



A TIMEZONEONE WHITEPAPER

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# How to Make Your Next Tradeshow Pay

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CHICAGO. TORONTO. CHRISTCHURCH.

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GET THE KNOW-HOW

# How to make your next tradeshow pay with tips from tradeshow experts...



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# Let's get started...

**Tradeshows are awesome. Inspiring speakers, mountains of free branded swag, and most importantly, all sorts of ways to grow your fame as a player in your industry, make connections, and generate new business leads.**

But tradeshows aren't just fun. No! Tradeshows can be an effective way to grow your fame as a player in your industry, make connections, and generate new business leads.

However, they can also be expensive and time consuming, and under deliver on investment. Not to mention the awkward social events, bland buffet lunches, and horrifying hotel carpeting. But all that usually isn't the fault of the tradeshow. (Well, maybe the lunches are.)

It's because businesses often underestimate the planning and effort that it takes to make a tradeshow a success. Tradeshows are a hard slog. However, done well, they can really deliver.

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**Tradeshows are a hard slog. However, done well, they can really deliver.**

## **SO HOW DO YOU MAKE TRADESHOWS PAY?**

In this guide, we take you through the five steps to tradeshow and expo success:

1. Target
2. Plan
3. Build buzz
4. Activate
5. Nurture

We bring the theory to life with top tips from tradeshow experts who've aced more tradeshows than we've had hot dinners.

At the end you'll be equipped with practical tips and inspiration to make your next tradeshow pay off properly. And hopefully you'll have fun, because while tradeshows are hard labour, they don't have to be a grind.

**If you operate in a small market niche, then you might be sorted! There probably won't be too many different tradeshow, and the perfect ones will be obvious. However, most industries have an abundance of tradeshow. There's a good chance you've been inundated with opportunities already...**

# Target

## **You probably can't go to all tradeshows – at least, not in a way where you can make the most of them. So how do you choose the right events to invest in?**

It sounds obvious, but it's not always so easy. It comes down to:

1. Knowing who your customers are.
2. Identifying the events that not only deliver your target market, but also delight them, so that you can benefit from the buzz.

Firstly, many tradeshows don't possess or share detailed information on attendees, so it can be hard to know exactly who you might find there. Secondly, many businesses don't have a detailed understanding of who their customers are.

You might not be able to do much about the first challenge. But the second is entirely within your control.

### **WHO ARE YOUR CUSTOMERS?**

So much marketing misses the mark because businesses don't know who they're talking too. They talk to everyone and end up connecting with no one.

It's beyond important to know who your customers are. And we don't just mean knowing your customer demographics. Sure, it's handy to know if your customers are predominantly affluent baby boomers from urban areas, for example. But that doesn't tell you why they choose your business, what they want, and how you can make them happy. Also, chances are that your customers aren't one homogenous group of people. Your business might appeal to different people for several reasons. To communicate with them effectively, you need to have a good understanding of who your main customer groups are, and what they want from you.

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**To communicate with your customers effectively, you need to have a good understanding of who your main customer groups are, and what they want from you.**

To understand your customers' motivations, we recommend spending time developing customer personas. Personas are fictional descriptions of your customers, which you create based on research, and they cover important things like personal motivations, and what makes an amazing experience for this person.

Even if you have no difficulty identifying tradeshows that deliver your target market, creating personas is still a useful exercise, because it helps you align your tradeshow messaging to your customers' needs.

We've included a persona worksheet at the end of this document, to help you develop customer personas if you haven't already got them.

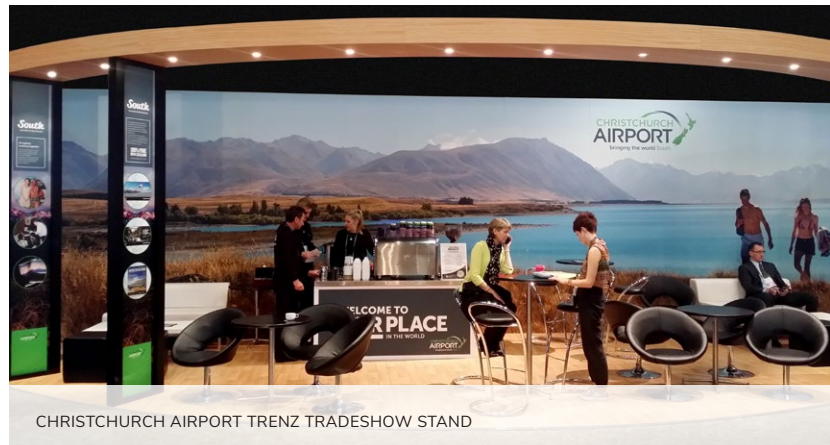
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## How can customer personas help your business

1. Personas help you make customer-focused decisions based on data.
  2. They help you pick the right events to invest in.
  3. And they remind you to focus your tradeshow marketing on helping your customers achieve their goals.
- 



MARK CAINE FROM MASSEL & BLENDER GIRL TESS MASTERS AT EXPO WEST



CHRISTCHURCH AIRPORT TRENZ TRADESHOW STAND



SKOPE AT HOST MILANO 2017

A person stands on a snowy mountain peak, arms raised, overlooking a vast landscape. In the foreground, a snow-covered slope with patches of dry grass leads up to the peak. Beyond the peak, a large, calm lake stretches across the middle ground. In the background, a range of snow-capped mountains is visible under a clear sky. The scene is illuminated by the warm, golden light of a sunset or sunrise, creating a serene and majestic atmosphere.

