



The Essential Guide to Exhibiting Overseas

From border crossings to language barriers, your indispensable guide to exhibiting in another country.



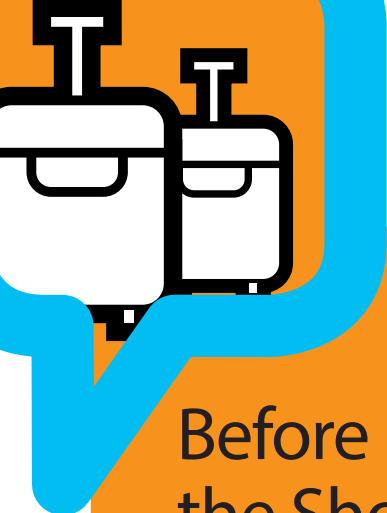
Exhibiting is rewarding but challenging, particularly if not on home ground, this guide tells you:

WHO to speak to and how to do it

WHAT to do at the show to maximise results

WHERE to avoid common exhibitor fails

WHEN to book, travel, sell and celebrate



Before the Show

So, you've decided that the best way to showcase your products and services to new markets is to exhibit at a show overseas – smart move!

Here's our Top 10 Tips:

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- 1. THINK LONG-TERM**
If you have a great show, will you be able to meet demand in the new territory? Plan your objectives clearly and carefully.
- 2. CHECK YOUR BOOKING**
Sounds obvious but there is a BIG difference between 4 square metres and 4 metres squared. The last thing you want is a nasty surprise when you turn up to your space.
- 3. SORT YOUR STAND**
Consider colours and messaging carefully to ensure it 'translates' for other cultures. On a practical tip, ensure you have plenty of storage space for suitcases and materials, and consider your hospitality offering carefully to cater to local tastes and customs.
- 4. APPLY FOR A GRANT**
UK Trade & Investment can provide financial assistance to companies exhibiting overseas. This has to be done at least eight weeks prior to the show, so mark your diary.
- 5. LEARN SOME LINGO**
It is important to look up local etiquette – you don't want to blow a big deal because of a simple false gesture or inappropriate handshake.
- 6. BOOK TRAVEL AND HOTELS EARLY**
Consider alternative accommodation via AirBNB or HomeAway if hotels seems overly expensive or in short supply – these private houses and apartments offer greater space and can cut catering costs considerably.
- 7. DON'T SQUEEZE THE ITINERARY**
Having staff arrive at the show straight from a long-haul flight, in a different timezone, is going to impact on their performance and your success. Allow time before the show to settle in so your stand sings with fresh-faced employees ready to do business.
- 8. PREPARE YOUR MATERIALS**
What will you be handing out at the stand? Will it be brochures or info on USB drives? What language will it be in? Make sure everyone has up-to-date business cards or have more printed including local translations.
- 9. DOUBLE-CHECK PASSPORTS AND VISAS**
China, Russia and India all require visas for UK citizens, while you will also need to apply in advance for travel to the United States. Also check passport expiry as countries have differing policies on how long you must have left on your passport to gain entry.
- 10. TRIPLE CHECK LOGISTICS**
Exhibiting overseas can be complicated, especially if you are heading to a country with unfamiliar procedures and regulations. Time zones, exchange rates, working days, tax – all these things need to be considered.



At the Show

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Eight steps to success:

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1. ON ARRIVAL

So you made it, congratulations! Now it's time to make all that hard work and investment pay off. Make sure your stand looks its best. If you think something is missing or could be better, speak to the show organisers and on-site suppliers – there is still time to spruce. Prior to the show opening it's worth checking out the competition or spotting ways you could attract more visitors.

2. SHOW TIME

Make sure staff arrive fresh and properly briefed on objectives and local protocol. Everything from a handshake to how you swap business cards has to be done according to local custom and etiquette. Look smart, approachable and interested in your visitors (so leave the phone alone).

3. USE SHOW MARKETING

Most exhibitions have websites, apps and daily newspapers where you can market yourself – often for free. Make sure you have something newsworthy to promote at the show (like a new product or service) to attract attention. Remember it's not enough to let people know which stand number you are on – give them a reason to seek you out.

4. COLLECT DATA

With thousands of potential visitors to your stand, it's important to keep track of who came and what they wanted. Badge scanners can be useful, or you can have visitors input their own data via iPads or other devices – which is especially helpful for difficult spellings. Also try to collect social media data such as Twitter handles. Have a plan in place to qualify sales leads to help prioritise the hot prospects.

5. CONVERT YOUR CURRENCY

Make sure any prices quoted are correct and up to date, and also presented in local currency based on current exchange rates. Relying on old rates could cost you dearly.

6. AFTER HOURS

Time spent away from the show floor can be just as productive, if you are hosting clients or simply ensuring your team gets time to relax and recharge. A three-day show can be physically and mentally exhausting, especially when away from home, so make sure everyone gets breaks and enjoys themselves, too. Organise at least one team social event or excursion.

7. FOOD AND DRINK

As tempting as it may be to sample traditional street food, it's probably wise to stick to familiar food and reputable vendors. Also try to avoid strong smelling foods. Alcohol should be drunk in moderation – especially in countries that have different attitudes towards over-indulgence. Drink plenty of water and have it freely available at the show for staff to stay hydrated and alert.

8. CONSIDER RE-BOOKING

If the show is meeting or exceeding expectations, now may be the time to re-book. You can guarantee your space for next year as well as take advantage of any early-bird discounts offered by the organiser.



After the Show

The three steps to exhibition heaven:

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1. FOLLOW UP ON YOUR LEADS!

Unbelievable as it may sound, studies suggest that up to three quarters of sales leads generated at exhibitions are not followed-up. After all that time and effort, that's just madness!

2. HOLD A PERFORMANCE REVIEW

When it comes to exhibitions, there are always ways to improve performance, so holding a review of the show will reap rewards for your next adventure.

3. START PREPARING FOR THE NEXT SHOW

Once the review is out of the way, it's time to start thinking about the next show. That may be rebooking for the same show or preparing for another one. The sooner you start, the greater your chances of tradeshow success.

Remember to keep talking to the new potential customers you met at the event. The organisers will be able to help you, many provide news and other information updates throughout the year.

For the latest information updates, check out the UK Government website: www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice



Visit our website if you want more in-depth guides and helpful tips to make your exhibiting activity a great success: www.facetime.org.uk

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