7 Essentials for Your Next Trade Show Booth

Planning for a trade show requires organizational skills as well as marketing skills - you don't want the perfect trade show exhibit that no one visits! Of course, you need to bring the basic trade show supplies - power strips, signage, business cards swag. Here are 7 essential must-haves for your trade show checklist.



- 1. CTA: What's your trade show Call to Action? Everyone knows your website needs a CTA. A trade show booth needs a hook - a CTA - to catch attendee's eye and lure them into your booth.
- 2. Mints, candies or gum: At trade shows, everyone is meeting face-to-face - and breath-to-breath. A big bowl of mints will entice passerbys to enter your booth to snag a couple of mints. Tip: put the bowl of mints inside the booth so visitors actually need to enter your booth, rather than reach in as they keep walking past.
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- 3. Chairs: Have 1 or 2 chairs stashed in a corner to use if a short chat turns into an actual sales presentation. Your visitor will welcome the chance to sit, and it will encourage them to stay longer. When the convo is over, stash the chairs away - you don't want your booth to become a resting spot for weary attendees!
- 4. Smartphone: Most people don't carry pens any more - even to meetings! Creative use of a smartphone camera can replace many 'write it down' functions: take a photo of a name tag, text your contact info,
    - Tip: Make sure your bring your charging cord so your phone is always ready to go!
    - Pro tip: Take a photo of industry experts or important clients in front of your branded booth for marketing.
- 5. Hand sanitizer: It's cold and flu and virus season - and trade shows are hotbeds of handshaking and coughing. Have hand sanitizer stashed away for your use - and maybe a big bottle to share!
- 6. Credit Card Reader: Be prepared to accept a new order during the trade show. Have a credit card reader or phone app than can process payments.
- 7. Have a gimmick: Your branded signage and displays are great - but so are everyone else's. Come up with a way to catch their attention - something that makes you stand out from the crowd in a good way so people actually look at your booth -

and remember it. Swag and giveaways are good - but can you come up with something more creative? Know your audience: what would interest your key target audience?

- Hold a contest: Be sure to make the prize interesting and attractive enough to lure participation.
- Make them smile: I often display a bobblehead of me in my trade show booths - it catches the attention, gets a smile - and gets remembered.
- Schedule a stunt or event: Eventually, all booths start to look alike... except for a few standouts. Bring out the unexpected at a time you know there is high attendance - and high levels of boredom.

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