

# Two Key Outcomes Your ProMat Exhibit Program Should Be Delivering

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Your ProMat exhibit represents a significant investment of both financial and human capital. If your program is performing properly, you should be able to provide senior management with evidence that the investment is delivering two key outcomes:

- 1. Visibly and directly supporting core business objectives.**
- 2. Delivering financial value beyond cost in a measurable manner.**

***If you were to score your exhibiting program right now on these two outcomes, on a scale of 1 to 10, how would you score it?***

I don't have a crystal ball, but over my 23 years as a tradeshow consultant and trainer, I have asked this question to hundreds of exhibitors. The majority of exhibitor's answers fall in the four to seven range. This means chances are really good there is significant opportunity for making improvements in your exhibiting program too.

As the marketing or exhibits manager, you have a lot to gain by doing everything you can do to make sure your company's exhibit is delivering results in these two key areas. Recognition, promotions, bonuses and pay raises may be a result of some focused effort in this initiative.

So let's discuss some ideas on how to improve in these two key areas. You should start by attending the ShowPro Workshop on December 11 in Atlanta. There will be a lot of discussion and great learning opportunities on improving exhibiting results.

## **How to Make Your Exhibit Program Better Support Core Business Objectives**

There are many objectives that can be set for exhibiting. The three most important areas that deliver significant value are marketing, sales and customer relationship management.

Start by engaging departmental leaders in these three business areas to determine what specific business objectives they are pursuing for 2015. Let them know you are committed to ensuring that the exhibiting program is helping them achieve their departmental objectives. They'll appreciate this effort. They will value the exhibiting program more and you'll probably find it a lot easier to get the support you need from them.

Next, set clear, specific exhibiting goals that visibly and directly support their stated goals. Back these goals up with written action plans. Be sure to communicate the goals and plans to everyone on the exhibiting team. Finally, set specific check points, pre, at and post show and measure progress and report results to management showing how the program is supporting core business objectives.

## **How to Make Your Exhibit Program Deliver Measurable Financial Value**

The financial value received from a show can be calculated in several ways. Obviously, sales orders written at or after the show are the key to measuring hard dollar ROI. To be able to track post show sales, you need a closed loop lead management system in place.

Financial gain can also be measured in potential revenue value generated and in documented savings.

For example, let's say your average sale amount is \$25,000 and you generated 50 "A" quality leads at the show. You could report that the exhibiting program generated \$1,250,000 of A level sales opportunities for the company. In this example, if your investment in the show was \$250,000, you have a 5 to 1 soft dollar ROI. That's measurable financial value.

Let's look at the saving's side of the equation. You could use Cost per Exhibit Interaction compared to the Cost of a Fields Sales Call as a metric. Divide your total exhibiting investment by the number of interactions in your exhibit to get CPI.  $\$250,000/1,000$  interactions equals a CPI of \$250. Compare this to the \$596 average cost of a field sales call and you have saved the company \$346 per interaction. Now, multiply 1,000 interactions by \$346 CPI savings, and you have generated \$346,000 if CPI saving for the company.

Bring together actual sales closed, add potential A level revenue opportunities created, add documented Cost Per Interaction savings and now your exhibit program is delivering measurable financial value far beyond cost. Your senior management team will be thrilled and you will be the hero.

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