Creating A Display*

Before you begin the process of creating a display for a trade show, exhibit or informational booth, take the time to review your overall display goals. If you are promoting a highly technical product or service, establish a graphic theme that supports a high-tech presentation. If you are selling a recreational product, consider a more creative and colorful look for your display. Remember, in creating your display to be consistent with your business colors, logo and overall feel of your business. Once you have established a brand, it is easier to use new colors, special logos, etc. When a company is starting out, consistency in look, feel, colors and the use of your logo are the most important aspects to creating a consistent “brand” image for your business.

Getting Big Returns from a Small Space
To combat the rising cost of exhibit floor space, many companies are now using smaller and more efficient displays. Here is how to turn small spaces into big results:

- **Focus your message.** Limit your signs and display to a core message and a few key products.
- **Limit your staff.** The optimum traffic density in a booth is one company representative per 50 square feet of open space. So in a 10’ x 10’ booth, two staffers are plenty.
- **Encourage communication.** Your time is best spent talking to good prospects, so don’t clutter your exhibit with stacks of take away literature or “eave-a-card fishbowls. However, offering some sort of freebie that directly relates to your product is often an effective tool for drawing additional potential customers into your booth. If you are marketing a new variety of coffee you developed from beans grown on your operation, consider one-serving-size sample packages of coffee or perhaps a travel mug with your company name and provide ordering information.

- **Avoid barriers.** Don’t put tables or demonstrations where they block access to your space.
- **Use literature.** Do use some sort of literature to help potential customers remember you. Business card size literature can contain all your contact and product information at a glance or even include ordering information and it remains on a potential customer’s desk. Large brochures and folders may be tossed quickly after leaving the trade show.
- **Keep it light.** Use lighting to spotlight products and brighten your entire display.

**Graphic Elements**

- **Color.** Use color to attract attention, set the tone or to support an established company message. Choose colors to support your objectives, for example: yellow is an attention-getter, black represents power, blue and gold suggest quality and green is positive and calming.
- **Copy.** Use words to identify your company, position your products and services to inform or educate prospects. Keep copy short and use action-oriented wording focused on the buyer.
- **Images.** Graphic images can be used to attract attention, support a message and illustrate core benefits. Larger-than-life graphics splashed across the backdrop of your display create excitement about your company and your products.

**Helpful Tips**
Your posters can easily be created in Microsoft PowerPoint and then printed to size at your local copy shop or printing office. This creates inexpensive graphics that maintain a professional feel for your display.
The display itself can be as simple as taking foam core posterboard and covering it with felt and an appropriate border around the edge to create a professional looking backdrop piece for your display.

As your business grows and your presence at trade shows increases, consider taking your display presence to the next level. Investing in a tabletop display that easily pops open and folds back down will create ease in travel, set up and take down and maintain a professional appearance.

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