

Rock Your Next Business Expo with These 10 Tips

Whether you're attending a local chamber business expo or a trade industry show, you want to showcase your best self. Of course, that means sending a good team that represents your business well, having an enticing set up, and giving away something worthwhile in the eyes of the attendees. But what can you do to really stand out from the crowd at your next business expo? Here are a few things you might not have thought of: 10 Tips to Rock Your Next Business Expo

1. Attend to needs. No one can listen to your business spiel if they need something physical. Often, that shows up in the form of rest needed for tired feet, a cool drink of water to satiate thirst, or the extremely important... charge for their dying phone. Be an oasis in the midst of the business expo by providing for all of the attendees' basic needs. When you give something to someone or assist them in some way, they'll feel obligated to listen to your pitch; at least until their phone is charged.
2. Tell them why they should come. Every business has marketed their expo appearance by saying something along the lines of "Stop by and see us at booth 444". This boring exercise has never driven any participant to action. Instead, give them a reason to come see you. Get creative.
3. Contact existing customers you know will be there. Invite existing customers to stop by for a thank you gift. This makes your customers feel good and ensures people will stop by to talk to you. Also, other attendees will see how you treat your customers and want to be a part of that.
4. Reach out to attendees before the event and give them something valuable. If you're able to secure an attendee list and can contact them, instead of just sending a brochure and letting it get lost in the mess of mail they receive, send them something valuable like Business Expo Tips or a discount for your services. (This is especially helpful if you sell something they could use at the show like business cards.)
5. Use the show hashtag early and often. Share helpful information on social media using the show hashtag. The show host will likely share your content.
6. Ask how you can help. If you have some extra time, ask if you can help the show organizers set up or tear down. One expo allowed a vendor to run check-in wearing their branded apparel. The vendor team was the first group you saw at check-in and what you saw was them being helpful. It made an impression and they never even mentioned what company they were from.

7. Tell your story. Create a video that tells your story and set up a little area out of the way where people can learn more about you without being pounced on by salespeople.

8. Select a prime spot. Location is very important at a business expo. Prime spots include near the food, on the end of an aisle, at the corners, or at the entrance. Find out how your trade show assigns locations and then work it accordingly to get a good one.

9. Look for complementary services. If prime locations aren't an option, look for businesses that cater to the same demographic that you do. For instance, if you are a mommy and me business, being located among senior citizen homes is not ideal. However, you would do very well near a toy company or diaper service booth.

10. Choose the comfortable upgrades. Trade shows and business expos often have a lot of options and upgrading to the luxury ones provides benefit to your attendees. For instance, if you must rent carpeting from the show, select the heaviest padding. After a long day of standing on your feet, you'll enjoy it and so will the attendees.

These tips can help you be more successful at your next show. Just keep in mind no one likes a hard sell anymore. Look for ways you can be of service and you'll quickly make a name for yourself at the business expo.

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