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**Wanaka**<sup>NZ</sup>



## TOP TIPS FROM THE TRADESHOW EXPERTS

# Shane Adcock, Hurunui Tourism



### HOW DO YOU MEASURE A SUCCESSFUL TRADESHOW?

It really depends on the tradeshow. For example, with appointment-based shows it's a combination of having a full appointment book, the quality of those appointments; and the resulting sales activity from those appointments.

With stand-based shows, where you can't make appointments, measuring success is more anecdotal in terms of how busy your stand was, and the quality of your conversations. At consumer shows where we are not selling something, we have tended to measure success based on number of brochures distributed at the show. As we don't generally attend tradeshows where you can sell directly, measurement can be challenging.

### OVER THE YEARS, WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED ABOUT PREPARING AND FOLLOWING-UP POST TRADESHOW?

When preparing for a show where you can make appointments, it's very important to know who you will be meeting, and if it's not appointment-based, who may be attending. You only get a small window with attendees and if you have a rudimentary understanding of their business, it can make opening the conversation easier and quicker.

Tradeshows can be incredibly tiring because of the amount of repetitive talking you do. It is vital to ensure your staff are briefed, prepared, and have ample opportunities for breaks.

It's important to send follow-up emails or phone calls as soon as possible after the show. There's more return engagement in the days immediately following the show than weeks or months later.

### WHAT IS THE BIGGEST MISTAKE YOU SEE PEOPLE MAKING AT TRADESHOWS?

Having the wrong staff on the stand or booth. There's nothing worse at a tradeshow than seeing someone on the stand who is on their phone or laptop most of the time not engaging with attendees, or who is not confident enough to approach people.

### ARE TRADESHOWS DIFFERENT IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES?

One thing I've noticed with overseas shows is that due to the number of attendees, or because your show can be one of many that people are attending, that attendees' attention span seems even shorter. So, more engaging booths are needed, or if you have an appointment, it's imperative to create interest immediately.

### WHAT'S THE MOST UNIQUE THING YOU'VE SEEN AT A TRADESHOW?

Air NZ's virtual reality booth, a mock plane cabin, was very impressive. The VR theme was all about possibilities, the future, and technology on planes. Particularly memorable was when you looked at the roof of the cabin and it was clear, like it was made of glass – so you could see the clouds and sunlight.

Shane Adcock, Sales & Marketing Manager, Hanmer Springs Thermal Pools & Spa / Hurunui Tourism

FOCUS ON RESULTS

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**Align your business goals with meeting your customers' needs to develop measurable goals and effective, attention-getting tactics for your tradeshow activity...**

# Plan

**Raising brand awareness is good, but it's not enough for this - alone, it's not a business goal.**

Business goals for tradeshows are more effective if they are defined as **SMART** goals.

**S** - specific, clear and well defined

**M** - measure when you have attained your goal

**A** - agreed upon by all stakeholders

**R** - realistic, given your budget and resources

**T** - timely, you set a realistic deadline to achieve your goals

## YOUR CUSTOMERS' GOALS

Now you know your customers better, consider each persona, and their tradeshow goals.

- + Which of your customer personas will be attending the tradeshow?
- + Why is each customer group attending the tradeshow?
- + What do they want to achieve?
- + What challenges may they face?
- + How can you help them achieve their goals?

## ALIGNING YOUR GOALS

- + What's your strategy for this tradeshow?
  - Outline your plan for the event, explaining how this furthers your long-term business goals and how this meets your customers' needs.
- + What promotional tactics align your business goals with your customers' tradeshow goals?
  - Ideally, you want to create a range of calls-to-action to give people a reason to visit your booth and meet your team. Don't worry if you don't have too many ideas on this front yet. We'll help you out with inspiration.
- + What key messages will customers see as meeting their needs?

Now you understand your customers' needs and you've set your tradeshow goals, it's time to make your tradeshow marketing plan.

TIMEZONEONE TRAVEL/TRADE PARTNER TO



## TOP TIPS FROM THE TRADESHOW EXPERTS

# Geoff Marks, Lake Wanaka Tourism



### WHAT IS THE BIGGEST MISTAKE YOU SEE PEOPLE MAKING AT TRADESHOWS?

Talking too much. You have two ears and one mouth. Use them in that proportion! Ask open questions and listen carefully to fully understand your customers' business requirements. You'll be better prepared to follow up after the tradeshow with relevant information.

Cramming too much information into your presentation. You only have 10 mins with a buyer so keep it simple and make a lasting impression. Use incredible imagery or video. Cut out text and bullet points. Buyers are bombarded with information, so inspire them with memorable stories. Save detail for the follow up.

### OVER THE YEARS, WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED ABOUT PREPARING FOR A TRADESHOW?

Research the buyers you're meeting and identify your top prospects. If you've met before, review your notes and get familiar with past discussions and correspondence. If you're meeting clients, be up to date with their account, so you're prepared to upsell, cross-sell, or handle any objections and potential issues.

### AND FOLLOWING-UP POST TRADESHOW?

If you've listened well, follow-up should be easy! Ask your prospect when and how they would like you to follow-up and meet this expectation. Buyers get 50-100 follow-up emails, so think about the best time to respond and what response will have most impact.

### TRADESHOW TIPS FOR DIFFERENT COUNTRIES?

Presenting through a translator can be challenging, particularly if they don't know your product. Simple presentations using imagery and video help overcome language barriers.

