

Tradeshow Marketing Manual



How to
make the
most of
and
get the
most of
tradeshow
exhibiting

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Planning for Expos

Evaluation of Market Opportunities

Familiarize yourself with available trade show opportunities by compiling a list of scheduled international, national, regional, and local expos. Prioritize these expos to fall in line with your current marketing plans.

The number of expos which a company should consider participating in should be directly related to the staff's ability to follow-up on leads attained from a show. If sales representatives or existing franchisees are located in the selected markets, they should be made aware of the expo from the planning stages. Franchisees should be prepared for an increase of prospective investor visits to their locations.

Determining Exhibit Objectives - Setting Goals

Meeting qualified prospects and ultimately making sales are the reasons for exhibiting in an expo. It is not enough, however, to simply generate leads and sell franchises, a company must set specific goals for leads and sales to achieve. A conservative rule of thumb is to ultimately sell franchises through expos for approximately half the marketing cost of any traditional print ads. Remember that selling is not a simple process, it is rarely accomplished in a single step. Trade shows are used to accelerate that process.

Literature & Information

Successful exhibitors distribute literature that creates an interest to learn more about their system. They do not let this remain as a stand alone piece for selling the system or as a key response vehicle.

Since your company already has brochures published, the only additional piece needed is a one page handout. Successful exhibitors distribute two types of literature: the controlled piece and a free circulation piece. A Controlled Piece is distributed to prospects meeting their initial qualifications and who they would like to meet with later – it is generally a more detailed source of information.

The other form is Free Circulation, a general information piece that conveys the basic info about your system and gives the prospect an avenue to follow-up if he/she can not talk in detail at that time. It is important to try to aim for every prospect receiving your free circulation piece. Usually designed as a one page handout, some exhibitors will utilize a direct response card for easy reply.

Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of all available literature in line with the show objectives. Be sure that the information contained in the brochure is not leading the prospect to make a “yes” or “no” decision. Make the literature tantalizing so that the prospect will say “YES, I want to learn more.”

Plan and execute the printing of new literature well in advance of the show date and determine quantities needed. The number of information packets needed for a show can be calculated according to the following:

Determine the number of qualified conversations you are able to have an hour x total show hours x total sales force = Controlled Distribution Packets.

Be prepared to distribute the inexpensive handout to almost the entire projected attendance.

Pre-Show Promotions

Generally, show management is responsible for the attendance portion of the expo. However, once at the expo you can maximize your time and effort by taking some additional measures of your own that will draw attention to your booth. Remember you are competing with other franchisors that

want to make an impact on the same prospect you are talking to.

Most franchisors already have existing prospects that qualify for their franchise prior to each expo. These prospects are already aware of your company's participation. Knowing that someone has come to a franchise show is a good qualifier in itself but, knowing that someone has come to a franchise show to see you specifically is a better one. The following are some types of pre-show promotions which have been successful.

Press Releases

Send press releases and/or media kits to all media (TV, Radio & Print). Be sure they are newsworthy, yet have a unique human-interest angle.

Personal Invitation

To any prospects you are currently working within a 100 miles of the expo.

Direct Mail

To any demographic sectors you may feel are important to contact within a 100 miles of the expo.

Appointing Expo Coordinator & Staff

This decision should be made early in the planning process once the decision has been made to exhibit. The coordinator should have a central file which contains all planning aspects of the expo.

