

BEST PRACTICES FOR VIRTUAL EXHIBITS

Getting Started

Setting Goals Up Front

Before you start building out your virtual booth, define what you are trying to achieve with your exhibit. Is the goal to launch a new product or service? Lead generation? Thought leadership? Pull in all stakeholders to set a clear direction. The content of your booth should be based directly on the goals you defined.

Do Your Homework

If you are new to virtual events, do your research by attending other industry conferences. Many digital events are free to attend or charge a minimal registration fee. Exploring other companies' virtual exhibits is a great way to gather ideas for your own.

Get the Word Out

The more people who attend, the more eyes on your booth. Spread the word by promoting the event through your channels, whether that is your company website, blog, newsletter, direct email or social media. Make sure to use the official hashtags! Use the opportunity to highlight what you will be presenting at the conference, such as previews of educational sessions or demos, exciting raffles or giveaways, or industry news announcements.

Invite Customers and Partners

Word of mouth is still the most impactful way to drive event participation. Reach out to your customers, prospects and business partners and invite them to join you at the event. Your sponsorship includes free tickets that you are welcome to share with them. Find your sponsor code and registration instructions on the registration page.

Making the Most of Your Virtual Booth

Content is King

Content encompasses any materials you make available at your booth, such as videos, images, documents, external links, etc. Make sure the content you are presenting aligns directly with the objectives you have set for this event.

- ✓ Think about it from the attendees' perspective. What do they want to learn? How can your products or services provide value to them?
- ✓ Work closely with your digital marketing and product teams. What materials do they see performing best? Are there any existing resources you can use in your booth without having to reinvent the wheel?
- ✓ Interactive content such as hands-on demo labs, competitions or games is a great way to keep attendees engaged. If the virtual booth itself cannot support a specific format, you can link out to an external medium.
- ✓ Use concise labels in your booth. For example, instead of using the broad term "Documents", label a button or tab "[Product XYZ] Case Studies" to let attendees know what to expect when they click on it.

Get Help From the Pros

Creating appealing digital marketing assets can be challenging, especially when you are starting from scratch. Our trusted vendors are ready to help with your video production and graphic design needs if needed. Reach out to your sponsorship contract for a vendor list.

First Impressions Matter

Creating a visually appealing booth is crucial to make sure visitors stick around to explore your content. Choose bright, high-contrast colors to grab attention and welcome attendees with a thought-provoking graphic or catchy video on the front screen. To retain brand awareness, include your company logo and branding in all assets that you make available at the booth. You can customize the colors of the booth background and font to match your company branding. Please adhere to the size guidelines for logos, images, and videos to make sure they fit seamlessly into the designated display areas.

Traffic Drivers

Think “outside the booth”! Here are a few ideas to help lead attendees your way:

- ✓ If your company presents a conference session, have your speakers direct attendees to your booth or your chat channel after the session for more information.
- ✓ Schedule “Meet the Expert” sessions at your booth during which attendees can chat 1:1 with a speaker or subject expert.
- ✓ Offer virtual swag and giveaways tailored to your target audience. Free trials, special event promotions or discounts that are quick and easy to redeem online are generally well-received.
- ✓ If you are offering competitions or raffles, switch them out daily or invite attendees to come back again the next day for another chance to win.
- ✓ Optimize your booth content for search to ensure your booth shows up in the search results if attendees look up keywords in the virtual event platform.
- ✓ Keep your own social media promotions going during the event. Share a daily recap or a preview of what awaits the next day.

Bring Your A-Team

Build a well-rounded roster of booth staff, including technical, product, and sales experts, who can immediately answer any attendee questions. If you have staff across different geographical regions, assign shifts based on their time zones. A training session for your booth staff is highly recommended to walk them through the booth layout, staffing portal, lead reporting portal, and booth builder (if applicable).

Setting the Right Tone

The chat features in your booth and the other networking chat areas are great tools to engage with attendees. Remember to be patient, and give visitors the freedom to explore and browse on their own before reaching out to them. Invite guests to share their pain points or comments on how they would like to see the open-source community grow and respond to challenges. End the conversation with a call-to-action such as sharing a link or document with further information.

Ready. Set. Go!

Preview the booth from the visitor’s perspective in the booth builder before the event goes live. Test all links, media and tabs in your booth in different browsers to make sure the attendee experience is consistent.

Wrapping Up

Keep the Conversation Going

Extend the life of your virtual content by publishing or repurposing it after the event. By sharing your videos, documents and experiences through post-conference write-ups, blog posts, YouTube or other social media, they become available to an even wider audience.

No Leads Left Behind

The event platform and booths will stay accessible for a period of time following the event, so you can still collect new leads after the event has ended. The amount of time the event remains open varies by event but consider pulling an updated copy of your lead report before it closes. We recommend pulling a report when you prepare to send out any email marketing, to make sure they get included in your targeted post-event marketing campaigns.