

# SIGN EXPO 2018



**NSSASignExpo.org**

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Connecticut Convention Center, Hartford, CT

# It's Showtime

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Getting the most out of your NSSA exhibit.

## Have you...?

- ☐ Determined your purpose for being in the show?
- ☐ Set your goal for this year's show?
- ☐ Started your pre-show publicity?
- ☐ Read your exhibitor kit? Surprises can cost money & lose opportunities?
- ☐ Checked your display & do the 4 "R's" ...**Repair. Replace, Refresh & Renew?**
- ☐ Selected your primary vendors. i.e., transportation, assembly, breakdown?

## "Why are we going in the first place?"

If you can't answer, you need to take a good look at your goal for attending the show.

Goal setting is the most important pre-show planning you can do. You need a clear, realistic and measurable goal to get the most out of your show experience.

The goals can be as varied as the number of exhibitors on the floor. It is important, however, to try to focus on just one major goal.

Here are some common goals for exhibitors—

- **Introduce a product**
- **Kickoff a promotion**
- **Scope the competition**
- **Investigate new markets**
- **Acquire sales leads**
- **Build new relationships**

Once you have your goal, you can set everything else in motion to support it.

Besides, without a goal going into the show, how can you measure your success after the show?

## What happens when you don't invite anyone?

**No one shows up**, that's what happens. Yet, that is what you are doing when you exhibit and don't let your customers and prospects know, in advance, that you will be there.

Pre-show marketing is essential for you to have a successful show.

Keep in mind, you are competing with hundreds of other exhibitors in a crowded, noisy, excited atmosphere and you can be easily overlooked by those folks who are your real buying prospects.

You need to make "seeing you" the reason they are attending the show in the first place.

There are many effective ways to get the word out. A good mix works best.

Here are a few suggestions:

—**Email invitations**

—**Social media**

—**Direct mail (postcards are inexpensive & work wonders)**

—**Convention program advertising**

—**List your "Upcoming appearances" on your web site**

—**Press Releases (watch lead times, needed well in advance)**

—**Personal invites to top prospects (phone, mail, etc.)**

Be sure to give good reasons to come and see you.

Perhaps updates in technology, new products, meet the president, new promos—essentially anything that can help them be more competent and profitable. Be sure to include the dates and times of any special event or presentation you are giving.

Only with a thorough pre-show marketing program can you ensure good attendance at your booth. Never trust to "luck" that someone will find you. It costs way too much money when real buyers pass you by.

## Who's in charge?

Your show coordinator bears the burden of the entire show program. From display design, to shipping, to breakdown, he/she carries the load. Maybe they need help.

How about this? Appoint one of your most experienced staffers "Booth Captain". Their tasks may include: coaching the booth staff & making sure they are up-to-date with products, promos, demos, greeting VIP guests, keeping literature in-stock, managing hand-outs and closing the booth each day.

## Display Design

First, remember...**your display is your company!** Make sure it screams who you are and what you have to offer.

With all the distractions on the show floor, you have only a few seconds to stop prospects in their tracks.

## Keep in mind....

- Focus your message on one direct, compelling idea. Use your graphics to portray that idea.
- Keep it Simple. One impressive or informative image is better than many. **Think billboard, not bulletin board.**
- Keep the main theme eye level or above.
- Keep it open and inviting. Remove barriers between you and your prospects.
- Display in a visitor-friendly way. Don't clutter, it isn't a yard sale.
- Know your audience and speak to their needs.
- Focus on new products.



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