

HOW TO CHOOSE THE CORRECT TRADE SHOW DISPLAY?

You should choose a trade show display based on the trade show or event for which you will be using the display. The display that best presents the products, services, and company image desired, will attract future customers. Frankly, a display is designed to do assist in creating or maintaining brand awareness. For once an attendee has been lured to your display; your booth's job is done. It is then up to you to throw down the hammer and commandeer that attendee as a future customer.

With only an ephemeral moment to seize the attention of a trade show attendee, your trade show display must make a plea to your target audience's needs. Your display has to effectively communicate who you are, what you do, and how your company can be of aid.

But, determining the correct display can be a daunting task. When purchasing a trade show display, you want to choose a professional based company with expertise and excellent customer service. If you consider the questions listed below you will have a much better idea of the direction for your display needs. Keep in mind; you will be limited by the size of your booth. Working under that premise, take a look at some options for that area.

- 1) What is the booth size?
- 2) What is the show budget?
- 3) How many individuals will be working the show?
- 4) What are the marketing and sales objectives?
- 5) How will the display be transported to the show?
- 6) Will graphics need to be created?

By answering these questions, you will narrow the search for a display booth. Once objectives and your trade show calendar for the year have been set, the next step is to choose a display. The display decision should be based on the specific show objectives, budgetary restrictions, as well as, corporate branding goals and guidelines. If for example you are a marketing director for a big company with an unlimited budget and want to position yourself as a leader in your industry, a large booth space and a custom or high end modular exhibit for enhanced appearance would best suit your needs. If, on the other hand, you are a startup or small company with a limited budget, a great choice would be to consider an inexpensive Pop Up Display. Most companies fall somewhere in-between these two extremes.

Pop Up Displays are the most popular option for spaces at sales events and conferences. There is a wide range of pop ups and most are available with podium wraps to convert your carrying case into a podium or small table. Further, Pop Ups can be complemented with shelving, peninsula counters, backlit headers, literature racks, and other accessories which can convert an ordinary Pop Up into unique marketing tool. Some of the key factors to look at in selecting a pop-up are durability, ease of setup, availability, fabric colors, and warranty. If you sometimes exhibit in smaller spaces, you could consider a convertible booth which can be easily converted to a smaller size. Each display booth uses a frame that can "pop up" allowing the display to be assembled in minutes. The frames are extremely durable and make it easier for individuals to set up and tear down. They are made of different components, some graphite, steel, and/or extruded aluminum. Manufacturers would argue their frame is the strongest, the lightest, or simply the best. Just remember each represents their particular calling card. You could equate it to the myriad of different HD televisions now available on the market. Though, when broken down to its bare essence, no one is any better than the next. The makeup from one frame to another is not overly important. Further, most of these displays have one thing in common... a lifetime warranty on the frame. Some offer a one year warranty on their display. The frame is the most important piece to your display. Every model, big or small, is a great portable trade show display choice for any trade show exhibitor. Today, marketers must achieve their goals with reduced budgets. Again, Pop Up Displays will assist you in stretching your budget because they are lighter weight and designed for easy set-up and tear-down. Further, you will save on storage, transportation, and labor costs.

Panel System Displays are an alternative to Pop Ups, and depending on their quality and countertop options, can provide a higher end look than a Pop Up Display. Panel displays generally hold more weight than Pop Ups, so they can work well if you have heavier products or a number of computer monitors to display. They are constructed of upper and lower panels that are assembled via heavy duty bolts. Panel systems give you an extreme amount of flexibility of design choices as displays can be custom created to your needs. Flexibility also abounds in color selection as upper and lower panels can be different. Most come with panels covered in fabric, be sure to select the color that best matches your companies logo, brand, products or overall image.

Modular Exhibits are high end exhibits that provide a custom look but can still be setup in a few hours, shipped in standard rotomolded plastic cases, and thus have a lower total cost of ownership than custom booths. Modular exhibits generally use higher end materials including tensile fabric structures, extruded aluminum frames, high end composites and laminates, and innovative bold designs. Modular exhibits will hold more weight and can also be used to hold large plasma screens and LCD panels.

Truss Systems provide a brash, modern, and unique look to a display. They are also excellent functional components that can be used to mount lighting, projectors, and Plasma or LCD panels. The fact that truss systems have a high weight bearing capacity makes them great for displaying heavier weight products like computers, machine parts, free weights, etc. They also have a unique dramatic look that works well with certain target markets. The beauty of Truss systems is the ability to be used in conjunction with other display structures like Pop Up and Panel System.

Custom Exhibits provide the ultimate in branding and high impact. As their name infers, they are custom built, ergo, designed to meet very specific show objectives and may include elements like conference areas, theater spaces, rotating towers, as well as, numerous product and service display positions. Given the higher cost of design, construction, shipping, installation and dismantling, these exhibits are best equipped for those willing to invest \$25,000 or more for their trade show display. The payoff in a custom exhibit can be huge because it can set you apart from the competition and create an indelible branding image of your company as an industry leader.

With each of the above-fore-mentioned display types, designing attention-grabbing graphics for your booth is essential to setting yourself apart from your competitors. Below, you will find some important strategies to consider:

- The 10 foot rule. Make sure all logos and text can be clearly read from a distance of 10 feet (i.e. Rule of thumb for text is 2" per 10' of distance viewed)
- Limit bullet points to 10 words or less... Less is more.
- Infuse a bounty of visual images to illicit emotion and make your exhibit unforgettable
- Make your logo simple to view even from a long distance. You want to make sure that your target audience can find you at a glance. High visibility is a priority.
- Consider using mural graphic panels to increase the value and emotional impact of your display. Remember, "Perception is Reality!"

Remember, purchasing a trade show display allows you complete freedom of expression. Be cognizant that the exhibit design should revolve around your specific tradeshow needs. The Trade Show Display, Exhibit or Booth should project your company's individuality, character, and panache. Over time purchasing a new tradeshow display may be your most economical long term solution to your trade show needs. Once you've answered the questions presented earlier and understood the dynamic differences between the many display options, you will be more informed and better suited to create your new display space.