### WHAT'S THE MOST UNIQUE TRADESHOW TACTIC YOU'VE SEEN?

The first time I saw virtual reality used to give buyers a virtual tour of a glacier flight in the Southern Alps, it was a game-changer for the tour operator. VR has since become more common, but I've not seen a more impactful use – it transported the delegates and provided an unforgettable experience.

### OTHER TOP TIPS?

Leave your promotional collateral at home. Check out the bins after a tradeshow and you'll be horrified at the hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of brochures wasted – especially at shows where delegates fly in from overseas. A timely follow up with a link to relevant content is a more cost effective and environmentally friendly option.

Don't be afraid to ask a buyer for their business at the end of your appointment.... You never know, they might say yes! If you don't get a yes, their response will help you gauge next steps to secure their business.

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Geoff Marks, Business Development Executive, Lake Wanaka Tourism

BUILD BUZZ

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**Pre-Show Promotion:  
Your goal is to establish  
yourselves as interesting  
experts who meet your  
customers' needs, before  
they meet your team at  
the tradeshow...**

# Promote

**You should contact your prospects at least seven times in the run-up to your event. You need some good excuses to do that – so it's back to marketing 101 with a marketing plan full of tempting tradeshow teasers and thought leadership! Here are some pre-show promotional tactics to get you started.**

## **BUILD A PROSPECT EMAIL LIST**

Review the speakers and tradeshow attendees and identify potential prospects.

If the event is run by a membership organisation, and you're not a member, consider joining, as this often gives you access to delegate lists. If you sponsor the event, you may be able to get an email list of attendees from the event organisers, or you may be able to include content in emails to delegates as part of your sponsorship package.

It's likely that your existing email list has prospects on it that will be attending the event. Remember you need permission to email people if they've not already opted into your email list. So, if you do create, purchase, or acquire a list for the event, it's best practise to send an initial email asking peoples' permission to continue to contact them.

Make this email a good one, with content created to serve your prospects' needs and demonstrate the value you offer.

## **SEND A PRINTED INVITE**

Print really stands out now that the world has swung digital. Sending out personalised print invites is still one of the best ways to get people to come along to your stand, particularly if you offer incentives to visit.

It's worth segmenting out your top prospects, so that if you can only afford to post invites to some prospects, you make sure you invest in your best prospects first. If there are particularly high-value prospects heading to the event, consider this an ideal opportunity to invite them to dinner.

If you can't afford to send a print invite to everyone, then send personalised email invites.

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## Compelling invites are personal and generous. Which one of these messages are you most likely to respond to?

1. "Visit us at Booth 123 at the Big Tradeshow."
2. "We're going to be at Booth 123 at The Big Tradeshow. Come and say hello."
3. "You're invited to Booth 123 at The Big Tradeshow for coffee and cake with our team."

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### DO A PRE-SHOW PR BLITZ

If you've got an exciting story to tell, now's the time to shout about it. Tradeshow are fantastic opportunities to launch new products, demo your latest ideas, and show off recent wins. And the media loves stories about new things.

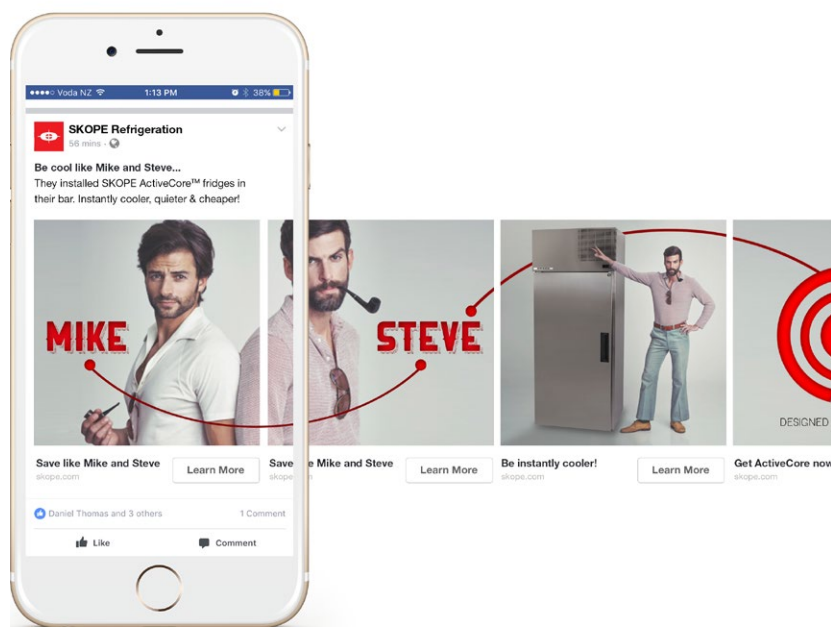
Identify the shows and publications your customers like and pitch targeted stories to them.

If you tailor an angle for each channel, you're far more likely to get your story picked up. Invest in good imagery to accompany your story, and you increase your chances even more.

If you're booking advertising space in publications, it's the perfect time to say that you're promoting this "awesome new thing", and you'd like to know if they can offer editorial space as part of your ad package.

Do a blitz on industry influencers. Send them personalised invites to your booth, let them know that you'll be attending the show, and invite them to a personal demo/talk/preview/drink.

And if you're planning paid promotional activity in channels targeting your tradeshow prospects, don't forget to add a strong call-to-action inviting people to your stand.



CONCEPT WORK FOR SKOPE TRADESHOW ACTIVATION



## SPREAD THE WORD ON SOCIAL

Run a tradeshow teaser campaign on social media. You can have fun with this by leaking snippets about the activities you have planned for the show and giving people reasons to visit your stand.

