

*A Comprehensive Guide to
Creating Memorable Exhibits*

Skyline[®]

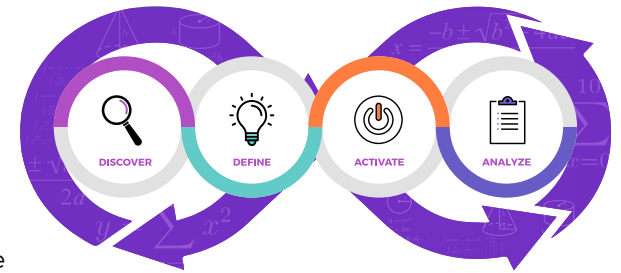


**IT'S MORE
THAN JUST A
TRADE SHOW.**

Welcome to our CMX e-book! We have compiled a few of our blogs into one place to help you achieve greater success at trade shows. First, let me introduce CMX: the fusion of custom modular design, measurable, human-centered experiences, and strategic digital activations. CMX redefines the rules by shifting your pre-show mindset to one that revolves around the attendee and is deeply rooted in your business objectives.

This powerful shift empowers brands like yours to craft truly meaningful, unforgettable, and quantifiable experiences that guarantee a competitive edge on the show floor. With CMX, your pre-show to-do list transforms into an innovative methodology that places the attendee at the core and aligns seamlessly with your business goals. When you embrace CMX, your exhibit experiences:

- Begin with the attendee, ensuring that each moment is expertly maximized to leave a lasting impression.
- Are strategically aligned with your business objectives, guided by a comprehensive strategy that seamlessly connects your exhibit to your overarching goals.
- Can be accurately measured, giving you the ability to prove the return on investment, validate objectives, and quantify the impact of your exhibit experience.



At the heart of CMX lies our proprietary 2D2A methodology, leveraging invaluable insights from exhibit performance to continually enhance the attendee experience and forge deeper connections with your brand. With four distinct stages - **Discover, Define, Activate, and Analyze** - this transformative methodology becomes an indispensable tool for quantifying success, acquiring actionable insights, and refining your exhibiting programs to surpass expectations.

Despite being the largest investment in the marketing budget, many exhibit marketing programs are often treated as mere checklists rather than strategic initiatives. What's more, marketers are often left without the necessary time or tools to measure and optimize their exhibiting efforts. But it doesn't have to be that way. We are now here to transform the status quo.

So, dive into this captivating read and share it with your team. And when you're ready to make your next move on the exhibit floor, let's connect and embark on an exhibit experience together.

Wendy Gibson
Wendy Gibson
CMO





It's not just an activation. It's your **story**.



It's not just a handshake. It's **engagement**.



It's not just a rental. It's **flexibility**.



It's not just a graphic. It's your **brand**.



It's not just a badge scan. It's **pipeline**.



It's not just a layout. It's an attendee **journey**.



It's not just ROI. It's your **future**.

The storyteller has to believe it. If the storyteller doesn't believe it, the audience won't believe it.

- Jim Henson, puppeteer and creator of The Muppets



IT'S NOT JUST AN ACTIVATION. IT'S YOUR STORY

Embracing Your Brand Story
Through Exhibits

By: Valerie Carstens

When it comes to connecting with people and making a lasting impression, there's nothing quite as powerful as brand storytelling. In today's crowded landscape, we crave authentic, meaningful experiences with the brands we love.

That's where brand storytelling comes in. It's not just about selling a product or service – it's about creating an emotional connection that resonates with your audience on a deeper level. In this blog, we'll dive into the world of brand storytelling and show you how to craft a compelling narrative that sets your brand apart from the competition.

What is Brand Storytelling?

Brand storytelling is the art of conveying your brand's values, personality, purpose, and messages through compelling narratives. It goes beyond simply listing features or benefits – it's about tapping into the emotions and aspirations of your target audience. A well-crafted brand story captures attention, engages the senses, and seamlessly weaves together the past, present, and future of your brand in a cohesive narrative.

Mattel is the current star when it comes to captivating audiences through brand storytelling. The company recently made huge strides in brand loyalty, according to a new report from New York-based loyalty and engagement research firm, Brand Keys. Much of this leap is attributed to the box office smash, *The Barbie Movie*. The movie weaves a rich tapestry of narratives, utilizing stunning animation, relatable characters, and engaging plots to leave an indelible mark on viewers.

Crafting Your Brand Story on the Show Floor

As a brand marketer, you know that trade shows provide a unique opportunity to display your brand and connect with potential customers on a personal level. But in a sea of exhibitors, how can you make sure your brand stands out and leaves a lasting impression? The answer lies in telling a captivating brand story through your trade show exhibit.

Here are 6 tips to unlock the power of your brand story and make a big impact at your next trade show.

