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TRADE SHOW GUERRILLA MARKETING GUIDE

It's a jungle out there! Survive like a pro!

Fleet Management Weekly's
BRAND ACCELERATION



Why you need this eBook

This ebook aims to equip individuals or product team attendees with the strategies and tools necessary to navigate trade shows effectively.

Whether you're an entrepreneur, a sales representative, or a marketing professional, attending trade shows can be daunting without previous experience. This guide will provide actionable insights to make meaningful connections, showcase your products or services, and maximize your time and investment in these events.

Trade shows are pivotal in the business world, offering unparalleled opportunities for networking, brand exposure, and sales. They gather industry leaders, innovators, and potential clients under one roof, creating an environment ripe for collaboration and growth. Understanding how to leverage these events can significantly impact your business' success and expansion.

Pre-Show Preparation

Make your show participation a true success — research the trade show, set clear goals, prepare your pitch, bring marketing materials, and know your social media strategy.

Research the Trade Show

Thorough research is the cornerstone of successful trade show attendance. Begin by identifying key exhibitors, speakers, and sessions relevant to your industry. Familiarize yourself with the trade show layout and schedule to optimize your time. Utilize the event's website and social media channels to gather information and engage potential contacts. Knowing the landscape will help you navigate the event more efficiently and decide about which booths and sessions to prioritize.



Set Clear Goals

Setting specific, measurable goals is crucial. Determine what you want to achieve, such as acquiring a certain number of leads, closing sales, or forming partnerships. Clear goals will guide your actions and help you measure your success post-event. For instance, if your goal is to generate leads, focus on collecting business cards and setting follow-up meetings. Having defined objectives ensures that every action you take at the trade show is purposeful and aligned with your broader business strategy.

Prepare Your Pitch

A well-crafted elevator pitch is essential for capturing attention in a crowded trade show environment. Your pitch should be concise, compelling, and tailored to different audiences. Practice delivering it confidently, emphasizing your product and its unique value. Being able to articulate your message succinctly will help you engage potential clients quickly and effectively, making a lasting impression in the brief interactions typical of trade shows.





Rock Your Marketing Materials

Ensure you have an ample supply of business cards, brochures, and product samples. Your marketing materials should be professional and informative, providing enough detail to spark interest without overwhelming the recipient.

Consider creating digital versions of your brochures and business cards for easy sharing and scanning of contact information. These tools can streamline the exchange of information, making it easier for you and your new contacts to follow up after the event.

Strategize Social Media

Leverage social media platforms to announce your attendance and connect with other attendees beforehand.

Join event-specific groups on LinkedIn or Facebook, and participate in discussions to build awareness of your presence. Use X to follow event hashtags and engage with posts related to the trade show.

This pre-show engagement can help you establish connections before you even arrive, making it easier to set up meetings and identify key people you want to connect with.



Working the Floor

Get it done! — Arrive early, plan your day, engage with exhibitors, express confidence, and collect contacts.



Arrive Early

Arriving early at the trade show can provide several advantages. It allows you to familiarize yourself with the venue, secure a good spot for setting up if you have a booth, and catch attendees when they are fresh and more open to conversations. Early arrival also allows you to network with other early birds, who are often key players and decision-makers.

Plan Your Day

It is crucial to have a well-structured plan for each day of the trade show. Based on your pre-show research, prioritize the booths you want to visit and the sessions you want to attend. Allocate specific time slots for each activity and remain flexible to adapt as new opportunities arise. Use project management apps to organize your schedule and keep track of important meetings and sessions.

Hit 'em Up!

When visiting booths, show genuine interest in the exhibitors' products and services. Ask insightful questions and listen actively to their responses. Building rapport with exhibitors can lead to valuable connections and potential collaborations. Networking is a two-way street; demonstrating interest in others' offerings can make them more receptive to your pitch.

Use Your Charm

Confidence and approachability are key when networking at trade shows. Approach people with a smile and a firm handshake, and introduce yourself clearly. Use open-ended questions to encourage meaningful conversations, such as "What brought you to this event?" or "What challenges are you facing in your business?" These questions can reveal common interests and opportunities for collaboration.



Collect Contacts

Develop a system for efficiently collecting and organizing business cards and contact information. There are many digital tools to help you quickly scan and store contact details, reducing the risk of losing important information.

Categorize your contacts based on their potential value to your business and make notes about your conversations to personalize your follow-up communications.



Get
Maximum
Impact

**Take the steps to stay in touch and leverage new opportunities.
Make a lasting impression!**

Follow Up – Follow Up – Follow Up

Timely and personalized follow-up is critical to solidifying the connections you make at trade shows. Send follow-up emails within 48 hours, referencing your conversation and any specific points of interest. Use tools like HubSpot or Mailchimp to automate follow-up emails while maintaining a personal touch. Consistent and thoughtful follow-up can turn initial contacts into long-term business relationships.

Engage with Social Media

Continue to engage with new contacts on social media after the trade show. Share posts about your experiences, tag new connections, and participate in ongoing discussions about the event. This helps keep you top-of-mind and reinforces your presence in the industry. Make use of available digital marketing apps to help you schedule and manage your social media posts.

Leverage Your Network

Use the new connections you've made to open doors to other opportunities. Request introductions to additional contacts, seek advice, and explore potential collaborations. Networking is an ongoing process, and leveraging your existing network can exponentially increase your reach and influence in the industry.



Go One (or more) Steps Beyond the Basics

Use Advanced Strategies to increase your success at the show. Attend workshops and seminars, leverage technology, or host an event.



Workshops and Seminars

Attend workshops and seminars that align with your goals and interests. These sessions are great opportunities to learn from industry experts and network with like-minded professionals. Engage actively in discussions and ask questions to establish your presence and expertise.

Leveraging Technology

Trade show apps and social media platforms can enhance your networking and scheduling efforts. There are many apps that provide features for managing schedules, networking with other attendees, and accessing event information in real time. These tools can help you stay organized and maximize your time at the trade show.

Hosting or Speaking

Position yourself as an expert by hosting a workshop or speaking at a session. This can significantly boost your visibility and credibility in the industry.

Prepare thoroughly and deliver valuable content to engage your audience and leave a lasting impression.

Attending a trade show is an excellent opportunity for companies to meet new prospects, strengthen relationships with existing customers and vendors, launch new products, increase brand awareness, and capture and qualify leads. Your success will be directly related to your trade show planning and preparation.





FLEET MANAGEMENT WEEKLY'S **BRAND ACCELERATION**

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of Fleet
Experience
& Marketing
Prowess

FMW's Brand Acceleration combines unsurpassed fleet industry heritage with a comprehensive array of marketing services. Together, this combination ensures that companies marketing to fleet decision-makers get the best return on their marketing dollar — with greater share of mind and more sales opportunities.

Whether the marketing need is to create awareness, position a brand, launch a new product, generate leads, or support sales throughout the customer journey, the *FMW's Brand Acceleration* team can help you continuously reach fleet professionals. We'll tell your brand's value story and fill the sales pipeline now and in the future.

We can start with a simple marketing project or a comprehensive, integrated marketing plan. Simply contact **Ed Pierce** at **(484) 957-1246** or send us your information at **fmwbrandacceleration.com**.

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