

HINTS TO PREVENT WASTING YOUR TIME

Excerpt from *The Exhibit User's Handbook: Fried Goose Eggs*

By Don Woodard



When is the right time to present your offering to a booth visitor? According to Mark S. A. Smith, author of *Guerrilla Trade Show Selling*, "The secret to persuading an individual is to present after you're certain that they are likely to buy from you. If they are not motivated to buy, your brilliant presentation is of no value. Resist the urge to present until you're certain you can serve their needs."

Too often a booth staff person will not qualify the visitor but launch into a full presentation explaining the benefits and features of their products or services. At the end of the presentation, the visitor informs them that they are not qualified to buy or that they really are not interested. They simply stopped to be entertained or to see what you may be giving away. Don't allow your staff to make this mistake!

Demonstrations are important.

Offering demonstrations is a proven method to gain interest and credibility for your products or services. If you encourage the visitor to become involved and participate in a hands-on demonstration, then the success of the demonstration is usually magnified.

Mark S. A. Smith suggests the four following steps to grab a visitor's attention for a demonstration:

1. Poll the audience to determine what they are looking for.
2. Build credibility before starting the actual demonstration.
3. Deliver what the audience wants or is looking for.
4. Let the audience close.

He also suggests that you always make a strong first and last statement when presenting a demonstration to increase memory retention.

The Value of Tradeshow

What is the true value of tradeshow? Increased demand for your products or services is the paramount result desired from shows. But in order to establish this result, "exhibitors must be prepared to advance attendees beyond the early stages (the spec sheet) of the purchase path, which requires quality personal interaction," according to a white paper written by Skip Cox, President of Exhibit Surveys.

And Mr. Cox states, “Ultimately, quality personal interaction is where the value of tradeshow exists for exhibitors.”

So don't waste your time presenting to your unqualified booth visitors. Always qualify them in advance of launching your presentation and involve them personally in your presentation whenever possible to get the maximum results. ■