1. Start with a Captivating Design

Your trade show exhibit is your canvas for brand storytelling. Work closely with your design team to create a visually stunning space that captures the essence of your brand and communicates your value proposition. From high-impact graphics to digital activations, every element of your exhibit should work together to lead your attendees through a journey that tells your brand story. Be sure to share brand messaging documents and brand standards with your exhibit design team.

2. Create a Brand Messaging Platform

A solid brand message platform plays a crucial role in enhancing brand storytelling by providing a strong foundation and effectively conveying the brand's narrative. Brand messages serve as the strategic framework for a brand, defining its purpose, values, target audience, brand promise, and brand voice. It acts as a guiding principle for brand storytelling. When combined with graphic standards, it ensures consistency and coherence in the brand's messaging and communication. A well-defined brand provides a clear identity and helps shape the brand story, enabling it to resonate with trade show attendees on a deeper level.

3. Lean on Digital Activations

Engaging attendees is key to effectively telling your brand story. Use interactive technology to immerse visitors in your brand experience. Incorporate touchscreen kiosks, vibrant LED screens, touchscreen tables, sliding screens, virtual reality, or augmented reality to provide a dynamic and memorable encounter. By giving your audience the opportunity to explore your brand story in an interactive way, you create a stronger connection and leave a lasting impression.

4. Take Attendees on a Journey

The attendee journey is crucial to crafting a cohesive story that resonates with your audience. By literally mapping out the journey within your exhibit, you ensure that every touchpoint aligns with your brand's messaging, values, and overall objectives. A well-planned attendee journey guides people through your exhibit, bringing them closer to your brand and messaging with each step. This includes everything from engaging graphics and interactive elements to well-trained staff who can answer questions, relay key brand messages, and customize the journey to match attendees' interests.

5. Engage Multiple Senses

Trade shows are bustling environments, filled with noise, lights, and distractions. To cut through the noise and leave a lasting impression, you need to engage multiple senses. Consider incorporating hands-on activations and product demonstrations to create a multisensory experience that captivates your audience and solidifies brand messaging. We recently created a hands-on activation where attendees created a custom cocktail infusion kit while learning about the benefits of custom modular exhibits.

6. Present Compelling Content

We've all heard it and know it – content is king, especially when it comes to brand storytelling. It's crucial to clearly communicate your brand's values, benefits, and unique value points. Create compelling content that educates, inspires, and resonates with your target audience. Think infographics, gamification, engaging oversized graphics, and large LED screens that draw people into your booth. Utilize high-impact fabric graphics, captivating videos, and well-crafted messaging to leave a lasting impression and ensure that your brand story is remembered long after the trade show ends.

With these 6 tips in your arsenal, you are well-equipped to create a trade show exhibit that tells your brand story and leaves a lasting impression.





**A handshake is
the silent language
of sincerity.**

- John F. Kennedy, former US President



IT'S NOT JUST A HANDSHAKE. IT'S **ENGAGEMENT**

Networking at Events: Elevating
Connections Beyond Handshakes

By: Brian Lanning

When attending trade shows, it's essential to recognize that the connections you make are not just another business card in your collection; they are the lifeblood of your sales pipeline. The key is to move beyond simple pleasantries and truly engage with attendees.

Let's explore the strategies to help you make the most of your in-booth conversations.

Laying the Foundation: Pre-Show and Post-Show Engagement

Engagement doesn't start when the trade show begins; it starts long before and continues afterward. To lay the foundation for meaningful conversations, consider the following steps:

1. Invite Your Attendees: Personal invitations have a significant impact on driving attendance. Extend personalized invites to contacts within your target audience, sharing the details of your exhibit and giving them a compelling reason to stop by your booth.

2. Plan One-on-One Meetings: Quality over quantity is essential when it comes to meetings. Schedule one-on-one meetings with high-quality attendees and provide them with exclusive content, a sneak peek into a new product launch, or a chance to win a giveaway.

3. Craft Key Brand Messages: Your brand story and key messaging are the foundation of your conversations. Develop messages that communicate the purpose of your exhibit presence, your product and service offerings, and the latest developments in your brand. Captivate your audience with compelling narratives that leave a lasting impression.

4. Train Booth Staff and Sales Team: To ensure seamless engagement before, during, and after the trade show, provide thorough training to your booth staff and sales team. Focus on helping them understand your trade show objectives and brand story. Equip them with knowledge of your products and services so they can guide attendees through the booth experience.

5. Pinpoint Attendee Needs:

Encourage your staff to ask targeted questions to identify attendees' pain points and challenges. Gathering insights will help you understand where your products and services can make a difference and qualify leads effectively. Measure conversations by tracking how much time attendees spend in your exhibit, what they show the most interest in, noting the most promising contacts, and those who return to your booth. This is easily done with the help of digital tools, such as a [universal lead capture system](#).

