

Are You Spending Time With Every Show Visitor? Stop That!

One of the hardest concepts for some exhibitors to understand is that everyone at the show is not a prospect. At any show, there are really only three types of prospects for your product or service. Handling each one correctly will save you time and save them time.

Prospects can generally be classified into three types:

Type A: Ready to order or buy now. These are the people you came to the show to attract and find. You want to spend quality time with them.

Type B: Interested, but need more information. These are the people you want to convert to Type A. If you can determine who they are, you can do more than just give them a product sheet which they may not read later.

Type C: Not qualified or not interested. Either they truly don't want or need your product, or they think they don't. If they don't really have any use for your product, don't waste time with them. If they don't think they need it, then you should try and avoid anything other than being nice to them. The only exceptions to this are when you are overstaffed in the booth and need something for everyone to do (I would send some home to get more real work done), or the show has very low traffic, in which case you are really back to being overstaffed.

Once you've classified attendees, the next step is to draw the best prospects to your booth. Here are two ways to attract the best prospects.

1. **Use good signs.** The signs in your booth can help prospects determine their interest quickly. Clear descriptions of who will benefit (and why) will get people to say to themselves "Hey, that's me! Perhaps I should look into this further." They walk into the booth with an open mind already. Don't stand in the aisle dragging people into the booth with the hope of obtaining a cool premium. This rarely results in more sales. More leads, perhaps, but not necessarily more sales.

For more information
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2. **Teach things in your presentations.** Product presentations can draw large crowds. Sprinkle trivia about the industry or your product category throughout the presentation so everyone watching feels that they are learning something in addition to your product's features and benefits. Make sure that the two important post-presentation options for each person are made clear during the presentation and at the end. Identify where they should go next: either to the order desk or to the in-depth demos.

As they view the presentation, the Type C prospects will probably realize who they are. But if they learn something in the presentation, then they'll leave with a good feeling about the company and its products -- without wasting your staff's time. (Perhaps offer them a small giveaway or brochure with your company's details as well.) Resist the urge to chase after the Type C prospects. If they are going to become customers, then you'll get them later.

Always remember the 3 second rule: you have 3 seconds to show the attendees what you do, who you are and why they should do business with you!

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