

BBBI

BUSINESS BUILDING IDEAS

How to Build More Valuable Leads at a Trade Show

I am always trying to think up new ways on how to spend less time randomly handing out business cards and more time focusing on people who might actually, potentially, want to do business with my company. When at a trade show, there are several things you can do to generate new leads. I'm going to give you some tips on spending less time handing out cards, and more time dealing with the folks who are most likely to need your services or products.

I always bring plenty of business cards to a trade show, but keep a handful of them in your pocket at all times. You never know when you might run into somebody on the way to the bathroom.

Keep a pocket free in case others give you their business cards as well. This way they don't get mixed up.

Have a stack of information cards at your booth at all times. Have some type of drawing and those who fill out the card are eligible to win. Also, have any person you speak with who shows interest fill one out so you can have that. Keep those separate from the others and jot down or attach specific notes to those you talked to so you won't forget later.

Whenever I'm speaking with a visitor, I try to find out specifically what it is they need and by what date. Again, I jot down notes according to their needs. If they don't need your products or services, you may even want to ask if they know of anybody else who might.

Finally, you want to come up with a call to action. Don't let the interested visitor leave without figuring out some type of follow-up. Some of them may want you to send them literature, some may want you to call them later, and some may be unsure. If they are unsure, it is up to you to suggest a follow-up plan. Tell them you will be calling later to check up and see how things are going or even send them an email.



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We've been doing this for over 50 years because we believe in the entrepreneurial spirit.

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The question is, always —
"Are you Ready?"

Harold Wallace

Call me anytime: 405.834.5836 (cell).



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Make sure you have a good phone number for them and even ask whether it's the best way to reach them. Some may prefer fax, some prefer email, and some prefer a phone call.

There are some prospects you may have to work much harder with and some will be easy. Here are some examples of who you should spend most of your time talking to:

- Someone who needs your products/services
- Someone who knows he has a problem, but doesn't know how to solve it
- Someone who has the funds to buy your products/services
- Someone who is motivated to solve their problem immediately

Often visitors will ask very tough questions. I have found that the way you answer a simple question such as, "how much will it cost?" makes all the difference in keeping that person interested or pushing them away. You want to be prepared for questions like this as some will ask you right off the bat.

Unless the person fully understands what you sell and the value of the product or service, the price will always sound too high. Therefore, you must first talk to them long enough to figure out what exactly it is they need. Train your trade show staff to be prepared for tough questions as well. This way, everybody is on the same page.

Meet with your staff while the trade show is going on whether at lunch or that evening in the hotel. Talk about any questions they had and problems they ran into during the trade show. Talk about what was working or what wasn't.

Once the trade show is over, take your leads and follow up-but first screen your leads for competitors who might have snuck in their cards! In addition to sending a general mail-out of some sort or follow up call to every visitor who gave their information, you will want to make sure you follow through with any requests from more interested visitors. Set a date ahead of time as to when your first follow-up will be and another for additional follow-ups. Months after the trade show, you can go back and measure how effective the follow-ups actually were.

I hope this information can be useful to you and I think you will find that following some of these simple guidelines for each trade show will really benefit your company. Whether you will have a staff of two or a staff of twenty at your next trade show, having everyone trained will make all the difference. Visitors will be more likely to have confidence in your business and the value of your leads will increase.

**If you have any questions or need advice, feel free to send us your questions.
Comments are also welcome!**

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