6. Open-Ended Conversations: Ignite interest by starting conversations with powerful, open-ended questions. Ask attendees about their reasons for attending the show, their current interests, and what they are looking for. Encourage them to share their needs and challenges. I like to ask what is your "Wouldn't it be great if", which will help you align your products and offerings with their requirements.

“Ignite interest by starting conversations with powerful, open-ended questions.”

Continuing the Conversation: Post-Show Engagement

The trade show may end, but the conversation shouldn't. Developing a post-show strategy is essential to maintaining engagement with attendees. Consider the following:

- **Customize Follow-Ups:** Based on the conversations and data collected at the trade show, customize your follow-ups with attendees. Personalize your communications to show that you remember their specific needs and challenges. This approach will nurture high-quality leads and increase the chances of converting them into sales opportunities.
- **Align with your Team:** Share the exhibit experience and the conversations that took place with your sales, marketing, and product teams. This alignment will help them seamlessly continue the dialogue, preventing the need to start from scratch. By providing the necessary context, your team can effectively follow up and build upon the foundation established at the trade show.

Remember, engagement at trade shows goes beyond simple handshakes. It requires a strategic and integrated approach that starts before the trade show, continues during the event, and extends afterward. By implementing these strategies and utilizing the right tools, you can create meaningful connections with attendees and maximize the return on investment from your trade show participation.

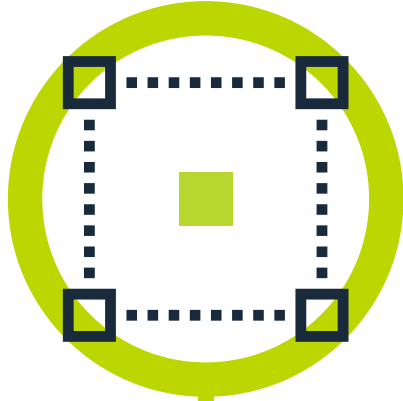
So, when attending your next trade show, remember it's not just a handshake – it's engagement.



**“The trade show
may end, but the
conversation
shouldn’t.”**

**The measure of
intelligence is the
ability to change.**

- Albert Einstein, physicist



IT'S NOT JUST A BOOTH RENTAL. IT'S **FLEXIBILITY**

How Renting Exhibit Structures
Provides Adaptability to Marketers

By: Brian Lanning

In the fast-paced world of trade show marketing, staying ahead of the curve is critical. With ever-changing trends, dynamic competitive environments, client needs, and budgetary changes, custom exhibit rentals are a secret weapon.

Beyond the ‘Kit’

Show Exhibitor Kit rentals are often made from low-quality materials that are easily damaged or worn. Modern [custom exhibit rentals](#) provide a far superior option to the old “kit rentals” offered by trade show contractors. They are typically constructed from high-quality materials, are designed to withstand the rigors of trade shows, and provide greater design flexibility. As a result, modern custom exhibit rentals are becoming a premier option for businesses seeking to amplify their brand presence because they offer various design options to create bespoke exhibits without a custom build.

Holistic Approach to Exhibits

Renting exhibit structures allows marketers to take a comprehensive approach to their exhibiting programs. Combining exhibit rentals, owned structures, and custom elements in a hybrid exhibit design can significantly elevate your brand.

Begin with a comprehensive exhibit strategy that includes every aspect of your exhibit marketing program. Considering your complete program, from the initial planning stages to the post-event evaluation, ensures that all elements work together cohesively to achieve the desired objectives.

Rentals make a substantial contribution towards optimizing your exhibiting program.

“Modern custom exhibit rentals are becoming a premier option for businesses seeking to amplify their brand presence.”

Purchasing an exhibit can be a notable upfront investment, especially for larger or more elaborate booths. Renting an exhibit reduces this upfront cost, allowing you to allocate more of your marketing budget to other initiatives. Also, with rentals, you have the flexibility to scale up for specific shows and scale down for others.

Flexibility to Gain Insight

Flexibility to test and adapt is another benefit of renting exhibit properties. With rentals, marketers can experiment with different booth layouts, graphics, and messaging without making as significant of a financial investment. This allows you to gather valuable data and analytics to inform future decisions and ensure your exhibiting program remains fresh and dynamic.

Optimizing Budget and Resources with Strategic Planning

Renting also eliminates the costs of purchasing, storing, and maintaining owned exhibit properties. Keep in mind that custom elements, including high-impact graphics, are still owned and standard fees for installation, dismantle and rigging may still be required.

You may consider a hybrid design that combines your owned properties with rental elements and allows you to refresh your booth look and feel without investing in a completely new property. This budget reduction allows you to focus on other marketing efforts, such as staffing your booth and engaging with attendees.

Strategic planning is vital to [maximizing the benefits of rentals](#). Working with a partner that offers a turnkey solution is essential. They should assess your specific needs, develop a customized plan, and handle the entire process, ensuring a seamless and stress-free experience.