Establish a sound work schedule for sales team efficiency and morale. Be considerate and fair to each for maximum co-operation. Provide for skilled sales coverage at all times: **DO NOT LEAVE YOUR BOOTH UNATTENDED.** (see pages 11-15)

Assign a "team captain" for each shift to oversee other staff. Coordinate the sales team on:

- Procedure
- Method of Prospecting
- Handling of Inquiries
- Objectives
- Literature Distribution
- Maintaining Show Lead Sheets

Selecting Space

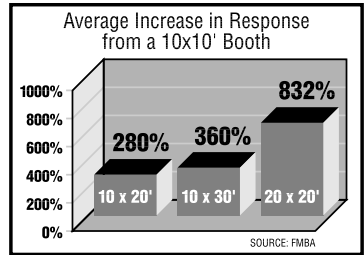
A common mistake made by many exhibitors is that they miscalculate the size of the booth space needed to effectively attract the number of prospects they would like to get. Exhibitors that have one or two sales persons in an exhibit space should not book spaces over 200 sq. ft. in size. The best way to calculate your needs is to account for 49 unencumbered sq. ft. of space for every staff member in the booth. If you have 4 sales people in a booth, then the minimum amount of space you should have is 200 sq. ft. This allows ample space for conversing with prospects inside the booth. Do not hold your presentation while the prospect is standing in the aisle. You want to entice the prospect into your exhibit space. (see page 16)

An event expecting 5,000 visitors will not require as much staffing as a show expecting 30,000 visitors. When deciding how many sales people to bring to a show, remember one person can hold four to six separate 10-15 minute conversations per hour. Within a two day show, that same person will have had 48 (qualified) 15 minute presentations. (see page 16)

A show attracting as many as 5,000 visitors with three sales people will allow you to talk in detail with 144 prospects on average or 2.8% of the total audience. Assuming that the average percentage of the audience at a trade show qualified for your offer is 16% or 800, you have reached 18% of the total number of qualified prospects. (see page 16)

Bigger Booths DO Get Bigger Response

The larger the booth space, the better the response only holds true when it has an adequate number of sales people to staff it. Also, the impression accredited to a larger professional booth projects a stronger company image with a commitment to separating yourself from the rest. When done correctly, a 200 sq.ft. space will average 280% more responses than a 100 sq.ft. space, and a 300 sq.ft. space will average 360% more responses than a 100 sq.ft. space. On the same level, a 400 sq.ft. space will average 832% more responses than a 100 sq.ft. space.



Factors which must be considered when selecting space on a floor plan.

- size
- corners
- islands
- double end caps
- in-line
- main aisles
- peninsula
- first impact/last impact

Corners and double end caps give you the ability to work two or three aisles of traffic as opposed to an in-line location. Island spaces, usually 400 sq. ft. or larger, are open on all four sides and have greater visibility. Companies whose booths are visually appealing and are larger in size usually receive greater recall by visitors.

Exhibit Design & Marketing Message

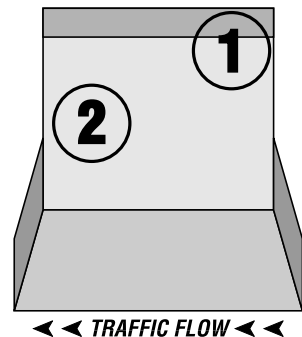
When designing your booth presentation, allow for openness and easy access. Avoid blocking prospects from entering the booth by putting tables along the aisle. It is important for prospects to feel comfortable with you and not distracted by what is going on around them.

Plot an exact scale floor plan of your booth. Spot your display, equipment, tables, chairs, and stands. Re-evaluate the available floor space for maximum use of the area, allowing sufficient room for your prospect interviews. Avoid cramping your display, and forcing prospects to stand in aisle traffic. (see page 19)

Carpet, usually not included with the exhibit package, is an important item that can be ordered in almost any color. Since most convention floors are concrete, a carpeted space can make a huge difference in the image you project and the comfort of your sales staff. Convention hall lighting is sometimes dim and dull, add extra lighting to your display for clarity and brightness, it also makes your exhibit stand out from those around you. This puts emphasis on your marketing message and is easier to read.

