Powerful Principles to Succeed at International Trade Shows and Industry Fairs

© 2010 by Alberto Rodriguez-Baez. All rights reserved. Do not replicate without written permission.
Alberto Rodriguez-Baez

alberto@rps-international.com
nebraska.mba@gmail.com
"The difference between the almost right word and the right word is really a large matter:
it's the difference between the lightning bug and the lightning."

Mark Twain, 1888
Lightning bug participation

The basics (travel, budget, timelines management, supplies, etc.) are the entrance ticket.
The Lightning Makers:

Preparation (before):

1. The Approach

Execution (during):

2. The Booth
3. The Staff

Precision (after):

4. The Follow Up

© 2010 by Alberto Rodriguez-Baez. All rights reserved. Do not replicate without written permission.
Preparation
(Before the event)
1) The Approach

Approach trade shows as if you are launching a new company!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Launching a new company</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product, Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to make the phone ring?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What to do with leads?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store (soft launch, grand opening)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Launching a new company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product, Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to make the phone ring?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What to do with leads?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store (soft launch, grand opening)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Launching a new company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product, Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to make the phone ring?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What to do with leads?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store (soft launch, grand opening)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Objectives

Sample of event objectives:

- Build the reputation of the company.
- Increase brand awareness.
- Conduct market research.
- Customer retention.
- Recruit key personnel.
Marketing Plan

How to effectively promote your participation.

1. Pre-invite targeted customers and prospects.
2. Give them a real reason to visit you (from objectives).
3. Show them your location.
1. Pre-invite targeted customers and prospects

More traffic (of the right kind) brings a much higher probability of success.

1. Print ads
2. Mass e-mails
3. Phone calls
4. Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.
5. Direct mail!
2. Give them a real reason to visit you

- Communicate why they should come.
- What are the benefits to the visitor?
- Clear call to action.
- No gimmicks!
3. Show them your location
2) The Booth

Big, expensive booths aren't always better!
Common advice:

Treat your booth as a print ad.

“The exhibit must communicate as the advertisement in a magazine does.”
CAN A COMPANY HAVE A SOUL?

It can when it’s a family. Which is why SC Johnson has remained a family company for 5 generations. The decisions we make come down to caring for you and the world we share. It’s why we do things like constantly improve our products, use renewable energy and work to help communities all over the globe. For us, it’s more than a business obligation. It’s a family one.

Fisk Johnson

SC Johnson
A Family Company
Be afraid germs, be very afraid.
the power of Clorox in a wipe

*Clorox® Disinfecting Wipes are effective against germs such as salmonella and the influenza A virus, including 2009 H1N1.*

*The peracetic acid (PAC) label, shown, is used to inert the disinfectant for the currently registered (for use as a disinfectant) of 2009 H1N1 virus against the 2009 H1N1 virus. For additional information, refer to the label information. ©2009 The Clorox Company. All rights reserved.
My advice:

Treat your booth as a PRESS RELEASE!
Most Newsworthy Info

Important Details

Other General Info
Background Info
The Lead: Who, what, where, when, why & how?
The most important info goes first.

BODY
Develop your "news peg" with supporting info, interviews, overviews or references.

As the story goes on, your details should become less & less important.
• Screening tool
• Billboard
• Silent Salesman
• Differentiator

…Lightning maker!
SCHWARZKOPF

AMAZONAS
FINDLINGE

www.schwarzkopf-natursteine.de
RAINBOW PLAY SYSTEMS
Seeking distributors for the most prestigious wooden playsets in the world. Inquiry here!

001-210-764-1375  www.rainbowplay.com  requests@rps-international.com
Seeking distributors for the most prestigious wooden playsets in the world. Inquiry here!

001-210-764-1375  www.rainbowplay.com  requests@rps-international.com
• Screening tool
• Billboard
• Silent Salesman
• Differentiator

…Lightning Maker!
• Screening tool
• Billboard
• Silent Salesman
• Differentiator

...Lightning Maker!

Business area (Staff)
• Screening tool
• Billboard
• Silent Salesman
• Differentiator

...Lightning Maker!

Business area (Staff)

Base area
Execution
(During the event)
Activity is not effectiveness!

You can have a lot of fun and have a lot of visitors **without doing business**.
Common but Harmful Advice

- Have plenty of pens, magnets, t-shirts and anything else that has your company name and/or logo on it.
- Use a prize draw or contest.
- Offer food.
- Offer an iPod.
- The kiss of death: Attract visitors with booth babes!
This demonstrates a lack of confidence about the interest in the product and the company.

Gimmicks draw a lot of people... but rarely attract the right visitors!
Instead...

1. Have special, thoughtful giveaways for highly qualified leads.

2. Have generic giveaways for all other leads.

* This will save you money in shipping!
3) Staff

Take only **the right** company representatives to staff the booth.
The right staff

• Energetic
• Personable
• Enthusiastic
• Professional demeanor
• Can handle change
• Knowledgeable (product and company)
How to properly collect and organize your leads’ information:

• Make it a critical part of the staff training.

• What CRM system do you use?

• Use a form to collect visitors information, make notes, and determine how you should follow up (A, B, C?).

© 2010 by Alberto Rodriguez-Baez. All rights reserved. Do not replicate without written permission.
Visitor Information

First Name: ______________________
Last Name: ______________________
Company: ________________________
Title: ____________________________
E-mail: __________________________
Phone: __________________________

Address: _________________________
City: _____________________________
Country: _________________________
Website: _________________________
Industry: _________________________

Part of this manufacturing network: ________________________
Interested in: _____________________

Notes: ____________________________

Action items: _____________________
Precision
(After the event)
4) High impact follow-up tactics

Follow up should not be an afterthought!

1. Prepare follow up campaign before the event! (e-mail templates, processes, timelines, etc.)

2. If you don't have a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) solution, get one.

3. Follow up immediately (the same night)!
• For great leads (A): hand-written thank you note and follow up by phone.

• For good leads (B): personalized e-mail and follow up by phone.

• For "just ok" leads (C): “thanks for coming” mass e-mail.
“The difference between the almost right word and the right word is really a large matter:
it's the difference between the lightning bug and the lightning.”

Mark Twain, 1888
The Lightning Makers:

Preparation (before):
1. The Approach

Execution (during):
2. The Booth
3. The Staff

Precision (after):
4. The Follow Up