

TRADE SHOW AND EVENT SELLING

2026



Katherine Duley
Sales Concepts, Inc.
kduley@salesconcepts.com
678-624-9229 x 237
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/katherineduley/>



Andrew Sharp
Sales Concepts, Inc.
asharp@salesconcepts.com
678-624-9229 x 226
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/andrewrsharp/>

“Maximize the return on your next trade show or event.”

Program review notes

TRADE SHOW AND EVENT SELLING

Trade show attendance in the United States peaked in 2015 and leveled off until Covid. Then it fell by over 92%. However, trade show attendance was up 60% in 2023 over 2022, and attendance in 2024 will be even higher. In other words, trade shows are back!

But are your people prepared? When is your next trade show?

Selling at trade shows requires unique skills that many new salespeople have yet to acquire. Did you know that in the first 13 seconds of entering your booth, 77% of visitors subconsciously decide if they are interested and that nearly half (46%) of the attendees at trade shows are in senior management positions?

Here are some more noteworthy trade show statistics:

- 81% of exhibitors use email to follow up with leads collected at a trade show.
- On average, it takes approximately 3.5 sales calls to close a lead generated at a trade show.
- Converting a trade show lead is 38% less expensive than relying on sales calls alone.
- For those who put in the effort and follow up, 5 to 10% of trade show leads convert.
- Among Fortune 500 companies, 14% reported a 5:1 return on investment (ROI) from their trade show exhibitions, meaning they earned \$5 for every \$1 spent.
- 52% of business leaders believe that trade shows and events provide the best ROI compared to other marketing channels.
- On average, companies realize a 4:1 return on investment (ROI) for their trade show expenditures.

Trade shows require a heavy investment, strategy, and proper execution to maximize return. The time to prepare your team for your next show is now.

Sources: Tradeshow Labs, Design Shop, Jobs In Marketing, Display Wizard, Quick Tap Survey, Statista, Lead Liaison, <https://www.tradeshowlabs.com/blog/trade-show-stats>

TRADE SHOW AND EVENT SELLING

Why do visitors attend shows?

- Find out what's new and available in a short period.
- See competitors and compare prices.
- Visit different suppliers - Hear presentations and compare points of view.
- Collect literature about services offered and review with the buying team.
- The average visitor stops at 26 exhibits.

TRADE SHOW AND EVENT SELLING

Agenda



- Before the Event**
 - Planning the Event
 - Have a Purpose = What do you want to do?
- During the Event**
 - Know your place
 - Connect
 - Etiquette
 - Document
 - Close
 - Go the extra mile
- After the Event**
 - Measure and Reflect
 - Follow-Up
- Best Practices**

[SALES CONCEPTS](#)

TRADE SHOW AND EVENT SELLING

Attending Events is Different

- You can reach lots of people in a short period.
- You are on a neutral territory.
- You can meet with people who are generally unreachable or otherwise wouldn't meet you.
- You can present equipment or ideas that would be difficult to demonstrate at a customer's location.
- There may be lots of confusion, noise, and distractions.
- You are with them for a short time.
- You need a modified sales approach.
- The intelligent minority cleans up!

Reasons to Pay Attention

86% of attendees have buying influence, yet only 9% of salespeople call them within 13 months before the show.

Of executive decision makers at any given show:

- 95% request information from exhibitors
- 95% meet with current suppliers
- 73% find at least one new supplier
- 73% ask for a price quote
- 51% request a rep to visit their company
- 46% have placed orders on the spot at shows

Source: Center for Exhibition Industry Research

TRADE SHOW AND EVENT SELLING

TRADE SHOW AND EVENT SELLING

Have a purpose

What do you want to accomplish? You must have a measurable objective(s).

Define your target accounts, organizations, or people.



- How will you collect the data?
- The numbers
- The people
- The checklist

SALES CONCEPTS

TRADE SHOW AND EVENT SELLING

Have a purpose

What do you need to know or learn?

Suspects



Prospects

Visitor's company and industry
Visitor's responsibility
Need or desire for your services
Can you meet their need(s)?
Timeframe for purchase
Budget for purchase

SALES CONCEPTS

TRADE SHOW AND EVENT SELLING

Have a purpose

What do you need to know or learn?

Suspects



Prospects

- Tough
Has little or no authority.
- Good
Has authority to recommend.
- Better
Has authority to influence.
- Best
Has authority to buy.

