

In this Current Economy – Are Trade Shows Worth It?

by Joyce McKee

This is a question almost every organization is asking: are trade shows the best use of my marketing dollars? For some, the answer is a resounding YES, while others are quite the opposite. In the recently released Center for Exhibition Industry Research (CEIR) report, “The Changing Environment of Exhibitions,” there are some data points which suggest a positive spin on trade shows.

One of the key findings from the study is:

“Ninety-nine percent of executives identify what they consider to be the key value proposition of business-to-business exhibitions.”

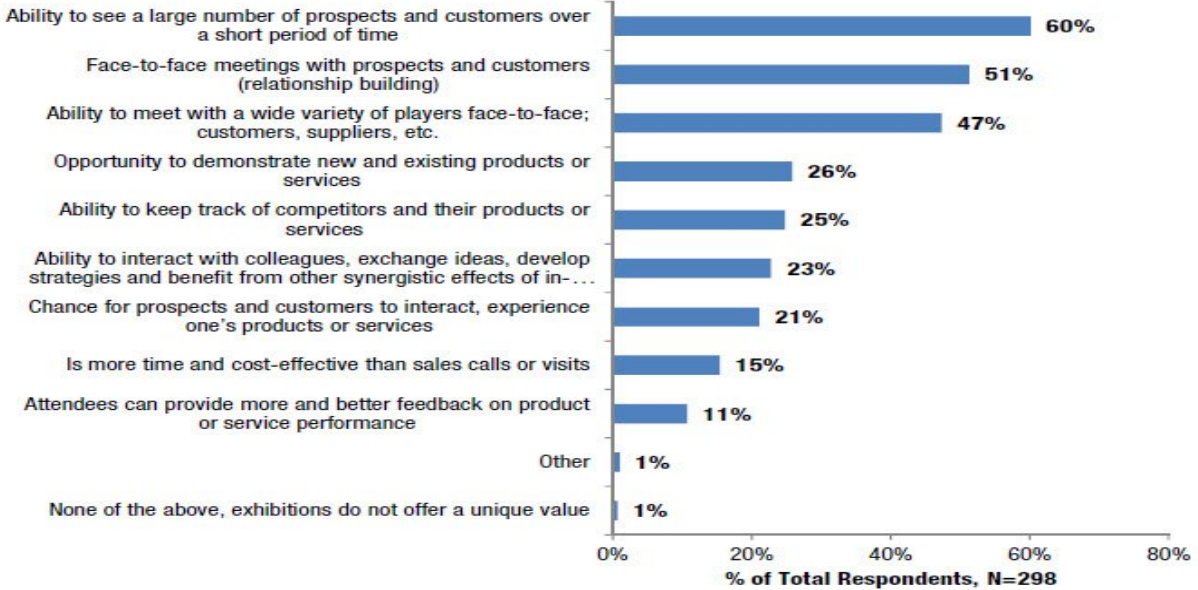
Six out of 10 executives identify 'ability to see a large number of prospects and customers over a short period of time;' while roughly one-half select 'face-to-face meetings with prospects and customers' (51 percent) or 'ability to meet with a wide variety of players face-to-face: customers, suppliers, etc.' (47 percent).

In review, the findings from this study explore the current and planned use of the full array of available marketing, communications and sales tactics; positioning of business-to-business exhibitions in this mix; current, high-priority marketing and sales objectives and perceived value of using business-to-business exhibitions to achieve them; as well as the factors that drive the decision to exhibit or pull out of an exhibition.

I have not seen that high of a statistic for years! Ninety-nine percent find trade shows hold a unique value. So it might appear that it is not time to skip an exhibition, unless you are not prepared or the show is drawing the wrong audience.

Another significant research point is found in this chart:

Unique Value Proposition of Exhibitions Not Fulfilled by Other Marketing or Sales Channels



The material in this report is exciting. If you would like to obtain a copy of “The Changing Environment of Exhibitions,” [please click here](#). There is a fee for this report; now, if you are a member of IAEE, the report is free.

Joyce McKee is the CEO of Let’s Talk Trade Shows. She has a broad perspective of the trade show and event industry starting as an exhibitor 28 + years ago. Her philosophy is to “be brilliant at the marketing basics!” This means you need to know and understand the basics of marketing and how your company can heighten them to outshine your competition and win business.

Besides her [own blog](#) (this month’s “Solutions...”article is a sample), Joyce facilitates two of IAEE’s blogs – [The Center for Exhibition Industry Research \[CEIR\]](#) and [The International Center for Exhibitor and Event Marketing](#). Her eBook, *The Secret to Achieving Brilliant Returns at Your Next Event: a Guide to Maximizing Your ROI and ROO* has been downloaded more than 7,000 times.