



Your Guide to Trade Show Publicity

Best Practices for
Boosting Results

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Guide Overview

Trade shows provide organizations the opportunity to increase brand awareness and launch new products and services. Their formats, from educational sessions to exhibitor booths, allow reporters, industry experts, and potential purchasers to meet directly with current and potential partners. These events condense the product education journey, allowing visitors to learn as much as they can at one time.

Whether in-person, virtual, or hybrid, securing interest during a show is not easy. The abundance of exhibitors sharing more content than ever can overwhelm reporters and attendees. A well-thought-out and smartly executed content marketing campaign can be the key factor in producing a solid return on your investment.

In this guide, we will outline best practices for maximizing your brand's story so that it captures the attention of trade show reporters and consumers alike — in-person or online.

We will also provide a comprehensive plan that spans from months before, to during and after an event, helping you get the most out of trade show publicity.



Plan in Advance

Companies that plan well in advance tend to get the coverage they crave, while those without a publicity or marketing plan struggle to gain coverage or meet their goals.

Start by arranging a planning meeting with all internal stakeholders to create goals and develop a marketing and publicity strategy to stay ahead of the game.



95% of marketers believe in-person events have a significant impact on achieving primary business goals. (Bizzabo, 2019)

Examples of trade show goals include:

- ✓ Identifying award opportunities
- ✓ Securing speaking engagements
- ✓ Launching new products or services
- ✓ Securing coverage through interviews with key editors, analysts, and bloggers
- ✓ Using content to increase visibility with key opinion leaders in the marketplace
- ✓ Creating excitement with content distributed over owned channels
- ✓ Monitoring chatter about your brand or featured products
- ✓ Evaluating the coverage share of voice vs. your competitors
- ✓ Generating sales and new opportunities

Finding Your Story

Think about the key messages you want to share about your organization. These messages should be newsworthy and catch a reporter's attention. Share specific reasons why someone should visit your booth.

- ❖ Are you releasing a new product?
- ❖ Are you announcing a new partnership?

Exciting and unique stories will help garner the attention you want.

It's also helpful to share who will be available for media interviews in your booth. This shows you're prepared and helps reporters arrange their schedules.



Research story angles the trade show's own PR team might be pitching. Knowing their story will help you align yours, showing a sense of community, but will also save you from developing an identical pitch.



Write a Trade Show News Release That Stands Out

A typical trade show generates hundreds of news releases from exhibitors announcing new products; larger events generate thousands. **It's important to pick an angle that supports your goals and helps you stand out from the crowd.**

Writing Style

Before you get started, think about who your news impacts. Understand what makes your industry tick and the problem you're solving. Make the audience and their interests the focus of your press release and media pitches. Connect the dots from your news to your target audience.



A Strong Headline

Your headline should be compelling, succinct, and complete. Skip the adjectives and use a strong actionable verb to make your headline stand out. Include the event name and your booth number in the headline or subhead. Avoid individual names in headlines unless they are very well known.



The First Paragraph Should Say It All

Most readers will not read your entire press release, so make your point quickly. Share impactful news at the beginning of your release. Be specific and showcase your product's attributes and differentials. Keep your sentences short and jargon-free.



Show Your Story, Don't Just Tell It

Readers rely on multimedia to simplify complex stories. Adding visuals to your press release expands and clarifies the understanding of your news, making your story verbally and visually enticing to the audience.



Increase Coverage Opportunities

Add Multimedia to Your Release

Increase the odds of reporters writing about your organization by including photos, videos, infographics, and other digital content. Your press release multimedia should focus on the impact of your product on your user.

Readers also rely on your multimedia to simplify complex stories. Adding imagery to a press release expands the readership of your news, making your story accessible to visual learners as well as text readers.

Emphasize Points of Contact

Make sure your news release tells your audiences who will be available to answer sales questions, media queries, or provide demos. Journalists often need quick access to a spokesperson or expert when filing a story.



Crafting a Show Press Release and Your Perfect Pitch

Add visuals to enhance news reach and complex stories



Be relevant; know what is going on in your industry and among your audience



Format with bullets, bolding, and underlines for easy readability



Tailor each subject line, showcasing how your news impacts the lives of that writer's readers



Write concise and audience-focused text



Skip the attachments; link to your published press release and content



Work with the Event Organizer

Develop a relationship with the show organizers and contact the media relations team early to **identify promotional opportunities such as scheduling press conferences, receptions, awards programs, and securing speaking opportunities.**

Event organizers can also let you know about sponsorship opportunities, such as publishing your logo on signage throughout the show or including branded inserts in attendee gift bags.