Consider your social channels carefully and adopt a different strategy for each one. If your audience is B2B, your focus will be LinkedIn. If you're more consumer-focused, social channels all offer different angles. We tend to use Facebook and Twitter to engage and interact, Instagram to inspire, Pinterest as a planning tool and YouTube to showcase video we want people to discover. Your goal is to play to each channel's strengths, rather than simply pushing out the same content across every platform.

Facebook and LinkedIn both offer targeted reach. You can use LinkedIn to target industries and job titles. Facebook is the most targeted advertising platform. You can set up targeting on Facebook to mirror the interests of your key personas and import your email lists to reach

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**Consider your social channels carefully and adopt a different strategy for each one. If your audience is B2B, your focus will be LinkedIn. If you're more consumer-focused, social channels all offer different angles.**

those people and others like them. Facebook offers very granular information to help you target the right people.

Allocate a budget for boosting your organic activity on social. Conversation is free. The rest is pay-to-play. Consider running a paid social campaign on the channels where you are getting the strongest engagement.

## CREATE A TRADESHOW LANDING PAGE

Make a landing page for the Tradeshow on your website. Here you can:

- + Invite people to visit your booth.
- + Introduce your tradeshow team.
- + Announce any other opportunities to interact with your brand. For example, are you going to be a speaker at the event, or are you running a workshop?
- + Announce your "new exciting thing" that you're promoting at the tradeshow.
- + Promote your contest. Include a link to your contest terms and conditions.
- + Promote your giveaways. You'll have a raft of incentives to encourage people to interact with your team. Now's the chance to promote them.
- + Have a download of your media pack for the event.

## CONSIDER A CONTEST

Contests can be a terrific way to attract people to your tradeshow booth. Your contest needs to be high-value, and catchy enough to cut through the noise. And you want to capture data, so you can get in touch with or advertise to people after the show. Promote your contest on social media and across all channels you use for pre-show promotion. Include a link to the contest terms and conditions on your site.

## USE TRADESHOW CHANNELS

Tradeshows offer a range of marketing channels for you to promote your presence to attendees. Some are paid, some are free.

These include:

- + Representation at the event as a speaker
- + Sponsorship opportunities
- + Product placement
- + Emails
- + Social content (Don't forget to leverage any branded hashtags!)
- + Content marketing including tradeshow business listings. The event organisers might be looking for blog content – so offer to write something for them.
- + Paid digital display

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Contests can be a terrific way to attract people to your tradeshow booth.



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PEOPLE NEED TO STAY HYDRATED! GET YOUR BRAND OUT THERE ON WATER



BIG CHEESECAKE! MEDIA MOMENTS CAN BE A GREAT WAY OF GETTING YOUR BRAND NOTICED



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**WHALE WATCH**<sup>®</sup>  
KAIKOURA • NEW ZEALAND

## TOP TIPS FROM THE TRADESHOW EXPERTS

# Nicolette le Cren, Perception



For a decade, I've done six to ten tradeshows a year. I've led event marketing, attending and coordinating distributors' events for ARANZ Medical and Foot Science International, managing tradeshow teams in New Zealand, the US, Australia and Europe.

In the medical sector tradeshows are a big deal, because doctors don't have the bandwidth day to day to engage with developments in their field, or even answer emails.

Tradeshows are really the only opportunity sales teams have to engage with medical professionals outside their heavily-booked patient appointment calendar.

With more than a hundred tradeshows under my belt, I follow the rule of thirds; spending one third of the budget before the show, the next third on the actual exhibition and the remaining third on post-show follow-up.

Here are my top tips for tradeshow success.

**Have a long-term plan. If you have key events you attend every year, make a three-year plan - improve and refine strategy and connections every year. And, start small. Choose just one show that really delivers your target market.**

*Nicolette le Cren, Senior Consultant, Perception*

## PRE-SHOW PREP

### HAVE A STRATEGY

Tradeshows are now a touchpoint in your customer journey. They can be:

- + A discovery, where people are introduced to your brand.
- + Part of the nurturing process, where you move a prospect to the next step by growing their affinity for your brand. Tradeshows, larger exhibits especially, are opportunities for brand experiences that get people involved and grow your fan base.
- + A sales opportunity, where you present product or services. Even in a sales-focused show, the deal tends to be closed post-event.
- + Have a long-term plan. If you have key events you attend every year, make a three-year plan - improve and refine strategy and connections every year.
- + Do a few shows really well. And, start small. Choose just one show that really delivers your target market. If you have a long-term tradeshow strategy, maybe your first year you simply attend the show to gather information and plan for next year.
- + Always weigh up every year if a show is worthwhile. There is always an opportunity cost of doing a show. They're expensive and time-consuming. There may be better channels for your marketing budget.

## FOCUS ON YOUR HUMAN CAPITAL.

- + Make sure everyone is pitch-ready, knows your story, and knows how to adapt your story to the different groups of prospects that will be at the show.
- + Have a clear team purpose, and a goal for your conversations with prospects. Know the best time to strike up a conversation.
- + Review the tradeshow schedule and plan your booth resource accordingly, so that the booth is well-staffed for busy periods.
- + Identify opportunities like coffee breaks and workshops outside your booth time for striking up conversations with prospects.

## GET YOUR LOGISTICS RIGHT

- + Make sure your stand is attractive and ready to use. If you haven't used it since your last tradeshow, have a trial run setting it up at your offices.
- + Make sure your promotional materials are fit for purpose, consistent, include calls-to-action, and fit into your customer journey.

