




Build a winning exhibition team

Your how-to-guide to building your exhibitor sales team





Once your stand has been ordered, your next task is making sure you've got the right team behind you.

It may sound obvious, but it's really important that your team is made up of enthusiastic and friendly people.

They don't necessarily all need to be sales people, some visitors are just looking for help and advice, but it's important everyone knows what you're trying to get out of the event.

So, how do you build a team that can solve the challenges you face?

Read on to find out...



PRE-SHOW

Sourcing a diverse team

The first pool of talent you should visit is your sales team. These people live and breathe your company every day; they also know how to get around awkward situations. However, it's worth keeping in mind that the skills required to sell on the show floor are different to doing it from the office.

Events can serve up all kinds of curveballs, so it's worth thinking of other people from around your business who may add value to your stand. For instance, multi-lingual staff are a must if you're attending an international exhibition. VIP's often make an appearance,

too, so even if they're not on your stand the entire time, have your senior management team on call at the event to take care of those relationships. Finally, it's worth having someone from operations/technical support around to answer technical questions and give out advice.

PRE-SHOW

Identifying the right skills

When you're at an event, your brand, your company and how you behave is on full public display. The team you take with you to back you up and help you achieve your objectives need to be the very best. So, what are the traits you're looking for?



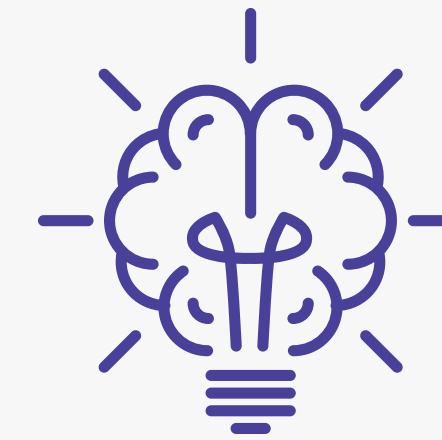
Approachable

Can your team pull in visitors off the aisle?



Decisive

Do they know how and when to ask the killer questions to qualify the visitor?



Knowledgeable

Is their product/service knowledge top notch to enable cross selling?



Concise

Can they distil the conversation notes to create a hot lead for follow-up?



Tactful

Can they tactfully move the visitor on at the end of the conversation?



PRE-SHOW

Quality over quantity

When was the last time you marched up to a huddle of people to instigate a conversation while flying solo? It can be pretty intimidating for some people, so it's really important that you take the right amount of people for the space that you have. Not keeping stands open and inviting is a common mistake for exhibitors and it drives potential visitors away.

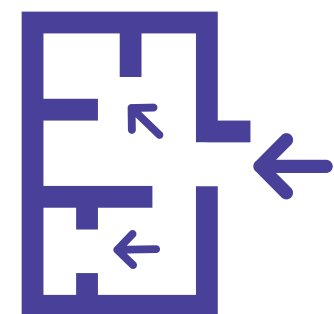
We recommend taking quality team members over sheer quantity. If visitors are interested in you and what you have to offer, they'll generally wait a short while – maybe they'll pick up and leaf through a tablet or brochure until you have seen off the last visitor.

As a rule of thumb, try to keep your team to one person per 4 square metres – this will give your stand, and your team, room to breathe.

Create and deliver your brief

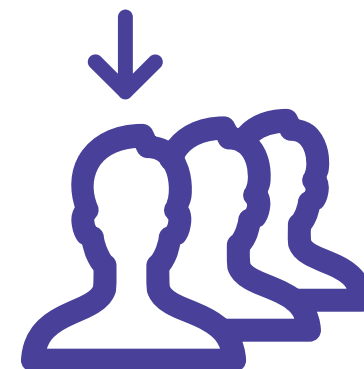
Once you've nailed down who you want to take with you, you need to make it known exactly what you want them to say and do. To that end, put together a short presentation detailing your space, your objectives, on-site activities and staff details.

One slide on each is all you need, but here's a checklist to make sure you cover off the essentials:



The stand

- Layout
- Anticipated visitor flow
- Hall position
- Nearest amenities



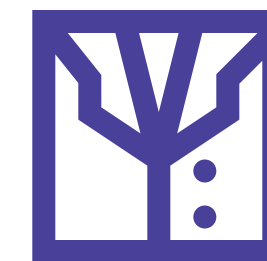
The objectives

- Targets and incentives
- Messaging
- Visitor demographics
- Key customers



Activities

- Demonstrations/displays
- Lead capture
- Literature/tablet content
- Giveaways



Staff details

- Dress code
- Show hours/roster
- Travel and accommodation
- On-site contacts

TOP TIP

Run this presentation past your executive team to work out any bugs and get their buy-in. Also, getting someone from your executive team to rally the troops before you address your chosen team will be a big help, too.

