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**GETTING VALUE FROM  
A TRADE SHOW**

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Despite a surge in spending on digital marketing, face-to-face marketing still commands a healthy share of the average marketer's budget. Forrester reported that trade shows, conferences, and events claimed 14 percent of surveyed senior marketers' budgets, compared to 10 percent for the next closest category, digital.<sup>1</sup> In the U.S. alone, business-to-business marketers spent \$26.1 billion on in-person activities, including exhibitions, conferences, and company events.<sup>2</sup>

Gartner discovered in its CMO Spend Survey 2016-2017 that 35 percent of chief marketing officers surveyed intended to slightly increase their event marketing budgets, while 12 percent intended to do so significantly.

To obtain the most value from your trade show investment, it's important to choose wisely, prepare thoroughly, attend fully, and follow up effectively.

## CHOOSE WISELY

There are some 1,600 trade shows annually in the just U.S.<sup>3</sup>, making the decision of which to attend an important one. To choose wisely, exhibitors have said they are looking for high-quality attendees in high quantities. In addition to being in a position to make buying decisions, these attendees must be relevant to your offering and a good fit for your target profile.

The types of shows exhibitors are looking for are well-respected within their industries, being known for attracting the top brands and companies as exhibitors and key decision-makers as attendees. And they have a reputation for being well promoted, well organized, and well run.



**FORRESTER REPORTED THAT TRADE SHOWS, CONFERENCES, AND EVENTS CLAIMED 14 PERCENT OF SURVEYED SENIOR MARKETERS' BUDGETS**



The second edition of CPhI North America, taking place April 24-26, 2018 at the Philadelphia Convention Center, is expected to draw well over 7,400 attendees from throughout the pharmaceutical ecosystem. This includes people involved in pharmaceutical sourcing, procurement, supply chain management, drug development, engineering, and R&D. More than 55 percent of this year's attendees were director-level or higher executives,

and 80 percent of all attendees reported they had a role in the purchasing cycle, from recommending to authorizing to making the purchase. That is four out of every five attendees.

## PREPARE THOROUGHLY

It is simply not enough to install a booth and wait for the leads to roll in. Pre-show marketing activities such as email campaigns, social media, media outreach, and leveraging the show organizer's marketing efforts can make all the difference in the foot traffic to your booth and the number of quality leads generated.

Be sure to promote more than your booth number; the vast majority of trade show attendees are interested in new products and services. That has been the No. 1 reason to attend trade shows for the past 25 years. Use email, social media, and even a pre-show press release to promote any new or improved offerings you'll have at the show, as well as any presentations, workshops, or events you may host while there.

Talk to the show organizer about possible pre-show marketing. This can include list rentals or sponsoring content in their pre-show promotions. CPhI North America initiated more than 80 targeted email campaigns for the 2017 conference. It also offers a digital floor plan and matchmaking

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.marketingcharts.com/industries/business-to-business-50732>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.chiefmarketer.com/digital-leads-2016-b2b-marketing-spending-growth/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.expodatabase.com/trade-shows-america/>



**THE CENTER FOR EXHIBITION INDUSTRY RESEARCH (CEIR) SAYS 85 PERCENT OF AN EXHIBITOR'S SUCCESS CAN BE ATTRIBUTED TO THE PERFORMANCE OF ITS STAFF.**



service in advance of the show, where attendees can search to learn about exhibitors and set up meetings. This year, the digital floor plan reached 173,000 total exhibitor profile views, 40,000 total exhibitor searches, and more than 2,400 exhibitor product views.

**ATTEND FULLY**

It is important to select the best staff to engage prospects once at the show. The Center for Exhibition Industry Research (CEIR) says 85 percent of an exhibitor's success can be attributed to the performance of its staff. Setting goals for the staff, such as finding three unexpected leads each show day, helps them to step up not only on-booth but at cocktail receptions, breakfast sessions, and the like.

Knowing you've brought your A-game to the show — a well-designed and signed booth, an enthusiastic staff — it's important to leverage the show services. At CPhI North America, this means taking advantage of its BOND meeting service — a matchmaking tool that helps exhibitors identify and request meetings with potential buyers and partners. In 2017, one

BOND meeting led to \$3.5 million in new business for an exhibitor. Another reported using the service to set up meetings with 25 new potential customers, greatly increasing efficiency and supporting booth traffic.

Whenever possible, demonstrate your thought leadership by signing up as a presenter or speaker at trade shows you attend. If available through the show and relevant to your offering, participating in speaking and educational engagements gives prospects another opportunity to learn about your company. CPhI North America offers such opportunities to exhibitors through CPhI Connect.

**FOLLOW UP EFFECTIVELY**

Once the booth is broken down and the leads have been entered into your CRM, the real work continues. Whether you've been collecting business cards or scanning badges, it's now time to reach out to your prospects with relevant follow up marketing.

Exhibit Surveys, Inc. reports that 67 percent of all attendees represent a new prospect and potential customer — and 48 percent of CPhI North America 2018 attendees were new

to CPhI events. Don't let these new prospects think you've forgotten them. Have assets to provide as a follow up, whether a white paper on an important industry topic, a webinar, or a case study of a solution they are interested in. Having these materials is a good reason to reach out and nurture those leads.

Staying in touch with prospects after a trade show maximizes your investment in face-to-face marketing. CEIR asserts that converting a trade show lead to a sale costs 38 percent less than sales calls alone, but only if you follow up with those you met at the show.

