

STEPS TO GET STARTED AND SET EXHIBITION OBJECTIVES

So, you've booked your stand. Great! But don't pop off for a celebratory flat white just yet. Booking your space at an exhibition is just the start. There are several steps before you'll be on-site at your business-ready stand in front of your target audience.

An exhibition is not a 'flag-waving exercise', so it's these next steps that will make your exhibition experience highly worthwhile for your business.

In this training module we'll cover the steps to get started, plus the all-important guide to setting exhibition objectives. After all, you're not going to exhibit without a plan, are you...?

ONE STEP AT A TIME

This series of Exhibitor Training Modules is for both those new to exhibitions and those who want to improve their results from events.

We've created six easy-to-understand Exhibitor Training Modules, covering why exhibit in the first place; who you need to know in the Exhibition Galaxy; how to plan for an exhibition including setting objectives (this guide); how to go about marketing; tips on dressing your stand and creating a memorable experience and how to measure your Return on Investment.

For a full list of modules, see the end or contact the Exhibitions & Trade Fairs' team. You'll learn:



1. How to start at the beginning:

- a) Appoint 'The Planner' (someone from your company who is responsible for the prep and planning)
- b) Setting a budget
- c) Using your USP to develop objectives

2. How to set measurable objectives for:

- sales
- customer relationships
- market research
- marketing and branding
- channels



1.
Starting at the beginning

WHAT TO DO NEXT

a) Appointing 'The Planner'

The first thing to do immediately after you've booked your stand is to appoint a planner for the exhibition.

There are two points here:



1. Be timely
(don't let valuable planning time slip by)



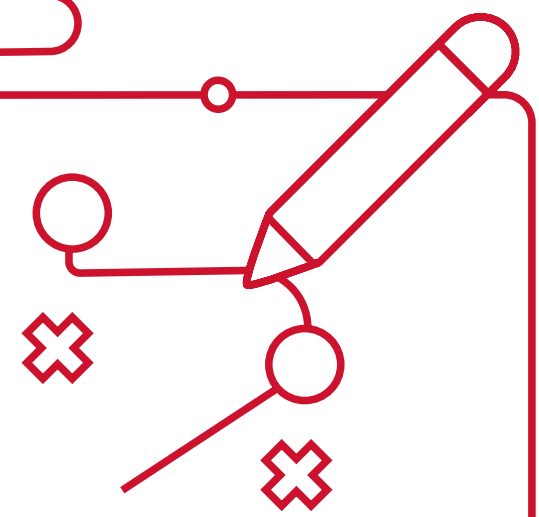
2. Be decisive in choice

While your planner will obviously work as part of a team, it's far simpler for all concerned to have one nominated person as the go-to. And don't just assume that 'someone from marketing will handle the exhibition stuff'. Even if you're in marketing and you booked the stand, make sure everyone in the company knows that you – or whomever – is the one to talk to about exhibiting.

A TIP ON APPOINTING A PLANNER:
don't choose someone just because they're great with graphics' and you think they'd do a stellar job of stand design.

Your planner must work well with people, must understand why the business is exhibiting at the event and they must be thorough and responsible.

Right after you've booked your stand, appoint a planner. Don't just assume 'marketing will handle the event stuff'.



1.
Starting at the beginning

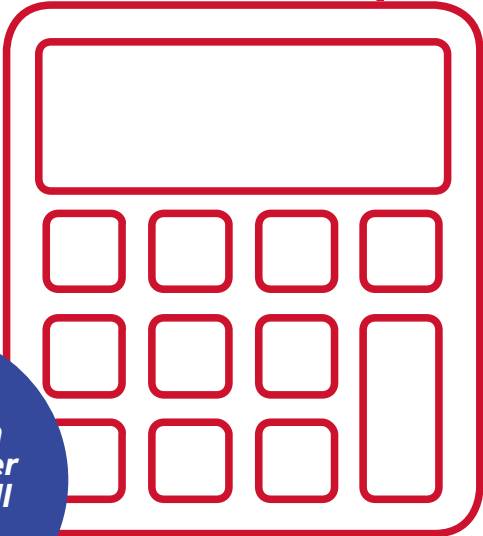
SPEND VS. SALES

b) Setting a budget

Exactly how much you decide to allocate on an exhibition will depend on several factors, including where it is located (i.e., locally or overseas), what you want to achieve at the event and its value to your business. If your business has exhibited before, then these previous figures will offer you a guide. Do remember to take into account how successful that event was for your business, which will indicate areas to tweak, keep or ditch.

