

Integrated Marketing in Trade Shows and Conferences

The definition of integrated marketing is one that we marketers live and breathe daily. Integrated marketing is the application of consistent brand messaging, across both traditional and non-traditional mediums, using different promotional methods to reinforce a continual message.

Now, many of you may be thinking, “thanks for the vocabulary lesson, but what does this have to do with trade shows and conferences?” The answer is simple: Everything. A trade show is, by nature, an integrated marketing campaign, with multiple touch points that coincide with traditional marketing mediums.

No matter what message you are trying to convey to the general public, established customers or potential clients, you must be consistent throughout all advertising outlets. Consistency builds better awareness for you brand and helps to make your brand message more memorable for people. Plus, using more than one message can be confusing for people. We find all too often that company's trade show displays don't mimic their current advertising campaigns.

Here are some tips on how to use integrated marketing successfully within your trade show program:

- Make sure all the graphics represent your existing brand standards and current messaging.
- The theme of your exhibit should reflect current promotions, brand standards and any advertisements that are being distributed through any medium.
- All of the pieces for pre and post show communications should fit with the theme of your exhibit.

- Keep in mind that people respond differently to each medium, such as direct mail, social media, emails, etc. You should use multiple channels when trying to reach your target demographic and tailor your speech to each channel specifically. You don't want to use the same language for social media that you use in direct mail.
- Don't forget about in-booth marketing efforts. This means connect your collateral to both current advertising campaigns and the theme of your booth.
- Gaining media coverage sounds like a big feat, but if you take the time to carefully craft an engaging press release, that stays in line with the rest of your marketing efforts and is news worthy at the same time, then you have a winner.
- Be consistent with your colors, fonts, language. This will only help with developing and building brand awareness.

Exhibiting in trade shows can be very rewarding and profitable for your company. It's imperative that you look at this face-to-face event as part of your already established marketing campaign.

Delivering the same message across multiple outlets is the best way to establish your brand and build awareness with prospects. Although trade shows only last a few days, if your company uses consistent branding before, during and after, every time someone sees an ad for your company, they will remember the event.

Sticking with current brand initiatives will not only make your job as the event manager easier but will put you on the path to becoming the qualified leads champ for your organization.