## CREATE INTRIGUE

Have something interesting on your stand that creates curiosity. My most memorable tradeshow moments have all been around engaging booth experiences.

- + When we launched Formthotics' cycling orthotic insoles we put a classic Bianchi bike on our stand, and it attracted lots of attention from cyclists (our target audience).
- + Onguard Seismic Systems protect wineries from spills and wastage in earthquakes. They had a holographic diagram on their tradeshow stand showing how their system works. It was unusual, fun, and educational.
- + Other memorable booth activations included a gondola car, a ski machine game (people were lining up around the corner for that) and talented dancers!
- + Epic videos are always a winner, and you can sneak up on prospects and engage them in conversation while they're distracted.
- + Interactive activities, product trials and other hands-on experiences are powerful tools.

## BE ORGANISED

Make sure your team show up early, well dressed and not hungover or too jetlagged. It seems so obvious, but I've been at events where the team have staggered up at the last minute bleary-eyed, and it shows.

- + Research the other exhibitors and attendees to identify leads.
- + Make meeting appointments with your best leads.
- + Have a plan to maximise your time at the show. Breakfast, lunch and evening events are all opportunities to spend time with your prospects and key opinion leaders.

## IN-SHOW SUCCESS

### SHOW UP

Make sure your team show up early, well dressed and not hungover or too jetlagged. It seems so obvious, but I've been at events where the team have staggered up at the last minute bleary-eyed, and it shows. Be present. Your job is to create a positive welcoming energy at your booth. You're here to meet new people and learn new things. Be excited.

### CAPTURE LEADS

- + Be organised around capturing leads.
- + Don't trust lead-capture devices. They're unreliable and can record incomplete data.
- + Go old-school. Staple business cards to a custom lead form for notes.
- + Take as many notes as you can.
- + Get permission to add people to your newsletter.

### GET OUT OF YOUR BOOTH

Have enough resource so you can take breaks from your booth and walk around the show. This is prime time for you to do competitor analysis.

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## Tradeshow fails

- + Having no tradeshow strategy and failing to understand where a show fits into your customer journey. This is the number one mistake businesses make.
- + Your stand doesn't immediately tell people what you do. You don't need the flashiest booth in the world. The human interactions are most important. Your booth's purpose is to attract the right people. If you don't have a stand that speaks to your target audience, it's a fail.
- + Booth teams that fail to engage with tradeshow attendees. If someone is sitting there reading their phone, they will not deliver results.
- + Collateral that doesn't address your target audience and doesn't have a call-to-action.

### AFTER THE SHOW

#### FOLLOW-UP

- + Enter your leads and all notes into your CRM.
- + Qualify your leads into cold, warm and hot leads, and prioritise hot leads (or define your own internal language around this – make it fun!)
- + Make sure the right people follow up.

- + Place KPIs around following-up within the week. It's difficult but it must be done. You must follow up fast, or they forget. The world moves fast.
- + Have a debrief with your team over a glass of wine and discuss what you would do better next time.
- + If you're doing a multi-day event, briefly debrief every night.

#### MEASURE SUCCESS

There are number of ways to measure tradeshow success:

- + The number of leads you generate
- + Data capture
- + The number of visitors to your stand
- + Did you meet measurable KPIs across other channels?
- + Did you gain more social fans? Integrating social campaigns with the tradeshow can bring more measurable targets.
- + How did people react to your brand?
- + How do your team feel after the event?
- + Did you learn interesting things about your market?
- + Did you learn things about your competitors?
- + Did you do everything you wanted to at the show?

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You don't need the flashiest booth in the world. The human interactions are most important. Your booth's purpose is to attract the right people. If you don't have a stand that speaks to your target audience, it's a fail.

MAKE AN IMPRESSION

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**We've created tradeshow strategies for Expo West, IPW, ESTO, National Travel and Tourism Week, and TRENZ. Standing out from the crowd is always a challenge. Here are some ways to cut through the noise and attract the right people...**

# Activate

## GO TALL

Tall banners stand out above the crowd and make your stand a landmark. When you're designing your stand graphics, consider the height of your table and the window of visibility on your banners. As a rule of thumb, text below chest level is a waste of time.

## GO BOLD

Attendees don't like to make eye contact with exhibitors – at least not initially. They scout booths using their peripheral vision, so make sure your booth is bright, colourful and engaging enough to draw them in. Have one strong simple message designed to resonate with your customers' needs and repeat it on everything.

## ENGAGE ALL THE SENSES

Use sight, smell, touch, movement, and sound.

## USE RECOGNISABLE FACES

Bring your influencers and your brand advocates. Bring your top guns to the show and staff your booth with your most connected people.

## GET OUT OF YOUR BOX

Get amongst it with a roving tradeshow team offering thoughtful little gifts along with simple promotional messages.

- + Embrace bold colour and costume and go all the way. Yes, you will all dress in neon onesies. Yes, you will love every minute. Yes, everyone will remember you.
- + At this year's Expo West, the most visible person at the show was the WTR MLN WTR girl, who strutted around the show in a watermelon catsuit, dispensing free samples.
- + At TRENZ our roving team always gets more engagement than the team at our booth. There's a reason why we're always at the coffee station, and it's not (just) because we love caffeine.
- + [Check out this spectacular example of a roving tradeshow brand rep.](#)
- + Investigate sponsorship opportunities that allow you to get your brand, your product or your people into other areas of the tradeshow.



