

*\*Hear from previous and current exhibitors on page 2!*

**Exhibitor Education:** Find the information below plus additional resources, and more in the Exhibitor Education page!

### **Market Your Booth**

Use the Marketing Checklist to meet your goals and objectives. Focus on:

- Updating your [The Show To Go Directory](#) profile in the Exhibitor Checklist section of your [Exhibitor Dashboard](#).
- Utilizing the Promotional Toolkit and review our [Marketing Best Practices](#).
- Meeting with your team to set your goals and exhibit plan with the [Objectives worksheet](#).
- Want other ways to stand out? Check out the profile packages and sponsorships in your [Exhibitor Dashboard](#).

### **Show Service Kit:**

- Informational resources for your exhibit – move-in and out instructions, design rules and regulations, shipping options and instructions, etc.
- Sampling permission forms plus the rules and regulations.
- Request meeting rooms and register your exhibitor appointed contractors.
- Official Service Providers for the Show – you aren't required to use them, but we highly recommend them.

**Freeman Service Kit:** (Located in the Official Service Provider section of the Show Service Kit)

- Find your assigned target move-in.
- Order products and services
- Schedule labor, material handling, and utilities
- Find shipping labels and information.
- AV and computer rental

### **Build Your Booth**

The sooner you start planning your booth design, the better! Not sure where to start?

- **Know your booth type's [design regulations](#)!** Your booth type is listed in Exhibitor Account – Booth Information section of your [Exhibitor Dashboard](#).
- Check [Booth 101](#) for:
  - What comes with your booth, Show color scheme, Booth restrictions, Utility port locations, and more!
- Have a 10x10 or 10x20 booth? Check out Freeman's furniture packages [here](#) which simplify the ordering process.
  - Includes a draped table, 2 side chairs, wastebasket, carpet, and one 5-amp outlet
- Freeman also offers exhibit bundles and can assist in custom design requests [here](#).
  - Think cinematic, product display, or engagement focused booth design bundles!

### **Certificate of Insurance**

- All exhibitors are required to have insurance to exhibit per contract Review the required information or purchase insurance from Rainprotection, under Insurance [here](#).
- **Required!** Submit your COI to [sales@rainprotection.net](mailto:sales@rainprotection.net).

### **Sampling at the Show**

- Planning to sample? Complete the Food & Beverage or Alcohol sampling form in the Service for the Show, Exhibitor Forms section of your [Exhibitor Dashboard](#) now! Forms are due April 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Find all sampling regulations and details in the service kit [here](#).

### Exhibiting Tips from the Exhibitor Advisory Committee

*Advice straight from the best resources! We asked members of our Exhibitor Advisory Committee which includes a range of years in Show, sizes of booths and sizes of companies who exhibit across Lakeside, North, and South Halls to provide the lessons they've learned throughout their years exhibiting at the Show.*

#### Pre-Show:

- Have a plan! Know precisely what your message is at the booth and be sure the verbal messaging matches the signage/copy strategy. Have a very clear plan for lead follow-up and be sure it can be implemented within a couple of days of the show. (Jeff Wilson, SmartBrew)
- The earlier you have your booth number, the earlier you should be promoting it. (Jeff Wilson, SmartBrew)
- If you're setting up your own exhibit, do a full set-up and breakdown in your/a warehouse long before the show. Mistakes happen from suppliers, and you don't want to discover them the day before your show. (Jeff Wilson, SmartBrew)
- Have contingencies in place. Flights are missed. People become ill. Family emergencies happen. Have a "what if?" plan ready if possible. (Jeff Wilson, SmartBrew)
- Assemble and bring an "emergency kit" that would include duct tape, tools, sharpies, glue, wrenches, measuring tape, box cutter, black tablecloths, ... (Jeff Wilson, SmartBrew)
- Review your portal/plan weekly and double-check that you have everything covered. (Jeff Wilson, SmartBrew)
- Something will go wrong. Be prepared to fix it on the fly. (Jeff Wilson, SmartBrew)
- There were things I didn't realize I needed to order, including cleaning and trash. You need to order it ahead of time and have it cleaned/emptied daily. (Jillian Vest, Buyers Edge)
- Test any technology or equipment before the event to avoid technical difficulties during the show. (Kim Redmin, Shoes for Crews)
- Attend the preshow exhibitor webinars. (Kim Redmin, Shoes for Crews)
- Meet the exhibitor discount deadlines to minimize your spend. (Desiree Logsdon, BUNN)
- Ship everything you can to the advanced warehouse location. Avoid as much as possible shipping to the show site. (Desiree Logsdon, BUNN)
- Pay close attention to charges on your paperwork. Make sure they align with what you have ordered, and your expectations of the expenses charged. (Desiree Logsdon, BUNN)