SALES CONCEPTS

TRADE SHOW AND EVENT SELLING

TRADE SHOW AND EVENT SELLING

Have a purpose



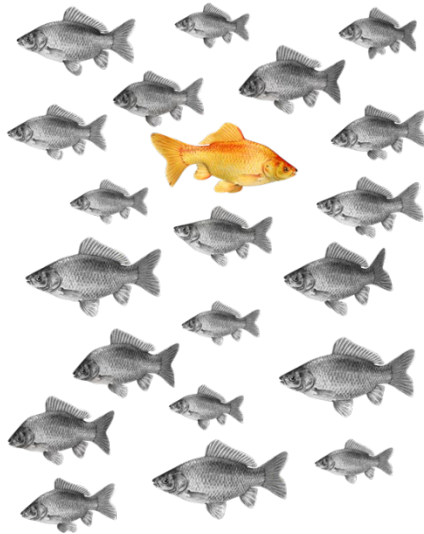
How will you measure success?

You must have a *smart goal* or a quantifiable purpose.

- **Specific**
- **Measurable**
- **Attainable**
- **Relevant**
- **Time-Oriented**

SALES CONCEPTS

How will you stand out?



- What incentive can you give them to call you or tell others about you?
- Create your key message to communicate and identify your target audience.
- Develop an email campaign. Let people know you will be there.
- Use social media
- For your franchise's social media
- Event social media
- Be well rested.

The 3 C's



- Connect
- Communicate
- Close

Connect



- Get out front! Don't stand behind the table.
- Reach out – Be happy – Open, confident body language. Positivity is Your Secret Weapon
- Don't rely on canned scripts. Notice something unique about each person you encounter.
- Make appropriate eye contact.
- Smile!
- Offer a gift or something they value? Bottled water – something with your logo on it – raffle – game – chance to win big prize.

Answer the question, “What’s in it for me?”

Remember the three connection questions.

- *Can I trust you?*
- *Can you help me?*
- *Do you care about me?*

Be curious.

Listen!

Thank people for spending time with you when they arrive and when they leave.

TRADE SHOW AND EVENT SELLING

TRADE SHOW AND EVENT SELLING

Etiquette



Don't eat or chew gum at the table or near your space.

Stand with an open posture.

Keep your space clean and neat.

Have a trash can if people want to throw something away.

Don't talk on the phone in the booth or tabletop.

[SALES CONCEPTS](#)

TRADE SHOW AND EVENT SELLING

Document



- Take some pictures or videos.
- Record details about each person you meet.
- Have a system of recording names and follow-up methods for each person you meet.
- Connect with them on LinkedIn
- Get their card.

[SALES CONCEPTS](#)

TRADE SHOW AND EVENT SELLING

TRADE SHOW AND EVENT SELLING

Close

Ask for their card.



QR codes – they can do almost anything.

<https://www.qr-code-generator.com/>

Use LinkedIn

Calendar invites.



SALES CONCEPTS

TRADE SHOW AND EVENT SELLING

Follow us for more profitable ideas and tips!



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/sales-concepts-incorporated>

SALES CONCEPTS

TRADE SHOW AND EVENT SELLING

TRADE SHOW AND EVENT SELLING

Go the Extra Mile



Arrive early – stay late.

Mingle with people – meals – cocktails – etc.

Offer to help others.

Be alert and active.

Always, always, always take the opportunity to be with prospects and customers, especially when they are having fun.

[SALES CONCEPTS](#)

TRADE SHOW AND EVENT SELLING

Measure and Reflect



- Did we meet our objectives?
- Why or why not?
- What did we learn?
- What can we improve?
- What should we stop doing?
- What should we start doing?

[SALES CONCEPTS](#)

TRADE SHOW AND EVENT SELLING

TRADE SHOW AND EVENT SELLING

Follow Up!



Phone/Text



E-Mail



LinkedIn

[SALES CONCEPTS](#)

The benefits of attending a trade show are only realized with a well-defined and executed follow-up strategy.

Trade Show and Event Selling

Maximize the return on your next trade show or event.



Katherine Duley

Sales Concepts, Inc.

kduley@salesconcepts.com

678-624-9229 x 237

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/katherineduley/>

Andrew Sharp

Sales Concepts, Inc.

asharp@salesconcepts.com

678-624-9229 x 226

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/andrewsharp/>

[Please follow Sales Concepts on LinkedIn for more tips and ideas.](#)



©2026 Sales Concepts, Inc. Roswell, GA. All rights reserved.

<http://www.salesconcepts.com>