Do not allow your staff to sit in the booth or stand with their arms crossed. Sitting down in chairs gives the impression you don't want to be bothered, or you just don't care. Be sure to strive for originality and showmanship, **REMEMBER—YOU ARE COMPETING WITH YOUR NEIGHBOR.**

Use the display as an attention getter that conveys your message. The first place an attendee usually looks is the upper corner of the display. Use eye appealing headlines at the top of the display to create curiosity. Ask questions with your exhibit display that create curiosity like, "Did you know that commercial cleaning is an \$8 billion a year industry?" or "Want a franchise system that assists in establishing corporate contacts?" By simply stating who you are is not enough in any circumstance. The second area will be to the left or right of the mid-section for more information.



Attempt to identify what issues are important to a potential franchisee. When developing your message be sure to include the following:

- What you have to offer.
- What the benefit is.
- How much it is.

Text should deliver what the benefits are to your system. Remember also, the closest a prospect will be to your exhibit initially is 10-14 ft. minimum. Avoid large amounts of small type. Use bullet formatted text (•) to highlight statements. The message should be brief and easily understood.

Accommodations/Travel

Hotel & Travel

Obtain the list of official hotels for each expo from show management. Assemble the list of authorized personnel assigned to the expo and arrange all hotel & travel reservations in advance. Often times, exhibitors don't schedule their hotel & travel reservations until the last minute and they find themselves with out a room because all available "official hotels" are booked. Since show management has negotiated a rate for exhibitors involved in the expo, it is to your advantage to use the "official hotel" for all exhibit related functions.

Hotel Meeting Rooms

If the decision has been made to utilize a hotel meeting room, place a reservation with the "show" hotel early on. Include specific instructions in writing for tasks that need to be fulfilled by the hotel. Consider this your office for two to three days following an expo. Upon arrival, check assigned rooms for accessibility, and condition according to your specifications. Weigh the option of securing beverage and food supplies from an economical outside source.

Exhibit Accessories and Shipping Arrangements

Show management supplies each exhibitor with an official "decorators kit". This contains information, prices and necessary forms for ordering ancillary products and services for the exhibit. Order electrical service, floor coverings, badges, extra tables and chairs, furniture, photographers, telephones, etc. in advance to take advantage of discounted prices. Set a date to confirm all orders.

Note and follow show instructions implicitly – they are for your benefit. By completing all necessary forms in advance, you will avoid extra handling charges. Arrange for adequate insurance coverage for your products and displays as well as general public liability.

Don't overlook necessary tools such as: hammers, pliers, screw drivers, tape, velcro tabs, hooks, extension cords with adapter plugs, touch up paints and brushes in the exhibit shipment. Be sure to follow-up with the appropriate contractor for post-show shipment of your display. (*see page 17*)

Effectively Working Expos

Erecting Exhibit

When setting up the exhibit, arrange your display for optimum visibility to major traffic flow. Arrive early for set-up and allow yourself enough time to rehearse sales presentations and deal with any unsuspected problems that may occur.

A Team captain is responsible for the appearance of the display during show hours. Watch for trash build-up in the display. Staff personnel should not smoke or eat in the exhibit at any time. Make arrangements for "early-bird" housekeeping maintenance. Carefully identify all crates before storing. Check with show management to find out when you will be able to gain access to them.

Sales Presentation

Other franchisors will be talking to the same prospects you are. A mistake often made by new exhibitors at franchise shows is that they give the prospects information on which to base a decision to buy and leave it at that. Then they return to the office waiting for applications or phone calls to complete the sale. When speaking to prospects at trade shows, the emphasis should be on creating an interest and desire to learn more.

When first greeting a prospect, open with qualifying questions relative to your franchise system. Open conversations with a “Who, What, When, Why or Where” question, then introduce yourself. Avoid in-sincere questions like “How are you today?” or “Can I help you?”. Some good opening questions are:

- Have you been looking for a franchise system long?
- What business sector are you looking to get involved in?
- Are you familiar with XYZ company?
- Are you interested in owning a business that is known internationally/nationally?

