

# Planning ahead

Choosing to exhibit rather than just attend a trade show is a big decision but planning ahead means that you can make the most of your marketing investment.

At Stanbury Chameleon, we know how important exhibitions can be in the marketing mix and we work hard to make exhibitions work for you. As well as helping you with your printed exhibition materials, getting the look of your stand right and creating effective display elements, we've used our experience to assemble a list of 10 key points to bear in mind when planning your presence at an exhibition.

## ① Location, location, location

When booking your space at an exhibition make sure that you negotiate your stand position to ensure that your customers will see you. Can you book space on a main aisle, or at the corner of two aisles? Where are your customers going to be spending most of their time at the show? Find out who has the stands around you.

## ② Decide what you want people to do on your stand

Are people going to be finding out about your products? Will they be discussing products and sales with your team? Are you trying to maximise visitors to build your database? Make sure that your aims are communicated to those helping design and staff your stand.

## ③ Plan your space

Once you've decided what you want people to do on your stand, make sure that your design enables that to happen. From lighting and furniture to marketing materials, banners, pull-ups and literature stands, make sure that these elements all help you to achieve your aims.

For example, are you hosting meetings on your stand? If so, a table and chairs can facilitate in-depth conversations with visitors to your stand. What technology will you need in order to be able to conduct business with your customers if your aim is sales?

If you have a smaller stand space, try not to make it too busy. An eye-catching pop-up stand can make a big impact in an uncluttered stand space. Keep in mind that you'll need somewhere to store extra brochures etc.

## ④ First impressions count

Ensure that everything on your stand reflects your company's image; keep branding consistent and professional. Set up your exhibition displays in your office and check that all elements look right together. Make sure that stand staff are briefed on what to wear and how to approach visitors.

## ⑤ Plan your print

Start thinking about what printed literature you'll need. Make sure company brochures and other promotional literature is up to date and follows latest brand guidelines, features the right logos etc. if not then arrange for these to be updated if possible.

Running a competition or adding value by giving visitors access to a special show offer can attract visitors to your stand and build your database, you'll need to plan for printing entry forms (postcard format works well) or special offer fliers.

## 6 Get social

Social media gives you the chance to get your customers and exhibition visitors excited about the show in the run-up. Talk about your plans for the exhibition, share your news as it happens and build a real buzz about the show. Make sure you are connected to the social media for the show itself so you can share their news too and hopefully they will share yours.

## 7 Use your contacts

A mailing or email to your existing database can be a great way to get visitors to your stand. A drinks reception for clients or an exclusive product launch gives customers an incentive to visit the show and will make them feel valued. Use the exhibition as a chance to set up meetings with contacts, email your clients, relevant journalists and any prospective clients ahead of the show and get appointments booked.

## 8 Show off your wares

Depending on what your product is, a demonstration or samples for visitors to your stand to try, along with ideas of uses for your product, will all help visitors imagine how your product could be a good fit for them, so plan this into your stand. As well as actual product, you could use striking images on roller banners and pop-up exhibition display units or incorporate video of the product being used into your display; this is your chance to get creative!

Find out if there's a chance to run a seminar or give a presentation on your particular area of expertise; you can use this as an opportunity to show off your skills and promote your products indirectly.

## 9 Check your stock levels

Check well in advance that you have enough business cards, company brochures, enquiry forms, branded notepads, company pens etc. for the duration of the show. Pens tend to disappear so take plenty with you. Checking early will ensure you have enough time to order what you need if necessary.

## 10 Make your company memorable

If you are planning on giving something away on your stand, make sure that it is something that relates to your brand and is relevant to what your company does. Something useful, like a branded USB stick loaded with your company brochure, will get your brand in front of your customers much more than a novelty gift that might get resigned to a bottom desk drawer.

At Stanbury Chameleon we want to help your company stand out. We can use our experience to help you to create a stand that will get you noticed. We know the exhibition products that we use and we can work with you to make your stand project a reality. Plus, we can give you the peace of mind that comes from knowing that our team can also get your printed exhibition materials ready for the show at the same time.

Talk to our experienced team on **023 9258 9425**



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