

Distribution of Trade Show Literature

The type and style of literature you give away at shows can really impact your budget. Careful consideration needs to be given to your approach.

According to the Center for Exhibit Industry Research (CEIR), 72 percent of brochures distributed at trade shows are never looked at. At the same time, brochures represent one of the biggest expenses in your trade show budget. With an average brochure costing anywhere from \$2.00 to \$5.00 your staff can quickly give away thousands of dollars in material that is read by less than 30 percent of the people who receive it!

If this percentage of discarded material seems high, I encourage you to look at the garbage cans near the exit of any exhibit hall when you're leaving. These garbage cans may account for half of the brochures that are thrown out, the other half gets thrown out when people get back to their hotel room and start packing their luggage. It is not a hard decision for most people to make when over-stuffing a suitcase to take home either their clothes and souvenirs **or** brochures from a show.

With these thoughts in mind you should:

- Only distribute brochures to qualified leads.
- Place all of your materials on a CD. It is convenient for your clients and very cost effective.
- Not leave your expensive brochures out to be picked up by all visitors.
- Mark your best brochures or product guides as "Exhibit Copy". If someone still requests it, you can retrieve a copy from storage.
- Consider making less expensive brochures. Less expensive brochures are usually more suitable for trade show distribution. They are typically a one-page handout sheet that shows an overview of your product line, and directs readers to your web site for more information.
- Consider mailing brochures to your prospects after the show. A more effective way of the distributing brochures may be to offer your potential client the convenience of mailing the brochure to them after the show. Most clients will gladly provide their contact information knowing that they are going to get something from your company and will not have to carry the materials home with them.

About the Author

Brian Keobke, CME, is Senior Exhibit Marketing Specialist for The Portables, Canada's largest exhibit and graphics company. Brian is a Certified Manager of Exhibits (CME) and a 17 year veteran of the tradeshow industry. Brian consults, develops and trains companies and their staff in the art of effective tradeshow marketing and exhibit design. Brian's articles have appeared in newspapers and magazines across the country. To receive additional articles or to book an in-person seminar, please call 1.800.663.1737 or email displays@theportables.com. Articles also appear online at www.theportables.com.