

EXHIBITING FOR HOT SHOTS

10 challenges for wily exhibiting pros

Prepared by:



FaceTime is an industry initiative helping businesses achieve super charged results through exhibitions

So you've been exhibiting at the same show now for the last few years.

You're a veteran of the exhibition hall and all it encompasses. Like a frequent flyer you know the quick shortcuts and the little tricks to get you off the show floor and in the taxi five minutes quicker than the amateurs you've had to stare at across the aisle for the last two or three days.

On top of that, you know how to wrap the organiser, the stand designers, the competing exhibitors and the visitors around your little finger – congratulations you're a hot shot exhibiting professional.

We're not stupid. This guide isn't a plea to convince you to renew your vows with exhibitions and restart your romance with your stand. This is a dirty little guide to keep you ahead of the game as you whistle through customs whilst the exhibiting plebs wait for their bags in the baggage hall.

Without further ado, here's ten challenges and games to keep you white hot and ahead of the exhibiting curve:





1. SAVE THE TREES

Like elite, high performing athletes, exhibiting hot shots know where to apply their efforts and energies and it's not lugging heavy boxes of leaflets, brochures and business cards across an exhibition hall. Who wants to sweat bullets doing that?

CHALLENGE

Make a decision to impose a paper ban on your stand. Bin your leaflets, folders and business cards before they are printed and think of more interesting methods of engagement. Sell your products using a stand theme, stand staff personality and evolving technology.

2. SLAM DUNK ROTA

All the exhibiting guides you've read in the past tell you to develop a rota for your stand staff. Start times, early finishes, coffee breaks and lunch breaks for two or three days. That's all well and good for 90% of exhibitors but the real pros have tasks, jobs and responsibilities for their staff in the weeks before and after a show to keep them ahead of the competition and smash their ROI.

CHALLENGE

Plan your stand and support staff activity for four weeks either side of the show that includes key KPI metrics and comms outside of the two or three days.





3. FARMERS AND HUNTERS

This is our favourite exhibiting game and keeps the competition between the stand staff nice and lively. It also maximises your stand traffic. Divide your staff into two teams – it doesn't have to be an even split. One team are farmers and they look after meetings, sit downs, product demos and existing customers. The others are hunters and they look for QMLs (Qualified Marketing Leads) and new data contacts. Set each team daily targets and random hourly targets. Watch the fight unfold.

CHALLENGE

Set up a stand staff competition to help achieve your exhibiting objectives. Give out prizes to watch the competition hot up.

4. HIGH WATER LEVELS

Did you know that 73% of the brain is made up of water and that you should be drinking 2.5 litres of water a day? A drop in hydration levels of even 1 or 2% can start diminishing performance and response levels. Nobody wants that and air-conditioned exhibition halls are known for drying you up. Polystyrene coffee cups, fizzy drinks and egg sandwiches still remain taboo but the real hot shots ignore the no drink rule and let stand staff hydrate with water throughout the day.

CHALLENGE

There are a host of (water) drinking games like Drink It/ Kill It for your staff to play throughout the show but as a minimum make sure your staff are on point with plenty of readily available water.





5. MARGINAL GAINS

Dave Brailsford is the mastermind behind the philosophy of 'the aggregation of marginal gains'. It sounds complex but it's actually really easy but really, really smart.

It basically proves that you can crush the competition by improving tiny elements by just 1-2%. It won Dave and Team GB 8 out of the 10 cycling golds available at the London Olympics.

CHALLENGE

Look at elements of your stand and see where you can get another 1-2% improvement in delivery. It might be an unused back wall, a more luxurious carpet/flooring or better lighting system.

6. PLAY THE MAFIA

Don't worry we're not advocating any criminal activity here. In any exhibition hall there will be at least 4-5 complementary, but not competing, businesses that can help you out and vice versa. The only thing better than having a stand at an exhibition is having four and if you partner up with the right exhibitors you'll be the true dons of the exhibition hall.

CHALLENGE

Do your research and arrange a 'sit down' with companies that you could help drive visitors to each other's exhibition stands. Word of mouth referrals of your mob will get real results. Just don't invite Luca Brasi.





7. SCORES ON THE DOORS

Allocating stand staff their own individual score sheet that links to overall stand objectives will have big gains on your exhibiting performance. These score sheets will help your staff understand what you are trying to do overall and what they need to achieve to help make it happen.

CHALLENGE

Create a Fantasy Football League style competition amongst your staff the week before the show. At the end of each day in the hotel bar be sure to have a suitable prize giving ceremony.

8. TEACHER'S PET

A lot of people think that hot shots are emotionally bankrupt but we disagree with that. It comes down to being ruthlessly efficient in the pursuit of excellence. That's why they cosy up to all the key contacts with the team of an exhibition organiser including all the contacts across marketing, sales, ops and customer service departments.

CHALLENGE

Make contact with the organising team, get their mobiles and be sure to swing into the organiser office for no other reason than to say hello. Once your face is known you can ask for first dibs on any opportunities like free press coverage and event TV interviews.





9. BREAK IT TO MAKE IT

Sometimes we can get too comfortable with familiar things but to become an exhibiting legend you'll soon realise that you have to break things. Hot shots like to stay ahead of the curve and it's only right that your stand designers and contractors earn their coin – each and every single year. New graphics don't make legends – new thinking does.

CHALLENGE

Send your long serving stand designers an email brief that outlines your ambitions for unbridled success, world domination and an exhibition stand that you'd show to your grandchildren when you're asked what you did with your life.

10. TOOTH ROTTER

For some reason exhibitors have it in their heads that visitors are seriously lacking on glucose. The untold amount of retro sweets, cupcakes, popcorn and mints on offer is staggering. A walk through the hall is enough to send your blood sugar levels through the ceiling. We're big fans of sensory sensations that link with the stand objectives but Murray Mints in a bowl should have taken a hike with Ceefax.

CHALLENGE

Make sure that you use **all five senses** to seduce and challenge the visitor's learning and discovery of your products and service in the live environment. Build the sensory exploration into the stand design to truly show the difference between the best and the rest on the show floor.



CONGRATULATIONS!

Complete and meet all these challenges and games and you'll be a certified exhibiting hot shot.

Enjoy the ride.



For more information about how you can supercharge your exhibiting activity with in-depth guides and helpful tips visit; www.facetime.org.uk

Don't forget to follow us on twitter: [@facetimeuk](https://twitter.com/facetimeuk)
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