



Why You MUST Use Multiple Pre-show Marketing Media to Get Your Fair Share of Booth Traffic

By Jefferson Davis, *Competitive Edge*

Consider the following exposition industry facts:

1. Today, the average attendee is spending 1.5 fewer days at a tradeshow.
2. 76% are pre-planning their agenda before they arrive.
3. The average attendee only stops at 26 to 31 exhibits.
4. 50% of their exhibit stops are pre-planned.

Because of these changing attendee behaviors, it is critically important for almost every exhibitor wanting a booth full of qualified visitors to execute a well-designed and highly-targeted pre-show marketing plan.

Now that we've established that pre-marketing your exhibit is a MUST do, let's shift the question to...

How many media do you typically use to pre-market your exhibit?

Perhaps one of the biggest mistakes we see is companies who do not pre-market their participation at all. Second to this mistake is using just one marketing media, like email.

While email marketing is fast and free - unless you're purchasing lists - it's important to keep in mind that according to the latest research, the average business person receives 147 emails a day. The clutter in the email box has gotten so intense that many people have approach-avoidance when it comes to engaging with their inbox, beyond what they perceive as critical response emails.

I'm not saying do not use email, but I am saying don't rely on it as your single pre-show marketing media.

Two other important considerations when designing an integrated pre-show campaign are:

1. Different people respond to different media.
2. Multiple touches through multiple media increase the response to your campaign.

When designing your pre-show marketing campaign, it's important to consider:

1. Exactly who your target visitors are.
2. What solutions you will be featuring in your exhibit.
3. Invest the time necessary to craft a strong value proposition that will help your messaging cut through the noise.

With this information in mind, you can now design and execute an integrated campaign using both one-to-one and one-to-many media.

Your **one-to one-campaign** should include: personalized emails, custom direct-mail, telephone calls and/or voice messaging. You may also want to consider a personal outreach plan from your business development and customer service teams.

Your **one-to-many campaign** may include: social media, digital marketing, advertising on the show website, writing an effective exhibitor listing, print advertisements in trade publications and show specific media, and public relations.

One of the most frequent questions I get asked is, “how many media should I use?” My answer is as many media as you have the budget, time bandwidth, and skill set to effectively utilize. If you are able to land 3 to 5 touches to your target audience with a well-crafted value proposition, the odds are very high that you will end up with a booth full of qualified visitors.

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