

# Tradeshows Tip Sheet

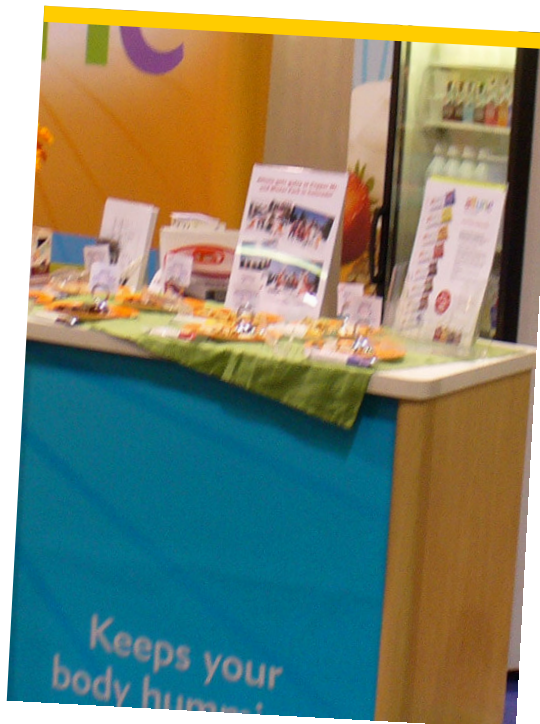
This month: Literature and Handouts

## Make the Most of Your Literature

When do you choose to offer your attendees some sort of literature? After all, you're at a tradeshow and everybody's handing out something, right? Chances are pretty good that whatever you hand out will end up in the round file on the way out the door. Or if they stick it in a bag it'll get mixed up with all the other stuff they accumulated at the show. So you hate to contribute more stuff to the garbage or recycling bin.

So the question is: how do you make it useful? How do you make it so valuable that they take it home and either use it or pass it on to someone who will use it?

There are a number of strategies to consider. The answer is not a 'one size fits all,' either. You should consider what type of business you are, what you want your customer to actually DO or FEEL or REMEMBER. Then you can decide if you want a simple brochure, a Special Offer or something else altogether.



## What Do You Want Your Visitor to DO?

The answer to this question comes back to a question we've asked in a number of previous newsletters and articles: what is the purpose of your tradeshow appearance? What are you trying to accomplish? Do you want to reinforce your brand? Would you like to make sales? Is this a trade show or a consumer show or a combination? Are you trying to get rid of inventory? Are you introducing a new product? Do you have some specific area of your product line you want to highlight?

After you've determined what you want your visitor do actually DO, then you can gear any handouts toward that goal. If your goal, for instance, is to sell more products, you might offer a special coupon offer only available by turning in your show coupon. If you want someone to test drive a new car, your handout may offer them a special bonus, such as movie tickets, to show up at your dealership. If your service or product is less immediate, a well thought out brochure might do the trick.

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## Too much literature can make your booth look cluttered

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Keep fewer pieces and qualify your visitor before handing things out

## Use Literature Sparingly

As mentioned, literature at trade shows can often be a waste of time. It gets mixed in with all the other literature that the attendees have picked up at dozens of booths and will probably get tossed.

Another reason to not use literature. As Orvel Ray Wilson said in his book 'Guerrilla Trade Show Marketing,' "for a complex product, literature can actually hinder the purchasing process. If your prospects review the literature and don't find exactly what they're looking for, they may think you don't offer it, and you're out of the running."

Another way to use literature sparingly is to only

give it to prospects that ask specifically for it. At that point, you can either give it to them, or get their contact information and offer to send them the literature via mail or e-mail. In fact, if you're concerned about using too much paper, send them a PDF version. They may never have to print it up at all. If they're into 'greening' and sustainability they may really appreciate your approach. Just be SURE to send it to them. In fact if you have a lap top at the show, send it immediately so they have it the next time they check their e-mail.

## More Literature Ideas

**Partnerships:** If you're teaming up with any other exhibitors, create a map of the trade show floor that shows where to find those partners. Make sure that each member of the team is handing out the same map.

**Create Literature For This One Show:** Create a special one-off flyer that is aimed specifically at the attendees of a particular show. Each show is different and attracts a different target market. Tailor your message and offer to them, based on your research and understanding of the market.

**Clutter:** Too much literature can make your booth look cluttered and unprofessional. For this



reason you may choose not to hand anything out at all, or simply keep a few brochures hidden and make them available only to people that you've qualified as truly interested in your product.

## The Bottom Line on Handouts and Literature

Don't assume that you must have literature available for all people at all shows. And don't assume the opposite, either: that you don't need anything to give a visitor. Each situation demands that you examine it individually and make the determination on its merits.

One final note: as you think about what your literature is telling your customers, plan on making the rounds to your competitors and picking up any literature you can so you can see what how they're positioning themselves to *their* customers and prospects!