- + What's around the tradeshow? Can you give people a reason to experience your brand outside the tradeshow context in some way? Can you get branded product or literature into bars and restaurants surrounding the tradeshow venue? What about the hotels where the delegates are staying? Is there a place nearby where your product or service is showcased?

Getting out of your box can be as simple as standing outside your booth, and letting people engage with your stand before you approach them.

If you stand inside your booth and stare hopefully at approaching prospects, you create a barrier. Nobody likes to make eye contact with a sales person. Instead, engage gently with people in a relaxed manner once they've had a moment to absorb whether your brand might be for them. Try a soft intro, like, "How are you enjoying the show?" or "Can I offer you a coffee or a water?". Remember your roving tradeshow team are out actively inviting people to your stand, so your role is to be a warm and generous host.

#### OFFER HOSPITALITY

People remember generosity, and it creates fun reasons for people to enter your booth and interact with your brand. Hospitality can be as simple as a fridge stocked with branded drinks and snacks at the back of the booth, and a big sign saying help yourself. Other engagement tactics include:

- + Free coffee. A barista at your stand adds movement and delicious coffee smells.

- + Free cocktails. At the 2018 Illinois Governor's Conference we hired a mixologist to make Illinois Made cocktails at our booth for the tradeshow opening reception. Guess which booth got all the buzz?
- + Fun photo booths are a huge tradeshow trend.
- + Offering free Wi-Fi in exchange for email addresses, or free phone charging points, are both crowd pleasers.
- + Free back rubs or other relaxing treatments can be a winner.

#### TAKE LIBERTIES

Every extra inch of promotional space you can win by being a bit cheeky is a bonus. Try roaming tradeshow teams, floor graphics, guerrilla bathroom leaflet drops (extra naughty!), and tables of goodies positioned just outside your booth. Some tradeshow organisers can be rather restrictive, so if you're going to a tradeshow with a record of squashing creative ideas, do first and ask permission after. Rules exist to be broken creatively. Who dares wins and all that jazz.

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**If you stand inside your booth and stare hopefully at approaching prospects, you create a barrier. Nobody likes to make eye contact with a sales person. Instead, engage gently with people in a relaxed manner once they've had a moment to absorb whether your brand might be for them.**

## CREATE MANY REASONS TO ENGAGE

See your tradeshow activation as a mini tradeshow within the tradeshow, with a programme of events and speakers of your own.

- + Remember your customer personas. How can you align your incentives and calls-to-action with your customers' needs?
- + Is seeing believing? Can you host demonstrations?
- + Can people trial your product or service at the event?
- + Do you have strong brand advocates? Host events with these influencers at your booth. Ask them to Facebook Live from your booth.
- + Run thought leadership workshops at your booth.
- + Offer a complimentary intro to your service.

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## Zig where Others Zag

If everyone else is slick and corporate, be homespun and down home. If everyone else is busy, go minimal. Your job is to stand out from the noise. But don't forget your number one imperative, which is to make it all about your customers!

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- + Try doing a simple survey. Incentivise participation with a reward. Capture data, learn more about your customers, and have another way to engage with visitors.
- + Remember that contest you've been promoting in the run up to the show. Push it some more to maximise your entries.
- + Re-purpose your top content marketing as thought leadership giveaways.

## PUBLISH LIVE FROM THE SHOW

- + Use social media to promote all the fun reasons to visit your booth.
- + Tell people to look out for your roving tradeshow team.
- + Ask people to come and fill out a survey.
- + Promote your contest.
- + And don't just talk about yourself. Talk about other great booths, share handy hints on places to chill, charge your phone, get free Wi-Fi, or score some sweet freebies.
- + Don't forget to Facebook Live and leverage those event hashtags for greater visibility.

## MAKE IT ALL ABOUT YOUR CUSTOMERS

Good marketers make their brands look amazing. Great marketers make their customers feel like heroes. For every marketing piece you create, go back to your customers' needs and desires and ask yourself, how am I serving and empowering my community? If you get this right, you will win your customers' hearts and minds.

TIMEZONEONE STRATEGIC PARTNER TO



## TOP TIPS FROM THE TRADESHOW EXPERTS

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# Rebecca Jelley, SKOPE Refrigeration



### FIGURE OUT YOUR KEY MESSAGE

When planning, figure out your key message first as early as possible. This is the best way to make sure all your elements come together to create a cohesive show and a consistent message.

### CATEGORISE AND TRACK LEADS

Our key tip for measuring tradeshow success is to use a lead-tracking method that your people on the ground are completely comfortable with.

It may mean more work for you behind the scenes following-up and categorising leads, but we've found lead-tracking more successful in terms of gaining usable leads.

### HIRE A SECOND SPACE

At our last tradeshow, we used a separate break out room to launch a new product to a select group of attendees.

This was invaluable. It gave the product launch more mystique and exclusivity and gave us a private space to invite customers to. It was also a fantastic space to host networking events and a working base for our team. We will certainly be doing this again.

When planning, figure out your key message first as early as possible. This is the best way to make sure all your elements come together to create a cohesive show and a consistent message.

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Rebecca Jelley, Marketing and Events Administrator, SKOPE Refrigeration

**Many leads generated at tradeshow are never followed up. We've all been there. Your team's exhausted after the event, they don't have a clear follow-up plan ready to roll, and next time you look, it's three months on and too late. Here's how to make sure you get return on your tradeshow investment...**

# Nurture

## **FOLLOW UP FAST**

Follow your hot leads up the day you meet them, with a personal email.