Rentals are Green

Sustainability is one of the objectives to consider when planning your overall exhibition strategy. By opting for rentals, our clients are reducing their carbon footprint and minimizing the need for extensive shipping. With rental exhibits, resources and hardware can be reused, leading to a significant decrease in waste and environmental impact. Renting may also eliminate the need to manufacture new materials for each event, lowering the consumption of natural resources like wood, metal, and plastics. However, this is only one consideration, as there are many choices for making exhibiting more sustainable.

Renting exhibit structures is no longer just about saving money; it's about empowering marketers to be more agile, creative, and data-driven in their approach to exhibiting. By embracing rentals, marketers can optimize their budgets, test new ideas, and adapt to changing market conditions, leading to more successful and impactful exhibiting programs.

“Rentals make a substantial contribution towards optimizing your exhibiting program.”





**A picture tells a
thousand words.**

- Frederick R. Barnard



IT'S NOT JUST A GRAPHIC. IT'S YOUR **BRAND**

How Exhibit Structure
Graphics Embody Your Brand

By: Matt King

Trade shows are the perfect platform to connect with potential clients, generate leads, and amplify your brand. However, with every exhibitor vying for attention, it's essential that your exhibit stands out from the crowd.

How do you make sure your exhibit reflects your brand and draws in attendees as they pass by? An essential step is to focus on your exhibit graphics. It's a simple and efficient way to level up your exhibiting game.

When executed precisely, eye-catching visuals have the power to attract attendees, enticing them to stop and discover more about your products or services. And when poorly done, they can negatively affect not only the number of attendees visiting your exhibit, but also your brand equity. With a keen eye, you can elevate your exhibit graphics to a brand-changing level.

Pictures can instantly communicate a great deal. And people generally remember visuals more than words too. This is because visuals are processed by the human brain much faster than text. In fact, our brains can process an image in as little as 13 milliseconds, according to MIT.

There are a few reasons why visuals are so effective. First, they are more engaging and attention-grabbing than text. Second, they can create a more emotional connection with the viewer. Third, they can be used to tell a story more effectively than text alone.

A study by the University of California, Berkeley found that people were able to remember 65% of the information they saw in images compared to just 10% of the information they read in text. This study also found that people were more likely to remember information that was accompanied by both images and text than information that was presented in text alone.

So, what does this mean for your exhibit?

It means that a little focus on the visuals within your exhibit pays off in spades. Exhibit graphics and images wield mighty influence on a brand's perception and are effective in the following:

- **Increasing Brand Awareness:** Through captivating graphics and images, brand visibility and memorability soar. An excellently crafted visual or short headline can create a robust visual identity, etching your brand into the minds of potential clients. Carefully curated graphics printed on premium fabric garner attention and break through the noise of the show floor.
- **Conveying Brand Personality:** Graphics and images showcase your brand's voice and personality. Use vibrant, colorful graphics for a fun and playful brand persona, while more subtle and sophisticated visuals convey elegance and professionalism. Talk with your designer about how to reflect your brand and tie your exhibit to other marketing campaigns.
- **Evoking Emotions:** Graphics and images can evoke emotions in attendees. For example, beaming faces can create a sense of positivity and connection while breathtaking scenery can evoke tranquility and relaxation. Use images to connect with targeted attendees on an emotional level.
- **Telling a Story:** Graphics and images enable you to narrate your brand's story. By showcasing your products in real-world settings, you can convey endorsement, creating a stronger brand-consumer connection. Or you can focus on corporate brand messaging and attributes with curated photos.



Overall, the strategic use of graphics and images elevates brand visibility, memorability, and relatability, forging a profound impact on your target audience.

“The visuals on your exhibit structure are not just graphics; they embody your brand.”

Eight Guidelines to Creating Exhibit Graphics:

When it comes to graphics for your exhibit, the smallest details can make the biggest impact. It's important to stand back and take in the full visual while also looking closely at the details. Implement these guidelines in your next exhibit.

1. Align with Brand Identity: Ensure graphics and images reflect your brand's values and personality, maintaining consistency across all visual elements. Share your brand standards with your exhibit design team and use consistent colors, fonts, and image styles throughout your exhibiting program and marketing campaigns.

2. Start with a clear understanding of your brand messaging: Once you have a clear understanding of your brand messaging, your exhibit design team can help translate it into high-impact graphics. Craft clear and concise messaging that communicates precisely what you do and why attendees should care. Avoid overwhelming graphics with excessive text. Instead, focus on delivering your key messages in a clear and concise manner for maximum impact. Often, less is more when it comes to graphics.

3. Speak to Your Ideal Persona: Identify your ideal client persona or profile and tailor your messaging and graphics to them. Focusing on one client profile enhances communication and increases the connection with your brand.