Get the prospect involved in the presentation. Avoid “robotic” practices such as “If your interested, fill out this card and we will send you more information”. Developing a rapport with prospects by getting them involved makes follow-up more efficient and effective. Remember, the prospect you’re talking to is there to meet with other franchisors as well, so you better do something that separates yourself from the rest.

After you have made your presentation, establish whether you want to contact the prospect after returning to the office, or arrange a meeting to discuss the benefits of your system in detail while still in the market area, whichever is more appropriate. Then, inform the prospect what your intentions.

Strategies

Developing strategies in the trade show marketing process is what makes the expos successful. Attendees at a franchise show are there for one reason – to shop for information on different systems that will ultimately affect their future. As an exhibitor you are there to sell them the benefits of your system and ultimately for them to buy.

A basic guideline applies for developing your strategies and presentations. Get the prospects ATTENTION then generate the INTEREST in what you have to offer. From there, create the DESIRE to learn more. Implement this AID formula in all aspects of the selling process.

Qualifying

What makes successful exhibitors is how they apply pre-determined qualification criteria to all prospects who visit their booth. This enables them to prioritize their follow-up efforts on prospects meeting their initial qualifying criteria. Below is a sample of some important qualifying factors your sales staff will need to know in order to decide to go ahead with a presentation.

- Investment capability.
- Market to open a franchise.
- Time frame looking to commit within.
- Knowledge of franchising.
- How far along into the process.
- Individuals background.

Qualifying a prospect by investment range first will determine if what you ultimately want to achieve is possible. You can use the investment range as an opening question such as “Are you looking for a franchise system in the \$150,000 range?” This will establish for both parties whether or not to continue.

During the expo, you will speak with prospects who not only meet your criteria but are also the kind of individuals you would like to have in your system. At that point, you should try to schedule a meeting prior to leaving the local area. Either a face-to-face meeting or a seminar should be held.

For example “Joe – you seem to be someone we would love to have in our system. I’ll be in town till Wednesday – Please understand I CAN NOT SELL YOU A FRANCHISE NOW – but I would like to answer your questions.”

The Lead Sheet

Establishing criteria for a “lead sheet” will play a vital role in your follow-up efforts. Complete one of these forms for every prospect that you feel is qualified to become a part of your system. Lay out the form logically so it is easy and quick for your sales staff to fill out in the qualifying/sales process. (*see page 18*)

Include basic information such as name, address, and telephone number. Code prospects on a temperature scale to assist in prioritizing your follow-up calls. In addition to information needed on your system, specifically include the following criteria in your lead sheet:

- Best time to get in touch with the prospect (day/night).
- Requests that the prospect made outside of the normal process.
- What was promised in the follow-up call.
- What the prospect is looking for in a franchise system.

This is the only recall you have. Do not depend on your memory.

Face-to-Face and Seminar Meetings

Face-to-face and seminar meetings are an effective way of speaking to prospects in greater detail about your offer. Many exhibitors have found them to be effective in maintaining and increasing the prospects level of interest in your system, as well as capitalizing on the excitement generated by the expo.

These discussions take place during the expo, after the show closes, or in the first few days following the expo. Suggested locations include seminar areas adjoining your booth, meeting rooms in the exhibit hall, hotel meeting rooms, or an existing franchise location. Meetings held during the expo or immediately following generally have larger attendance numbers than those held after the show dates.

Scheduling seminars during show hours can be an effective method of getting prospects into a relaxed (and private) environment. Since equipment and location will vary, it is advisable to contact show management to determine what is available.

Helpful Tips – Do’s & Don’ts

Exhibitors should always wear business dress standard for the industry. Wear older, comfortable shoes that your feet are used to.

Use the first few minutes to qualify prospects before starting a presentation or in-depth discussion. Then make a decision whether to continue or back off. Often, you will find yourself talking to an enthusiastic listener who could never be a buyer. Ask about buying interest within two to three minutes. Complete your qualification process quickly while remaining polite and friendly.

