



So you Want Good Results from Exhibiting at a Show?

from: **Adam Baggs of Soaring PR and Emma Swales of Marketing ESP**

Making the most of marketing and PR activities will ensure that you make the most of your presence at the exhibition.

Once the organisers have done their job, it is up to the individual exhibitors.

Emma Swales of exhibition marketing specialists, Marketingesp Ltd: "If the organisers get it right in terms of visitor profiling then the exhibitors only have themselves to blame if visitors don't visit their stand.

Floor space, location, stand design and staff all play their part in attracting visitors but even exhibitors on smaller budgets can make a significant impact.

"An exhibitor has **less than three seconds** to make an impact as visitors walk past their stand.

Thoughtful and planned use of pre-show marketing and PR means key messages are already cemented in their minds, making those 3 seconds far more effective.

Then it's down to the **interaction of the stand staff with the visitors** and the use of crowd-pullers.

Use pre-show marketing and PR activity to make visitors already aware that you are exhibiting and give them reasons to visit you."

Soaring PR's Adam Baggs: "Using PR at the right time in the build up to a show directly affects people's awareness of your presence, stand, new products or indeed offers you are making.

By reading and hearing about you or seeing promotional material in advance, visitors will either plan a trip to your stand or be far more aware of what you offer when they catch a glimpse of you at a show.

The opportunities to promote your presence at a show are vast but the simplest starting point is the organiser – so talk to them. **They need case studies and stories to help them** promote the show as a whole so get on board and benefit from their experience and media links.

Exhibitors should also try to get involved in the new or fringe elements of a show, such as conferences – they offer yet more opportunities for PR and profiling.

Beyond that it is a case of seeking your own opportunities, understanding what media your potential clients are exposed to and achieving coverage where it is going to have the most impact for you and your attendance at the show."

Swales concludes: "**Pre show promotion and marketing can take many forms, including PR, advertising, direct mail, viral or email and telemarketing** but it must, like any campaign be planned carefully and thoughtfully with both your goals and your target audience in mind.

An exhibition marketing plan is straight forward enough to put together but it needs to be done well in advance and that means six months before the show. Too many exhibitors plan their attendance in the last few weeks (or even the week before!) and expect miracles."

The actual show days are obviously vital to achieving exhibiting goals but the right application of pre-show promotion certainly shortens the odds and makes life a little easier.

The exhibitor, like any craftsman has many different tools available to him, they all have a purpose and if they are used in the right sequence the outcome will be successful. It is simply a matter of balance.

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