

TRADESHOW TIP SHEET

APRIL 2010

The Magic of One-to-One Marketing

One-on-one marketing and face-to-face marketing are similar but separate practices. You could split hairs over which is better, and what each type of marketing really is, but it's hard to dispute that having people in your target marketing put an actual face on your company is a big plus. You get to know your potential clients and the process humanizes your company. If I were to draw a distinction between the two descriptions as they would apply in the tradeshow or event field, I would say that one-on-one marketing is the discipline of using a tradeshow to meet your potential clients up close and personal, and face-to-face marketing is the practice of putting on events that bring your target audience to you in a planned setting that delivers useful and important information.

If you're a promotion products company, for instance, one-on-one marketing at a tradeshow gives you an opportunity to meet potential clients, query them about their specific problems (and possibly offer solutions on the spot) and plan a follow up shortly thereafter. Face-to-face marketing may

mean bringing in a group of prospects and doing a free information seminar that is much heavier on useful strategy and tactics around promotional products than it is about a heavy-handed sales pitch. The sales angle is implicit in the presentation but doesn't have to be overt.



Why Face-to-Face Trumps All Else

Many companies view public relations and tradeshow marketing as part of the broad realm of media relations. But when you can't reach your audience through trade-shows, the press and the internet you'll need to add to your overall media program. That's where a specialized event may be just the thing. A specialized informational event is one that is built around your target market's interests. Teaming up with partners gives you an opportunity to expand your reach and share the costs. For example, a construction company may team

with a bank, an accounting firm and a real estate firm to create a 90-minute seminar aimed at delivering topical and useful information. Latch on with local business groups, such as Chambers of Commerce or industry organizations and you have a large group to pull from for potential attendees. Throw in lunch or breakfast and you have a winning combination. Come away with a handful of good leads and the cost of the program can easily be justified.

WHO'S ON OUR LATEST TRADE SHOW MARKETING PODCAST?

FIND OUT TODAY AT
TRADESHOWGUYBLOG.COM/PODCAST



Editor: **Tim Patterson**

1865 Beach Ave NE

Salem, OR 97301

503-371-9411

Fax: 503-371-9402

InterpExhibits.com

Tradeshowguyblog.com

@tradeshowguy

YOU SPENT A LOT OF MONEY ON THE BOOTH, TRAVEL AND LOGISTICS, SO PUT SOME REAL THOUGHT AND EXECUTION INTO WHAT YOU'LL ACTUALLY DO AT THE SHOW WHEN YOU COME FACE-TO-FACE WITH EACH VISITOR.

What is Your Agenda for One-on-One Marketing?

When at a tradeshow, it's tempting to stick to the 'norm' (whatever that is for you); put on a dog-and-pony show or give away an iPod to someone that puts a business card in a fishbowl. But what are you really getting with a 'normal' approach? You spent a lot of money on the booth, travel and logistics, so put some real thought and execution into what you'll actually DO at the show when you come face-to-face with each visitor. Come up with a list of things you want to know about your potential clients. Build a handful of short, engaging questions that you can easily ask visitors. Look to disqualify people as soon as possible so you can move on to others than may actually qualify for your product or service.

Almost all visitors to your booth will only stop once, so it is critical that you determine if they may benefit from what you do. It's a mini-sales call under highly chaotic conditions, but if you can perfect the skill of asking just a few great questions

to uncover your visitor's intent and need, you'll undoubtedly come away with a lot of viable leads.



Creating a Comfort Zone for Tradeshow Visitors

Without launching into a long-winded discourse on communication and body language, it's important to note that humans typically perceive non-verbal body language more than they detect the tone and content of your message. When a visitor approaches your booth, it's incumbent on you to take a moment to assess their communication style (as they're assessing yours) and try to meet them on their ground. In other words, if you typically shout out "Hello!" to everyone as they enter the booth, or use some boisterous method, you'll turn off the

people that don't like that style of greeting. A communication expert once told me the best thing to do is to try and 'pace' the visitor with their style. If they're low-key, be low key. If they're outgoing and bubbly, try and match that. It's not a perfect solution, but your awareness of the various types of communication – and your willingness to match that style – can go a long way to making your visitor feel comfortable, making them more willing to open up and offer useful information.

Bottom Line

One-on-one marketing and face-to-face marketing are disciplines that go much deeper than a 2-page newsletter. To learn more, spend some time researching and talking to people that have gone through it many times. Meeting and greeting your fans and potential fans is a highly nuanced skill and the more you do it, the more you'll learn. And the more you do it, the more you'll realize how much you still need to learn!

But in today's fast-paced Facebook/Twitter/iPhone/blogging/online connection world, your interpersonal marketing touch takes on even more

importance. Even stalwart social media believers and practitioners must admit that there's nothing quite like meeting someone face to face to find out what they're really all about. Could it be that's why there are Tweet-ups? It becomes even more crucial if you 'know' someone through social media but have yet to meet them in person – and are about to. Upon meeting them, your image of that person will change dramatically. The same dramatic change can happen at events and tradeshows. Is your staff up to the challenge of one-to-one – face-to-face marketing in a frenzied atmosphere?