Speak clearly and slowly – show floors are noisy. Maintain good eye contact with your prospect. They will feel uncomfortable and insulted if you allow yourself to transfer eye contact to attendees passing your booth. If you are speaking to more than one person, be sure to address each one of them equally. Stand with hands at sides or cupped below the waist. Folding arms across the chest puts attendees off. Hands in pockets imply “I don’t care.” Stand at all times. Expos are not for shy people, but a “huckster’s” approach won’t work either.

Take full details of every visitor whom you have identified as a prospect. Many exhibitors leave the expo without names, addresses and phone numbers, assuming their prospects will contact them later, only to be disappointed. Contacting your prospects after the expo will show your company’s professionalism. Use a properly designed “lead sheet” to record your discussions and information.

Posture, appearance and body language are vital. Don't address a prospect sitting down unless you already led them to a sitting area. Never smoke, drink, eat or read in a booth. Never overcrowd the booth with too many sales people - all these things will cost you business.

Never say "Can I help you?" They may say "No." Use lines that prompt answers that allow you to begin the qualifying process. Never start with "How are you today?" either, they know you're not concerned for their health. Professionalism and sincerity are critical to your success at an expo.

Don't chat with other booth staff, even during the quiet periods. Visitors will not wish to interrupt. Stay on the alert, close to the aisle, showing a willingness to help.

Restrict the handing out of valuable literature. By all means make a one-page handout available to every passer-by, but only provide your full prospectus to those whom have met your qualifying criteria. If you have a one page flyer, don't lay them out in a design, because the visitors will not wish to disturb it.

Don't forget to get written details from each prospect. Each of them will have many other discussions during the expo, so your ability to follow-up professionally and quickly will play an active role in their decision to do business with you.

Don't wear yourself out in the evenings. Manning a booth is more exhausting than the inexperienced may realize, so restrict the nocturnal social activities.

Never "badmouth" your competitors, it will cost you dearly. Always highlight the features of what you are selling instead. If your prospect raises the subject of your competitors, acknowledge the comment then lead the conversation back to your advantage.

Dismantling Exhibit

Show management prohibits the dismantling of exhibits prior to the show closing. To do so is also inconsiderate to other exhibitors who are still talking to prospects. (it may also invalidate your public liability insurances) Even though the show is coming to a close, qualified prospects are still on the show floor. Dismantling early, gives a bad impression to prospects who are reluctant to talk to you while you are packing up to leave. In fact, these attendees who are still on the show floor are often the most serious.

Verify all shipping arrangements with the moving contractor prior to the closing date of the show. Pre-locate storage crates and packaging materials in the convention hall for quick access at the close of a show.

Effective Follow-Up & Evaluation

Follow-Up

The number one reason for failure at trade shows is exhibitors do not follow-up quickly and effectively. It is essential that your first day back be considered another show day.

Personally contact all prospects within a few days after the show, even if only to let them know that the information they requested is being sent. Don't forget that prospects are speaking to other franchisors.

Many times exhibitors delay following-up on leads they worked hard to collect at a show and prospects that were once hot turn cold. Remember that you are competing with all other exhibiting systems, not just those in your specific industry.

Prospects attending the show you once felt were hot or warm but do not do anything should not be forgotten. Often exhibitors will close leads or bring them back to life several months after a show when they are ready. After all, investing in your own business is not an overnight decision.

Expo Evaluation

Consider evaluation a prime objective. Note areas to improve upon:

- What will make next show operate more efficiently?
- New ideas to implement in your next show to improve overall performance and response?

Personally compare your exhibit location with competing displays. Note the particulars of other impressively successful exhibits. Make a list of more desirable locations. Register all comments with the show management immediately following the expo. Make it your business to continually study the existing techniques of skilled trade showmanship and to keep abreast of new techniques.