Have your “nice to meet you” email set up, so it only takes five minutes when you finally arrive back at your hotel room to send personalised emails to the people you met that day.

If you have a CRM system, get your contacts straight into your CRM, and send your email from your CRM. More on why this is a smart move below.

## **GET LEADS STRAIGHT INTO YOUR CRM**

If you have a CRM system set up, you can create forms to make this process faster.

Your goal is to get your prospects into your CRM system the day you meet them and send an email straight away.

Craft this email to drive the prospect to your site, so you can track their interaction with your content, and find out more about their interests. The faster you do this, the more likely you are to capitalise on their post-show interest in your brand.

You can also consider things like automated pop-up greetings tailored to tradeshow attendees, triggered the first time the prospect visits your website.

If you don't have a CRM, gather your leads straight away and activate as follows:

- + Segment into hot and cold leads.
- + Assign hot leads to your sales team.
- + Place warm and cold leads into your nurturing process, so they grow awareness of your brand.

## **RUN A POST-SHOW NURTURING CAMPAIGN**

Run a follow-up nurturing campaign for your warm and cold leads.

You could email a few times in the first month post-show and then add prospects to your regular e-newsletters. You can automate this follow-up campaign with your CRM.

Have your first follow-up email ready to roll when you return from the show.

Provide reasons to engage with your campaign that re-enforce the key messages you promoted at the show.

Tradeshow experts suggest that you provide options that appeal to prospects at various stages of the selling cycle, for example:

- + Download a white paper
- + Share a case study
- + Invite them to an event
- + Find a retailer/rep in your neighbourhood
- + Subscribe to our newsletter
- + Contact a sales rep

This is another opportunity to repurpose your content marketing efforts.

### **CALCULATE YOUR COST-PER-ACQUISITION & RETURN ON INVESTMENT**

Tradeshows are expensive, and it can take 12 months or more to convert a tradeshow prospect into a customer.

Calculating your cost-per-customer-acquisition (CPCA) can help you decide which tradeshows are right for you. Consider your CPCA over a fixed period, i.e. a financial year, so that you can compare like-with-like.

Your CPCA = (Marketing Costs + Sales Costs) / \$ value of New Customers.

#### **Marketing costs include:**

- + Salary and benefits of marketing team
- + Operational costs
- + Third party fees, i.e. creative agency partners
- + Creative costs
- + Media budget
- + Marketing disbursements

#### **Sales costs include:**

- + Salary and benefits for sales team
- + Commissions
- + Sales collateral
- + Sales disbursements
- + Revenue from new customers

Once you have calculated your CPCA for a financial year, you can identify which customers resulted from each tradeshow, and compare your CPCA per trade show.



LIZZIE SPEAKS WITH PHILLIPA FROM RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE SOUTH ISLAND, AT A TIMEZONEONE MARKETING EVENT



TIMEZONEONE TRAVEL/TRADE PARTNER TO



[VisitTheUSA.ca](http://VisitTheUSA.ca)



## TOP TIPS FROM THE TRADESHOW EXPERTS

# Lisa Bond, Whale Watch Kaikoura



### OVER THE YEARS, WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED ABOUT PREPARING AND FOLLOWING-UP POST TRADESHOW?

It is important to have a presentation that is eye-catching. Imagery speaks volumes, so have images that are fresh, new and showcase what you have to offer well.

I always try to make our booth inviting and provide a glimpse into what Whale Watch is all about. Carrying the right promotional collateral for the event is also key; we have special whale shaped USBs that are a real hit.

I've learned the importance of follow-up. It continues the relationship and opens the opportunity for dialogue we didn't have time for during our meeting at the tradeshow. Good follow-up can be the clincher for securing business and being added into itineraries.

### ARE TRADESHOWS DIFFERENT IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES?

I travel to Tourism New Zealand tradeshow around the world and while they all have a similar theme, timing, and structure etc. they're also uniquely different, which I like. They have a local focus mixed with some good old Kiwi flavour which I think the buyers really appreciate.

When preparing my presentations and collateral, I make sure that I'm carrying business cards with me with my prospect's language on one side and English on the other. I'll have my trade manual translated along with my PowerPoint presentation, to help make our time together more effective.

### WHAT IS THE BIGGEST MISTAKE YOU SEE PEOPLE MAKING AT TRADESHOWS?

Not being prepared with appropriate collateral. And having a space that is unattractive – this is your opportunity to shine and if your booth doesn't showcase your product well then you won't attract the eye of the consumer or the buyer.

I've learned the importance of follow up. It continues the relationship and opens the opportunity for dialogue we didn't have time for during our meeting at the tradeshow.

Lisa Bond, Marketing Manager, Whale Watch Kaikoura



## COLLECT CUSTOMER DATA

1. Review any existing customer research.
2. Interview your team about your customers and note down everything they say. Make sure you speak to the people that spend the most time with your customers, the ones answering their questions and addressing their challenges.
3. Find examples of your customers expressing their genuine opinions about your product or service. This may be emails, calls, or letters from your customers, feedback on social media, reviews, or customer surveys.
4. Group your customers based on the problem they are trying to solve, or the experience they are seeking through interacting with your brand.

## CREATE PERSONAS

Next, you breathe life into this data by creating personalities to represent each customer group. It's a bit like writing characters for a story.

### BACKGROUND

- Age
- Gender
- Location
- Income
- Education
- Job
- Family

### MOTIVATIONS

- What tasks are your customers trying to accomplish through your brand?
- What problem are they trying to solve?

What goal are they trying to reach?

