

Exhibitions Work

The case for a powerful,
cost-effective marketing medium



Exhibitions

Business doesn't get any more direct than this

The effective part of the marketing mix.

It's true whether you sell industrial power plants or sticky puddings: the better you know your customer - and the better your customer knows you - the more likely you are to make that first sale and the increasingly profitable sales that follow.

If you had to design from the ground up a marketing medium that's perfectly suited to this kind of relationship building and customer retention, it would probably look remarkably like exhibitions, the most direct form of direct marketing ever.

Top marketers in virtually every industry have known it for years. The right exhibition is the only marketing medium that:

- brings your most active prospects and customers to you
- allows you to demonstrate products, answer questions, overcome objections and meet your market face-to-face
- harnesses all five senses to drive home your messages
- allows you to further virtually all of your marketing goals at the same time: from long-term brand building to immediate sales; from researching the market to generating media coverage; from launching new products to entertaining loyal customers; from educating prospects to collecting high-quality leads.

These are just a few of the things that exhibitions, and only exhibitions, bring to your marketing efforts in a measurably cost-effective way.

Of course, exhibitions are only part of the entire marketing mix. But, as more and more marketers are learning each year (and as an ever-increasing body of research supports), they're the most effective part.

'Is face-to-face marketing important':



In a recent survey 87% of marketers said that face-to-face marketing is important to their company.

[SOURCE: BENCHMARK RESEARCH 1999]



discovered it
handled it
bought it
felt it
learned it

I saw it at an Exhibition.

tried it
heard it
touched it
tasted it
smelled it
noted it
understood it
squeezed it
liked it

Eye-to-eye marketing.

Don't let anything get between you and your prospects.

When it comes to the total quality of a marketing interaction, nothing holds a candle to exhibitions. Ever see one of your print ads turn a hardened sceptic into an evangelist? Ever see a radio spot absorb an objection and turn it into a sale?

'Exhibitions are essential for launching our new brand of designer eyewear. No other medium lets us meet a vast number of potential customers face-to-face - except travelling around the world knocking on doors!'

PETER BOOTH BOOTH & BRUCE ENGLAND

'An exhibition was the natural place to launch our Nivea For Men range. Overcoming men's resistance to grooming products is a face-to-face job.'

JO EDWARDS SENIOR PRODUCT MANAGER NIVEA FOR MEN

'You never have a better chance of getting your message across than at an exhibition. All those months of running ads and sending mailings and, suddenly, there in front of you is the customer and at last marketing has a human dimension.'

ARNOLD VINK HEAD OF MARKETING XEROX ENGINEERING SYSTEMS

Fact!

When asked what exhibitions do better than any other medium, this is what marketers came up with:

- Face-to-face communication
- Interaction with people
- Meeting pre-qualified prospects
- Demonstrating products
- Direct communication
- High-quality communications

[SOURCE: BENCHMARK RESEARCH 1999]



'We use shows to meet lots of customers and prospects from the UK and abroad in one place over a few days. It's excellent value.'

SYLVIA WARMAN XTOL (ELECTRONIC RESPONSE SYSTEMS)

'Exhibitions are an important part of our marketing mix - and the only part that lets us demonstrate our lift trucks to potential customers. We also use exhibitions as platforms for generating coverage in the major trade magazines.'

BOB HELBERT LANSING LINDE

Concentrated marketing.

Meet a self-selected core of buyers.

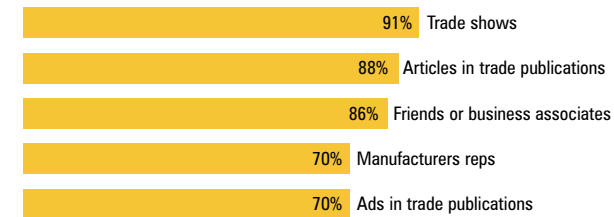
Think about your hottest prospects. What is their most valuable commodity? Their time. That's why, in business-to-business markets, it can be so hard for your sales team to get in to see them. And in consumer markets, the visitors are spending their leisure time, which is arguably even more precious.

Given the value of their time, what does it say about a prospect who invests a day to visit an exhibition? It says they're motivated. It says they have a reason to be there. It says they're serious buyers in active buying mode.