4. Tier Messaging for Attention-Grabbing Branding: Strategically position your corporate brand at the highest plane, creating a focal point and guiding attendees to your exhibit. Place product messaging at the next level down. And finally, more detailed, show-specific messaging at eye level. Remember that attendees will be standing in front of lower graphics. To ensure visibility, place all important information at eye level or above, avoiding lower placements that may be obstructed.

5. High-Quality Standards: Utilize high-quality materials and printing methods that ensure your graphics appear professional and can withstand the rigors of a trade show. Ask questions about the quality and condition of machinery and experience of the staff running them. For the best color match, choose an exhibit partner that prints all your graphics at the same location, on the same machine. Once installed, inspect the graphics to ensure there are no wrinkles or scuffs, and that they properly affix to the exhibit structure.

6. Don't Forget Digital: Today, there are many choices for including digital activations in your exhibit, and LED screens can really make graphics come to life! Including digital touchpoints opens a whole new level of engagement opportunities, including video and touchscreens. Plus, the innate measurement capabilities of digital are a game-changer.

7. Measure Effectiveness: Speaking of measurement, it is no longer limited to only digital engagements. With the use of anonymous motion-tracking technology positioned strategically around your booth, you can measure how long attendees are looking at specific graphics and how much time they are spending at various stops in the attendee journey. This provides invaluable insight for continually improving your exhibiting program.

8. The “Three Sets of Eyes” Rule: Having three people – or sets of eyes – proof graphics before printing is a marketing standard that ensures the quality and accuracy of your exhibit materials. By having three different people proofread your work, you can catch a wider range of errors.

The visuals on your exhibit structure are not just graphics; they embody your brand. By aligning visuals with your brand identity, crafting powerful storytelling elements, and evoking the right emotions, you'll forge a deep connection between your brand and your target audience. Combine these strategies with quality materials, best-in-class printing, and clear messaging to make the most of your exhibiting program.

**Strategy without tactics
is the slowest route to
victory. Tactics without
strategy is the noise
before defeat.**

- Sun Tzu



IT'S NOT JUST A BADGE SCAN. IT'S **PIPELINE**

Leveraging Technology to Generate
Qualified Leads at Trade Shows

By: Chris Ybarra

Exhibiting at a trade show is a great face-to-face opportunity to connect with potential customers, highlight your products or services, and generate leads. However, many companies make the mistake of solely relying on badge scans as their lead generation strategy. While this may provide basic contact information, it does not necessarily mean these leads are qualified or interested in your offerings. To truly make the most out of exhibiting, it's important to have a comprehensive lead generation plan in place including digital tools, such as Universal Lead Capture, to generate qualified leads and maximize your sales pipeline.

Merely scanning badges at a trade show is equivalent to putting a bunch of business cards into a fishbowl. Sure, you might have a stack of cards at the end of the day, but there is no guarantee that the CEO or sales team will consider them qualified leads. Capturing leads at trade shows requires a more strategic approach. Here are four keys and tips to help you make the most of your trade show leads.



1. Understand what makes a qualified lead.

This requires taking the time to develop a target persona, which involves exploring the pain points and characteristics of your ideal customer. By understanding who your target attendee is, you can determine the criteria for a qualified lead. Understanding your target attendee is essential because it allows you to focus your efforts on individuals who are genuinely interested in your products or services. You can avoid wasting valuable time and resources on leads that are unlikely to be converted into customers.

- **TIP:** A best practice is to have an agreed upon definition between sales and marketing of what makes a marketing qualified lead (MQL). An MQL is determined by a list of specific criteria to ensure that you are effectively targeting the right individuals at trade shows. This will ultimately help you maximize your pipeline and increase your chances of converting leads into loyal customers.

2. Take a holistic approach by creating an Attendee Journey.

To truly maximize your lead generation efforts at trade shows, it's important to take a holistic approach and consider the entire attendee journey. This means looking at how you can engage potential leads before the show, during their time in your booth, and even after the show is over. By integrating a [Universal Lead Capture System \(ULC\)](#) into your CRM (Customer Relationship Management) database or marketing automation platform, you can seamlessly capture leads and automatically send them relevant information, such as brochures or follow-up emails. This not only streamlines the lead capture process, but also allows you to nurture leads and stay connected with them long after the trade show ends.

- **TIP:** Develop a well-planned attendee journey that guides attendees through your exhibit, bringing them closer to your brand and messaging with each step.
- **TIP:** Your brand story and key messaging are the foundation of your conversations. Develop messages for each step of your attendee journey. Woven together, these messages will captivate your audience and leave a lasting impression.

