

Capture Every Opportunity at Your Next Trade Show

How to Maximize Your Investment



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Interactive Solutions



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In a Sea of Exhibitors, Here's How to **Stand Out**



Trade shows are an indispensable marketing initiative because they offer direct access to thousands of prospective clients. But the opportunity to capitalize on this concentrated source of leads is fleeting and the window for attracting and engaging attendees during the show itself is barely open a crack.

That means you need to offer a compelling reason over-scheduled visitors should devote some of their limited, precious time to exploring your business.

To help you make your shows more memorable, more dynamic and more effective than ever, we've assembled into one handy resource some of our most popular trade show-themed blogs. **In these pages you'll find:**

- **Actionable guidance for planning your next exhibit**
- **Overviews of important industry trends**
- **Clever ways to showcase your business to best effect**

CHAPTER #1

Amp Up Your 2018 Trade Show Game by Focusing on These 4 Things

By [Stephanie Van Ness](#)



Chief marketing officers typically spend a quarter of their annual marketing budgets on live events — think trade shows — to connect with customers and generate new leads. But wringing the most value from limited marketing dollars means keeping pace with industry trends and spending on tactics that deliver the greatest ROI.

So what should you focus on in 2018?

According to Jay Cheney of [Sacks Exhibits](#), a global provider of exhibits, events, and show environments, exhibitors have always looked for effective ways to stand out.

And 2018 will be no different. “Bigger, brighter, bolder remains a method to achieve a leg up on the competition,” Cheney said.

“Clean, crisp messaging using large-scale seamless fabric graphics, for instance, will continue to be popular in 2018,” Cheney said. “But **engaging, interactive presentations on large monitors** are becoming increasingly popular as a way to attract attention. And, they make it easy to customize messaging.”

“Of course, more LED video screens virtually ensure a ratcheting up of the visual noise and chaos on the show floor,” he added.

“That’s why you need to make sure exhibits aren’t just flashy, but make business sense. Games, challenges and competitions, for instance, can be effective ways to

generate interest and build a crowd but these tactics alone don’t guarantee a valuable lead or conversation.”

The takeaway? While creative engagement and the use of in-booth tech, from digital signage to virtual reality games, continue to be important ingredients for a successful exhibit in 2018, these (and all) **tactics only work if you’re using them to carefully communicate your key message and deliver a personal, custom interaction** with your prospect.

According to *Event Marketing 2018: Benchmarks and Trends*, Bizzabo’s survey of more than 400 event marketers, and anecdotal information I collected from discussions with



several exhibit house and corporate event executives, **you should spend money on: technology, personal connection, customization and continuity.**

1. Interactive Technology

Eighty-six percent of marketers believe **technology can have a major positive impact on their show success.** From captivating touchscreen presentations to proximity beacons that integrate with clients' products, interactive technologies draw people in. [ViewPoint](#) is one example of a technology that not only engages but delivers data and insight that can be mined once the show ends.

"ViewPoint's interactive touchscreen experiences showcase products in a dynamic way while also collecting aggregate user analytics about the information booth visitors found most (or least!) interesting," said ViewPoint Director Philip Chila. "This is valuable data that can help exhibitors better understand customer behavior so they can refine their messaging for future shows."

2. Personal Connection

Of course, technology should support not supplant human interaction. **Authentic conversations continue to be pivotal** to a great in-booth experience so make sure your booth is properly staffed, and your reps are trained to effectively convey your brand story. "Whether you are using technology or person-to-person interaction or a

combination, visitors expect you to offer a meaningful message delivered in an honest and compelling way," Cheney said.

3. Booth Customization

Nearly 65% of the marketers surveyed by Bizzabo said they plan to spend more on live events next year. That's a good thing since **cookie-cutter booth exhibits are out.** For 2018, custom exhibits will be more popular than ever as companies search for unique ways to show the flavor of their brand and stand out from competitors in a memorable way. Fortunately, custom does not need to bust the budget. You just need to work with a flexible exhibit partner known for creativity and ingenuity.



