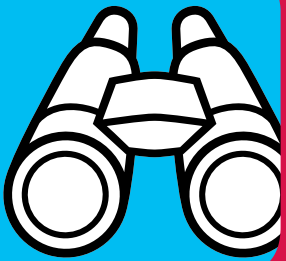


Top tips for brand awareness and sponsorship – Exhibitors

- Building brand awareness
- Communicating your key messages
- Visibility at the event

This could make all the difference to your success. Read on to find out about the latest eyetracking research and how it can help you stand out at your next event.





How do people look around?

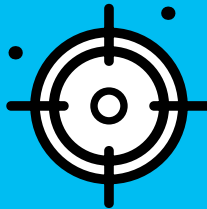
FACETIME HAS INVESTED IN SOME EYE TRACKING RESEARCH TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT VISITORS LOOK AT WHILST WALKING AROUND AN EXHIBITION.

**What are their eyes drawn to?
What distracts them? What engages them?
What stands out and how can you benefit from it?**



The research was carried out by an independent insight company, Cog Research, at both trade and consumer exhibitions and the results were exactly the same for each type of event. The subject may differ but visual behaviours, ways of looking and seeing the world don't change.

Visitors were asked to wear glasses that tracked the position of their eyes, the direction they were looking in and the amount of time that objects, words, images, people etc held their attention.



SO, HOW DO PEOPLE LOOK AROUND AN EVENT?

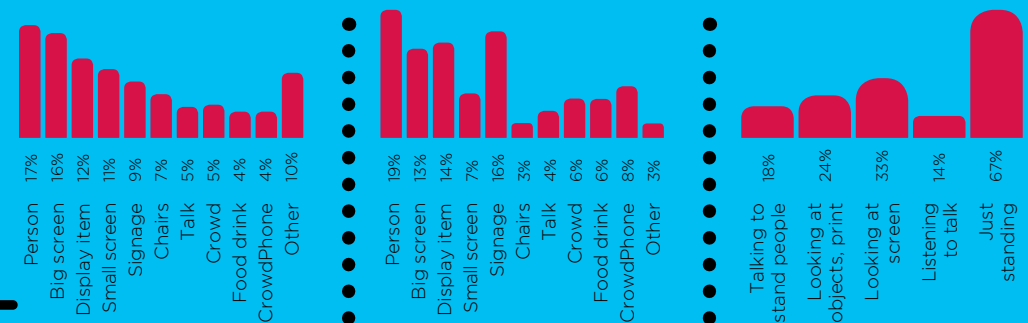
The FaceTime eye tracking research was first carried out in 2011 and a lot has changed since then. Now, at events, much more information is delivered in a screen based, digital format, ranging from video walls, LED displays and plasma screens to hand-held devices.

When standing still - most of a visitor's attention (80%) is either drawn to looking at things high up or straight ahead. When looking down, visitors will still look in front of them.

When walking around - 90% of the time, visitors walking around an exhibition hall will be looking up or ahead and are more likely to look left and right than they do whilst standing.



The results showed what caught people's eye, how often visitors looked at particular things around the exhibition and what stopped them being easily distracted.



The biggest attention grabber for visitors, in terms of length of time spent looking, is people, closely followed by large screens and on-stand display items. This is good news for exhibitors, as these are all within your control.

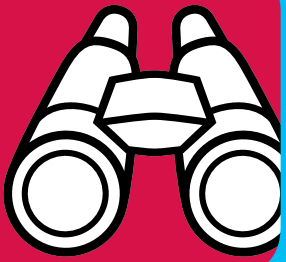
Small screens, signage and chairs were the next highest attention grabbers.

- People and signage came out on top for frequency, closely followed by display items and large screens.
- Signage, although looked at frequently, held attention for less time as visitors tend to look at them quickly for navigating the halls, zones and stands.

- Maybe unsurprisingly, compared to 33% of visitors who became distracted when looking at screens, listening to talks and talking to stand staff are the most compelling activities that prevent attendees' attention from straying.

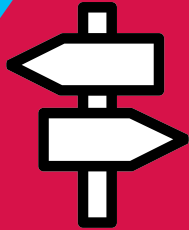


So let's take a look at what caught the eye of the visitors in our tests. For this section, we've broken the results down into "around show" and "on-stand" engagement.



Around the show

AROUND THE SHOW



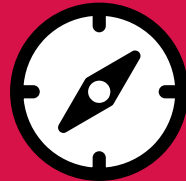
Whilst navigating the general areas of the consumer and trade exhibitions used in the research, the visitors were drawn to moving images and colour but they sought out static images and text to help navigate the event and inform them of what was happening when.

