

No matter how small your marketing budget, your business can afford to have a successful presence at trade shows without incurring big expenses. Here are five tips for exhibiting in trade shows inexpensively:

- 1) Have a sales representative exhibit your line at a trade show. If you can't afford a booth and travel expenses, a sales rep who exhibits in trade shows or gift marts in your industry can present your product line without the cost of a full-fledged booth. An added benefit is that a professional sales rep has a network of connections and knows your market niche well, and is likely to be more experienced in selling and trade show dynamics than you are.
- 2) Rent a temporary space at a wholesale gift mart or showroom. You can plunge into wholesale shows inexpensively and without being present by renting a temporary space in a wholesale gift mart or showroom. For a monthly fee, you can display your products there for direct sales to retail shop owners. This is a good way not only to break into wholesaling on a small budget, but also to test new products.
- 3) Share a trade show booth and expenses with a related but non-competing business in your niche. This cost-cutting solution works especially well for one-person businesses. Besides saving money, additional benefits to a booth-sharing arrangement include access to each other's customers in the same market niche, and the convenience of having a knowledgeable person manning the booth when you need to take a break.
- 4) Make over your current displays instead of buying new ones. Creating a new exhibit by giving your existing trade show booth displays a fresh face costs a fraction of the price of purchasing all new booth components. Consider each element of your booth separately, and brainstorm ways to update it without completely replacing it.
- 5) Purchase used trade show displays rather than springing for new ones. Many pre-owned booths and exhibits are in excellent condition and can be bought for less than half the cost of a brand new one. If you decide to buy previously owned exhibit components, be open-minded and keep your display needs in mind. Visualize how each used exhibit might perform for you.

For even greater savings, look at used trade show displays offered at rock-bottom prices because of damage or missing parts. If you can think creatively about how you'll refurbish the damage or replace missing pieces, you can come up with an effective, original display for very little cash.

Many sellers of pre-owned trade show displays are willing to bargain with you. Don't hesitate to offer the seller less than the asking price. It helps to research beforehand the retail price for the exhibit so you can make a reasonable offer.

In summary, there's no reason to miss out on potentially profitable trade shows because of the expense. Look at your small marketing budget in a new light, and brainstorm ways to put those limited dollars to work helping you reach new customers.

About The Author

Rena Klingenberg's website, <http://www.trade-show-booth-display.com>, is a resource for trade show exhibit success information. She is also editor of the online newsletter "Trade Show Success on a Small Budget" at <http://www.trade-show-booth-display.com/newsletter.html>
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