In thinking about the event's value, also take future sales and brand awareness into consideration. Often the value of exhibiting comes in later sales, when the customer is ready to buy or when your follow-up marketing has had the desired effect.

TIP:
Always set a budget. Never just think "I'll add that up later".



Here's a Budget Checklist to give you an idea of what to think about:

- Pre-event marketing _____
- Stand space _____
- Sponsorship _____
- Stand design and build _____
- Furniture hire _____
- Graphic design _____
- AV and lighting _____
- Electricity _____
- Catering _____
- Rigging _____
(banners/lighting)
- Special uniforms _____
(if desired)
- Shipping costs _____
- Accommodation _____
- Travel expenses _____
- Meals _____
- Hospitality _____
(including hosting guests)

1.

Starting at the beginning

UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITION

c) Use your USP to develop your objectives and drive visitors to your stand

Your USP is your business's Unique Selling Proposition.

In Exhibition Training Module 1, we looked at the USP of exhibitions themselves. Now it's time to apply that thought process to your business.

Firstly, what do you offer your target customers that no other business does?
And then, how can you build on that as a drawcard to your stand?

While visitors spend an average of 5.5 hours at an event, they will most likely have many stands they want to visit, so you need to be creative as to why they must come to you. Think of it from their viewpoint: **What's in it for them?** Is it a new service, or something that will allow them to reduce costs by X%, or a new ice-cream flavour, or an improved product. Great! Now think of **how and why that will be beneficial for them.** That's what your USP is; it offers target customers a solution.

Another way is to think about what your brand experience is. Are you the most trusted? The highest quality? The cheapest by a long shot? Build on the experience customers have with your brand in devising your USP, which is a reason for target customers to visit you.

Your stand USP offers visitors a solution that they need.

Use your USP in all your marketing material and make sure it's front of mind when setting your objectives.



2.
Setting
measurable
objectives

A GUIDE TO SETTING EXHIBITION OBJECTIVES

Exhibitions deliver excellent ROI.

In days gone past, some companies have used exhibitions pretty much as a 'flag-waving exercise'.

They're there, that's great (you know from Module 1 that visitors encountering you at an exhibition think your brand, product or service is 28% more innovative than they did before they attended).

But that approach no longer cuts it. Today, business owners and marketers – quite rightly – expect a good return

on investment (ROI) from exhibiting. The best news is that done properly, an exhibition will have excellent ROI for a business.

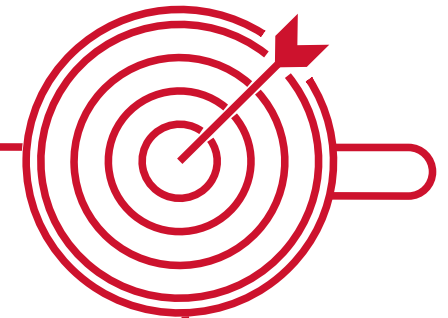
Without surprise, exhibitors who set and measure objectives, consistently achieve great success.

Management specialist Peter Drucker is well known for his quote that "you can't manage what you can't measure", which simply means that

unless you define success (by setting objectives) and then track success (by measuring against your objectives) you can't possibly know whether that exhibition was a success. The fact you sold 300 widgets and collected 301 business cards is meaningless if your objective was to sell 100 high-end widgets and meet the buying influencers in your top 10 potential customers.

So setting objectives to direct every aspect of your participation is important.

And then it's equally as important to follow the plan. You may be surprised to learn that 71% of exhibitors turn up to an event without a clearly stated desired outcome — or, don't follow their own objectives!