3. Use Universal Lead Capture.

Once you understand what makes an MQL and have a well-developed attendee journey, you can genuinely appreciate the value of a Universal Lead Capture System (ULC). ULC integrates with the event management platform's registration system to retrieve attendee information. When an exhibitor scans a badge or enters an email address, the system creates a lead record and populates it with the attendee's data. This enables exhibitors to qualify and nurture leads using Marketing Automation or CRM tools. You can collect and manage leads using various devices including mobile devices, tablets, and laptops, with your entire team accessing the same information and capturing leads both on and off the show floor.

One of the great advantages of using a Universal Lead Capture System (ULC) is the ability to instantly access your data. The data is incredible; you can see how many times attendees engage with your exhibit, helping you in the lead qualification process. With many ULC programs, you can review and score the leads you have captured at the end of each day, allowing you to stay organized and track your progress. When selecting a ULC system, it's important to choose one that is easy to use so you can quickly train your staff to capture leads efficiently.

- **TIP:** Personalize the questionnaire and integrate it into the attendee journey, gathering more qualification data at each hands-on or digital activation.
- **TIP:** To maximize efficiency, train your staff to team up, with one person engaging in conversation while the other inputs notes into the system. This collaborative approach will ensure a seamless lead capture process and set you up for success in your trade show strategy.
- **TIP:** At the end of each day, review all the leads you gathered that day, add any missing relevant information, and if they meet your defined criteria, qualify them on the show floor.

4. Don't let your leads go stale!


To generate pipeline and increase sales, it is crucial to gather high-quality information from your attendees and deliver it to your sales team as quickly as possible. Trade show leads are often more qualified than leads generated from other marketing tactics, but they also have a short shelf life. With ULC, you get qualified leads into the hands of the sales team more quickly and efficiently. Plus, with detailed notes, sales can continue the conversation rather than starting over.

By understanding what makes a qualified lead and implementing a comprehensive lead generation strategy, you can maximize your pipeline and increase your chances of converting leads into loyal customers. It's important to move beyond just scanning badges and utilize digital tools to streamline the lead capture process and ensure that you are targeting the right individuals. By taking a comprehensive approach to the attendee journey, you can personalize the questionnaire and gather more qualification data, making your lead generation efforts even more effective.

- **TIP:** Include the booth staffer in the first post-show sales meeting to ensure a great handoff and connection.

Don't underestimate the power of a comprehensive lead generation plan and digital tools because it's not just a badge scan; it's your pipeline to revenue.

“Capturing leads at trade shows requires a strategic approach.”



**It is not the
destination, but the
journey, that matters.**

- T.S. Eliot



IT'S NOT JUST A LAYOUT. IT'S AN ATTENDEE JOURNEY

How to Develop a Compelling
Attendee Journey

By: Adam Deming

Capturing the attention and interest of attendees at trade shows requires a well-designed and thoughtfully executed attendee journey. By mapping the journey throughout your exhibit, you can ensure that every interaction aligns with your brand's messaging, values, and objectives. Here are the essential steps to develop a compelling attendee journey that maximizes engagement and creates a positive in-booth experience.

“Capturing the attention of attendees requires a well-designed and thoughtfully executed attendee journey.”

Step 1: Define Your Goals

Clearly outline measurable objectives for the trade show that align with your business objectives.

Objectives often include lead generation, brand awareness, growing the sales pipeline, product launches, or networking. Understand your target audience and what you want them to take away from the experience. By setting clear, measurable goals and understanding the needs of your target attendees, you can align your exhibit to achieve business results.

Step 2: Map Out the Exhibit Experience

Familiarize yourself with the trade show venue layout and formulate a design that aligns with your business and marketing objectives. Determine the flow of traffic and identify high-traffic areas. Think of your booth as a board game, strategically guiding attendees through an informative journey that showcases your brand identity effectively.

Step 3: Create a Captivating Design

Design an attractive and inviting exhibit that reflects your brand identity. Use clear, high-impact graphics to communicate your key messages. Work with your designer to create a visually stunning space that captures the essence of your brand and communicates your value proposition.

Step 4: Engaging Entrance and Interactive Elements

Create an enticing entrance to draw attendees into your booth, digitally through pre-show marketing and physically at the trade show. Incorporate eye-catching visuals, interactive technology, and product demonstrations to engage attendees and immerse them in your brand experience. Consider incorporating games or contests to encourage participation.

Step 5: Think in Zones

Divide your exhibit design into zones with specific messaging and assign booth staff based on their expertise. Each staff member should collect information about attendees and guide them through the journey. This ensures relevant messaging at every turn and accurate data collection for lead qualification. A well-designed universal lead capture tool will help you gather and collect relevant information.

Step 6: Train Booth Staff and Sales Team

Provide thorough training to your booth staff and sales team to ensure seamless engagement before, during, and after the trade show. Focus on helping them understand your trade show objectives and brand story. Equip them with knowledge of your products and services so they can effectively guide attendees through the booth experience.