This is the power of exhibitions: no other medium concentrates your efforts on the most active buyers in your market at any given time.

Decision-makers Prefer Trade Shows

'Extremely useful source of purchasing information':



[SOURCE: SIMMONS MARKET RESEARCH, PROVIDED BY THE CENTRE FOR EXHIBITION INDUSTRY RESEARCH, USA]

Versatile marketing.

Whatever your goals, exhibitions can take you there.

Because they represent the marketplace in one place and time - bringing together suppliers, buyers, purchase influencers, consultants and the media - exhibitions are an incredibly versatile marketing medium.

If you want to launch new products, generate media coverage, build brand awareness, generate leads and retain existing customers, exhibitions let you do it all in one bold stroke.

Maybe we should call them 'Flexhibitions'.

Marketers surveyed reported the effectiveness of exhibitions for achieving a wide variety of goals.

'Exhibitions are effective for':

- Personal selling to potential buyers
- Building prospect databases
- Building relationships with existing customers
- Educating the market
- Generating sales leads
- Demonstrating products or services
- Generating media exposure
- Building brand awareness
- Launching new products
- Positioning company as market leader

[SOURCE: BENCHMARK RESEARCH 1999]

'Exhibitions help us generate a significant amount of new business, raise our profile and educate the market about the breadth of services we offer. It's all about targeted versatility.'

PIPPA MALLINSON OCS GROUP

Cost-effective marketing.

Exhibitions deliver measurable value.

The days of using exhibitions as 'flag waving exercises' are long gone. Today's best marketers expect exhibitions to deliver a significant return on investment - in measurable terms, including cost per lead and cost per sale. Many even track the value of each exhibition over three, six and twelve months (after all, a single new customer can represent huge lifetime value to your company).

Fact!

80% of trade show visitors are personally involved in buying the products or services on show. And 29% never see sales reps other than at exhibitions!

[SOURCE: AEO EXHIBITION EFFECTIVENESS RESEARCH. MULTI-SHOW STUDY 1999]

'On top of generating sales leads, attending exhibitions provides a focal point for a range of marketing activities, including advertising, PR, telemarketing and web promotion. JBA has been very successful at our exhibitions.'

ZOE ALLAN JBA

'Intimate contact with travel agents and consumers is what it's all about. We use shows to stamp an image of our destination into people's minds. Exhibitions help us generate visits to the Bahamas. That's our measure of success.'

TOMMY THOMPSON BAHAMAS TOURIST OFFICE

'Exhibitions offer cost-effective sampling to a highly targeted audience of trade buyers.'

PAULA PATMORE J.A. SHARWOOD & CO

Intelligent marketing.

Exhibitions make business sense.

As a marketer, you've never had so many marketing media to choose from. Some may boast 'interactivity' - but what is more interactive than a conversation between people?

Others may claim to be 'direct' - but can you get any more direct than face-to-face?

Still others focus on targeting - but none can put you in front of a self-selected audience of active buyers.

No one would say that exhibitions should be the only medium in your marketing plan. But many would agree that exhibitions are the pinnacle of the marketing pyramid - that they deliver completely what other media can only get you a step closer to: personal interaction with real buyers.

You've heard the argument. You've read what other top marketers have to say. And you've seen the research data. Now it's time to stop and think: are you using your most powerful marketing medium as much as you ought to be?

For more information about exhibitions in your market and how to make the most of exhibitions (or just practical 'how-to' advice), contact UFI - the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry on +33 (0)1 42 67 99 12 or visit www.ufi.org

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About UFI

UFI - the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry is the leading voice of the exhibition industry. Our members are committed to making exhibitions work hard for both exhibitors and visitors and to maintaining the highest standards of professional service. When you see the UFI logo on an event, it is nothing less than a seal of approval.

UFI offers membership packages for organisers, venue operators, service providers and for associations. For more information call +33 (0)1 42 67 99 12 or visit the association web site on www.ufi.org

UFI has produced a booklet on the power of exhibitions called *How to Exhibit*. It summarises the case for using exhibitions and supports the argument with important new research.

To order your copy, call +33 (0)1 42 67 99 12 or email info@ufi.org





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