What experience do they want?

How do they want to feel?

#### CHALLENGES & OBJECTIONS

What challenges might stop your customers from using your brand to achieve their goal?

What common objections do they make to using your brand?

How can you help them overcome these challenges and objections?

#### PATH TO PURCHASE

Tell the story of how this person buys your product or service

#### WHAT MEDIA CHANNELS DO THEY USE

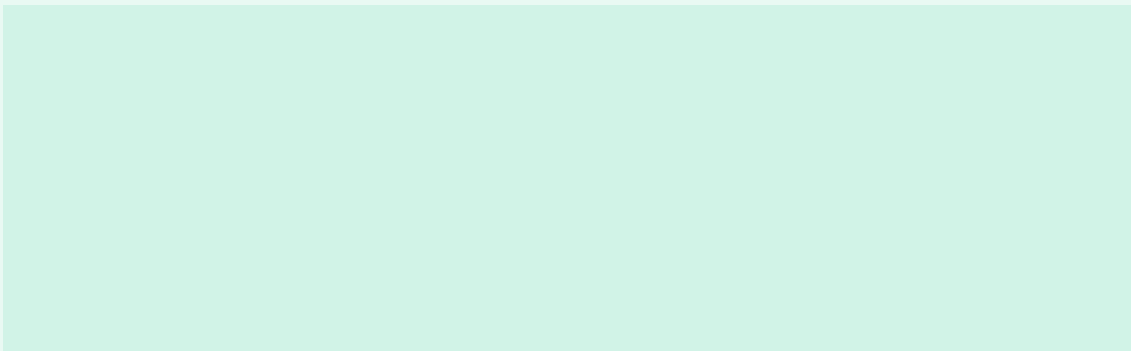
TV or radio – list their favourite shows

Digital and social media, what channels and social networks do they use?

Events and guerrilla opportunities. What events do they go to? What places do they frequent?

- PR including print, broadcast, and influencers
- Keywords. Choose three to five keywords to describe this person
- Name. Give your customer persona an appropriate name

+ Describe this person in a few paragraphs. If you have lifestyle information about them include this in your portrait. Facebook data on your audience can be a helpful source of insights that help you flesh out your customer personas. Do they have pets? What do they like to do in their spare time? What do they read or watch? What other brands do they use?



+ Pictures. Find photos that represent your customer persona, their lifestyle and their interests.

Once you've created your customer personas it can be helpful to create a one page illustrated guide for each persona.

**PHIL & KIM CHICAGO SIGHTSEERS**  
Domestic travelers from nearby states, seeking an indulgent city break

**NORA & BRYAN OUTDOOR ADVENTURERS**  
Urban day trippers seeking nature, active adventure and authentic local experiences

**ATTRIBUTES:**  
Fun, Casual, Natural, Millennial, Fitness

**INTERESTS:**  
Domestic travel, hiking, backpacking, Professional couples, Age: 35-55

**ATTRIBUTES:**  
Nature, Explore, Escape, Fitness, Active, Authentic

**DEMOGRAPHIC:**  
Urban Millennials, Professional couples, Age: 25-45

**ATTRIBUTES:**  
Phil and Kim are Chicago. They both love cities, so they like to visit other cities. They go to Lake Michigan for a weekend. They plan their trip a month or so in advance. They are exploring Chicago culture as they're not done to the beach, agriculture and the opportunity to meet themselves at a market.

**MOTIVATION FOR VISITING ILL:**  
They want to reward themselves for their hard work in Chicago. They love the fact that Chicago has to offer. Oh, because it's nearby, but they're big boys and they want to get out of the city.

**ATTRIBUTES:**  
Nora and Bryan are young professionals living in Chicago. They work in law. They're into fitness, and they love to get out of the city. They plan trips at the last minute, usually with no more than a few weeks planning.

**MOTIVATION FOR VISITING ILLINOIS:**  
They're inspired by their peers and they're also big influencers for you. The social media regulars, their stories will inspire other visitors to enjoy Illinois.

**STORIES TO TELL NORA & BRYAN:**

- Active outdoor adventures, hiking, biking, water sports, winter sports, cycling tours
- Immersive outdoor adventures, woodcraft courses, guided hikes, cycling tours
- Local courses. Short breaks where they can learn a new skill.
- Parks, resorts, zoos and other state destinations.
- Local food experiences.
- The real Illinois. Stories from locals.
- Illinois made. The artists, the makers, the bakers, the musicians.
- Local events and festivals. The more professional and urban the better.
- Local weekend getaways, especially to scenic places like glamping, historical places, and remote locations. Anywhere that's got a great story attached.
- Itineraries for day trips for beaches, outdoor adventures, art and craft fairs, vintage markets, photography, and consumers of picturesque local stories.

VISITOR PERSONAS | Q3

VISITOR PERSONAS | October 2016

ILLINOIS LIVING



LET'S TALK

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## TimeZoneOne can help you *turbocharge* your tradeshows

Tradeshows are a tough slog. It helps to have a marketing partner who knows what they're doing.

Even better if that partner has a track record of delivering tradeshow results.

Our team of Tradeshow experts can help you:

- + Activate ROI with a strong tradeshow strategy
- + Build buzz with pre-show marketing
- + Improve your tradeshow impact
- + Nurture your leads

### LET'S GET STARTED

Speak to Kintilla about your next tradeshow  
[kintilla@timezoneone.com](mailto:kintilla@timezoneone.com)



CHICAGO. TORONTO. CHRISTCHURCH.

#TZOGO

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