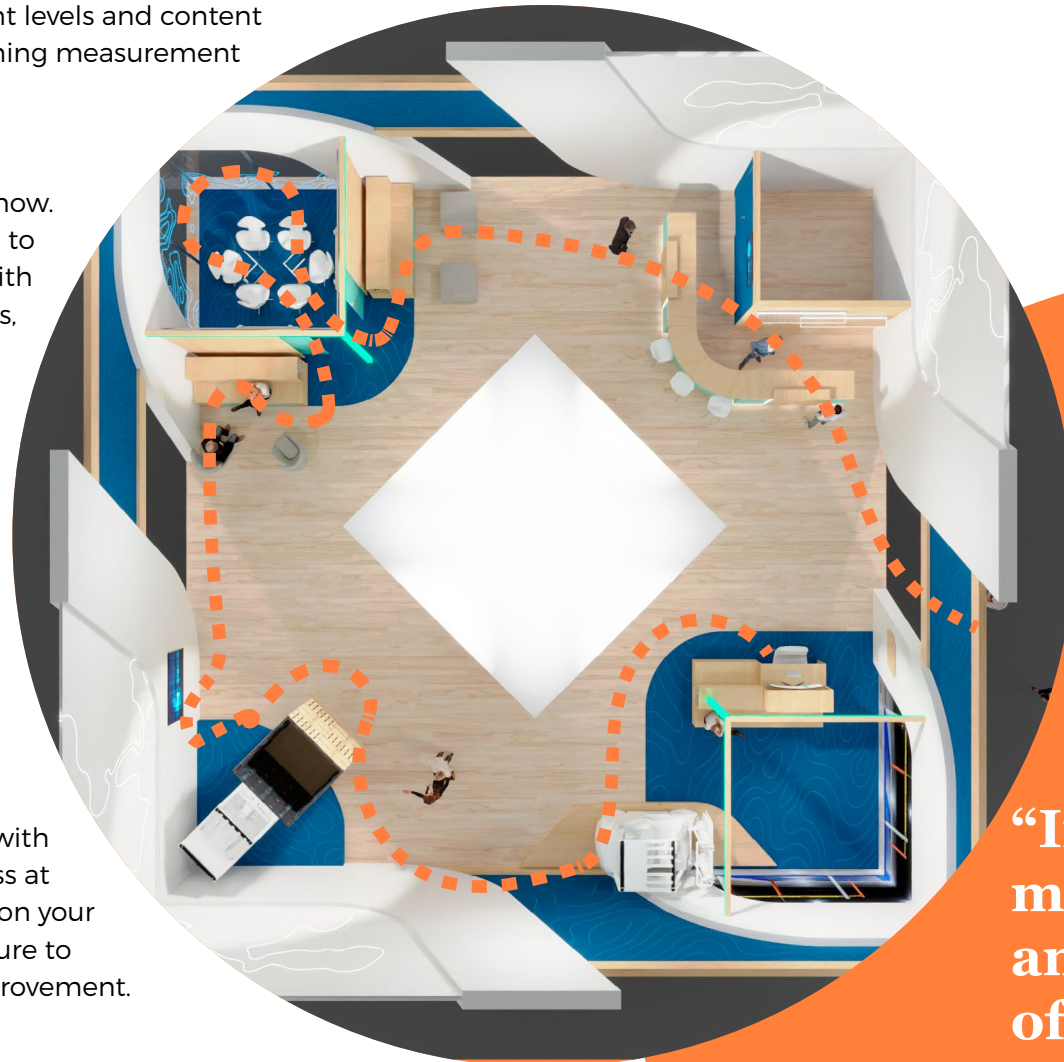
Step 7: Collect Data (and Insights) Along the Way

Incorporate measurement as an integral part of your attendee journey. Ask questions at each touchpoint to determine success metrics and capture essential data, such as engagement levels and content performance. Streamline reporting by aligning measurement with your exhibit and business objectives.

Step 8: Carry It Forward

The attendee journey continues after the show. Develop a strategy for post-event follow-up to nurture leads and maintain connections with potential clients. Customize your follow-ups, outline the following steps, and provide personalized communications based on the conversations and data collected at the trade show. Ensure alignment with your sales, marketing, and product teams to continue the dialogue seamlessly.

Creating a well-designed attendee journey through your trade show exhibit is essential for maximizing engagement and creating a positive experience. By following these steps and continually assessing and refining your approach, you can create a cohesive story that resonates with your audience and leads to ongoing success at trade shows. Adapt these strategies based on your specific goals and target audience, make sure to leverage your data to drive continuous improvement.



“Incorporate measurement as an integral part of your attendee journey.”

