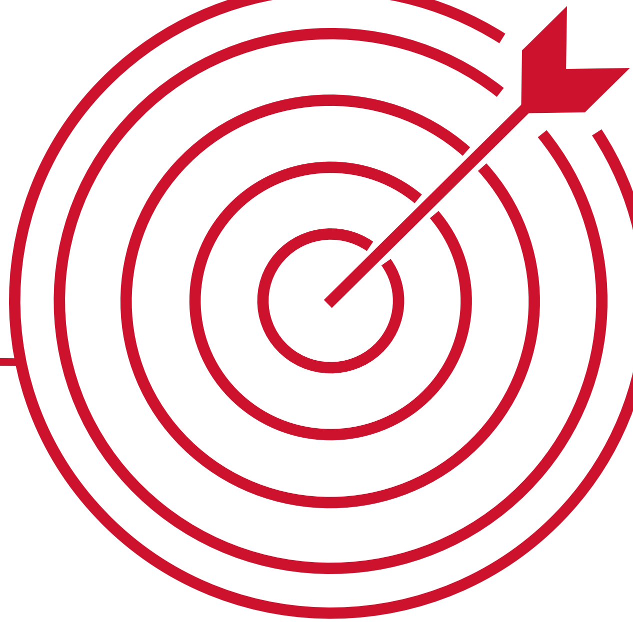
TIP: Remember, the leads with large money values against them will take some time to convert into sales and won't happen over night.

DID YOU HIT YOUR OBJECTIVES?

Remember those SMART objectives you set for the event?

Now is the time to measure them.

In Exhibitor Training Module 3, we covered setting exhibition objectives and example measurement metrics. Use the checklist and measurement metrics on the following page to determine your success.

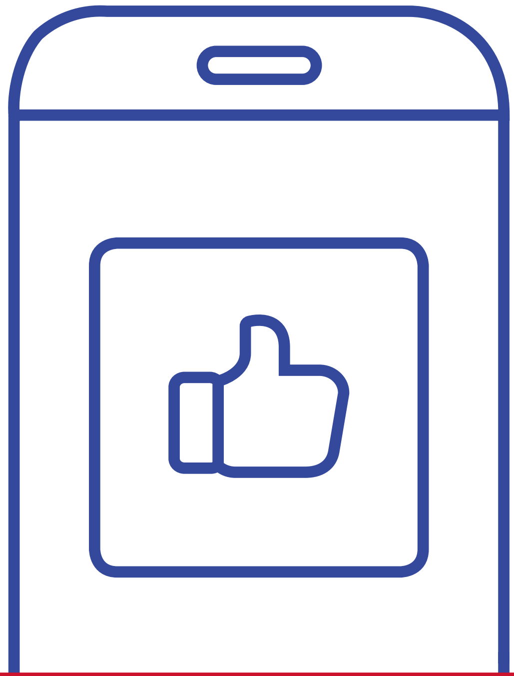


AREA	GOAL	MEASUREMENT METRICS	SUGGESTIONS
Customer Relationships	To educate visitors on your product and service offerings	Number of 'info' sessions with attendees	Consider collecting the visitor data of those you attended your session
	To reconnect with existing clients	Number of reconnected customers met and recorded value	Use our follow up timeline and record success
	To reactivate lapsed customers	Number/value of lapsed customers met	
	To create brand ambassadors	Number of 'ambassadors' recruited	
Sales	To make immediate sales	Orders taken and revenue	Don't forget about the weeks and months following the show (an extend show special is a great opportunity to track)
	To launch new products or services	Number of demonstrations done	
	To generate sales leads	Tallies of A, B, C leads, etc	Use our qualification system and measure the value of those leads
	To build a contact database	Number of new contacts acquried	
	To make $XYZ sales from newly launched products or services	Revenue and orders taken	
Channel Building	To cement your current spot as a reliable channel partner	Number of partners met, and signed up	Assess potential lifetime value
	To find and recruit distribution partners in new channels or geographic locations	Number of partners identified, and signed	
Marketing and Brand Buildng	To build or strengthen your brand awareness	Number of gross impressions (total attendance) at the event	Calculate the equivalent value of attendee impressions (using paid advertising as the baseline)
	To generate media coverage in the event material	Number of articles in eDMs, magazines, etc	
	To generate media coverage in publications read by your target customers	Press inches, broadcast gained, number of articles produced, etc	
	To build relationships with journalists	Number of journalists met with, and coverage spoken about initially or later	
Market Research	To test a new product	Number of demonstrations done and quality of feedback	Consider a short survey or questionnaire at the conclusion of the end of each show day or at the conclusion of the event. Consider testing different product/offers each day and measure and compare this feedback.
	To trial variations on a product		
	To learn consumer awareness and perceptions of your brand/ company	Number of impressions/quality of seminars/ demonstrations, etc	
	To test your marketing and sales materials	Number and quality of feedback	
	To assess your competition		

SHARE YOUR SUCCESS STORIES!

There are two ways to do this: via your own social media and ours.

TIP:
After all the effort, many exhibitors just don't follow up on their leads. Don't make this same mistake — make sure you get the best ROI for exhibiting by following up!



Keep piggybacking on the event by sending us great stories of customer success as a result of them visiting you at the exhibition. You can also use this in your promotional material for the next event, or just as a general "success story". And always, always, get their permission first.

TIP:
Many exhibitors also measure the event success based on what we, as organisers, have achieved. If visitor numbers are something you'd like to add to your internal post event reports, we'll typically provide exhibitors with a comprehensive post event report within 6 weeks of the event. This report will include visitor numbers which are always audited by a professional auditing body.

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.

Our team has experience across incredibly diverse sectors, from energy storage, construction, mining, oil & gas, irrigation, automotive, manufacturing, to travel and lifestyle. We offer a full suite of services, so we tailor what we do for different organisations depending upon their needs. The result is an excellent event — from its quality as an industry-building tool to its ROI.

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Credit: Statistics provided by the Exhibition & Events Association of Australasia and Facetime UK.