4. Brand Continuity

A cohesive brand experience delivered across all branded environments will be even more important in 2018. That means you need to **communicate a consistent message at every touchpoint**, from your retail showroom to your trade show booth. “This is an area where ViewPoint really shines,” Chila said. “With it, you can deliver a consistent brand experience across multiple environments, from your corporate lobby to your employee training center to your retail outlets to the trade show exhibit hall. By meeting your customers where they are, with a cohesive message, you’ll build brand awareness, appreciation and customer loyalty.”

Raise Your Game

Keep visitors interested by offering a compelling, highly targeted user experience built on innovative technology, personal connection, customization and continuity.



Trade show attendees today are savvy and expect meaningful engagement in return for their time and attention. So give it to them.

A hand is shown interacting with a large digital display. The display shows a 3D model of a car seat with white airflow lines flowing over it, set against a blue background. The text 'HYDRA CRUISE!' is visible on the screen. The display is part of a trade show booth.

CHAPTER #2

3 Tech Trends That Raise the Stakes for Your Next Trade Show Booth

By [Ken Ciesielski](#)

Technology is providing exhibitors with new, more interesting ways to make their mark at trade shows, and they're using it to grab attention and engage prospects longer. But, with all the new technologies available, event professionals are being held to a higher standard when it comes to creating a spectacular booth that delivers results.

So what's hot in booth tech? Here are some of the most promising trends to consider if you want to stand out and get noticed:

1. Visually Compelling Signage

Every exhibitor at a show is competing for one thing: attention. Unfortunately, research shows the average person has a pretty short attention span and is easily distracted. Think puppies and bright shiny objects.

Technology has impacted the way our brains look for, process and engage with information. That's why exhibits should be identifiable from a distance and entice attendees to walk in.

In the past decade, many exhibitors have replaced traditional printed signage with dynamic digital signage, such as large-scale video walls and Internet-connected displays on LCD monitors. That's a trend that will only grow as the tech becomes more affordable.

2. Interactive Screens and Walls

Much of what we do these days is about interactivity with touchscreens. They're showing up everywhere, from museums and stadiums to restaurants and retail stores, and offer users the the chance to control choices about what they want to learn, the pace of how they learn and in what order they want information.

At trade shows, **touchscreens and interactive walls provide booth visitors with an immersive experience** by putting them behind the wheel so they can drive their interaction with your digital content. They can experience your "story" in a variety of ways, including manipulating information — a simple tap to play videos, for instance, or a swipe to reveal product information and specs. Interactive

Look for new and intriguing ways to **include tech in your exhibit.**

touch media experiences will soon become a standard feature in all trade show booths as people demand more from their digital experiences.

3. Games and Contests

Another trend is promoting products and services with strategic and fun interactive digital games and contests. Whether you leverage technology like VR, gesturing or touchscreens, **“gamifying” your offering can create higher engagement** and make your booth more memorable.

If you have games or contests designed for use at trade shows, make sure to choose the right technology and take advantage of the natural human inclination to compete. And make sure games or contests are interesting and offer attendees enough incentive to participate and are aligned with your company goals and brand personality.

Tech will continue to influence booth design and visitors’ show experience so look for new and intriguing ways to include it in your exhibit. But remember, at the end of the day all the tech in the world can’t make up for the “human technology” of interacting with someone one-on-one. So be sure your booth staff has the experience and knowledge to not only use the tech to showcase your brand, but also develop the kind of deep, trusting relationships that lead to new business.



CHAPTER #3

3 Rules for Gamifying Your Next Trade Show

By [Philip Chila](#)



You want to stand out. You want people to remember your brand, your sales message, your value. The trick — especially at trade shows, where you're competing for attention with hundreds of other exhibitors — is to **deliver an unforgettable experience.**

That's where games come in. People love games. They play to our competitive nature and help build camaraderie. That's why **gamifying your booth can draw lots of attention** from curious visitors — potential buyers who will be happy to spend time engaging with your brand. *That is, if you do games right.*

I've seen a number of companies that incorporated games into their booths, but did so in a way that probably didn't help them reach their sales goals. The games were flashy and exciting, which is great, but didn't do much to support the sales message.

