

Tradeshows

Coaching Questions

“What tradeshows have you been to?”

Topic Introduction

Going to a tradeshow to learn best practices is a good investment. It will also help you determine if the tradeshow is for you.

Discussion Questions

- What did you go to as an attendee?
- What did you go to as a vendor?
- What did you notice about the busy booths at these tradeshows?
- What did you notice about the empty ones?

Key Learning

There is a lot of colour, noise, and commotion at a tradeshow. A compelling message needs a little bit more to stick out.

“What tradeshows are a good fit for your business?”

Topic Introduction

Not every tradeshow is a good fit with your business. With tradeshow being an expensive marketing tool, it is a good idea to select the tradeshows that are the best fit and give you the largest chance of making a return on your investment.

Discussion Questions

- What is the price for a tradeshow booth?
- Have you been to the tradeshow before?
- What is the price for your display? Do you already have one?
- What type of business do you expect to get from the tradeshow?
- How much revenue do you expect to make from the tradeshow?

Key Learning

Tradeshows are expensive to participate in. You need to have a good understanding of your costs to determine if this is the correct use of your marketing budget. In many cases it is, especially when done correctly.

“How will you ensure your ROI?”

Topic Introduction

Being remembered and converting sales at the show is critical. You need a strategy to do this.

Discussion Questions

- Will you collect emails?
- How will you stand out from the crowd?
- How will you entice people to your booth?
- How will you ensure that potential customers are spoken with?
- How will you ensure people remember your business?
- How will you convert business at the show? Will you have a tradeshow special?

Key Learning

People at tradeshows are actively looking for a solution to their problems. In many cases they are in the later part of the sales cycle, and many are ready to buy.

Examples

Real Life Example: What tradeshows have you been to?

A telecommunications consultancy franchise was looking for a tradeshow to begin being a part of. They went to all of the franchise tradeshows in the area over the course of 6 months, and chose the one with the largest audience.

Before entering the tradeshow themselves, they met the people who organized it and spent time developing relationships with them.

Next they invested in a low cost tradeshow booth at approximately \$3000. Attending their first tradeshow they realize that they needed to tweak quite a few things. They ended up getting 2 new franchisees out of the show. This money was reinvested into future tradeshows, but purchasing a more expensive booth at \$20,000.

These best practices and the new booth were then used at other tradeshows.

Real Life Example: What tradeshow are a good fit for your business?

An inventor's networking group wanted to help their members in commercializing their product concepts. There were a lot of different tradeshow options that they could enter, as their inventor membership had created product ideas in a variety of industries.

In order to choose the best tradeshow to participate in, they surveyed their membership to gather the following information;

1. What type of products have you invented?
2. What type of tradeshows have you frequented in the past?

There was an overlap in the home and gardening industries.

The founders of the networking group reached out to the gardening tradeshow in the area, and ended up being offered a low cost rental fee as they were being considered an attraction at the event.

By choosing a tradeshow that many of their members had products for, they were able to share the low tradeshow fee and ensure a return on investment for their participating members.

Real Life Example: How will you ensure your ROI?

At the home and garden tradeshow, there are a lot of different vendors making it difficult to stand out. Due to this, there are a lot of creative booths.

1. A landscaper created an entire garden within the tradeshow building with a fountain, pathway, huge garden, and a built in BBQ.
2. A swimming pool company lay an empty swimming pool shell against the wall of the building. This made their display visible throughout the building with the top of the pool over 25 feet in the air.
3. A hot tub company filled their hot tub with water and hired two people to be in the hot tub. When people asked where the hot tubs were, the directions were 'Go down this aisle and you'll see the 2 swimmers. You can't miss them.'
4. A patio furniture company had a massive discount to entice people at the show to purchase on the spot.

Unfortunately there were examples that did not attract potential customers:

- A hair product company was situated at one end of the building. This was unrelated to home and garden, making it less likely that people would be interested in a hair care product.