2.
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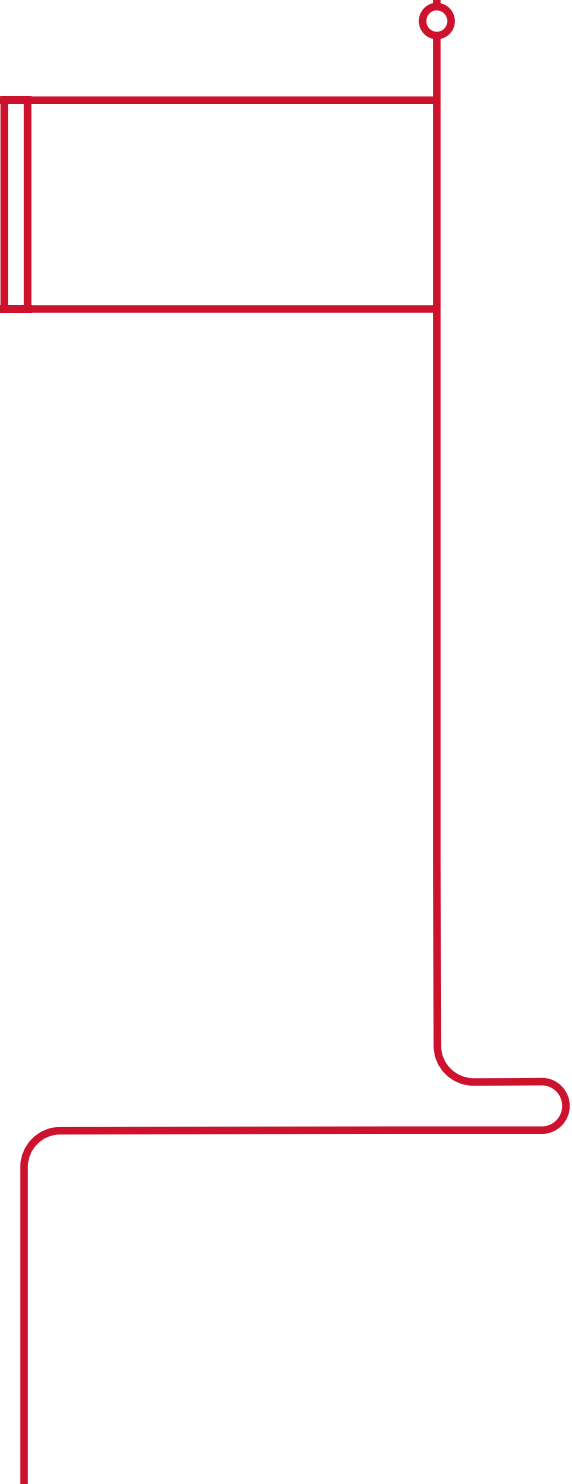
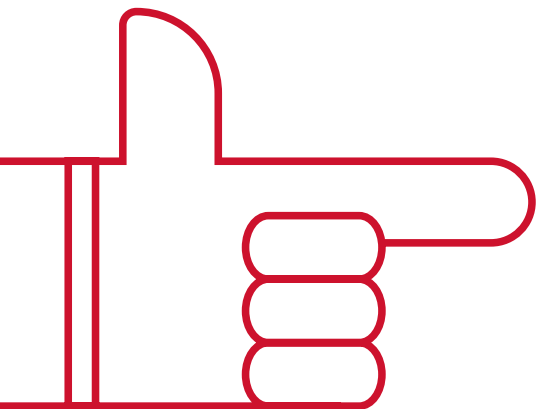
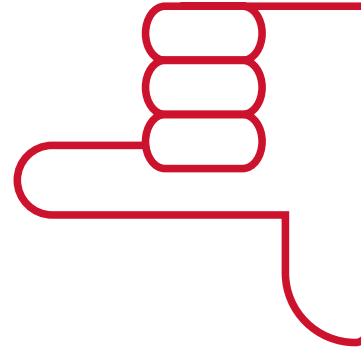
FOCUS

Think about what you want to focus on:

Is it indeed meeting the buying influencers in your top 10 potential new customers? Is it generating 50 strong sales leads? Is it to identify new suppliers or distributors? Or it could be meeting 15 key accounts, face-to-face (say over a coffee).

Make sure everyone on your exhibition team has a copy of your objectives. You can also ask staff to contribute regarding the company's objectives.

Once formulated, it's also often worthwhile to then ask staff if they have any personal goals off the back of the company's list. This can help to cement their engagement and provide an added motivator.