People are drawn to crowds. Understanding what the draw is and seeing others engage in activity attracts people who stay to decide if what's happening is relevant to them.

Another way of engaging with all visitors, including those on a mission, is through sponsorship of items that other visitors carry or wear. Sponsoring items such as bags can be a really good, cost-effective way of getting noticed and communicating that you're at the event.

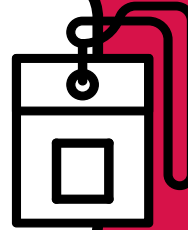


LED screens performed particularly well - visitors tracked messages in a similar way to reading a static sign, rather than viewing a video screen. This held attention longer while information was processed.



People who are seeking a destination at an exhibition scan signs more, look at exhibits less and are less distracted en route. However, if your stand, display or activity is particularly unexpected or engaging, it will still attract attention from people on a mission.

Whether from on-stand merchandise or by sponsoring bags, lanyards or badges, using a large logo with added text and bright colours proved to be a big draw.



ON-STAND

The research found that the highest engagement levels at an exhibition occur on-stand, when visitors have a high level of facial engagement and willingness to learn about your story, product or service.



The exception was when exhibitors displayed something completely unexpected. Something in keeping with the theme of the event

but that none of the other stands had thought to exhibit, for example a retro video game at a technology event.



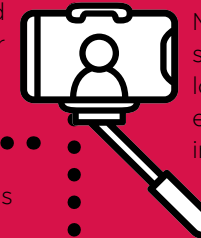
The research found visitors looked longingly at vacant furniture so, if your stand is large enough, you could invite visitors to take a well-earned five minute rest or sponsor rest areas where your branding will get lots of visibility.



The strongest impact came when branding from people, print, screens and text all synergised.

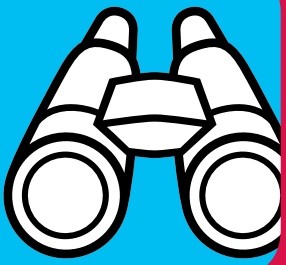


Make your brand and strapline visible. Include large logos at eye level - they're easy to find and perfect for including in selfies.



People are naturally drawn to text, so have enough to explain what you do but not too much to overwhelm onlookers.

Put giveaways in an easily visible spot. Somewhere that makes visitors step onto your stand to make it easier for you to engage with them.



Some key recommendations

MAKE SURE YOUR BRANDING, STAND DESIGN, SIGNAGE, GIVEAWAYS AND STAFF ALL WORK IN HARMONY TOGETHER AS A GROUP - WITH COLOUR MATCHING AND CLEAR MESSAGING.

AROUND THE SHOW

Why not invest in sponsorship opportunities?

Overhead, hanging banners directing visitors to your stand provide a fantastic opportunity as people tend to look up and ahead as they navigate the event.



If you're planning on sponsoring floor tiles, don't forget to check with your organiser first. Your branding will need to be big enough and positioned in the centre of the aisle so that visitors will see it when looking down and ahead.

If you don't have space for a large screen on your stand, see if you can benefit from the screens the organiser provides at the event.



Promotional bags, badges and lanyards handed to visitors as they come in are a great way of getting brand visibility away from your stand.

- Visitors are unconsciously looking for rest and space -
- can you include a tempting branded sofa or sponsor a rest area?



ON YOUR STAND

People and large screens both grabbed and held attention so it's worth investing the time in getting these two things right.

If you're considering having screens and video on your stand:

- include text or subtitles to hold audience attention and get your message across.
- combine high mounted, big screen drama with small interactive screens or hand-held devices.



Make sure your team is well turned out, on brand, knowledgeable and well-briefed on acceptable on-stand behaviours as they are a vital asset. Make sure to give them breaks so they can re-energise throughout the event.



Branded goody bags are a great way of getting visitors to be walking advertisements for your presence at the exhibition.



- Don't make your stand all about you - let the visitor know what's in it for them with large simple messaging.

Stands that are visually inviting, dramatic or have technological engagement, such as touchscreens and gamification, are more likely to appeal to visitors looking for inspiration as well as distract those on a mission elsewhere.



Engaging all five senses is still a winning formula - how can you build this into what you offer on your stand?

- Branded sweets or cupcakes as giveaways.
- Free coffee brewing, and delivered in branded cups, to appeal to the visitors' sense of smell.
- Props or products to touch or technology to engage with.



- Surprising sounds to attract attention.
- Visually appealing design

- Think about the use of lights, a relatively low-cost way of creating an atmosphere or adding drama.

