

Making the Most of the Show



We want your experience at the show to be the best possible. Following are some tips that you might find helpful. Please share this information with your booth personnel and booth set-up staff.

Pre-Show Planning and Promotion

It is important to not just plan how your booth will look or what you will offer at the show but also how you are going to let others know you will be there.

- Tell your clients & potential clients. Ask them to come and support and/or meet you. You can do this via your website, email, mail, Facebook and/or Twitter.
- Decide what your company's objectives are. How do you want to use the show – leads, sales, name branding etc.
- Reinforce client relationships. Send an announcement or mailing (or two or three) to your database. Ask them to pass it on.
- If you have a website, you can use the show logo to link the Garden & Home Show website (www.ColoradoGardenFoundation.org). You can also put a 2 for 1 coupon on your website. Please contact us to get the electronic coupon and logo.
- You can have your web link on the show website. Ask us how.
- Consider purchasing additional VIP tickets (\$5 each) to give to customers.
- Decide what supplies you will need ahead of time, not just for your booth but personally. Some items you may find handy are:
 - tape, Velcro, paper, scissors, glue, safety pins, pens, stapler etc.
 - You may want a change of shoes, breath mints, water, and snacks.
- Plan in advance what materials you want to give away during the Show. You may want to save your glossy, full color marketing materials for people you know are interested in your product or service and have your black and white copies available for anyone else.

Booth Design & Booth Set-up

Perception is important in a consumer show. Image is everything. Your display is a reflection of your company's personality and professionalism. Craft an attractive, eye catching and memorable showcase that attracts your target audience.

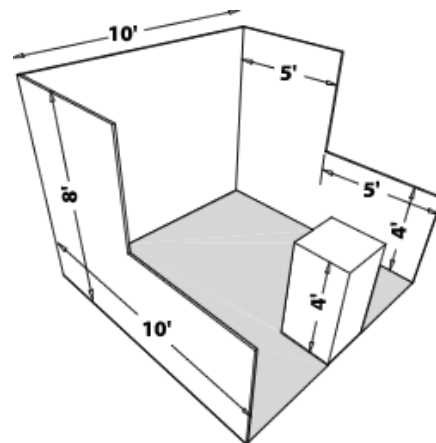
- Plan your booth in advance. Lay it out to make sure you have enough space to do what you want to do.
- Don't create a barrier between you and the attendee. Don't use a table to prevent attendees from entering your booth.
- Design your booth so visitors can navigate easily without feeling crowded.
- If you are offering a giveaway or promotional product, make it applicable to your business.
- Your booth should reflect who you are and how you do business. This is your "showroom" for 9 days. If your space looks thrown together and you are giving out poorly copied materials...this sends a message.
- Furnishings and carpeting are **not included** with your booth. You can bring your own or you can rent from Freeman Decorating.
- Electricity is not included in the booth and can be ordered through the convention center.
- Be clear on your intention for participating (generate sales, get leads, establish a presence in the marketplace etc.) What image do you want to project and what do you want the focal point to be?

Making the Most of the Show



(Booth Design & Booth Set-up Cont'd)

- After you set up your space step back. Take an objective look and ask yourself if you would be attracted to the display or does it need to be tweaked a bit?
- Helium balloons are **not allowed** in the convention center.
- Canopies and tents are prohibited.
- Inline booth set up (see illustration to the right) - A standard inline booth is any booth 10' in depth. Inline booths may not exceed 8' 3" in height including signage. The side walls of an inline booth may extend 5' from the back wall at a height of 8'3", then must drop down to a height 4' as not to block the sight lines of neighboring exhibitors. All solid opaque structures or exhibit materials over 4' in height are to be confined to within 5' of the back wall of the booth to avoid obstructing the view of adjoining exhibitors. **Any part of your display that faces the adjoining booth must be finished.**



During the Show

80% of show attendees base their opinion of your company on the actions of you booth personnel. A well-trained staff is a critical requirement for success. Avoid making common mistakes. Below are some tips on exhibitor etiquette that you can share with your booth personnel.

