

Trade Show Booths: Sales Process

The key relationship in the initial phases of a trade show exhibit sales process is between the Client and the Account Executive. This relationship is the most important factor in the success of any exhibit house experience. The Account Executive is the client's advocate, acting as the liaison between the Client and all internal departments including design, engineering, production and/or accounting. The AE's role is to be the eyes, ears, and voice for the Client, accountable for the success of every project from initiation to completion. The effectiveness of this relationship is dependent effective communication and documentation.

Account Executives should also add value to the design process by providing creative ideas and options that serve to further the goals of the project. At Boothster.com, Account Executives are trained in the latest eco friendly materials, to meet increasing demand in the marketplace.

Successful partnerships begin with the flow of strategic and creative information between the Client and the Account Executive. The Account Executive briefs the Designer and arranges a Client/AE/Designer meeting to allow for further articulation of the project goals. It is important (although not always critical) for a direct communication between the Client and the Designer. This allows for a more fluid interpretation of the design goals. However, it is important that the majority, if not all, of the project management (emails, documentation, contracts, estimates, negotiation) be handled by the AE and Account Manager(s). Designers can easily get bogged down trying to manage the details of a project and loose site of their role, which is to create a successful branded environment on time and within budget.

To create and manage an effective trade show, the Account Executive/Manager must know the Client's trade show goals and objectives, their long-term trade show schedule, the major messages and products to be promoted at each show, and the budget for each project. With the right information, the Account Executive can enhance the trade show program with recommendations for designs, graphics, and marketing services that impact the messaging and reduce costs by finding the best ways to manage the Client's exhibit properties between shows.

Beyond the exhibit process, the Account Executive/Manager become industry resources for the Client, providing services that support the Client's efforts in all phases of developing an integrated tradeshow-marketing plan. The exhibit house can supply integrated services and resources to assist the Client in creating and developing tradeshow marketing and promotion strategies. These services can help prepare the booth staff for optimum performance, increase booth traffic, enhance retention for the company message, document the visitors in the booth, and quantify show results to understand the impact of their trade show participation.

Department Processes

Specifically, the sales department uses the following procedures to support the Client:

- The Account Executive/Manager and the Client develop a strategic and creative partnership through detailed communication.

- The Account Executive/Manager act as the liaisons between the Client and all exhibit house departments.
- * The Account Executive/Manager initiates each project for the exhibit house and is accountable for working with the Project Manager to oversee the process from initiation through conclusion so it is on time and within budget.
- The Account Executive/Manager acts as industry consultants, assisting the Client in integrating all phases of their trade show marketing plan and providing the resources and services for turnkey support.

What the Exhibit House Needs from the Client

To create a successful partnership, the Client should supply:

- Focused information! Providing strategic information helps the exhibit house understand the purpose the trade show plays in your company's trade show exhibit marketing plans. Combining this with detailed logistical data allows the exhibit house to make the best recommendations for the time frames, budgets, goals, etc.
- Timely information! Starting early on the trade show schedule helps you get the best service, support and return on your investments.
- Ongoing information! Keeping the lines of communication open with the Account Executive and Manager helps the exhibit house provide long-term support that can mean the difference between a moderate success and an exceptional exhibit program.

Client Benefits

There are many ways the Client benefits from open communication channels including:

- A strategic partnership can provide ongoing improvements to your trade show program **increasing the ROI for your participation.**
- Turnkey services and resources can help you **accomplish goals and enhance your trade show results.**

Step By Step Outline of Sales Process

1. Initial contact is made by AE or Client
2. Project is discussed; AE provides Client with collateral information such as company information, portfolio project images, sample pricing
3. Client Provides AE with a detailed RFP (Request For Proposal)
4. AE responds with questions if any
5. AE provides a proposal based on the requirements outlined in RFP
6. Discussion and questions answered on proposal
7. Client signs official Sales Agreement and makes payment arrangements
8. Project begins!
9. Account Executive provides additional products and/or services on an as needed basis

10. Account Executive provides Client with weekly and/or daily reporting; Client provides timely answers and approvals on progressive designs

John-Paull Davidson has over 12 years experience in brand marketing. He is currently Creative Director for Boothster.com and site developer for several online resources for trade show exhibits, design and graphics:

<http://boothster.com>

<http://tradeshowboothster.com>

<http://sustainabooth.com>

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