

TRADE SHOW & EVENT MARKETING

Information to maximize your event potential



From the World's Leading **Marketing, Advertising** and **Public Relations**
Firm for the **Oil and Gas** Industry

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THE VALUE OF TRADE SHOW AND EVENT MARKETING

Participation in trade shows and events gives a company the opportunity to market its products and services using arguably the most effective method available: face-to-face communication. Not only do you find yourself face-to-face with clients attending an event, but in the case of trade shows, you are positioning yourself in front of hundreds, possibly even thousands, of potential clients with a vested interest in your particular industry, product or service. Most importantly, you have their undivided attention.

An effectively designed trade show exhibit or a well-themed event can and should communicate the benefits of a company's products/services as well as promote the company's brand and image. Event marketing is a vital piece of a company's larger corporate marketing plan and can be used to promote and communicate a company's overall marketing message, which is more important than ever!

Why Are Events Important?

- Reaffirm existing business relationships
- Identify new customers and potential partners
- Scope out the competition
- Networking opportunities

TRADE SHOW TRENDS

81% of trade show attendees influence product or service recommendations or make final purchasing decisions. Visitors want to evaluate your product — how it works and looks against the competition.

8.1 hours is the average time attendees spend visiting exhibits.

47% of trade show attendees plan to buy one or more exhibited products within 12 months of the show.

SOURCE: "Survey Says." *EXHIBITOR MAGAZINE*. April 2010

EVENT MARKETING AND TRADE SHOWS IN THE OIL & GAS INDUSTRY

In the ever-changing oil and gas industry, new technology and new practices are continuously being developed. To remain competitive among industry leaders, your company's products and services must be visible and available to customers. Exhibiting at trade shows or hosting events provides a great forum to debut new technology, demonstrate benefits and remain visible to your customer.

In respect to trade shows, no other venue provides such a large number of prospects in one locale. Personal connections that can be made at such events offer great value. One interaction at a show can lead to a connection that can many times compensate for the investment made in an exhibition and then some!



MAXIMIZING YOUR INVESTMENT

Planning

Choose the right shows for your company. Exhibit at shows that are attended by buyers and other decision makers in the market for your product or service.



How Can You Find These Shows?

- **Search the web to find industry shows.** There are numerous sources available online, but the industry sites below list many of the major oil and gas exhibitions and events.
 - PennWell Publishing – Conferences & Exhibitions
<http://www.pennwell.com/conferences.cfm?navid=3003>
 - Society of Petroleum Engineers – Meetings/Events
<http://www.spe.org/spe-app/spe/events/index.htm>
 - Gulf Publishing Company
<http://www.gulfpub.com/page.asp?PageID=22760>

TRADE SHOW & EVENT MARKETING GUIDE

- Oil Online
<http://www.oilonline.com/Events.aspx>
- **Review a show's Exhibitor Prospectus** to gather information about how many attendees and what types of professionals attend a particular show. Is the show a general industry show or more targeted to a specific sector of the industry?
- **Walk the aisles first**, as an attendee, to get a feel for the professionals attending.
- **Word-of-mouth discussions** among industry peers can often present an accurate evaluation of a trade show.



To Consider Before Attending a Show

- **Location:** Are any of your clients located in the same city as the show itself?
- **Exhibitor list:** Identify potential clients and business partners as well as competition.
- **Technical sessions, panels, seminars and keynote addresses:** Educate yourself.
- **Events and socials:** What networking opportunities are available?

For all events, determine if the purpose of the event — whether a party, a technology transfer, an open house or a groundbreaking ceremony (to name a few) — is important enough to merit the time and expense needed to properly execute the event.



Preparation

Set a theme for your exhibit or event. Each element of a trade show booth and each visual produced for a company event should complement each other and work together to communicate to attendees a clear, succinct message.

Set measurable objectives. Setting achievable and measurable objectives, both quantitative and qualitative, prior to the event will allow you to determine your success and return on investment. What are your company goals for this event?

This list should be very specific. Do you want to generate \$X in new sales, start a certain number of new business relationships or spread the word about a new service offering you are introducing to the market?

