

# Keeping The Audience in Mind: What Our Trade Show Visitors Really Want to See and Learn

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## Agenda

1. Review of key research + recommendations
2. Making your message seen – quick review of ideas for maximum visual impact
3. Delivering your message – ideas for making your message heard and understood
4. Creating specific sales-related objectives
5. Conclusion and introduction of next webinar
6. Q&A



## Independent Research

- From Exhibit Surveys, Inc.
- Review of 2007 show:
  - Visitors want to learn *what's new*
  - 3/4 of attendees use show to EVALUATE and COMPARE products and services
  - Overall level of engagement of visitors by exhibitors is below all-show averages – more “active” engagement is necessary



## Key Idea in Research

*There is not a good fit between exhibitor objectives and attendee reasons for attending Car Care World Expo. A high percentage of attendees use the show to evaluate, compare and/or purchase products. Compare this to the fact that the percentage of exhibitors with sales related objectives has dropped significantly. This misalignment negatively impacts both attendee and exhibitor value.*



## So what?

For trade show success, focus on 3 things:

1. Better active engagement of visitors
2. Better delivery of compare and contrast messages
3. Better development of measurable sales-related objectives



## Engaging: Begin with what is *seen*

- Make sure visitors know what you do, not simply who you are
- Make sure benefits are featured in any graphics
- Make sure visitors will have an idea what they will learn if they stop
- Brevity and clarity work best
- Highlight on “What’s New”



## Survey says: low level of engaging

- Staffers must develop new ways to be assertive, yet not aggressive
- Use pre-show training to get new ideas and words
- Practice, practice, practice



## Engaging – what to say to start conversations

### How?

- For visitors who come right in:  
*get right to business*
- For visitors who pause with some interest:  
*ask what issues they came to learn about*
- For visitors who express little interest:  
*try a social opener*



## Engaging techniques

- Know what your visitors might want to learn from you
- Know how to summarize your product's benefits in a very clear and concise manner
- Ask visitors what kind of info would be helpful to them
- Make sure your staffers know that engaging is up to **them**, not to the visitors



## Help visitors learn more – make compare and contrast easy

How?

1. Know your product's benefits in a variety of ways
2. Know competitor's products, and how they stack up
3. Create valuable differentiation



## Know your product's benefits

- Be able to deliver slightly different presentations depending on visitor need and background
- Top level executives may need a different presentation than an engineer, or a CFO – be ready to deliver!



## Know your competition

- What are your competitive advantages or differentiators?
- What do your customers say about why they chose you?
- Practice comparison without being negative



## Know your products

- What are top reasons visitors would be interested in your products? For example:
  - Reliability / value over time
  - Sustainability / environmental savings
  - Engineering / responsive service
  - Innovation / technology
- Develop a “**story**” about each of your top reasons, and practice telling that story



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## A competitive difference example

### Why we stack up well in cost effectiveness

Our new product is designed with:

1. Energy efficient power (*and here's how some competitors handle that same opportunity*)
2. Easy access to all moving parts for better and faster preventive maintenance (*show pictures of your product, illustrations of competition*)
3. Proven reliability over time (*customer endorsement over competitive product*)



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## Polling question

The next section will discuss show objectives.

Question: Does your company create written, measurable objectives for each show?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No



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## Creating and implementing better sales-related objectives

To help you succeed, objectives must be

- Measurable
- Attainable
- Valuable



## Typical sales objectives

1. Introduce our new products, and sell a lot of them
2. Get better leads so we can sell more after the show
3. Enhance our reputation as a market leader so we can keep selling in a tough economy
4. Gather competitive info so we can sell smart against our smart competitors (*as discussed*)



## Quantify and measure

### **New product intro**

- Quantified: Key demo to 60% of audience
- Measured:
  - Send pre-show promotion piece to targets, and measure response
  - Use lead forms to count demos to correct targets
  - Use surveys for post-show memorability
  - Monitor press coverage



## Quantify and measure

### Get better leads

- Quantified: Using a good form, complete at least part of form for 100% of booth visitors
- Measured:
  - Record all info, analyze results
  - Offer premium for visitors who help by allowing complete documentation
  - Create internal competition for completed leads



## Quantify and measure

### Enhance our reputation as a market leader

- Quantified: Deliver our crafted brand message to 85% of all exhibit visitors
- Measured:
  - Develop and rehearse product demos that open and/or close with brand message
  - Use post-show surveys to measure recall
  - Measure press coverage



## 5 Tips to Keep the Visitor in Mind

### 1. Ask your customers

- what they want
- what they expect to learn
- what they like about how your competitors deliver at shows



## 5 Tips to Keep the Visitor in Mind

### 2. What is your competition saying?

- How can you differentiate your company and products?
- How can you best compare yourself?



## 5 Tips to Keep the Visitor in Mind

### 3. Who do you expect to talk with at the show?

- Develop basic profiles of each type of visitor you expect to see
- Develop 2-5 qualification questions your staffers could use to ID each type of visitor
- Use visitor responses to these qualification questions to alter how the conversation goes forward (faster for some, slower for others)



## 5 Tips to Keep the Visitor in Mind

### 4. Promote your participation with focused methods of attraction

- Help get the right people to your exhibit
- Invitation
- Direct mail
- Web-based promotion
- Attract selectively (avoid over-attraction)
- Be prepared for outcome



## 5 Tips to Keep the Visitor in Mind

### 5. **Be prepared for questions and concerns**

- Develop a list of likely questions from visitors
- Group questions into categories; company, industry, product, competitive, etc.
- Develop brief answers
- Practice VERBAL responses to these questions



## Conclusion

- Survey information is powerful
- Your planning must include a process for information gathering and message development
- Trade shows are a verbal medium, so all participants must practice telling their various stories until they are easy and authentic



## Putting this info to work – Feb. 09

- Topic: Creating a staff training program
- Ideas we will discuss:
  - Why shows are different - preparing your team for a retail sales environment
  - Effective time management skills
  - Creating great leads
  - Working as a team, and much more
- Input welcome!



Thanks for your time and interest

Please submit your questions!

