

# Make Your Exhibitor Marketing Campaign a Success

When thinking about marketing events, many associations focus the majority of their time and efforts on attendee marketing. After all, registration fees make up a significant slice of an association's non-dues revenue pie. However, if your event or workshop includes a trade show floor, exhibitor marketing should be in your event plans from the start and be viewed just as important.



## Plan Ahead

Start marketing to tradeshow exhibitors 6 to 12 months before your event! In fact, some of our clients get a large percentage of their exhibitors to renew for the following year with on-site registration at the current year's show.

At Naylor's AMD Group, we start planning the exhibitor outreach for clients' future shows 13 months ahead of time: about a month before the first show even starts! We aim to have a new concept and marketing plan started a full year in advance. This gives us appropriate time to measure/research what worked and didn't work in the previous year.

## Invest in Your Marketing

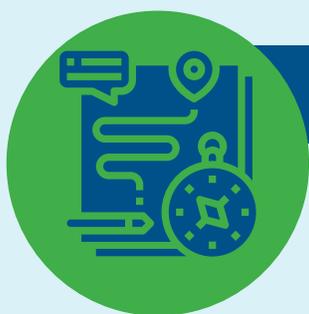


Not every marketing strategy or tactic incurs a high cost. Some marketing tools that are free or low-cost include:

- Email marketing:** Find a service that allows A/B testing of subject lines, email personalization, and graphics to see what resonates most.
- Social media:** Find the platforms your exhibitor audience uses the most and meet them there with quick messaging.
- Your website:** Post all exhibitor information in a special section that is easily accessible from the home page or from search engine results.

Other marketing tools have a cost, but they can be worth the investment in your future non-dues revenue returns:

- Direct Mail:** Snail mail is making a comeback as a tool that catches the eye of people who slog through hundreds of emails a day.
- Phone calls:** Placing a call to a potential exhibitor carries a personal touch that is usually well-received.



## Execute and Measure

Once you have a plan and a budget in place, stay on track!

- ✓ Create schedules with tracking and goals.
- ✓ Know what's important to your exhibitors and stay on that message.
- ✓ Communicate effectively, but don't overdo it.
- ✓ Collect ongoing feedback from internal stakeholders.
- ✓ Measure throughout the campaign and adjust.

## Follow Up Throughout The Year

Satisfaction with an exhibit experience isn't defined by just the event itself, but by how the host treats an exhibitor throughout the year. Keep in touch with your exhibitors and let them know how much your association values their participation. Use surveys, phone calls and other efforts to steward your association's relationship with them. This type of effort keeps favorite exhibitors coming back year after year. Stewardship also gives your exhibitors a chance to share their perspective about the event with your staff and, in turn, gives your staff an opportunity to share how your association is continually working to improve the next event. It's that circle of life cycle that characterizes well-planned event marketing!



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