

MANAGING YOUR BOOTH TRAFFIC

For an Enriching Event Experience



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Synopsis

In the current scenario, events have gained enormous attention and have become an important part of the demand generation process. But creating an effective event experience can turn out to be a complicated task. In this white paper, we take you through the next step of managing your booth traffic to give your customers a more enriching event experience.

The Three Facts of Traffic Management

Needless to say, events have been gaining significance in the current context of sales. And to back this up, companies have invested a lot of effort and time to integrate events into their marketing strategies and budgets. The primary aim of exhibiting at an event is to ensure that every attendee who interacts with your booth exhibit and staff has a meaningful conversation that further leads to a sale. Essentially, there are three aspects that go hand-in-hand to create a productive environment.

- A smart and interactive booth design
- A staff training regiment
- Tools to help you simplify the meeting/ sales process

Each of these facets is interdependent on each other and contribute significantly to the success and the overall experience of your event campaign.

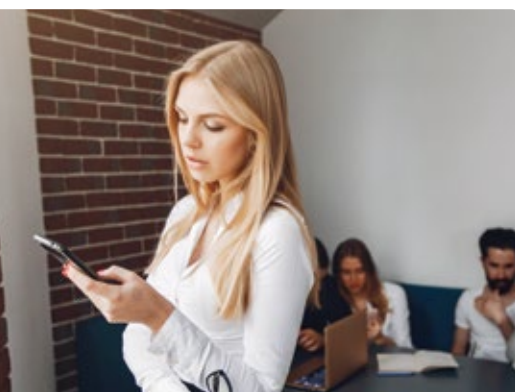


Hurdles That Customers Face on the Exhibitor's Floor

Effective traffic management matters as much to a walk-in attendee as it does to an executive who has requested for a pre-scheduled meeting. But there are many types of interaction that customers have at your booth - product demos, networking sessions, presentations, etc. And each of these has a specific function to help prospects through the various stages of the sales cycle. This makes it important to know how to ease them into the sales process smoothly. But to understand this better, let's take a look at three of the biggest challenges that customers face on the exhibitor's floor.

Pressed For Time

Customers on the exhibitor's floor are perpetually busy. They are constantly scouting for business opportunities and are at different stages of the buyer's journey. These customers adhere to a carefully planned schedule. This tends to make them impatient and unwilling to wait for a long period of time to be attended to.



Prefer Speaking To Someone With Authority

Given that customers are pressed for time, they tend to prefer productive conversations as opposed to superficial ones. Companies hire personnel to engage attendees and direct them to a marketing/sales rep. In the event all sales reps are occupied, they often do not know enough about the product to engage customers. This can cause customers to lose interest.

Crave Meaningful Stimulation

At events, marketers are graded on the number of badges they have scanned. Taking this into consideration, customers often feel like they are not provided with the right level of engagement they need to understand the product or service. The challenge they face also has a lot to do with the content they are provided. There's only so much they can take away from an activity or a pamphlet. And not handling this hurdle appropriately can make it increasingly difficult to lure them into the sales cycle and may hamper the decision-making process later on.



Leveraging Booth Design to Aid Smooth Traffic Flow

There is only so much that an intelligent booth design can do. If you have designed your booth based on pre-determined traffic flow, you will need to leverage the potential of your booth by sticking to the plan. Conversely, mismanagement and clutter can undo all your efforts in attracting prospects to your booth. Assessing attendance and planning the flow of booth traffic is needed to ensure seamless customer interactions. In this section, we look at the essentials of planning your booth design to help manage your traffic more effectively.



Start With The Entrance

The best way to understanding the movement of attendees through the booth is to start at the entrance. Typically booth exhibits are open, which means there are going to be multiple entrances and exits. While planning booth layout, it is important to know where your customers come in and leave your exhibit. This makes it easier to understand where to place fixtures throughout your booth and predict how attendees will interact with them.



The Walkway

When planning your booth layout, ensure that your booth does not eat into the walkway. This way, your booth does not get clustered and attendees have ample space to walk around. Plan cut-throughs so that people can easily navigate around congestion-prone areas of the booth. Not only does this incorporate a buffer of breathing space, but ensures that the booth is equipped with enough room during emergencies.



Signage

The importance of signages is often overlooked because they are only seen as decorative elements. On the contrary, there are ways in which these signages can be leveraged to deliver a big punch in terms of traffic management. Graphics and display harmonize the natural flow of traffic and reduces chaos.

From a branding perspective, signages convey a lot of information at the booth. If done right, these signages can lead customers through the booth in a sequential order while building on the story of your brand and products. Once they are engrossed, you can place specific stations at strategic points that encourage productive engagement.