In addition to traditional lead-generation efforts, there are numerous objectives that can be identified before a trade show or event and measured after:

- **Obtain customer feedback.** Trade shows provide an easy opportunity to gather information from customers on various topics. Perhaps you would like to know how customers feel about the sales staff's customer-service skills or how they rate your new exhibit design or product demonstration. These questions can be easily answered through in-exhibit surveys, informal polls or in-booth focus groups.
- **Gather competitive intelligence.** No other venue is as valuable as a trade show for gathering competitive and industry intelligence. Walk the show floor, attend seminars and network with customers to collect valuable industry data to use to your advantage.
- **Introduce employees to the industry.** Trade shows serve as a microcosm of an industry making them a great venue for new employees to get their feet wet and to meet key individuals, build relationships and gain valuable knowledge.
- **Meet the press.** And meet them face-to-face. That is not something that you can do just any old time. Hosting a media event or conducting an interview in your exhibit can give a company an inside track with a trade publication.
- **Find partners and form strategic alliances.** Explore outside your exhibit space. Especially in the oil and gas industry, some of the best leads can be found from your fellow exhibitors.
- **Provide customer service.** You can provide great customer service by being prepared to respond to customer questions or complaints. This goes a long way in building credibility and customer satisfaction.
- **Identify potential employees.** We've all seen them walking around the exhibit floor ... the potential employee. If you have positions that need to be filled, take these attendees seriously. One might just make the cut.

SOURCE: Siskind, Barry. "Reasons to Exhibit." *EXHIBITOR MAGAZINE*. March 2010

Determine your budget. The possibilities in a trade show marketing campaign are endless so having guidelines is a must. High-tech is eye-catching, but is that approach the most cost-effective? Weigh renting versus purchasing booth elements. Determining how often you will use the booth is an important consideration. Remember:

- Exhibit space usually accounts for **1/3** of total show costs
- Exhibitors spend **\$180** on each attendee who enters their exhibit, on average
- Exhibitors spend **\$280** on each face-to face attendee conversation

SOURCE: "Survey Says." *EXHIBITOR MAGAZINE*. April 2010

Budgeting is a crucial step in the preparation for any event. An event budget should be as detailed and specific as possible, outlining all that is needed for the event.

Research trade show booth requirements. Exhibit rules and regulations differ for every show and venue. Ensure you have all the information needed before moving forward, for example, height, space and weight regulations for the booth space.



Consider logistics. Major issues to consider when planning a trade show exhibit or an event include size of space or building used; utility support needed; setup (tables and chairs, tents, portable toilets, parking and signage); coordination; cleanup; emergency plans; transportation; and public services needed.

Prepare collateral materials and graphics. Do not wait until the last minute to prepare graphics and collateral materials for trade shows. Keep graphics simple. Attendees have a lot of ground to cover, and they need a clear, succinct message.



Conduct pre-event marketing. Promotion before a trade show or event is crucial to increasing traffic and attendance to your booth or event. Promote your participation through your website, emails and newsletters, as well as through mailers that peak the interest of potential attendees.

Invitations, both printed and electronic, should be sent to the targeted audiences, including media representatives.





Promotional items or giveaways. When well-conceived and planned these can be very effective. Giveaways that follow your theme, have shelf life and provide information on your company will have the greatest impact on visitors.

Presentation

An exhibit should have entry points that are clearly accessible.

Increase traffic by drawing attention to your booth using signage, video presentations, memorable giveaway items or even a magic show...the possibilities are endless.

Staffing a trade show exhibit. Consider the following tactics in choosing and maintaining a strong booth staff. Overall, staff company events with knowledgeable, upbeat and friendly professionals who will reach out to attendees and go the extra mile to make a good impression. Prepare your booth staff before every show to identified goals and objectives for the event. Booth workers should understand the products and services being showcased and how products and services differ from your competitors.



