A CLEAR, PRECISE and STEADY approach

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Seema Srivastava
Executive Director
India ITME Society
Every exhibitor seeks the secret of running a successful Trade Show booth. But to uncover this holy grail, one should first define what success really means.

**What is a successful trade show booth?**

Success is always relative and depends on the investment you make and the expectation you put in the event.

Some key elements of most companies’ success are: positive ROI, good visibility, brand awareness and media coverage, new potential customers that couldn’t have been captured otherwise and an updated vision of the industry’s landscape.

But reaching these targets is a long haul and requires multiple elements to be managed properly.

If you want to run your trade show booth successfully, you will need to follow those rules:

**Plan early**

Planning a trade show booth takes time. It takes a lot of time to manage the multiple pieces you need to organize, and three weeks won’t break it.

Give yourself at least 3 months, but it would be optimal if you could plan 6 to 8 months ahead. (Get your week-by-week plan with our series “20 weeks to success”)

**Delegate**

A successful trade show booth is always run by ONE person. This person is in charge of the direction, the budget, making decisions, training others, tracking results, etc. But he/she is also in charge of delegating.

Being in charge doesn’t mean doing everything by yourself. Learn how to share the workload with others and involve them in the process. Success is often the result of a team effort, so be a team player.

**Train your team**

The direct consequence of working with others is that your success depends on their ability to do their part. You certainly know the saying “a chain is as strong as the weakest link”, this is true.

If you need your team to excel, you must train them – don’t expect them to read your mind or do miracles if you
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talk, remind everyone of their individual targets. You are in charge of coffee breaks and lunch hours. You must play the booth-mom and remind your team that chewing gums and playing with their phones is not allowed. You need to stop bad behavior and reward good ones.

You must keep your team aware of their progress and make sure your back office knows what is going on. You need to get your Social Networks on fire and engage with your audience. All in all, you must keep control of everything happening in your booth.

Have a follow-up strategy

You should not hire people before you know what you hire them for. Similarly, you shouldn't go to a trade show before you plan how to follow-up.

Have a clear strategy in place before going: define how to divide the leads, who should follow what, prepare follow-up templates, arrange a timetable, etc.

It is much easier to be efficient when a clear roadmap is defined than when you need to figure out the steps as you walk.

Track your results

We said it earlier, an event's success is defined by your ability to reach your targets. That means that you will have to do some tracking if you want to estimate your success!

Track things such as leads captured, leads converted, budget spent, revenue generated, etc. Tracking does not stop at the end of the show; it goes on for a few months until each lead has been either converted or lost forever!

Now you should have all the cards to run a successful trade show booth – it is just a matter of playing the right cards!

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