



## Exhibition Planning Checklist

### 10 Items To Consider For Your Next Event

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A leading UK supplier of promotional marketing and advertising gifts, with over 10 years experience helping clients make their promotions and events an outstanding success.

## Exhibition Planning Checklist : Items 1-3

### 1. Write A Stand Brief

Whether you are going for a Space Only or a Shell Scheme write a stand brief listing your objectives and overall aims for the show and what you want to show.

There are several key areas within a stand brief. Include an overview of your company along with a website address and contact details for further information, state your marketing message and strapline, corporate logo and colours, other company graphics, stand objectives, space needs in terms of working, demo, meeting and storage, stand personnel numbers, utilities inc local WiFi, key announcements for the show and images of previous stand designs.

### 2. Get Bids From Stand Designers

Send the brief out to up to 15 stand designers and ask them to send you a costed proposal for evaluation on a set date. Review the proposals to get a shortlist.

If you only want a shell scheme, then the stand brief will be useful for your marketing agency whom you should engage with early in the planning process. They will help with pop-up banners, wall graphics and other materials. If you want space only you will need a stand design and construction company. Most exhibition websites will provide a list of these that you can contact. They may also share your contact details so expect stand companies to contact you.

### 3. Remember to BAFO!

It's a competitive world. Ask your shortlist for a Best and Final Offer. Then review all the bids against your brief and budget. Involve your marketing agency in the review.

Create a shortlist of proposals and discuss these with your marketing agency. They will provide a different point and external view of the project. Whether the show is overseas or in the UK it is useful to negotiate with the shortlisted companies and seek any clarifications or final changes to the designs before making a final decision. Select the company with the best proposal and ask for references from them. This especially important if you have not met them in person.

## Exhibition Planning Checklist : Items 4-6

### 4. Exhibition Manuals

Once you have booked a show you will get access to an on-line portal or be sent an exhibitor's manual. Read, plan and execute.



Exhibition organisers generally run smooth operations. They want to provide a successful show and make it easy for you as their client. One of the most important documents they provide is a timetable when you need to have completed forms back to them. Make sure you read this, note key dates in your diary and leave enough time to complete the forms and any other information they need including logos, social media, contact details and press releases.

### 5. Hotels, Travel and Personnel

Like the forms in the exhibition manual you cannot leave these decisions to the last minute. Especially for major shows.



In your stand brief you decided on the number of people needed for the show, right? Well review this and build in some contingency. Make sure they are available and prepared to travel to the event. Book hotels well in advance along to get the best rates. You need to be as near to the event as possible to keep your team fresh but may need to balance this against your budget. Book any flights or trains in advance to guarantee seats and prices.

### 6. Set-up and Packing Logistics

Proper preparation and planning prevents potentially poor performance. Your logistics pre and post event must be right.



Your company insurance may cover exhibitions and goods in transit, but it is always worth checking. You may decide to use your own vehicles or transport using a recommended carrier from the exhibition organisers. Book well in advance and find out how they handle packaging pre and post event. If you need to move heavy goods you may need to hire on-site fork-lift and additional personnel. Remember to aim to complete set-up at least 24 hours before the event opens.

## Exhibition Planning Checklist : Items 7-9

### 7. Plan Your Marketing Activities

What momentum building activities will you undertake to make the show a success for your company?



What does success mean? Refer to the objectives in the brief for the show in terms of visitor numbers, takeaways, sign-ups and after show follow-ups in terms of orders and new clients. Plan a marketing campaign for the show that fits into your wider marketing program and includes all aspects of engagement including social media #hashtags, exhibition editorials, advertising and PR. Include invitations to the show for your clients and prospects.

### 8. Marketing Collateral

What will your stand visitors take away from your stand in terms of brochures, samples and promotional merchandise?



You may have new products to launch, new service announcements, demos and competitions. Once a person walks off your stand, how will they remember their visit to you. What can you give them to take away that will reinforce their memory of the visit and motivate them towards moving forward in your opportunity pipeline. Brochures, graphics, samples, promotional products, corporate clothing, branded confectionery, drinks and snacks need to be planned into the schedule.

### 9. Review The Plan Regularly

Remember that show success is a team effort. Hold regular review meetings and generate a task list to review at the next meeting.



A lot of different skills are needed to make a show a success. It is a team effort and you need to make sure that everyone is onboard. Plan through the logistics of delivery and stand build. Make the after-show take-down and packing as easy as possible as well as your team will be tired and ready. After the show take time for a post-show audit, listing what you liked, what worked and didn't. Make it a learning experience for all concerned.

## Exhibition Planning Checklist : Item 10

### 10. Make A Don't Forget List

There are always last-minute overlooks that creep into event planning. Here's a few to consider.



Adequate stock of business cards, name badge holders, data capture, stand security, stand cleaning, waste bin and bags, a first aid kit, a tool box, IT cables and wires, extension leads with local plug adapter, spare tape, a stationery box with pens, pads, a stapler and spare staples, emergency contact numbers and a letter of authority from the company for overseas travellers.

Space for your notes