#### During Show:

- Share updates: Post real-time updates about your booth and the show. (Kim Redmin, Shoes for Crews)
- Use event hashtags: Increase your online visibility by participating in event-related conversations on social media. (Kim Redmin, Shoes for Crews)
- Attend networking events. (Kim Redmin, Shoes for Crews)
- Offer incentives – swag, discounts, or giveaways. (Kim Redmin, Shoes for Crews)
- Bring a jacket/sweater as it gets cold in the exhibit space. You'll likely be on your feet for an extended period, so comfortable shoes are crucial. Bring water and snacks: Stay hydrated and maintain energy throughout the day. Bring a phone charger. (Kim Redmin, Shoes for Crews)
- Have plenty of business cards, in addition to a lead scanner. (Kim Redmin, Shoes for Crews)

## Exhibitor Tips

- Don't underestimate the time to set up and break down. Though there's a real cost to having too many people staying in hotels for longer than necessary, the positives outweigh the negatives in this. Always. (Jeff Wilson, SmartBrew)
- Have a plan for your samples. Some will see a value in furnishing samples to other exhibitors as it increases perceived popularity of your exhibit. Some will see it as a necessary waste. And some will display signs saying "sorry - no exhibitor samples". If you're sampling - decide what your strategy is in advance. Be sure you bring enough product but pace your sampling around the traffic for each day. (Jeff Wilson, SmartBrew)
- Your best sales representative is your current customer. Consider having them help you at your exhibit. The cost of travel, accommodation and entertainment is nothing compared to the value of prospects having live conversations with a customer who will sing your praises. (Jeff Wilson, SmartBrew)
- Don't allow some members of your team to "shoot out early". For many small and mid-sized businesses, exhibiting comes with a degree of manual labor in setting up and tearing down. If a team member isn't able to do their share - don't have them go to the show. It's a culture killer when you acquiesce to prima donnas. (Jeff Wilson, SmartBrew)
- Allow for breathers/time for staff to walk the floor. This applies to management and booth staff. Offering a daily break for lunch and to experience the show shows your appreciation. Having staff work an exhibit space from open to close is exhausting, and not in the best interest of the exhibitor. It's almost impossible to stand out to an attendee if your staff isn't fresh and engaging. Bonus - your staff will see things that you haven't, and you'll likely be able to incorporate some brilliant things other exhibitors are doing. Encourage the staff to look for these things. (Jeff Wilson, SmartBrew)
- Have a plan for "exiting conversations". Be sure your staff aren't drawn into extended conversations with prospects who are clearly not qualified. There are polite ways of doing this, but having a strategy ahead of time is helpful. (Jeff Wilson, SmartBrew)
- Have a designated "spotter". Have someone scanning the aisles looking at badges/category/position. If there's a clear perfect prospect, you can politely engage in conversation without being "salesy" but you need to have a perfect 5 second pitch that will impel them to allow you to continue. (Jeff Wilson, SmartBrew)
- Be courteous but firm for reps looking to sell you something at your booth. Have a plan. The morning of Day 4 is a perfect time to have them come back and pitch you. Be sure the staff understand the time slot you have designated to speak with reps and stick to it. Have them take a card, and let the rep know the contact to whom they want to speak would be happy to speak with them on Day 4. (Jeff Wilson, SmartBrew)
- Don't sit when there is traffic. Absolutely sends the wrong message. Optics is everything. (Jeff Wilson, SmartBrew)
- For larger spaces - have some in "logo attire" and some in oxford/jacket/skirt, etc. This is a great optics tricks so during the slower periods your exhibit doesn't look full of staff with no interested customers. Mixing up the dress code gives the impression that you have interested prospects in your booth. Same reason you have staff park in front of the restaurant. (Jeff Wilson, SmartBrew)
- Pursue booking next year's hotel rooms during this year's show at the housing service desk. (Desiree Logsdon, BUNN)
- Investigate your neighboring booths for visual impediments to your booth. You might be able to be proactive if there is any issue and avoid any surprises when you arrive for show set-up. (Desiree Logsdon, BUNN)
- It's difficult to get an Uber/Lyft to O'Hare Airport, especially on the last day of the show. Take the train. (Kim Redmin, Shoes for Crews)

### Post-Show Marketing:

- Send follow-up materials within 10 business days from the end of the Show.
  - Thank you notes, and product information to all the leads you received during the Show.
- Assess sales, leads, and prospects against ROI and exhibiting goals and create an evaluation report.
- Send product information to press who attended the Show for inclusion in their post-Show articles.
  - Use the registered press list posted in your [Exhibitor Dashboard](#).
- Purchase targeted messaging with [Attendee Email Marketing](#).
  - Send a follow-up email to anyone who may have missed your booth at the Show with your sales information.
- Review your online profiles to update any pertinent company information through August when The Show To Go is still active.
  - All profile packages – continue to follow up on your [Exhibitor Dashboard](#) leads.
  - For Gold & Silver profile packages – add any new products, press releases, or contact information (online business cards).