Additionally, either the show organization itself or a company they are connected to may have curated packages for exhibitors that include email packages to attendees, inclusion in a newsletter, or banner ads on the show's website.

If you plan on holding a press conference during the show, work with show organizers to book your time slot and then publicize the event well in advance.

Other Ways to Get the Word Out:



Trade shows may produce a **daily publication** highlighting exhibitor news. Pitch them to share your news with all attendees.



Does the event include an **online exhibitor portal**? There may be an area for you to upload press releases, product literature, and more.



If the show is **printing a program**, make sure your company and booth information are up-to-date and submitted on time to be included.



Is the event in person? Host your own **invitation-only press reception** or special event at your booth or an off-site venue.

Identify Your Target Audience

Identifying the right people to target is critical for garnering media attention — and it all starts well before doors open at the event.

There are **several ways to increase visibility of your company and news during a trade show**, including doing some pre-show media relations outreach. Think of your pre-show work as creating buzz, while the event itself is where media, customers, and prospects are waiting to see what they've heard about before the show.

Here are a few ways communicators identify relevant show reporters to pitch:

- ❖ Using show-provided media lists
- ❖ Searching past coverage
- ❖ Using a media database like Muck Rack



The top reasons journalists attend shows and events are for coverage (84%) and networking to meet future sources (77%).

43% don't think that the pitches they receive for virtual events are personalized to them or their work, while only 20% do.

70% said embargoed briefings before the holidays would make it easier to cover events over the next year.

(The State of Tech Journalism, 2021)



Using Show Lists, When Available

While in the past, media lists were often provided as part of show registration, changes in rules related to email marketing have led many shows to stop this process. This puts a bigger onus on PR teams to identify the right reporters for their news.

If a media list is provided to you, take the time to review it and research who might be the best match for your news. Since 21% of journalists reject otherwise relevant pitches due to lack of personalization ([The State of Tech Journalism, 2021](#)), make sure to tailor your pitch to each reporter.

Searching Past Coverage

One way to find reporters covering the show and your industry to is to review the prior year's coverage. Keep in mind, more and more publications are shifting into covering sectors like technology and healthcare, so don't forget to expand your search for potential coverage.



Members of the media typically already know who they want to meet before the show begins. Make appointments with your top targets early. Familiarize yourself with the reporter beforehand and be clear on how your news is relevant to their audience.



Your Trade Show Content Checklist

Keep in mind that your PR plan is only one piece of the puzzle. Your marketing plan, booth design, and more also help share your key messages. Whether in person, virtual, or hybrid, your trade show booth provides your customers with the opportunity to meet you and experience your product.

Use this list of content pieces reporters and decision makers want to see before deciding to cover, or buy, your offering.

- ✓ Links to speaking events
- ✓ Product photos or images
- ✓ PowerPoint presentations
- ✓ Product demos (video or other digital content)
- ✓ Product announcements and fact sheets
- ✓ Corporate backgrounders
- ✓ Invitations to special events or receptions
- ✓ Relevant press releases
- ✓ White papers and case studies
- ✓ Lead generation forms
- ✓ Inbound traffic links to key landing pages
- ✓ Links to social channels



Extending Your Content Beyond Show Walls

One of the biggest challenges organizations currently face is how to effectively recreate and extend their previously in-person show experience to support event sales goals. Looking at customer experiences in new ways could mean:

- ❖ Considering how new technology allows the customer to lead their own experience, just like they would if they were speaking to your team at an on-site event.
- ❖ Adopting technology that recreates the in-person experience across the web to a broader audience beyond only those attending the show online.

Interactive media allows organizations to turn their booth experiences into a dynamic online event that engages customers and readers.



Interactive Media for Trade Shows

Create an interactive media kit, directly distributed to show reporters and your target audiences, that can be easily embedded across your owned landing pages.

Interactive Media takes your entire suite of booth and show content, including speaking events, to videos, to product features, images, quotes, case studies, and inbound links, and repackages it into a single interactive element. Unlike antiquated media kits that sit and wait to be discovered, your interactive content journey is actively pushed out to media and consumer audiences.

Pulsing icons catch reader attention and each area clicked reveals a new part of your content, allowing your viewer to navigate their way through your story. Click to click, customers consume each piece of content at their own pace, all with connections back to appropriate landing pages on your website.

