



Exhibiting for Grown ups

plusgroup
helping you create business



A young child with blonde hair, wearing a dark blue sailor's cap with a gold anchor emblem and a blue and white horizontally striped t-shirt, is giving a thumbs-up gesture. The background is a bright blue sky and a hint of a green sail.

welcomeaboard

Exhibitions provide businesses with a wealth of opportunities for boosting their brand, attracting new leads and making sales. An exhibition allows you and your team to meet potential clients face to face in order to let them know who you are, what you do and how doing business with you will benefit them. It allows prospects to experience your products or services up close and ask you any questions straight away. Put simply, exhibitions are your perfect platform for building a stronger, more identifiable brand.

However, if you're to make all this a reality, it's important that you approach each exhibition in the right way.

Here at the Plus Group, we can certainly attest to this. We've helped businesses all over the UK and worldwide to get more out of exhibitions, by providing them with exhibition stands that help create business. These top tips have been written specially to help you benefit from our collective experience and expertise – the end result of many years spent working with businesses ranging from start-ups to leading international corporations.

1 preparation is everything!

The more plans the better, the more lists the better, the more organisation the better.

Leaving things to the last minute could compromise your exhibition whereas being fully prepared is a recipe for success.

2 brief your staff

Everyone on the stand needs to know the answer to every possible question about your product or service.

Your staff are the most important factor in your exhibition's success, second only to the stand design, so give them the tools to shine on behalf of your business.



create a master checklist

3

Create a list of every single thing you need to take, organise, do or action before the big day so that there is always a visual indicator of what is still left to do.

We have created a template we can send to you. If you think this would be useful to you, just ask.

the early bird catches the worm

4

Arrive at the venue as early as you can if you have things to do on the build day. As we take care of everything, our clients do not usually need to turn up until around 4pm the day before the exhibition to simply sign off the stand. However if you do have a huge amount of things to do on build day, arrive in good time. Have a calm yet energised; productive yet stress free day and you'll be refreshed and raring to go when the show starts.





What are you hoping to gain by attending?

Are you just looking to gather leads and boost your profile, or are you actively looking to make sales?

The more specific your goals are for an exhibition, the more likely you are to fulfil them.

set goals

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graphics will make or break your stand

Designing for large format printing can be a tricky business... so when it comes to your stand, the appearance of professionally designed graphics compared to those created by someone inexperienced, can be as different as night and day and could be the one thing that encourages someone to visit your stand ... or not.





appoint an event co-ordinator

You need to appoint an event co-ordinator to manage the event from within your company. The workload is potentially huge so additional help may be needed, but having one person overseeing everything is essential.

If you can opt for a fully project managed stand from your stand designers, then the workload is almost entirely relieved; they will provide an event coordinator. Always make sure that the company you choose for your stand design offers a full project management service..



8 stand out

Be bold, be vibrant, be eye-catching and inventive. Make your stand the one that everyone notices.

who is your target audience?

Figure out who you are trying to attract to the stand and how you are going to get them there. You need to tailor your pre show marketing and your stand design to attract the right audience for the particular show.

less is more 10

Opt for bold and uncluttered graphics. Paragraphs of text will simply not be read. People will generally not read much more than a strap line at an exhibition... there are plenty of other things to distract them.

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people will judge a book by its cover

Your exhibition stand could be the first impression that a prospective client gets of your business.

Do your research, look at what your competitors have done in the past and do your company justice.





would you tell an architect how to design a house?

No! - Whilst a client's input is absolutely vital, it is also important that the stand designers get to know your company and your goals for the show, before doing any design work.

We develop briefs with clients on the premise that the more success you achieve at an exhibition, the more success we achieve. Think of it as a partnership and not a one way thing where we just provide an exhibition stand and move on. The relationship between a stand builder and client should be so much more than that.

13 do not cut corners

There is nothing wrong with spending your money wisely, but if you have decided that something is vital to the success of your exhibition, there's no point in doing it with any less than 100% commitment.



14 an investment not an expense

An exhibition stand is an investment; you are investing in it and it should get you a return. If you don't think it can, ask the stand builder to explain how the right stand design will help you achieve your goals.

Long term, can you reuse the stand at a fraction of the initial cost?

Always ask about reuse costs.

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a brief should not be brief

When it comes to a stand design brief, the more information the better. We spend time with our clients to come up with a really detailed brief. It all stems from your aims and goals for the exhibition, no detail is unimportant and no information not useful. Getting the brief right at this stage will save days of work ahead, ensuring the design is right first time.