**Insights without
action are useless.
Action without
insights is reckless.**

- Peter Drucker



IT'S NOT JUST ROI. IT'S YOUR **FUTURE**

Transforming Exhibiting Programs
Through Measurement

By: Niru Desai

Despite representing the most significant investment in the marketing budget, most exhibit marketing programs are often treated as mere checklists rather than strategic initiatives. To compound the issue, marketers are not provided with the time or tools to measure and enhance their exhibiting program. However, by embracing a data-driven approach and incorporating measurement into the attendee journey, marketers can understand and enhance the value of their exhibiting program. Below are six key benefits of effective exhibit measurement:

1. Gaining Actionable Data: Analyze, Optimize, and Streamline

Measuring trade show booth performance allows you to gain valuable insights and make informed decisions to enhance efficiency. By analyzing data on engagement levels, content performance, and various stages of the attendee journey, you can identify areas for improvement and optimize your exhibit. This data-driven approach eliminates guesswork and ensures that you allocate resources strategically to maximize your impact on the show floor.

2. Uncovering Insights for Growth: Get Answers and Provide Direction

Understanding what works and what doesn't is critical to continuous improvement. Measurement helps you move beyond surface-level observations and uncover concrete insights by asking why and delving deeper into data. By exploring factors such as content engagement, visitor dwell time, and booth traffic around specific touchpoints, you can identify the most effective elements of your booth and make data-driven decisions to refine your strategy.

3. Justifying the Value: Demonstrating ROI and Impact

One of the most significant advantages of measuring performance is demonstrating the ROI and impact of your exhibiting efforts. Quantifying leads generated, tracking sales conversions, and justifying

“Measuring booth performance empowers you to refine your strategy and optimize your resources.”

future event budgets become seamless with comprehensive measurement. By presenting precise data on ROI and ROE (return on experience) you secure buy-in and resources for future events and gain a competitive edge in the market.

4. Refine Strategy: Enhancing Engagement and Results

Measuring trade show booth performance empowers you to refine your strategy and optimize your resources. By analyzing data and engagement metrics, you can pinpoint the most compelling aspects of your event, such as specific activations, content, or design elements. This enables you to tailor future events to meet attendee needs and interests better, resulting in improved engagement and exceptional results show over show and year over year.

5. Building Brand Awareness and Engagement: Beyond the Trade Show Floor

Trade shows are not just about what happens on the show floor. You can also track brand reach and sentiment of show participation through social media mentions, press coverage, and sentiment analysis. Identifying key influencers and nurturing leads post-show ensures that your exhibiting efforts have a lasting impact, building strong relationships and brand loyalty.

6. Informing Other Tactics: Data-Driven Decision-Making

Gathering data and insights from trade show booths allows you to inform other marketing tactics and business strategy. The voice of the customer (VOC) that emerges from trade shows can be integrated into product development, business strategy, promotions, and sales enablement. By leveraging the data and insights gathered, you empower your organization to make informed decisions that align with customer preferences and market trends. You can take this one step further by focusing on competitive intelligence and research for product development at various trade shows.

Keys to Effective Measurement:

Now that we have covered the benefits, let's look at how to get you there.

Start with Your Business Objectives

Successful measurement begins with a clear focus on your business objectives. This helps define the specific metrics that matter most to your organization.

Connect Data to Booth Design

Gone are the days of clunky data capture mechanisms that disrupt the flow of your exhibit. Instead, seamlessly integrate advanced data capture tools into your booth, streamlining attendee engagement while effortlessly gathering crucial information.

Involve the Right People & Collaborate for Maximum Results

To elevate your measurement efforts, engaging key stakeholders in the process is vital. Connect with sales leadership, product development, corporate strategy teams, and other business partners. A collaborative approach ensures that your measurement efforts capture valuable insights across your organization. Collaboration with your exhibit partner is also crucial. Make sure that team includes representatives from strategy, design, digital, measurement and exhibit services (transportation, asset management, I&D, etc.) – who are critical in ensuring it all comes together on the show floor. We can't overstate the importance of having the right people at the table.

Leverage a Framework and Dashboard

Effective measurement requires a structured framework and a user-friendly dashboard to communicate actionable insights. With a dashboard, you gain visibility into the highlights that matter most to key stakeholders, enabling seamless decision-making and paving the way for success.

Measuring trade show booth performance is not just retrospective analysis; it's about forward-thinking and building a solid foundation for future success. Adopting an insights-driven approach that leverages data and proven strategy can elevate your exhibiting program to new heights.



About Skyline

Working with brands of all sizes, Skyline Exhibits partners with marketers to create brand-elevating trade show experiences through modular structures, digital activations, high-impact graphics, custom fabrication, and comprehensive services. With a strong focus on excellence, Skyline makes great design accessible to everyone. To learn more, visit skyline.com.

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About CMX

Combining custom modular design with measurable, human-centered experiences and digital activation, CMX is a new approach to trade shows that helps brands create exhibits that capture attention, drive engagement, and deliver business results.

To learn more visit skyline.com/cmx

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