Furniture And Fixtures

Congestions are very annoying to deal with. At the booth, you'll want to know what to do to avoid congestions. The first step is to do away with clutter. Make sure that you place furniture and fixtures at a distance from each other so that attendees can move freely through the booth. If there is a session or display that tends to draw the crowd, make sure you have a corner reserved. This way, customers can walk in and exit without disrupting the flow of the other attendees.



Meeting Spaces

Meetings involve the exchange of confidential data and may even involve VPs and CXO level executives. So these areas need to be placed as far away from the noise as possible. While planning your booth layout, reserve a corner that's easily accessible and quiet. Preferably soundproof the rooms to minimize distractions.



Effective Staff Management

Your booth is most often the first impression of your brand at an event. If you have been to a trade show, you may understand what it feels like to go through a maze of event exhibits. The exhibitor's floor is crowded all through the day and a lot of attention needs to be given to ensure that attendees have meaningful experiences.



Greeters

If your company employs greeters, ensure they know a little bit about the product. Give them reading material that they can go through before the event starts. This will ensure they engage with your customers better. At the very least, they can talk to customers about some of your product's features broadly till a sales rep frees up.



SMEs

SMEs need to be available in case prospects need answers to questions of a technical nature. On the exhibitor's floor, they double up as sales representatives. When customers have queries pertaining to integration or customization, SMEs need to be able to step in. Just like your sales reps, ensure that SMEs are always around to give customers the clarity they need and instruct sales reps to reel them into conversations whenever necessary.



Sales Representatives

If you are at the booth, chances are that you will have a lot of running around to do. As mentioned earlier, your customers want to talk to someone with authority and someone who can give them what they are looking for. But how do you ensure that they get it?

Firstly, ensure your sales reps and greeters are spread around the booth. If they are huddled together, attendees will feel like they are unapproachable. Space them out evenly. This way, greeters can easily direct customers to them whenever necessary. If all your sales reps are occupied with customers, instruct your greeters to direct them towards the executive's lounge or the seating area and remind a sales rep to check in on them as soon as possible. You could alternatively direct them to the demo station where an executive can engage them before having a sit-down meeting.



CXOs and VPs

At the event, your executives are going to be busy networking with executives of other companies. They will most likely be reeled into meetings that are more important than others and typically have a significantly higher deal size. So once your meeting manager meets a high-priority prospect, ensure that they are introduced to a high-level executive.



Registration Desk

The registration desk is the first part of your attendee's event experience. So it is important that you do not leave it as an afterthought. The registration process needs to be short and sweet. It should not take over a minute and a half to complete. This way, customers do not wait too long to hand over their information. They want to be redirected to someone who can talk to them as soon as possible. But how do you collect and keep track of countless customers over the course of your event? Luckily, a badge scanner takes care of that. It lets you collect attendee information and eliminates the need to deal with business cards.

This information directly flows into the system which makes it easy to profile customers and create a follow-up process. Also, depending on your APIs, your software may also allow checked-in attendees to create meeting requests.



Technology and Traffic Management

Technology plays an important role in the event industry and is evolving at a rate that threatens to leave behind those that do not get on board. Assuming that you are on board with event tech, there are a few ways you can use your meeting management software to ease the flow of traffic through the booth.



Meeting Management

In the event industry, there are a lot of things that directly tie into the success of your event. Right from managing your meetings effectively to collecting leads at the event, there are numerous factors that can help you build meaningful event campaigns and get the results that your company needs. Using a meeting management software eliminates the need to manually maintain spreadsheets and going back and forth with emails.

Have a look at your meeting schedule to see how many meetings you have scheduled so that you know how many meetings you have scheduled. This way, you can plan networking sessions and floor time around them. Apart from giving you a completely unique way of managing, and measuring your meetings, a meeting management interface lets your customers take the first step. Once registered, customers should be able to schedule and check-in to meetings with the click of a button. This takes the stress away from having to manually monitor these meetings and lets you concentrate on things that matter.



Conclusion

At the booth, attendees are often interested in your product and the problem it solves. They look forward to as many meaningful interactions as possible. But to give them a productive experience, it is crucial to ensure that they are led through your booth seamlessly and minimize waiting periods and the time taken to go through mundane processes. But creating these experiences is not as easy as it looks. Smart booth design, effective staff management and event technology need to work together to deliver a stellar event experience that can ease prospects into the sales cycle and successfully convert them into customers.

We hope you find the best practices discussed in this white paper useful.

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