- Stand as much as you can. If you have to sit, try and sit off to the side and not behind a table. When you sit you give attendees the impression you don't care. Attendees won't interrupt your private time, as they see it.
- Stay fully present. This means no reading, doing crafts or having long conversations with friends. This also means no eating, chewing gum or talking on your cell phone. Be proactive. Don't wait for someone to ask a question. Smile, make eye contact, get their attention and draw the attendee over by speaking to them first.
- Don't ignore attendees. If you are busy when an attendee approaches, either acknowledge them or try to include them in your conversation. If you are talking with a booth mate, break that conversation off immediately.
- Don't be a border guard. Don't stand where you become a barricade or block the attendees' view of your booth, but make sure you stay in your booth.
- Don't hand out literature freely. Your literature and brochures end up in a bag with everyone else's literature. Be discriminating in who gets literature or mail them to qualified prospects after the show.
- Don't underestimate prospects. (Don't Judge a Book by its Cover). Get out of the habit of sizing up somebody by the way they look. Qualify them, don't classify them.
- Sales can be made any time of the day on any day. In fact, many serious buyers attend the show during less crowded times.
- Don't cluster with friends and other booth personnel. Don't be a "street gang". Nobody will approach a group of strangers, it is too intimidating. Be more approachable.
- Don't overstaff your booth. Too much booth personnel do not allow for attendees to enter your booth and pushes your staff out into the aisle (which is not permitted).
- Stay out of other companies' booths. Your presence in your company's booth is vital to serving your customers and potential customers. Wandering into other booths disrupts exhibitors who are with clients. If you do this, you can expect others to do the same to you.

Making the Most of the Show



- Stay out of competitors' booths. Even worse than wandering into "friendly territory" is going into competitors' booths to take information or to crowd out legitimate clients. This is unprofessional and reflects badly on your company and on you personally.
- Don't talk bad about your competition. Highlight your products positives not your competitors' negatives.
- If you make a connection with someone make a note right away while it is fresh in your mind.
- Think of some questions in advance that will stimulate conversation. Ask open ended questions that require more than a yes or no answer.
- Listen more than you talk. Don't give a lot of information until you know what they know.
- **DO NOT SOLICIT IN THE AISLES.** Our rules specifically prohibit exhibitors soliciting in the aisles. The show is set up to encourage a free flow of traffic through the aisles. Companies that choose not to pay for a booth sometimes attempt to solicit in the aisles. This, too, is prohibited. If you see someone soliciting please inform show management immediately; either by going to the Information Booth at the entrance of the show or you can call our on-site show office at 303-228-8419. If you like you can tell the solicitor that you don't have time to talk because you are working and that you 'paid' to be there.
- Do not disrupt other exhibitors or visitors. Disruptions such as loud music, announcements, loud microphones or yelling from your booth etc. are strictly prohibited and annoying to attendees and surrounding exhibitors.
- **MAKE SURE YOUR BOOTH IS STAFFED DURING ALL SHOW HOURS.**
- Do not start to break down even 5 minutes early. There will be attendees at the show until the very end. It is not fair to them or to the exhibitors around you if you start packing up early. Also, packing up early will insure that you will not be asked back to the 2020 show.
- **If you have a complaint about anything please tell show management. Please do not complain to other exhibitors or attendees.**
- Keep things light. Have fun. Keep your energy up.

After the Show

When the show is over, your work is just beginning. Don't wait too long to follow up and contact your prospects.

- Follow up, follow up, follow up! Follow up with all of your new contacts within a week after the show.
- If people ordered product from you put your orders in right away.
- If you said you would send them something...do it. How you handle post Show interaction will tell them how you do business.
- Networking and sales is a process. Do not judge the show prematurely based on sales or contacts. You now have to nurture those contact you made and turn them into something. Be patient.
- Don't forget to rebook your booth for the 2020 Show!

**We are here to help. Please feel free to contact us with any questions:
Call 303-932-8100 or email: Info@coloradogardenfoundation.org**

Sources:
How to Get the Most Out of Trade Shows by Steve Miller, Federal Way, Washington
Trade Show Exhibitors Association
Ginny Robertson
Susan Ratliff, Exhibit Like and Expert