Incorporating your entire suite of show images, videos, and other marketing materials, Interactive Media is:

- ❖ Packaged as a single news release for media, financial, and search audiences
- ❖ Distributed over Business Wire's newswire
- ❖ Embeddable for easy reuse across your channels
- ❖ Trackable providing valuable customer-led data



Real World Examples



Increasing Show Interest During and After the Show

Mouser Electronics increased trade show media interest by releasing an [interactive news release video](#) from a session they hosted at the ECIA Executive Conference. Distributed after the show ended, the video, which showcased a discussion on the frontiers of robotics, provided Mouser an opportunity to both extend the reach of their hosted session and reiterate their expertise to on-site and off-site attendees.



Maximizing Event Results

When Spok was preparing to [launch their new software, Spok Care Connect](#), at the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) Global Conference & Exhibition, they knew they would need something tangible for audiences to see. Spok repackaged their full suite of content into a fully interactive multimedia piece, distributed across Business Wire's National Circuit and targeted to the HIMSS audience. This resulted in a 60% increase in release views and 36% more inbound traffic.



Extending Awareness of Show Events

Superior Essex successfully used [interactive media to highlight their booth activities and speaking events](#) during the 2019 BICSI Fall Expo. Rather than issue five news releases to highlight their booth, product showcase, and speaking events, Superior Essex combined all content into one immersive asset, effectively promoting their suite of trade show content in a single news release.



Put Social Media to Work

Start and engage in show-related conversations with key audiences using your social media channels and blog. Search social channels for the show name and hashtag to find attendees. When you tweet, use the correct show #tag to reach even more relevant audiences.

To maximize your show impact across your social channels:

Before Your Event

- ❖ Incorporate messaging about attending the show into your social media posting schedule.
- ❖ Tease new products or services.
- ❖ Share details about contests or giveaways taking place at your booth.
- ❖ Promote any sponsorships or speaking opportunities.

During the Event

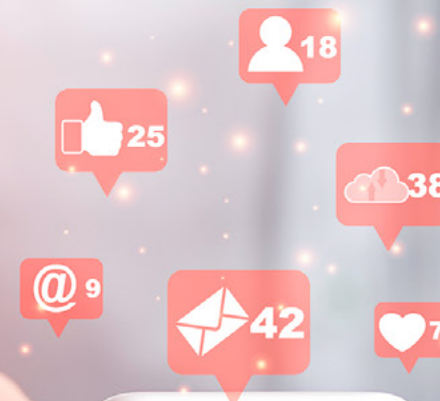
- ❖ Share imagery of your booth and any featured products.
- ❖ With their permission, share photos of your team with relevant partner contacts along with brief testimonials.
- ❖ Post photos or video clips of your company's presentation or panel discussion.
- ❖ Remind attendees of any giveaways or contests you're hosting.

After the Event

- ❖ Share a thank-you message.
- ❖ Post photos or video reiterating any new products or announcements.
- ❖ Reshare any content that was presented by a representative at your company.
- ❖ Write a recap post about what you launched.



Creating a landing page specifically for your show or event and linking to it from your social media posts will give you measurable statistics that you can use as you evaluate ROI.



Timing is Everything

12 Months Out

Determine if your organization will attend the show.

9 Months Out

Define goals for the show and booth requirements, and discuss budget. Begin layout and design.

6 Months Out

Plan advertising, direct mail, email marketing, social media promo items, giveaways, etc.

3 Months Out

Confirm your spokespeople, schedule meetings, confirm vendor details, and build social media awareness.

2 Months Out

Issue a media advisory (Who, What, When, Where) so reporters are aware of your participation. Set up your online press kit.

1 Month Out

Start sending preview news releases highlighting what you will be launching during the show. Conduct media relations by contacting key reporters.

1-2 Weeks Prior

Issue pre-show news, tease big announcements, and share your Interactive Media.

Week of and During

Release big show news, meet with reporters, share social media posts throughout the show, and promote your show assets.

After

Issue a summary release of your accomplishments, thank media connections, and review coverage and usage of your assets.



Would You Like to Know More?

Business Wire's news delivery networks help you **expand your public relations and marketing efforts** to reach global media, analysts, investors, industry trades, bloggers, buyers, and consumer audiences to maximize your event ROI.



**Business Wire's
Trade Show News
Distribution Options**

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**How to Make Your CES
Pitch Stand Out**

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**60 Actionable Media
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PR Pro Should Follow**

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