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shout about it

If you do not tell people that you will be at an exhibition, how will they know you're there? Email, direct mail, social media, website, blogs, telephone and any other avenues of communication you have at your disposal... use them all!



plan for the future

Before starting the design process, plan out your future needs. Just like you would plan for the future when buying a house (are 3 bedrooms enough as we grow as a family, is that garden going to be big enough for our dog to destroy...?), a similar conversation needs to be had about your exhibition stand. Will it fit into the space at other shows, will it adapt and grow as our business grows? Make sure it's fit for purpose.

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location, location, location

Be it a house or an exhibition stand, the same is true. You do not want to be tucked away in a corner. Opt for a stand that has a great location with lots of footfall. Near the entrance/exit or near the catering facilities is always a good option.

you're a winner!

Competitions, giveaways and games are great ways to attract people to your stand. Try to avoid offering business based prizes; opt instead for "treats", something that will make potential and existing clients think of you positively.



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20 gimme gimme gimme

Branded merchandise can be an effective way of gathering leads at exhibitions. The benefits from this approach are twofold. First, if you offer somebody something for free, they'll often feel honour bound to offer you something in return. Second, if your merchandise includes everyday items, like stationery or coffee cups, potential clients will be looking at your logo every time they grab their pen or make a cup of coffee to go with that doughnut.



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Exhibitions halls can be hot and sweaty places, especially in the summer. Keep water on your stand and take regular breaks to get some fresh air. You will not only benefit from this personally, but so will the people visiting on your stand as you will be much more engaging.

stay hydrated



keep it clean

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No one wants to go on to a stand covered in litter, dust or your left over lunch. Keep all your coats and bags stowed away or if there's nowhere to keep them, leave them in storage with the exhibition.

23

hello?

You really do not want to be at an exhibition on your own, even if you are the only person running the business. Ask a friend or colleague to come with you, or even hire some help. You can't talk to every single person that turns up to your stand and having a few people on a stand makes it so much more inviting to people walking past.

Never, under any circumstances leave your stand unattended; if your colleague has gone and you really need the bathroom, hold it for another 5 minutes. Whilst the stand is unattended someone wanting to place a £1,000,000 order could arrive.



keeping up appearances

Make sure you look the part, don't turn up to a business to business trade show and man your stand in shorts and an England football shirt. You are the outward representation of your company so make sure your appearance and the impression you wish to create, match.

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stop the gossip

While it is fine for your staff to chat to each other throughout the day, make sure they are not oblivious to people arriving on your stand. Focus always needs to be on potential clients.

25



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be enthusiastic

If you and your staff don't appear to be excited about your product or service, you can practically guarantee that a potential customer won't either. This is your perfect opportunity to show off, so make the most of it.

27 follow up your leads



You will be surprised at how many companies view an exhibition as a failure because they did not sell anything on the spot.

90% of business generated from exhibitions comes from leads gathered. Even when you are selling product direct at the exhibition, collect people's emails/contact details, find out what they are interested in and then follow them up!

who, what, why and when?

The 4 answers you need from every visitor with regards to your product or service. Who makes the decision about whether they are going to buy it? What are their needs and can you help them? Why do they want it? When will they be making the decision?

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look Mum I'm on TV

Printed graphics are no longer enough to keep people's attention. You need, at the very least, to be looking to use TV screens, or even video walls and interactive touch screen games.

there's no business like show business

Exhibitions and trade shows give you the perfect platform to display your wares/services, show off your amazing customer service and generally wow people.

Make sure your stand is entertaining and fun...





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does size really matter?

Size does indeed matter; the bigger the better when it comes to exhibitions (and chocolate cake), but do not fall in to the trap of buying a huge 10m x 10m stand and only having £10,000 to fill it. You are much better going for a smaller 7m x 6m stand and using the extra budget to make it look fantastic.

32 illuminating



Lighting your display to show it off to its maximum potential could be crucial to its success. It ensures your message/products are clear and visible, encouraging traffic onto your stand.

Simply put, it allows your visitors to easily read text and view your displays, but it can just as effectively be used to convey mood and a specific image.

Use spotlights, back lights, shelf lights etc creatively to bring attention to your brand or a particular product. Coloured lights can create atmosphere and light boxes make a spectacular change to graphic walls.

Make sure your stand shines brightly amongst your competitors.


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Go Tall or Go Home

Take advantage of the maximum height that both your budget and exhibition venue will accommodate. Most venues allow up to 4m high for your main structure, with some also allowing hanging banners and structures to be suspended from the ceiling.

We've found hanging banners to be a successful method of ensuring your brand stands head and shoulders above the others.



A young boy with short brown hair, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and a striped tie, is sitting at a desk. He is wearing large, gold-rimmed glasses and is smiling while holding a rotary phone receiver to his ear. The phone is a dark-colored rotary phone with a coiled cord. The background is a solid light blue.

So, now you're a grown up,
what will make you...

stand out?

plusgroup
helping you create business

Find out here:

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