



Discover and Deliver Your Attendee-Focused Value Proposition

By Jefferson Davis, Competitive Edge

The competition for attendee's time and attention at a tradeshow is fierce. The days of wandering up and down every aisle and falling into a lot of booths at random are gone. Attendees will only spend time with exhibitors who they believe can add value to their business, career or life.

If you want to get your fair share, you have to recognize and respond to a few important facts:

1. You not only compete with your direct product/service exhibitors, but with all exhibitors, and with educational sessions, social events, and so on.
2. Attendees are spending fewer number of days at tradeshow, which is creating more time pressure.
3. In response, the majority of attendees arrive at the event with a planned agenda.
4. According to CEIR research, the average attendee only visits 26 exhibits while at a show.
5. Half of their exhibit stops are pre-planned.

So how do you make sure you get enough of the right attendees to your exhibit?

The answer is to clearly define your target visitor, then craft and deliver a compelling attendee-focused value proposition that makes visiting your exhibit a "must do" in their mind, so you land on their agenda.

Start by clearly defining your Ideal Visitor Profile. What types of companies? In what industries, market segments or specialties? In what geographical areas? What job functions and titles? What specific situations might be happening in their operations that would make them think about what you do? Now, knowing all of this, what solution(s) should you feature?

Next analyze the products and services you plan to feature. How does the customer use your product/service? What is the application? What specific problems does it solve? What specific opportunities does it create? Where does it help them gain, save time and/or money? What does it help them reduce, eliminate or avoid? What are the three most important things you want them to know about your product/service? What makes it different or better than direct competitors? Different than alternative ways of achieving the same result or outcome?

By taking the time to answer these questions, you will have plenty of content to craft your attendee-focused value proposition. Here's a 5-point template you can use:

- **Problem Headline:** Struggling with? Worried about? Tired of?
- **Opportunity Headline:** Interested in? Curious about? Want to learn about?
- **Call to Action:** Give us just 5 minutes at (show name – booth number)
- **Attendee Experience:** You will SEE... You will DO... You will LEARN...
- **Reward:** Oh by the way, you'll receive....

If you have multiple products and services, or target visitors, you can create multiple value propositions. You can also split test using problem-based headlines with opportunity-based headlines to see which generate higher response and engagement with your audience.

Now all you have to do is **deliver your attendee-focused value proposition(s) through as many channels as possible.**

- Start with your exhibitor listing because this is an overlooked, but highly visible opportunity. Many attendees use exhibitor listings on the show website and online floor planner, in the show directory, and on the show mobile app to determine and manage which booths they will visit.
- Post on your social media and the show organizer's social media accounts.
- Post in LinkedIn Groups.
- Send emails using your problem and opportunity headlines as the subject line.
- Mail oversize postcards to your house list and a sorted pre-registered attendee list, if available.
- Do banner and button ads on the show website, if available.
- Run print ads in Trade Publication and the Official Show Directory.
- Evaluate all at-show visibility options like digital signage, meter boards, banners, floor clings, etc.
- And finally, don't forget to integrate into your exhibit graphics, A/V and in-booth presentations and demonstrations.

By investing a little time to carefully define and deliver your attendee-focused value proposition through as many media as possible, you will stand out from the crowd, grab the attention of your target visitor, and give them a compelling reason to add your exhibit to their "must see" list. This will translate to a booth full of interested and qualified visitors.