

Achieving Success at a Trade Show



# STAGE 3

# EVALUATION



~ Step 1 ~

## Reach Out

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You didn't generate those sales leads  
for nothing!

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## Follow up, follow up, follow up

An effective follow-up system should be carefully planned. You might have graded your prospects – from ‘Red hot’ to ‘lukewarm’ – but no matter the priority, they should all be contacted. You should be tracking your results as you meet your follow-up deadlines.

Get your sales staff to work those phones. It’s one thing to send an email; another to put out a call and chat with a lead about a special offer.



### TIP

Work those phones!





## The art of the follow-up

There are a couple of things to consider about the timing and tone of your follow-ups. First, too soon is no good. If your lead is still at the show or catching up on the work they missed while attending, your first contact is going to be buried or missed. Wait a day or two after the show ends before corresponding with your warmest leads first.

Your first line should be a reminder of meeting at the event. From there you can turn a cold touch into a warm touch by including a line or two on a shared interest. Can you remember anything from your conversation that might help build rapport? It's unwise to stretch for a connection that isn't there, but by paying attention when they spoke you may have gleaned something about their career or hobbies that you can work into a cordial professional greeting. The trick is to be friendly without being too familiar.



The rule for successfully following up on trade show leads is to tell them **what's in it for them** within the first few seconds of the call.

**DO**

"Hi (PROSPECT NAME) this is (YOUR NAME) with (YOUR COMPANY NAME). Thanks again for dropping by our booth at the (NAME OF TRADE SHOW). We're the ones that (YOUR USP)."



## Choose a winner



If you ran a contest at the trade show, it's time to choose your big gift winner, a week or two after the show. The gift is a tidy investment – neither too lavish, nor too forgettable – and you should really bestow it upon the right prospect.

Please don't give it to the person who has already taken the bait and is already doing business with you. And certainly don't send it out at random to a name plucked from your bowlful of trade show cards.

You want to give the gift to the prospect who has shown the greatest interest in your product/service through online engagement but hasn't been overly responsive to your sales team. They're the one you'd like to woo. Your calculation is that they've been too busy or distracted. The gift is a reminder of your presence and an invitation to future communication.



~ Step 2 ~

## Engage

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New leads are the focus of most trade shows, but your post-show social media output should keep a larger audience in mind. Think of existing customers, suppliers, partners, valuable contacts and the media. Now's the time to engage them with all the interesting stuff they missed out on.

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## Return to social media



You used your platforms to promote your presence, now use them to show off what you did. (Although we know you were 'live tweeting' during the show.)

These after-show posts should be more considered. Maybe you don't mind revealing a couple event statistics, using a graph or a chart. Feel free to rely on the organiser's stats, but be sure to use the most relevant, and always tie your social media posts to your business' attendance.





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**TIP**

Use some  
show stats  
when you  
post



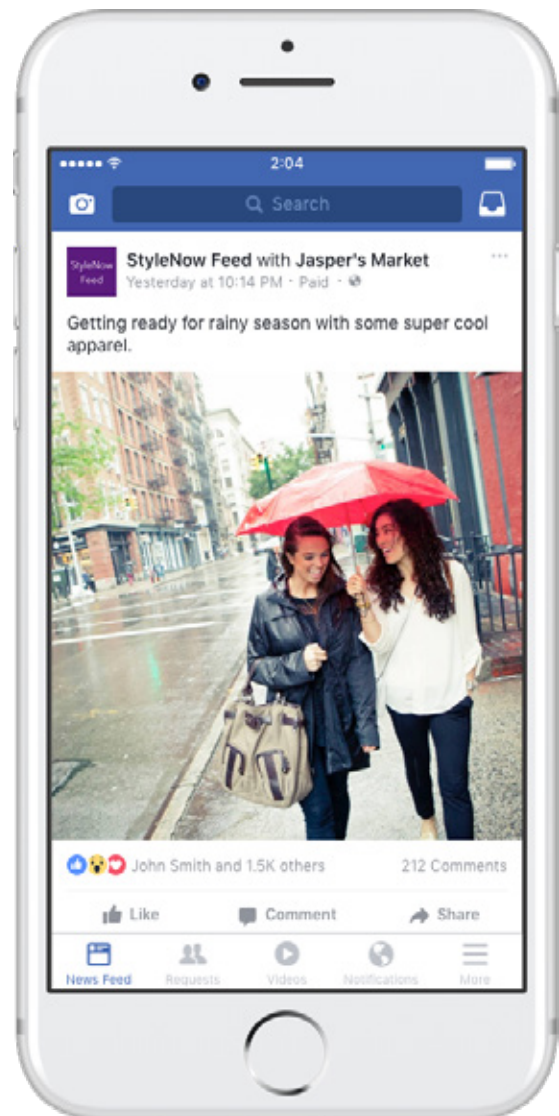




## Keep it coming

Post photos and videos from the event: You can share on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, tagging the people in the photos and the organisations they represent. If you have photos of influential attendees, speakers, and organizers, tag them in the photo and go over how it was great to meet them in person, furthering any topics you discussed.

You'll want to identify the team member with skills in social media. The trick is to combine aptitude with a keen sense of what might be interesting to your potential audience. Your social media posts might even become a team effort, with one person suggesting content and another ensuring that it gets posted.





~ Step 3 ~

## Analyse

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Let's figure out if we should do  
it again!

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## Report on the event

Here's where you go back to Stage 1, Step 1 – pulling out your trade show Objective to see if it was met. Produce a report that speaks to the number of leads and the value of business gained. How did your budget compare to actual cost?

You should report on customer reactions to your booth, highlighting strengths and weaknesses gleaned from their feedback. You definitely want to record what you'd do differently if you could do it again.

You'll have seen things at the show that may have prompted you to think: We should try that next year. Was there a speaking spot that could have put you in front of the right audience for a pitch? Or a sponsorship opportunity that might have generated extra traffic?

Take your time on the report. Remember that it forms the basis for your next big decision: Is it worth going back?





## TIP

Reflect  
on future  
opportunities





# Return on Investment



Did you blow the budget, or were you able to keep within the lines? Above all, was the show worth it?

The truth is that you won't be able to calculate your Return on Investment (ROI) until three to six months after the show, when you have a good idea which show-generated leads turned into sales. Tracking those leads means being organized. Some companies use Customer Relationship Management software, but as

long as you can tie revenue to attendees, you can quantify ROI.

This is a common formula:

$$\text{ROI} = \frac{\text{Profit} - \text{Investment}}{\text{Investment}} \times 100$$

This would mean your ROI was 100%. Attach your ROI figure to the trade show report that you prepared right after the show.



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**EXPORT**  
DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

[www.carib-export.com](http://www.carib-export.com)

Baobab Tower, Warrens, Barbados  
P.O. Box 34B, BARBADOS. BB14000  
Tel: +1(246) 436-0578  
Fax: +1(246) 436-9999  
E-mail: [info@carib-export.com](mailto:info@carib-export.com)

Av. Pedro Henríquez Ureña No. 150  
Torre Diandy XIX, Piso 7  
Santo Domingo, República Dominicana  
Tel: + 1(809) 531-6565  
Fax: + 1(809) 473-7532  
E-mail: [c.export@cotedel.net.do](mailto:c.export@cotedel.net.do)

151, Angle Avenue Jean Paul II et Impasse Duverger  
Immeuble Digicel, 4ieme étage,  
Turgeau, Port-au-Prince, Haïti  
Tel: (+509) 2230 9295