

How to write an exhibition stand brief.

If you are reading this it is likely that you have been given the task of writing a brief for a new exhibition stand. These pages will help guide you through the process. It's not the definitive list of what you will need, but it's certainly an excellent starting point and will serve as food for thought.

We have broken this up into a number of stages to make it more manageable.

Introduction

The exhibition stand design company will need to know a bit about your company in order to get a feel for how they should design your exhibition stand. A good starting point would be to list the following:

- ♦ A couple of paragraphs about your company
- ♦ The products you sell or services you provide
- ♦ The size of the company. i.e. the number of employees, a rough turnover figure (if you want to provide it - there is a great deal of difference between how a £100,000 company and a £100,000,000 company should look!)
- ♦ Are you an international company? if so, which countries?
- ♦ How long have you been established?
- ♦ Describe the company using five or ten words (i.e. young, vibrant, technology based etc) ?
- ♦ What are you trying to achieve at this exhibition, brand awareness, direct sales, etc?
- ♦ What are you exhibiting, products large or small, services etc?
- ♦ How will you operate the exhibition stand, by demos, visual with literature or a/v etc?
- ♦ How many of your staff will be working on the exhibition stand at any one time?
- ♦ Will you provide refreshments?
- ♦ Will you have 'give aways'?

In order to meet your requirements any design agency would need to know where any previous exhibition stand design has failed. So also detail any thing else that could be relevant.

The new exhibition stand

You must now examine what you need from the new exhibition stand. So a good starting point would be to consider the following:

- ♦ Outline the aims of the exhibition stand (to increase traffic, increase product awareness, generate more sales, brand awareness, a new product or service)

- ◆ Who is the target audience? What are their demographics (i.e. Children, Adults, Social Class, Income levels, location etc)
- ◆ Is the new stand part of a re-brand, a new product launch or part of an ongoing strategy ?
- ◆ Is there other branding/advertising taking place that the new stand should link in with?
- ◆ What are the unique selling points for your company, your products or your services?
- ◆ What industry are you aiming the stand at?
- ◆ Is the market saturated with competition?
- ◆ List a few competitors web sites
- ◆ Do you wish to purchase the stand outright or hire it for each show?
Generally an exhibition stand purchased out right will incur a storage charge unless used frequently. It will also be subject to charges for refurbishment and amendments
- ◆ Decide upon a budget which should include everything. Click [here](#) for a breakdown of what may need to be included.
- ◆

The look of the exhibition stand

The exhibition stand should be an extension of any media, advertising or branding that you have. It is always helpful to be provided with a brochure, some marketing literature or the annual report to help get a feel for the company. So include them with the brief.

Design is subjective, in order to get an idea of the kind of exhibition stand that you like it is often worthwhile noting details of three or four exhibition stands that you have seen and like. Not necessarily competitors or exhibition stands related to your industry - just give a few examples that you like: the colour schemes, the graphics, audio visual items or the structural elements.

Do you have access to any corporate images? Does your company have an image library? In larger companies you may find that another cost centre has already spent hundreds or thousands of pounds on photography and used it once. It would make sense to use these images if possible. If your company doesn't have an image library it might benefit from one and we can build it for you - see more [here](#)

Brochures etc - An area that is often overlooked for is copy writing. Have you got the graphics and copy text ready to go for the exhibition in question? Do you have the resources or skills to create and supply the text - If the answer to these questions is no, you will need a copywriter - we can provide this service if necessary - find out more [here](#)

Design & Technical requirements

- ◆ What site have you selected for your exhibition stand, is it island, open on three (two or one) sides?

- ◆ Have you checked the proposed flow of visitors' traffic?
- ◆ What is the best orientation of the stand? Some times it might be better to be facing a large visitor attraction rather than the entrance.
- ◆ Do you wish your stand to be open and inviting or does it have to promote a more targeted approach with a private meeting room etc?
- ◆ Do you require a kitchen area?
- ◆ What services do you require (power, water and waste, telephone, internet etc) ? Sometimes it works out cheaper to use the venue LAN rather than a normal analogue line, it's certainly more effective
- ◆ Will you have a platform floor? (All such floors require a ramp for disabled access)
- ◆ Do you wish to reuse the exhibition stand or elements of it?
- ◆ How many graphics and what form would they take? (Posters, light boxes etc)
- ◆ How much storage space do you require
- ◆ Do you require display cabinets?
- ◆ Do you require pc's, plasmas etc
- ◆ Do you require a reception desk(s)?
- ◆ How many literature racks, carrier bag hooks etc?
- ◆ Does your product require specialist lifting or handling etc? If it is very large it may need to be sited prior to the exhibition stand build
- ◆ What is the maximum height allowed and do you wish to utilise this?
- ◆ Is it possible to 'hang' things from the ceiling (banners, stand elements etc)
- ◆ Do you understand the Health & Safety requirements – if not we can help

Check List

1. Are you certain the exhibition is the correct one, if so book early to get the best site available
2. Book hotels early to obtain the best rates and locations etc
3. Appoint an exhibition stand design and project management company early to allow plenty of time for completion of visuals etc etc
4. Pass the exhibitors manual to the appointed company to ensure that deadlines for ordering services etc for the exhibition stand are not missed as this will result in extra cost
5. Decide graphic content early for production allowing plenty of time for the graphics to be sent with the exhibition stand if it has to be freighted
6. Appoint somebody within the company to liaise with the design and project management company. This will hopefully help to stop design by committee which is generally a disaster.
7. How will you obtain details of visitors – bar code readers, collecting business cards etc
8. How do you propose to judge the success of exhibiting at this event?

Event promotion

You are proposing spending money on a new exhibition stand now it is important to consider how you will promote it.

An exhibition stand should really be supported by a strategy of promotion and advertising, perhaps consider the following.

- ✦ Postal mail shots
- ✦ Brochures
- ✦ PR exercise
- ✦ Sponsorship
- ✦ Complimentary gifts.
- ✦ Web site promotion

This area of marketing is often not considered, many rely on the exhibition organisers to promote the event in its own right. This does not always help your company as you are probably one of many providing the same or similar products/ services at the show. If you do not tell your clients and potential clients you are exhibiting there is a very good chance that your competitors will be inviting them to their own exhibition stand!

Conclusion

You should finish your exhibition stand design brief with a short conclusion, outlining what you would like to receive back from the design and project management contractor/agency and by what date.

At CNM we provide a full design proposal, visualising the stand using your logos etc, the layout, the costs (initial and on-going), the timescale's involved and any assumptions and conditions that we have made.

Good luck with your exhibition stand design brief and don't forget to include us on your list of companies to pitch for the work.....