

Social Media for Trade Shows



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Part 4: Pre Show Social Media - What's The Plan?

The Pre Show step of Social Media (SM) for an event or trade show is your Planning stage. This is where you set up all of the ideas to accomplish your SM goals and put them into a game plan. Integrating your SM ideas into your display or booth graphics, videos and structures will also be decided during this stage.

Always keep your customers and their needs in mind when planning. It would be a good plan to post on SM portals every other day 2 weeks out from the event then post once a day the week before. This will help to make sure you let all of your fans know you will be at the show and how to locate you.

The following ideas are for companies who are having a team or large group of individuals at a trade show or event.

Graphics:

- Design your booth graphics, sales literature, catalogs, white papers etc. that you will display or hand out with SM information. This way your visitors or others walking by on the show floor will be able to engage with you.
- Add Quick Response (QR) codes to your graphics and other ancillary show materials. Direct your QR codes to specific information like product demos, surveys, special pricing, suggestion boxes etc. to continue the engagement with your visitors.

Email Marketing:

- Design four email marketing campaigns about the event you will be attending. Send two of them two months out from the event. Send the other two the month before the event.
- If you do a monthly newsletter make sure to start hinting to the upcoming show in it starting two months out from the show.
- In your pre show email campaigns and newsletter show photos or renders of your booth display that you will be using at the event to stir up buzz.

Blog / Website:

- Add SM buttons to your blogs and websites so customers can begin to follow you and start the engagement process.
- Create a mini website or landing page dedicated to the event or about your appearance at the event.
- Leading up to the event add posts & photos to your blog showing your display being produced at different stages of development.
- Post a pre show article on your blog or website about things you will be showcasing or displaying at the show.

On LinkedIn: (Discussions can help with the planning process.)

- Post your show appearance as an event on LinkedIn.
- Get a discussion started by asking others if they are going to event or difficulties about events.
- Post a news release about the event on LinkedIn with a related group then invite followers to see it. Check the News area of a group to promote.

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Twitter Time: (Plan some content but also be spontaneous with your posts while at the show.)

- Two weeks out from the event begin posting on Twitter once a day about attending the event. Then post twice a day the week leading up to the event.
- Schedule Twitter posts to go out two times daily during the show about the event itself, your booth location or special booth events you have scheduled.
- Create a hash tag (#) on Twitter to use during the event. Use it in conjunction with the official event's hash tag. Post links to the event, your booth info, and photos of your display along with booth activity.
- For your Twitter followers exclusively start an online scavenger hunt. Put clues in emails, on your websites / blogs for people to follow and come in with a completed scavenger hunt form to the event. Advertise early to get people to sign up if they do not already. Give first 3 visitors to your booth with the correct information a nice gift.
- Decide on a good place to meet up with customers after the event and organize a "tweet up" and invite them through Twitter. Advertise the "tweet up" with graphics at your booth.

Using You Tube: (Using video increase traffic to your booth)

- Take a video of someone by your display for the show teasing your appearance at the show or make a video "news release". Upload the video to your You Tube channel and link to it from all your other SM portals.
- Make videos of product demos, time lapse of a project etc. and upload to your You Tube channel.
- Mention specials and contests you will have at the show with a You Tube video.
- Make a short video dedicated to letting your customers know about your SM portals. Then tell them to follow you.

Other Ideas:

- Invite bloggers from relevant sites to your booth to get the scoop on new products or services you are introducing.
- Decide on an exclusive group of customers to meet with at the show and send them a "text message" during the event.
- Create a "back stage" pass for a few people to get a one-on-one with your companies CEO, VP or Sales-person attending the show. Do this away from the traffic of the booth attendees possibly in a separate section of the booth display.
- Plan and schedule videos or interviews to record at the show so you do not forget them.

Notes: _____

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Part 5: At Show Social Media - Let's Do This?

The "At Show" duties will be working your Social Media (SM) plan and having fun while doing it. Just like at any show you want to engage with the audience. You now have another tool in the form of SM.

Important: Ask permission and explain to individuals what you will be doing with the pictures and videos you are taking. Not everyone wants to be on the internet nor do they completely understand what can be done with the information.

A few ideas before show starts:

- After booth set-up post on SM portals (or text message) your GPS location. As an added benefit give a gift to the first person to find you.
- Designate a specific someone to oversee the SM effort. This might be you or someone else. Everyone should participate but one person in charge will help.
- Announce to your group the certain time each day that you will all get together and discuss what should, shouldn't and hasn't but needs to be posted on SM portals.
- Set up an example of your Newsletter and other marketing emails at the show so customers can sign up for them. This is a great source for registration.
- Make sure all QR tags and other directional SM links are all working and going to the accurate information.
- Step back from your booth and check to see that all your QR tags, Hashtags, links, web addresses and any other important SM info is easy to see and get to for scanning.

Email Marketing:

Send one, possibly two, emails related to what has happened at the show and things still to come midway through the show week. This might be something you can plan but being spontaneous while the show is going on will really get your email subscribers attention. Make sure to give it an engaging and eye catching subject line.

Blog / Website:

Upload photos of booth attendees, product demos and anything interesting during the show to your Blog / Website. If you cannot do this during the show do it in the evening or send to your office to have someone do it for you. A recap after the show is good but if you can get info up during you are ahead of the game.

Twitter:

Post links to relevant content of things happening at your booth and the show. Tweet about other web sites, blogs, pictures, other hash tags and videos on-the-fly to inform and engage your followers on your Twitter account.

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Part 6: Post Show Social Media - Gone But Not Forgotten.

Now that the show is over and you are back at the office it is time to see how well you did. Time to check all the responses and activity of your Social Media and follow up on it. Put together a recap outline of the show. Collect information from all of your team. Write down everything and weed through to look for those things that would be of importance to your customers. Items that would benefit your *company* can be compiled and organized to meet on in a week or so.

Marketing Email:

Send a quick recap email to all of your customers with an image or two and links to all content posted on your SM portals. Make sure to add all new registers from the show to your email list before sending. Create an email campaign specific to those who dropped by your booth. Thank them for coming by and give them a quick outline of your show notes and let them know you will be contacting them in a couple weeks to see if they have any questions or requests.

Blog/Website:

Post interviews and images you collected from the show on your website or blog or both. Discuss a one on one that you had with a customer about your products or their needs that your product fulfilled. Create it as a case study and add to your main website or on your show mini site/landing page. Publish multiple views from the show by having others in your team do a paragraph or two and post them on your blog.

Twitter:

Check for new Followers, Direct Messages and look over your feed again to make sure nothing was missed or if something should be addressed. Look at your hashtag posts. It may have been going on longer than you thought. If it will benefit your customer retweet them and add some of the comments to your email campaigns.

Story: I followed a hashtag during an about an hour after a webinar. I checked the feed again two days later and even though the activity was calmed an audience was still communicating about the webinar.

You Tube:

Create “Wrap Up”, “Thank You” and “Sorry we missed you – here is what happened” videos to your channel. Add the video links to emails, post them on your Twitter feed and add them to your Blogs or show landing page. You may want to mix up the information so all of your SM portals do not have the same info. Make a video montages of your images and videos you collected from the show and do a 2 to 3 minute mini movie of your experience. Upload a video of an interview with your contest winner if you had a give away at your show.

LinkedIn:

Make mention in your “Share an update” box that you attended the show. In your comment add links to your show mini site, blog or hub where information and links to other ancillary SM is located. In the appropriate group ask others if they attended the show. Also, post a link to an image or two of either something at the show or your own display to get a discussion started.