For games to deliver ROI they have to be used strategically. That means following three rules:

1. Make Your Message Powerful

The whole purpose of exhibiting at a show is to promote your brand and sell your products. If your game is so captivating that everyone remembers *it* but not your message — or even your name — what's the point? Keep your ultimate goal in mind when developing your game.

2. Match Your Game to Your Demographics

Whether your audience is say senior manufacturing executives who may not be super comfortable with video games or millennial marketing pros who grew up with a game controller in one hand, make sure your game's UX design is appropriate for and tailored to your audience.

3. Use the Show as a Hook

Make your game relevant to not only your audience but the show itself. This will help you get more value from your investment, as well as reach a wider audience. We follow these rules when developing games for our clients.





Above is an example of an interactive game we created for [Boston Scientific](#). They were exhibiting at a medical show and wanted a way to engage seasoned physicians and tout the benefits of their latest offering.

The audience was primarily senior-level doctors and the content was very technical so while the UX had to be visually interesting and the game easy to play, it required a

softer touch than if we were creating a game for medical students who grew up in front of a screen.

Engagement drives success at trade shows so use games to get people interacting with your brand. You'll fire up your audience and generate buzz about your products. And that's why you're there in the first place, right?

Use games to **fire up your audience and generate buzz** about your products.



START!

CHAPTER #4

Integrate Games, Product
Kiosks and Tablets for a
Seamless Sales Experience

By [Philip Chila](#)

FINISH!

Tie together interactive experiences on large screens, kiosks and tablets to create a rich sales journey in your trade show booth. Here's a hypothetical scenario, based on a real-world customer engagement, to show how this sales journey might look at your next trade show.

The Journey

Meet gastroenterologist Dr. Jeremy Wexler. He's come to this leading industry trade show to learn more about promising new medical devices, check out the latest in IoT and medtech innovations, and connect with vendors that might one day supply his practice.

Strolling the exhibition hall, something catches his eye. It's a giant, elevated screen with what looks to be some type of medical procedure, as well as a leaderboard. He swings by the booth to discover that **the presentation is actually an interactive game**, which leads players on a journey through the digestive system while posing a series of increasingly difficult questions.

A competitive guy, he wants to test his skills. He launches the game, navigating with precision through the small intestine while collecting points for correct answers to questions — like Pokemon — that randomly pop up on screen. With every question he's becoming more deeply engaged. He's barely noticed the crowd that has gathered around him, laser-focused on beating the top score.

The crowd grows as more passersby stop by to see what's up. Think FOMO (fear of missing out, if you don't speak millennial). As he plays, the lookee-loos get restless. They want to play too!

Dr. Wexler answers the final question and pauses for a moment to see his name atop the giant, blinking leaderboard.

That game was pretty cool, he says to himself, wonder what this company (your company) is all about.

He takes a few steps to his left and begins exploring a large-screen information kiosk, which features interactive, user-driven content about your business. His interest already piqued by the game, Dr. Wexler examines your products in detail considering whether your [latest-and-greatest medical device] would be a fit for his practice.



He's primed to find out. You step in to start a one-on-one conversation. Your whole sales team has the same branded, interactive product-and-services presentation on iPads or tablets so you are free to move to a quieter part of the booth for an in-depth sales discussion.

With the interactive presentation on your tablet you're armed with everything you need — all the product specs, video demos, catalog options and company backstory — to answer any questions he might have about your products or your business. And you can uncover Dr. Wexler's specific pain points — why is he considering a new scope? What challenges is he facing? — so you can deliver a highly customized and relevant pitch.

Dr. Wexler appreciates this personalized approach and feels like you truly understand his business and his concerns. He also likes your product and asks you to come by his office the following week, once he's back from the show, to talk numbers and explore possibilities.

Let's review: Dr. Wexler attended the show with a vague goal of checking out the latest medical devices and left with a

substantive relationship with a new supplier for a product he wasn't actively shopping for.

