

Five Ways to Drive Engagement and Sales With Tradeshow Marketing

by [Katie Price](#)

Thanks to the digital age, there are tons of marketing platforms and formats to choose from. 's time to draw attention back to a tactic that can really drive engagement and sales for your business—tradeshow marketing. Here are five ways to do it.

1. Create pre-event buzz

Too many businesses wait until the day of the tradeshow to start generating buzz about the event. If you start early, you'll be able to nurture leads even before you meet them in person at the event. Here are some ideas to create pre-event buzz.

Promote via social media

If the tradeshow has a designated hashtag (you can find out on the event website), start using it on social media. Some [11% of brands](#) don't seem to use social media to complement their in-person efforts, but it's helpful to connect both digitally and in-person to drive conversions.

Blog about it

Build hype by blogging about the event in advance. See what speakers and sessions are scheduled, and tell your audience which ones you plan to attend. You can also offer a sneak peek of what you'll be featuring at the show.

Host a webinar or podcast

Create a webinar or podcast as a countdown to the event. Discuss expected outcomes of the event, important attendees, etc.

Distribute press releases

There are plenty of free and paid press release distribution services you can use. Also contact important bloggers in your industry to let them know your business will be at the tradeshow; they might just provide coverage of your presence.

2. Become a speaker

If you really want your brand or firm to stand out at a tradeshow, become a speaker at the event. Appearing as an expert on a topic will bring credibility, and you can mention your own booth and encourage people to visit.

Booth staff can talk to visitors about your speech, and you can use the slide deck for digital content, as interested prospects may want to refer back to it.

Regularly follow the announcements of major industry tradeshows so you can submit a speaking proposal well in advance.

3. Make your booth noticeable

The advantage of tradeshows comes from creating impactful imagery with your booth, so make the most of in-person marketing by standing out. Here are some ways to do just that.

Create signage that has impact

Signage will be your main tool for attracting interest at the tradeshow. Invest in quality signs to create a visualization of your brand message. You can use them again and again for future events.

You'll want at least two types of signage: those that attract, and those that inform.

From afar: Use simple imagery to address a pain point. This type of signage gives an impression in a flash to attract browsers.



Up close: Offer something more detailed for when people approach and interact with your booth.



Your brand name or logo don't necessarily have to be front and center on your signage, unless building brand awareness is your main goal of the tradeshow.

Check to see what kind of signage you're allowed to have at the event, and consider using a [step and repeat](#) for branded photo opportunities.

Choose the right location

Get a copy of the exhibit hall layout beforehand to find the best place for your booth. You'll want it to be in a high-traffic area with lots of engagement opportunities. Some locations may cost a premium price.

Before you commit to a spot, ask yourself:

- Are the dimensions large enough for my signage?
- Is there lighting available?
- Are there internet access and outlets I can use?

Booth location can make or break your tradeshow marketing success, so choose carefully.

4. Focus on interaction

Digital platforms allow you to passively market to potential leads. At tradeshows and other in-person events, the real value comes from interaction.

Take steps to make sure as many people as possible engage with your booth. Start by encouraging your employees to connect with show attendees, and use great graphics and demonstrations to draw interest.

Fully [80% of those who attend live events](#) say live demonstrations and free samples significantly help define their purchasing decision. You can also use contests and giveaways to encourage interaction, such as...

- Industry trivia
- A prize wheel
- A photo contest
- A guess-how-many game
- A spot-the-differences game

Or get creative. [Here's an idea](#)

Also, post live social updates using the event hashtag and images of your booth. Other attendees who are following the event feed may be drawn to your display because of your posts.

5. Follow up after the event

Most of the leads you gather at tradeshows will be at the top of the sales funnel: They'll need more convincing post-event to convert.

You've made a memorable face-to-face impression at the tradeshow. Now you need to follow up.

Send out a message to new email signups, thanking them for visiting your booth. Hopefully, you've developed a targeted email marketing strategy to start moving these leads down the sales funnel.

Create and promote post-tradeshow content in your email marketing, on your site, and social media. Remind people of your in-person interactions to help them feel connected to your brand.

Did your efforts meet your tradeshow marketing goals? Measure results and see how you can improve for the next in-person event.

Here's the takeaway

Fully [74% of people](#) have a better opinion about a brand after an in-person event. That is a huge opportunity for marketers to capture valuable leads.

Follow the advice in this article to make the most of tradeshow marketing for your company's engagement and sales.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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