

Tradeshow Tip Sheet

Lead Generation

The Sad Story of Tradeshow Leads

Seven out of ten tradeshow leads are not followed up on. Sad but true!

This statistic has been tossed about for years – and it seems to never change, no matter who’s doing the survey.

Do you find yourself in the same boat—leaving leads orphaned?

Tradeshow leads are left sitting in a box, tossed away on the tradeshow floor, or cooling off on a hard drive. Or they’re not very good leads so the sales team doesn’t have any incentive to follow up after discovering the first few lead nowhere.



What does this mean? It means there is great inefficiency throughout the tradeshow marketing field – and if you can step up your efficiency to where you’re finding good leads and following up on them – even at a 2 out of 3 or 3 out of 4 pace, you’ll race past your competition.

So how do you generate good leads? And how do you effectively follow up on them?

In this issue of the **Trade-show Tip Sheet**, we’ll take a look at some methods that can immediately help in your gathering of leads through better qualifying, and then uncover some ways in which you can better follow up on those more qualified leads.

Qualifying Tradeshow Leads

In a recent interview on Interpretive Exhibits’ podcast, “The Listening Lounge,” tradeshow consultant and author Mitch Tarr says it takes practice. For instance, you should come up with a qualifying question, such as “Do you own a small business nearby?” If you take a few steps to engage someone, you’ll soon find out if they’re qualified prospects. Each show might require a different qualifying question. A regional home

show would have different requirements than a national tradeshow.

Make sure that everyone on your staff is well-rehearsed and able to ask the question to qualify visitors. While this may seem simple, in practice it often is not. In the heat and bustle of a tradeshow, it’s easy for someone to forget what the question is – or forget to ask it consistently of the booth visitors.

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Lead Tracking Systems

What's the best lead tracking system available?

That's like asking 'what's the best pizza?!' Just because one system works for a business colleague doesn't mean it will work for your business.

When you're determining what lead generation system to use, consider your circumstances, the personnel available and the team that will follow up with those leads.

Sometimes just keeping a few clipboards available with pre-printed information sheets is best. Other companies may be set up to handle scan-

ning badges and importing that information into your database.

Bottom line: make sure you find out the level of interest from your prospect. Break it down into four or five levels: highly interested (follow up immediately), moderately interested (looking to buy soon), somewhat interested (still evaluating) or not interested at all (not qualified). If you can give your sales team this kind of information, even with less leads, you'll find them more useful than three times as many names that lead nowhere.



"The Listening Lounge" is the tradeshow industry's first podcast, featuring interviews with industry experts and consultants

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Following Up on the Leads

Want to stand out from the pack? Go to the tradeshow with a stack of thank you notes, pamphlets or brochures. At the end of each day, send a short note to the folks you met that day.

Come Monday morning, your stuff will be in their in-box! If there is a specific need they mentioned, be sure to refer to it.

If there is not an immediate need on the prospective client's end, there are

a number of other things you can do as follow up: a personal email or letter; a reminder that your tradeshow special pricing expires soon; press clippings you generated as a result of your appearance. You might also consider sending information to the show attendees that did not come by your booth (show management should be able to provide this information).

Summary

"Luck is a crossroad where preparation and opportunity meet."

While you may think it sounds like a broken record, it's a fact: preparation will win out every time over those that don't prepare.

For your next tradeshow, prepare with an eye on ensuring that all pieces of the system work and that your tradeshow staff is familiar or trained on the

various elements of your system.

After the show (or even each night of the show), examine your methods for flaws and see what parts can be fixed or improved on the spot.

Do your due diligence – and bring home the bacon!