PRE-SHOW

Pre-event networking

You don't need to wait until you're at the event to start talking to your prospects. Many exhibitors try to fill their meeting pipeline in the weeks prior to the opening day, here's how:



Identify

Identify other exhibitors you may want to speak to at the after-show drinks party – most events post their exhibitor lists on their website so take some time to have a look.

Create a plan

Ask the organiser for the floor plan and create a plan for who from your roving sales team is going to visit each exhibitor and when.

Invite

Invite your target prospects to the show and pre-book appointments to meet up – this is a great opportunity to show of your company, message and activity before the event.



AT-SHOW

Get the lay of the land

You and your team should aim to get to the event the day before to make sure everything is ready. Arriving early will give you time to practice your demonstrations, learn where literature is being kept, find out what the Wi-Fi login details are and see what your competitors are planning to do.

The last thing you need is your team arriving after visitors start pouring in and being unprepared for those that arrived early to speak to you.

PRE-SHOW

The art of the deal

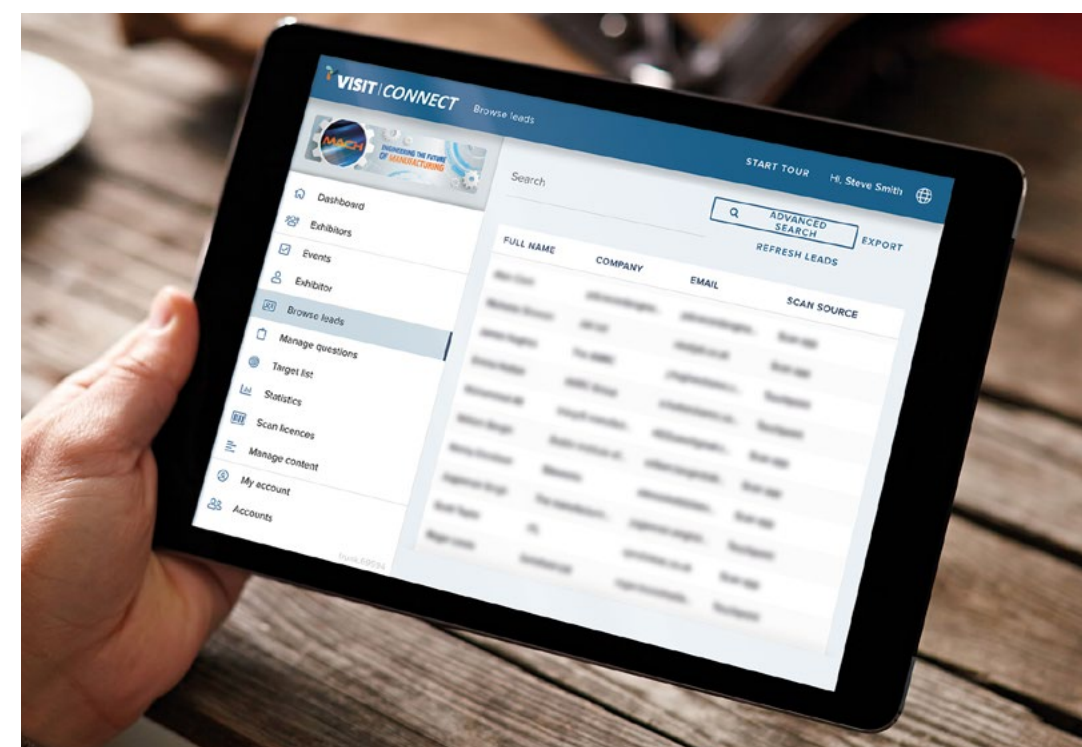
Handling potential leads at an event is different to calling them or hosting a sales meeting. Your main competitor can literally be next door, or you could have a delegation of students visiting for research purposes – the environment is much more fluid.

That shouldn't deter you though, because there's a very easy, four step process for managing the visitors that come to your stand:



1. Meet and greet

Don't let visitors just pass by, get into the aisle and pull them in! Don't forget; event visitors have arrived with an agenda in mind – especially at trade shows.



2. Qualify

At public events this can be more difficult, but at trade shows most visitors are pre-registered and will have their company and job title on display. If the event has our [event intelligence suite](#) active, you can ask to see the visitor's badge to scan it and have a quick read at the same time.



3. AIDA

Now you need to grab their **Attention** by teasing out a pain point, **Inform** them about how you can solve said pain point, engage their **Desire** to fix it and finally move them to **Action** by gaining a commitment from them. Commitment doesn't have to be a sale, even just agreeing to receive information from you or scheduling a call counts.



4. Dismiss

By this point you'll have what you need from your visitor and it's time to move them on so you can gather more leads. Thank them for their time and let them know you'll be in touch soon.