Putting It All Together

Have you ever passed a storefront window display, had something catch your eye — something you didn't already know you wanted or needed — and walked out of the store a satisfied new customer? I have. Many times. Certainly Dr. Wexler's experience in your booth was not as impulsive — after all, purchasing precision medical equipment is a far more serious undertaking than snagging the latest pair of Adidas lace-ups — but the fundamental premise is the same.

The takeaway: **Offer something eye-catching but educational (and relevant to your business and value proposition)** to pique a show-goer's interest, provide an interactive information kiosk to deliver details on your wares, and follow up with a one-on-one sales conversation that you can tailor to your now-intrigued-and-motivated prospect's specific needs. And do it in an interactive, visually compelling way proven to drive engagement.

Tie together interactive experiences on large screens, kiosks and tablets to create a **rich sales journey**.



CHAPTER #5

Solving Exhibitors' 2 Biggest Challenges

By [Stephanie Van Ness](#)

I took a day off from my marketing job to indulge in one of my passions, all things horses. I made the rounds at Equine Affaire, a huge horse-tastic trade show held at the Eastern States Exposition, checking out the Friesians, Morgans and Gypsy Vanners, and trolling for cool barrel racing swag.

I'll admit that I did — for a fleeting moment — consider laying down my hard-earned cash for a 13-year-old American Quarter Horse named Chisolm, who caught my attention with his gleaming coat and devilish twinkle. But good sense prevailed and I settled for a pair of riding gloves and a funky t-shirt supporting an equine-rescue charity.

Anyhoo. Everywhere I looked were booths jam-packed with merchandise for both horse and rider, from cowboy boots and bridles to blinged-out headstalls and ornate, hand-tooled saddles. Eager shoppers lined up three-deep at the most popular booths. Not sure what those were selling — it was too crowded to get close enough for a peek.

That got me thinking. **Was the crush of traffic hurting, rather than helping, the exhibitors?** Driving booth traffic is typically Priority One for exhibitors. But can there be too much of a good thing?

Vendors Weigh In

To find out I did a little guerrilla research. (Once a marketer, always a marketer I suppose.) I spoke with several sellers, including major players like SmartPak, which offers a huge inventory of tack, horse nutrition and rider apparel, and tiny

start-ups like custom-clothing designer Rodeo Karma. Most of the people I spoke with said they were satisfied with the traffic they were drawing.

But — and you knew there was a but, right? — some said they were concerned they might be **missing out on sales because they couldn't help everyone at once during busy periods.**

If you've ever exhibited at a trade show you know the cyclical nature of traffic — booths are either as empty as middle school on the first day of summer vacation or as hectic as Grand Central Station during rush hour. Nothing in between.



With so much for attendees to take in – there were booths set up in several buildings at the expansive fairgrounds, plus scores of demos and seminars – some of the sellers worried potential buyers might be too impatient to wait at a specific booth until help was available.

The other concern I heard from several vendors was whether they were showing their wares to best effect.

This was of particular concern to the sellers with small booths, like Rodeo Karma. The owner told me she had spent a lot of time before the event picking and choosing which products to bring along, since she was severely limited by booth size. She ultimately pared down to a tiny rack of samples, and augmented with an iPad and an old-school binder of photos to showcase her creations.

Even the sellers with expansive booths said they had to leave much of their inventory at home. If a specific item wasn't available to explore on site, two vendors told me they would direct show visitors to their website – always an iffy proposition due to unreliable trade show wifi.

Different Industries, Similar Concerns

From my completely non-scientific research it's clear that **capturing every lead, and showcasing products effectively in limited space are two of exhibitors' most pressing concerns.**

And not just at this show. Those sentiments are echoed by exhibitors in a variety of industries, from medical devices to consumer goods. How do I know? Full confession: I query vendors at every show I attend. Can't help myself! I've spoken with sellers promoting everything from industrial equipment that costs hundreds of thousands of dollars to specialty food products that cost just a few bucks per unit.