Compare Results With Objectives and Goals Set

Immediately following the expo you can evaluate your objectives such as the number of leads generated and face-to-face appointments made. Ninety to 120 days following expo you can accurately compare sales results.

Appendix Forms

These forms have been provided to make accurate calculation in the exhibit planning process. If at any time you have questions please contact your MFV Expositions representative.

- Exhibit Planning Guide (pages 11-15)
- Space Size Estimating (page 16)
- Goals Per Hour and Day (page 16)
- Audience Analysis (page 16)
- Pre-Show and At-Show Checklists (page 17)
- Sample Lead Sheet (page 18)
- Exhibit Layout Form (page 19)

F. Franchisee Locations:

G. Is UFOC/Last Annual Report Available?:

Your Exhibiting Record

A. History:

Number of Years as an Exhibitor:

Number of Shows in Past 12 Months:

Major Shows Include:

Annual Exhibit Budget: \$

Exhibit Manager Experience: Extensive Some Little

Present or Previous Exhibit Sources:

Strengths or Weaknesses of Your Expo Presentation:

Are Pictures of Previous Exhibits Available? Yes No

Member of IFA or Other Organizations?:

B. Summarize Your Training Plan for Exhibit Staffers Prior to a Show:

C. Describe Your Method of Follow-up for Leads Developed at Expo:

Exhibit Checklist

Name of Show:

Dates:

Location:

Total Show Hours:

Estimated Show Attendance: Total Prospects Anticipated:

Product

A. Which System Will Be Shown?

What Are the Main User Benefits of Each?

B. Are Specification Sheets, Catalogs, and Advertising Materials Available?

Exhibit Requirements

A. Space Size:

Square Feet

Dimensions

Island

Perimeter

Peninsula

In-Line

B. Space Restrictions:

Height

Depth from Backwall

C. Existing Display Materials: (Pictures and/or plans available?)

D. Percent of Space for Products/Services:

E. Budget for Exhibit Design and Production: \$

F. Exhibit Theme Based On:

G. Indicate Suggestions for At-Show Promotions:

H. Preferred Colors and Shapes:

I. Are Specific Logs and/or Typefaces to be Used?

J. Any Colors Not to be Used?

K. What is Reuse Potential of Exhibit?

L. Carpet Is: Existing New Rental Other

M. Size and Kinds of Literature:

For Display

Free Distribution

Controlled Distribution

Size of Literature Request Card

N. Describe Storage Requirements:

O. Seminar/Meeting Space Needs: (Number of People)

Refreshments: (Number of People)

P. Special Dress for Exhibit Staff:

Blazers

Patches

None

Other

Q. Preferred Lighting:

R. Graphic Preferences and Extent:

Overall

By Product/Service

S. Preferred Method of Shipping:

Existing or New Cases

Air

Rental Cases

Company Truck

Self-pack

Van

T. Exhibit Furnishing Preferences:

Rails

Chairs

Audio/Visual

Counters

Islands

Podiums

Stools

Benches

Pedestals

Platforms

Computers

Other

Hospitality

A. Requirements Include:

Suite

Special Party

Entertainment

Location Tour

Meeting Room

Meal Function

Sports Event

Busses, Cars, Boats

B. Objective of Hospitality:

PRE-SHOW CHECKLIST

- Business Cards
- Sales Lead Forms
- Office Letterhead and Note Paper, No. 10 Envelopes, and 9 x 12 Envelopes
- Folders for Temporary Files
- Inexpensive Paper Staplers, Staple Remover, and Staples
- Ballpoint Pens (several) and Marker Pens, Cellophane Tape and Paper Clips
- Calendar
- Leather-bound Appointment Book to use for formalizing Customer Appointments at the Booth
- Telephone Contact with Existing Prospects
- Review Exhibit Location on Floorplan
- Review Show Objectives
- Review Presentation
- Review Literature

In Addition to General Supplies, Specific Show Items can include:

