



Post Show Evaluation

If you're reading this, you've already attempted to minimize show costs and maximize your staffer's knowledge base and skills. But what else can be done to squeeze every last drop of value out of your exhibiting budget?

One of the most valuable yet least-used tactics is to perform a post-show evaluation. By locking yourself away for 30 minutes, you can review every major aspect of the show. What went smooth? Who did well? How many problems were there? The benefits you receive by evaluating include:

1. Correct mistakes for the future;
2. Remember what went well and discover ways to increase those features/aspects for next time;
3. Create a database of critical items to remember that you otherwise might not recall down the road until it is too late;
4. Overall, you'll maximize your budget and become more valuable than ever to your employer.

The most important tip we can give you is: *write down your answers in complete, specific detail.* You'll thank yourself next year when it is time to decipher your notes.

Overall, how did we perform in relation to our goals? Which goals did we surpass? Which did we meet? Which did we miss? How can we measure the results?

Did we establish goals before the show? Were they realistic?

What could we do differently to improve our performance next time?

What were our major challenges during the show involving attendees? Involving the show services?

What happened that we were not prepared for?

What else do we need to be more prepared for?

What areas should we address with show management?

Why should we come back to this show? Or, why not?

Was our booth space appropriate for the number of attendees we attracted? Was the booth too crowded?

What was damaged? Why? Did we file a claim?

What needs to be repaired before our next show?

What attracted the most attention in our booth? Was it a product/service or something we did not intend to be the dominant attraction?

How effective was...

...our staff?

...our exhibit?

...our location?

...traffic flow within our booth?

...our demonstrations?

Did we display the appropriate products/services for this audience?

How much response did we receive from our pre-show promotion?

How can we improve our future pre-show promotions?

How can we improve our future at-show promotions?

Were our giveaways valuable/useful?

How many leads were gathered? Who is following up and how?

How did we classify our leads? Do we have a dollar value?

Relate the quality of booth attendees to our needs.

How effective was the staffing schedule of our booth? How can it be improved?

Which of our major competitors also exhibited?

What were their key messages/themes?

How did they attract attention?

Are our vendors happy? Have we stepped on any feet, so to speak?

In addition to answering these questions yourself, talk with your staffers. Ask them what they saw, what their concerns are, what they were unhappy about, what they appreciated, etc. Create a medium for this information that is friendly and inviting (the best way to get facts that are critical and might otherwise be held back for fear of job loss, demotion, etc.). Do not encourage an atmosphere in which your own staffers do the same thing every year (despite their displeasure) out of habit or fear. That attitude will quickly transfer to your attendees and will eventually decrease leads.

Once you have answered these questions and any others you would like to add that are specific to your situation, prepare for next year. Establish goals. Speak with show management to improve your space. Meet with vendors to identify concerns. Write thank you notes to your staffers. And be sure to read other topics in our free "How-To Be A Successful Exhibitor" series, available exclusively at <http://www.northlandcustom.com/library/>

- *Maximize ROI On Your Exhibit*
- *Budget & Cost Control*
- *Show Selection Guidelines*
- *Space Selection Guidelines*
- *Boothmanship 101*

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