

Successful Exhibiting

Exhibitions can be a powerful marketing opportunity, being one of the few occasions where we get face to face opportunities with large numbers of our prospects. It's a shame then that limited planning often results in a poor return on investment.

This is partly because running an exhibition usually costs MUCH more than your initial estimate and can take up a huge amount of time (and how much is that worth); and it's partly because once we get there we don't make the most of the opportunity.

So to help here's our top ten actions points to help you get the most from your exhibitions. Also you can download our Exhibition Planner from <http://www.mblsolutions.co.uk/exhibiting.html>

Want some expert help?

You only get one chance to shine at an exhibition so you need to invest to get it right. Check out our exhibition packages or give us a call to discuss your needs.

How we can help:

Brochure and display design and print, or full event planning.

Ring 0191 250 4530

MBL Solutions top ten Exhibition tips:

1. Check out the exhibition first:

What is the history of the event and how did it perform last year? Speak to a previous exhibitor or visitor. Find out how many visitors there were and what their profile is (is there a better way you could target these people?). Who's already committed to booking this year? What spaces (think location and traffic) are available? What support will they provide and what will be the event marketing? What are the rules and when can you set up and break down the exhibition?

2. Check your resources

Can you afford the money (see budget later). Do you have the time to effectively plan the event? Do you have the right staff available at that time? Do you have the expertise?

3. Visit events and get ideas

See what other businesses do and what you feel about their stands and style.

4. Create a Project Plan

Decide early who is going to be in charge, who the exhibition team will be and set up a project plan. To help you we have our own downloadable [Exhibition Planner](#).

5. Budget

Work out what you can afford and what the event will cost. Obviously this includes stand space, equipment hire and displays, but also remember travel, hotels and expenses, brochure reprints and that your time is a valuable and limited asset. Think about the costs of promotions, incentives and giveaways. Exhibition budgets have a tendency to creep upwards!

6. Set targets and objectives

This should be realistic and measurable and make sure each staff member knows what their own targets are. We usually recommend that you should be trying to get leads and not sales initially, as you can spend an hour trying to get a sale when you could be capturing 20 leads or capturing data. You need to know what your sales conversion rate is likely to be. Then you can estimate the cost of these sales based on your budget above. Does this stack up against other sales methods?

7. Pre event Marketing

You should try to drive as much traffic to your stand as possible and you might want to incentivize visitors to your stand. See if you can get a database of previous visitors. Don't forget that it is often a good idea to encourage existing customers and prospects to your stand to re-enforce your relationship with them. Invite key press to your stand. Integrate your website into the marketing activities.

8. Be professional, interesting, inviting and proactive

What are you going to do to make your stand exciting, and eye-catching? Good design is crucial here. Make sure your stand and display makes people want approach you to talk to you and does not present barriers. Are your team trained, welcoming and proactive – you don't want people walking past your stand.

9. Record your leads and CAPTURE DATA

You're going to be busy – make sure you have means to effectively and quickly capture warm leads. And make sure that you have a method for capturing interested parties through a competition or draw.

10. Post event marketing

It's so easy to capture leads and data and then not follow them up. Plan your post event marketing in advance. This might include a press releases, telemarketing or email shots.