AT-SHOW

Content placement

There's a whole host of branded items, merchandise and literature choices you can take with you to an event – and some are more expensive than others. There's nothing wrong with making your visitors work for their freebies; you can do this by placing smaller giveaways (like pens) on the periphery of your stand to act as hooks and the nicer stuff further in to reward those that qualify.

It's also worth noting that literature, if you have it, is not a crutch. At an event, people don't buy from books – they buy from people. Literature should be used to enhance a conversation and work as a tangible reminder once your visitor has gone home instead of replacing the conversation entirely.

There are lots of different styles and finishes available to help you convey your message, so consider limiting literature to qualified prospects. You can also have two standards of finish – a cheaper one and an expensive one depending on how the stand team qualify the potential lead.

TOP TIP

If you have the space on your stand, install a meeting room to give you a quiet place to talk to your qualified lead in a branded setting. Alternatively, have a plan in place if your stand starts getting too busy to take potential clients away for a coffee and detailed conversation about their requirements.



AT-SHOW

Effective questioning

After greeting your visitor, the trick to keeping visitors engaged is asking open-ended questions.

“What are looking to get out of your day today,”

“What’s the most interesting thing you’ve seen today?,”

“You work for X company, what do you do?”

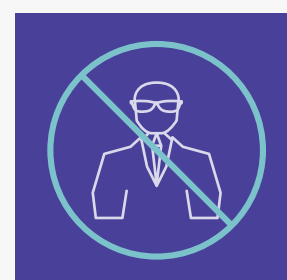
– these are just a few examples but they should help you keep the door open long enough to find a hook you can get on to. Asking open-ended questions will help you rapidly qualify your visitor and decide what your next step will be.

TOP TIP
Rapid post-event follow up is key to converting a lead to an opportunity. Confirm a day and time to call your lead after the event to get in there before your competitors do.

AT-SHOW

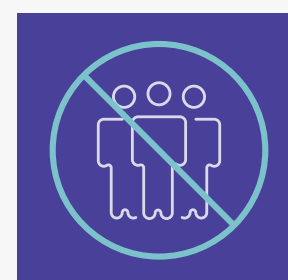
The devil makes work

Being on your feet for up to a week can be hard going. But it's vital you and your team maintain an approachable and attractive stand area. To help you stay a step ahead of your competitors, here are our top tips to keep you looking fresh and ready to sell:



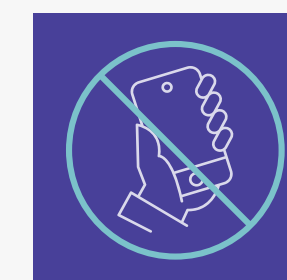
1. Don't be a bouncer

Standing at the entry way to your stand makes you an obstacle in your visitor's path. You need access and visibility to your stand to be as easy and free flowing as possible, so stand just off to the side or in walk around the aisle if there's room.



2. Don't cluster

As tempting as it may be to stand and have a chat with your colleagues, it poses an intimidating situation for your visitors. Have your team work in zones around the stand, visitors are more likely to approach individuals than approach a group.



3. Don't talk on the phone

If your phone goes while you're on your stand, answer it if you have to but take the conversation away from the stand. Better still, leave the call to go to voicemail and check them on your breaks.



4. Don't sit

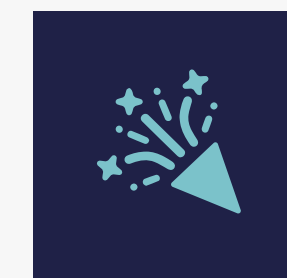
We've all been there: it's 4:30 in the afternoon, the show starts to get quiet and your feet are sore. But resist the urge to sit down, you're still on the clock and visitors could come by – they'll think you're on private time if they see you sitting down on your phone.



5. Don't eat

This one is a no-no for two reasons:

1. It's just really messy and you'll cover yourself and the stand in crumbs,
2. Visitors won't want to talk to you if you're mid-sandwich. Set lunch breaks so everyone can go and eat at the dining area.



6. HAVE FUN!

Keeping the atmosphere light and fun will instantly attract visitors. Everyone wants to be a part of the fun, so set some competitions for your visitors and your stand team to keep everyone motivated and engaged with the task at hand.



And that's it!

Even if you only follow a couple of these guidelines, you're sure to build a team that will deliver results at your event.

Obviously, building a stage to help your team shine is a major piece of the puzzle too – and we can help you with that.

Talk to a member of our team today

Find out how we can help you become show ready with our zero fuss, maximum impact range of exhibits.

Whether you're making the move from **shell scheme** to **space only**, or you're an experienced exhibitor looking for a cost-effective alternative, **we can help**.



Want to get Show Ready?

Or call us on:

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