If lead capture or product presentation are of concern to you, I invite you to check out [ViewPoint](#). Our custom, interactive touchscreen experiences allow you to **feature your entire product line in limited space and capture every trade show lead.**

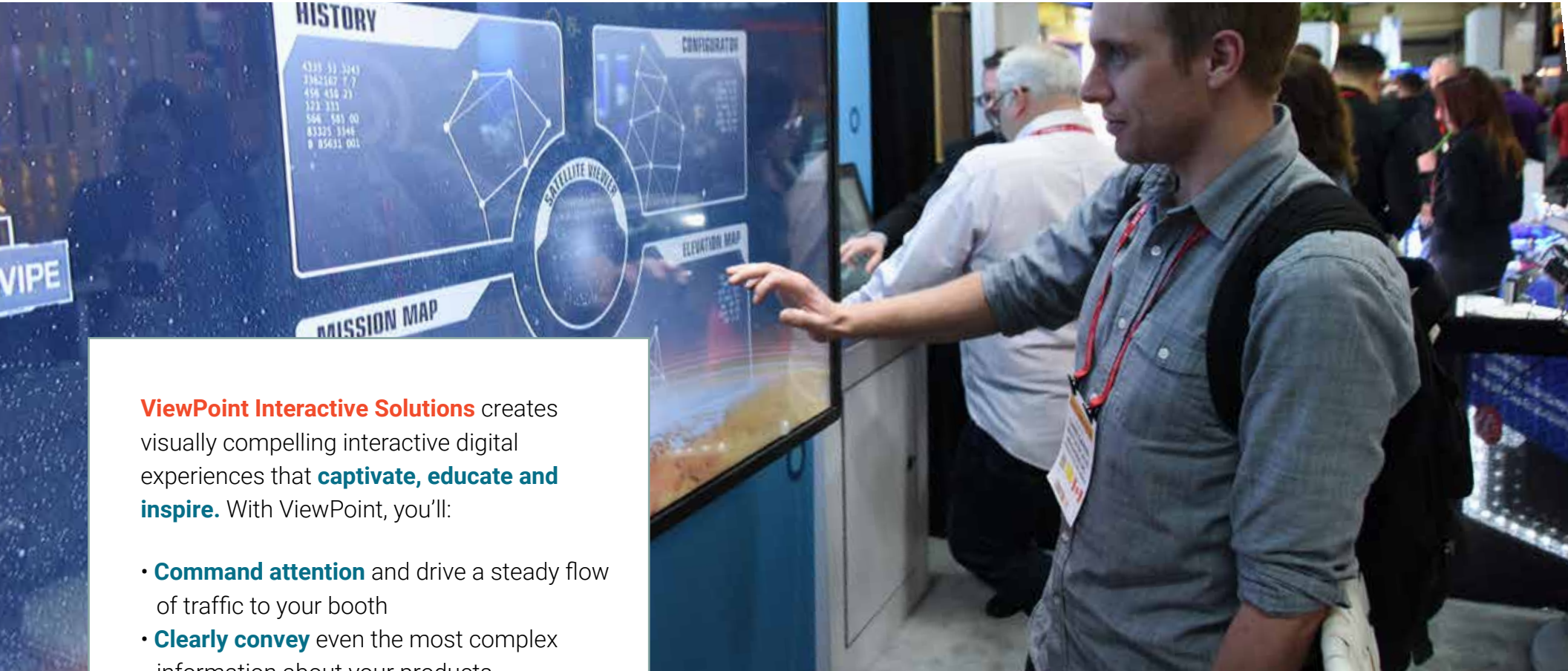




Above is an example of how ViewPoint can showcase an extensive product line. And ViewPoint makes it easy to engage a number of people at once, allowing you to easily connect with multiple groups of prospective customers even in a small booth with few sales reps.

With our interactive tech, potential customers can learn about your products in as much detail as they desire even if you're unavailable, as well as leave contact information for a call-back, ask for additional product information, or complete a pre-sales request.

Feature your entire product line in limited space and **capture every trade show lead.**



ViewPoint Interactive Solutions creates visually compelling interactive digital experiences that **captivate, educate and inspire**. With ViewPoint, you'll:

- **Command attention** and drive a steady flow of traffic to your booth
- **Clearly convey** even the most complex information about your products
- **Stand apart** from your competitors with innovative tech and gamification
- **Generate** more and better leads

Learn more at www.viewpointtouch.com