- **Select the right staff.** It is just as important for a staffer to have a good attitude as it is to have skills and product knowledge. A staffer with an impassive attitude is difficult to change.
- **Divide and conquer.** To maintain your staffers' attitudes, plan some down time in their schedules. Employees need time to recharge.
- **Implement a staff-tracking system.** Develop a system within the booth to track each person's whereabouts during show hours so that appropriate personnel are always available to serve booth visitors.
- **Instruct and motivate.** Focus on motivating and even entertaining your employees in preparation for the task at hand...in addition to the sales plan and event goals.
- **Foster team spirit.** Implement team-building activities before or during the show so that all staffers get to know one another, increasing your team's effectiveness.
- **Establish rewards and punishment.** Make sure to establish a system of rewards and punishments, praising stellar employees and reprimanding poor performers.

SOURCE: "Seven Staffing Strategies." *EXHIBITOR MAGAZINE*. March 2010

Post-event Follow-up

In order to determine a return on your investment, capturing (and then pursuing) leads from a trade show or event is mandatory. Lead retrieval devices are usually available for rent at trade shows to electronically keep a record of prospects and customers who visited your booth. If an electronic scanner is not available, leads can be obtained by collecting business cards.

Pursuing leads should be done soon after the event while the details are fresh. Follow up leads to move them closer to a sale. Determine the value of each lead and compare to the cost of the event. One way to prove your ROI is through these quantifiable numbers.

To determine your qualifiable results, a survey of attendees can be conducted to examine whether the message and theme of the event was effectively communicated.

Once post-show data has been collected, review your performance collectively as a company.



MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES

News Releases

News releases can be distributed immediately preceding or during a trade show to peak media interest in specific products/services being promoted at the show. News releases in preparation for and immediately after an event are imperative for achieving maximum media exposure and attendance.



News Conferences

News conferences are designed to make important announcements that require more direct attention. This is an opportunity for your company to engage many members of the media at once and allows for more immediate interaction and feedback. Calling news conferences in conjunction with a trade show or industry event is effective as media representatives and other interested audiences are already gathered. If done effectively, an in-booth news conference allows for a very hands-on presentation using the booth elements on display.

One-on-one Interviews

Media representatives are out in full force at industry events/trade shows and often are willing to meet with exhibitors. Use the availability of influential media to share new technology, advancements in your company and other newsworthy information.

Advertising

Placing advertisements around trade show schedules and in the specific tradeshow publications can heighten your presence at a trade show.



Editorial Opportunities

Inviting media to your event will increase the likelihood of editorial coverage focusing on the event or as a result of connections made at the event.

HOW TO GET STARTED

The event specialists at Foster Marketing can help you decide how trade show and event marketing fits into your marketing mix. Will you be exhibiting across the globe? Do you have a major product introduction? Is this a coming-out party? Meeting with our team can help you sort through these questions and gain the insight you need to move forward with a successful event plan. We will research and determine what areas are best suited to help you achieve your objectives and map out a comprehensive and strategic integrated marketing and event communications plan tailored specifically to you and your audiences.

The international presence of Foster Marketing's trade show and event planning activities is strong as our clients and their work span the globe. Our specialists not only coordinate domestic-based events but also travel the globe building the brands of our clients through international events and trade shows. The stars below identify those areas in which we have coordinated trade shows and/or events.



WE CAN HELP

Foster Marketing has been providing cost-effective, creative communications to the worldwide oil and gas industry for 30 years. We understand the industry and the unique challenges and opportunities you face. Our presence in the industry has allowed us to build relationships and a reputation all over the world for effectively executing a company's message. Our diverse and strategically built team of professionals understands the importance of executing a comprehensive, integrated marketing communications plan, and we know how to coordinate all of the pieces, including trade show marketing, to maximize its effectiveness.

By nature, trade show planning and event coordination is a detailed, time-consuming process with countless variables. There are many steps and a lot of work required to get your desired results. With years of experience on the trade show floor, countless events under our belt and a list of partners across the globe, Foster Marketing will provide your organization with a strategic trade show and event marketing plan based on specific goals and objectives, while freeing up your company's valuable time.



To speak to a marketing specialist, please call

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