- Bills of Lading for Commercial Transportation
- Show Exhibitor Kit, including Show Contract and Order Forms, Copies of Orders sent in advance.
- Telephone Set
- Copies of Brochures, Flyers, and Press Releases

AT-SHOW CHECKLIST

- Wear Registration Badge
- Check out Competition, Hall Layout and Show Facilities
- Arrive Early for Booth Duty
- Review Exhibit Layout and Sales Presentation
- Review Personnel Objectives and Number of Sales Leads per Hour
- Put Briefcase and Coats Out of Sight; Keep Exhibits Neat and Clean
- Do Remember that You are there to Make Sales and Get Leads, So Do Everything Possible to Ensure That Goal!

LEAD SHEET

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: () _____

Fax/Alt. Phone: () _____

Geographic Interest: _____

Investment range seeking?

\$0-\$5k \$5-\$15k \$15-\$30k \$30-\$60k \$60k +

Financing Needed? Yes No

Time Frame?

0 to 3 months _____

3 to 6 months _____

6 to 12 months _____

12 or more months _____

LEAD SHEET

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: () _____

Fax/Alt. Phone: () _____

Geographic Interest: _____

Investment range seeking?

\$0-\$5k \$5-\$15k \$15-\$30k \$30-\$60k \$60k +

Financing Needed? Yes No

Time Frame?

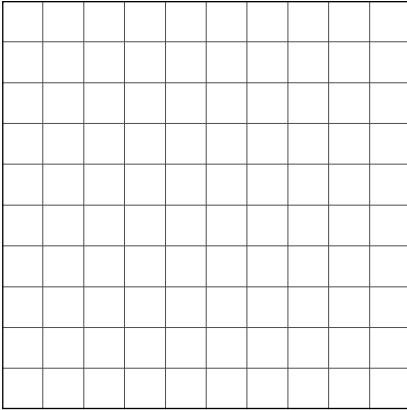
0 to 3 months _____

3 to 6 months _____

6 to 12 months _____

12 or more months _____

EXHIBIT LAYOUT FORM



10' x 10'

Company: _____

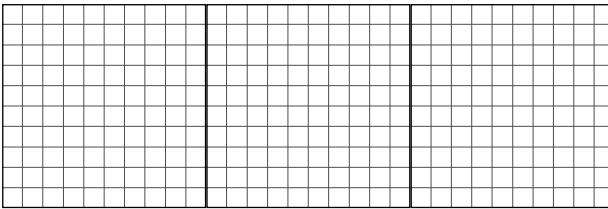
Event: _____

Booth Space Number: _____

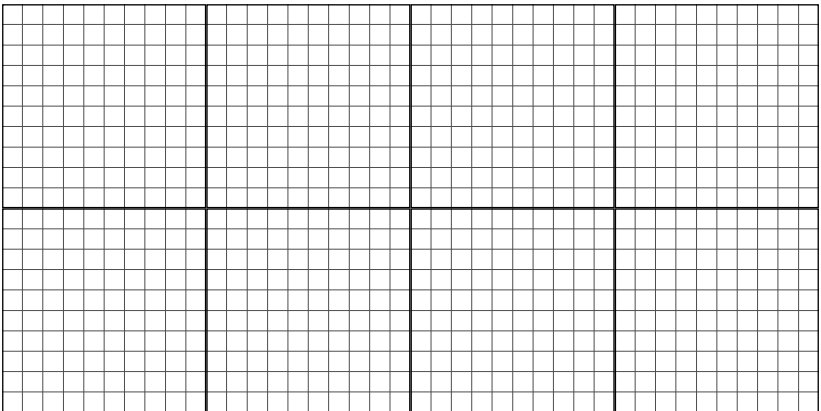
Show Date: _____

Location: _____

SCALE: Each Square = One foot



10' x 30'



20' x 40'

Tradeshow Marketing Manual



How to
**make the
most of
and
get the
most of
tradeshow
exhibiting**