



Choosing an Exhibition Space

Regardless of the size of your business, representing it at trade exhibitions is proven to provide a host of benefits including generating new sales leads, expanding your network of industry contacts, conducting free market research with exhibition visitors and gaining the opportunity to find out what your competitors are up to. But there's more to exhibitions than simply turning up, setting up an exhibition stand and expecting visitors to flock to you.

Choosing the best space for an exhibition stand is of the utmost importance in order to maximise the business benefits of attending an exhibition. There are many options to consider when selecting the right exhibition space, so it's a good idea to obtain a floor plan of the exhibition venue at the earliest opportunity.

In Aspect Exhibitions' experience the best locations for exhibition stands at larger and more popular exhibitions are booked the moment they are made available, so it's vital to plan ahead to ensure that your business obtains the most advantageous exhibition space as early as possible

How to choose the best exhibition stand space for your company

There are many factors to take into account when selecting an exhibition space. For example, anecdotal evidence suggests that the majority of exhibition visitors instinctively turn left when they first enter an exhibition venue. If that's true, you might reasonably expect that an exhibition stand positioned somewhere to the left of the entrance is automatically in a good position to attract customers. But of course, there's more to it than that. Besides the size, type and orientation of your business stand, the physical layout of the exhibition venue will have a bearing on your choice of exhibition space.

Different exhibition venues tend to offer similar visitor facilities, but no two layouts will be the same. When choosing the best exhibition stand space for your company you should consider how the following exhibition venue features might affect – positively or negatively – your exhibition stand's performance:

The main entrance or exit

Particularly in the case of large or popular exhibitions, the entrance and exit may be subject to congestion and visitors will want to move away from this as soon as possible. If your exhibition stand is immediately adjacent to the entrance, visitors are liable to walk straight past it (unless it is compellingly eye-catching) whilst they orient and familiarise themselves with the venue.

By the time visitors are heading for the exit they've probably achieved everything they wanted to at the exhibition and are ready to leave. Again, an exhibition space too close to the venue's exit may be overlooked by visitors keen to leave.

Physical obstructions (pillars, partial walls, alcoves etc.)

The keys to creating a successful exhibition stand are visibility, accessibility and visual impact. When selecting an exhibition space it's important to avoid proximity to any physical barriers that may obscure your stand or detract from its effectiveness. A good exhibition stand contractor with an in-house design team such as Aspect Exhibitions would ensure you make the best use of any difficult or awkward space.

Major players within your industry

Inevitably, the biggest exhibitors from your industry are likely to attract the greatest footfall to their exhibition stand. If you can see an obvious route that visitors will take to get to that stand, choosing an exhibition space along that route will ensure that your exhibition stand also benefits from the extra footfall.

Toilets

Not an obvious choice, however, an exhibition venue's loos are another feature that will receive guaranteed footfall, but think carefully before choosing an exhibition space close by. After all, how many visitors are likely to want to hang around outside the toilets? That said, since proximity to the Ladies and Gents is guaranteed to provide exposure (no pun intended) for your exhibition stand that it might not have gained elsewhere in the venue.

Café and rest areas

A better bet than the toilets, an exhibition venue's café or restaurant or any area dedicated to enabling visitors to sit and relax for a while will provide footfall and a captive audience. Provided that your exhibition stand does nothing to annoy or disturb those relaxing or enjoying refreshments (e.g. no over-loud multimedia demonstrations, blaring music or light-shows) selecting an exhibition space near these areas could be a beneficial choice.

Competitors' stands

Choosing an exhibition space in the same area as your nearest competitors can be an opportunity to gain useful business intelligence as to how they are developing their products and services, their price points and so on. It may also enable exhibition visitors to make direct comparisons between your business, or products, and theirs; a great opportunity if you have a less expensive or better quality product.

Exhibition stands of associated industries

Exhibitions offer a business excellent opportunities to form mutually beneficial relationships with companies in complementary industries; for example, if your business involves manufacturing state-of-the-art key-cutting machines you might find it useful to select an exhibition stand next to a company of professional locksmiths.

Main aisles versus perimeter aisles

Is it better to choose an exhibition space on one of the venue's main thoroughfares or to select a space around the perimeter? Whilst the main aisles may attract higher footfall, competition between exhibitors here is likely to be fierce and therefore it is essential to ensure that your exhibition stand is the most attractive, compelling and visually-engaging in order for your business to maximise the benefit of a main-aisle exhibition space. Selecting an exhibition space slightly away from the main thoroughfares is likely to cost less, but it is vital that you offer visitors an irresistible reason (a free giveaway, product demonstration, competition or other promotion) to seek out your exhibition stand.

Choosing the best space for an exhibition stand: in conclusion

Whilst the individual design and visual impact of your exhibition stand, coupled with the attractiveness and value of the goods and services you offer will play the major role in your company's successful performance at an exhibition, choosing the right exhibition space from the outset is a key contributor to achieving your exhibition goals.

There are no hard and fast rules as to what constitutes the best exhibition space: what works for one business may not for the next, but there are certain advantages to choosing some exhibition spaces over others. Obtaining the floor plan of an exhibition venue early and working out the likely flow of visitors, the places they are most likely to gather and recognising any spaces that are best avoided will help you choose the right exhibition space for your business. Once that's done, it's down to you to exploit that space to its maximum potential.

What do you think?

Have you found success with a particular exhibition space? Share your exhibition tips and experiences with Aspect Exhibitions by emailing us.

See more at: <http://www.aspectexhibitions.co.uk>

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