2.
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MEASURING

Be realistic when you're setting objectives!

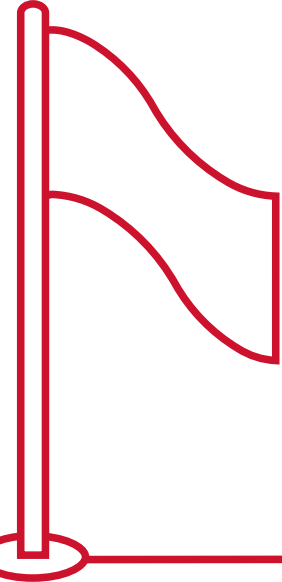
When you're setting objectives, make sure you also note how you will measure their achievement. Don't leave that 'until later'; do it now so it's easy to do when the times comes.

There are five main areas for which companies like to set and measure goals for an exhibition: **customer relationships, sales, channel building, marketing and brand building, and market research.**

Bounce off the checklist on the following page to create your own exhibition objectives.

TIP: Module 6, A Guide to Measuring Exhibition Success, is a step-by-step guide on how to collect leads on the event day, and when and how to follow up with your leads post-event. This is a MUST-READ!

TIP: Make sure your objectives stretch you, but are achievable. Don't overload yourself by trying to achieve too many. If you choose a few, related objectives and focus on those, you'll have a higher chance of success.



AREA	GOAL	MEASUREMENT METRICS	SUGGESTIONS
Customer Relationships	To educate visitors on your product and service offerings	Number of 'info' sessions with attendees	Consider collecting the visitor data of those you attended your session
	To reconnect with existing clients	Number of reconnected customers met and recorded value	Use our follow up timeline (Exhibitor Training Module 6) and record success
	To reactivate lapsed customers	Number/value of lapsed customers met	
	To create brand ambassadors	Number of 'ambassadors' recruited	
Sales	To make immediate sales	Orders taken and revenue	Don't forget about the weeks and months following the show (an extend show special is a great opportunity to track)
	To launch new products or services	Number of demonstrations done	
	To generate sales leads	Tallies of A, B, C leads, etc	Use our qualification system and measure the value of those leads
	To build a contact database	Number of new contacts acquired	
	To make \$XYZ sales from newly launched products or services	Revenue and orders taken	
Channel Building	To cement your current spot as a reliable channel partner	Number of partners met, and signed up	Assess potential lifetime value
	To find and recruit distribution partners in new channels or geographic locations	Number of partners identified, and signed	
Marketing and Brand Building	To build or strengthen your brand awareness	Number of gross impressions (total attendance) at the event	Calculate the equivalent value of attendee impressions (using paid advertising as the baseline)
	To generate media coverage in the event material	Number of articles in eDMs, magazines, etc	
	To generate media coverage in publications read by your target customers	Press inches, broadcast gained, number of articles produced, etc	
	To build relationships with journalists	Number of journalists met with, and coverage spoken about initially or later	
Market Research	To test a new product	Number of demonstrations done and quality of feedback	Consider a short survey or questionnaire at the conclusion of the end of each show day or at the conclusion of the event. Consider testing different product/offers each day and measure and compare this feedback.
	To trial variations on a product		
	To learn consumer awareness and perceptions of your brand/company	Number of impressions/quality of seminars/demonstrations, etc	
	To test your marketing and sales materials	Number and quality of feedback	
	To assess your competition		



This Exhibitor Training Module is part of a series of six easy-to-understand guides:

1. **The Power of Live Events**
2. **A Guide to the Exhibition Galaxy**
3. **Steps to Get Started and Set Exhibition Objectives**
4. **A Marketing Guide for Exhibitors**
5. **A Guide to Dressing Your Stand and Creating that Memorable Experience**
6. **A Guide to Measuring Exhibition Success**

For more information, contact the Exhibitions & Trade Fairs' team. They can help you through the guides and answer any questions you have. After all, if you're going to ask a question, ask an expert!

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Our team has experience across incredibly diverse sectors, from energy storage, construction, mining, oil & gas, irrigation, automotive, manufacturing, to travel and lifestyle. We offer a full suite of services, so we tailor what we do for different organisations depending upon their needs. The result is an excellent event — from its quality as an industry-building tool to its ROI.