THE 2015 GUIDE TO
SUCCESSFUL TRADE SHOW DISPLAYS
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Successful trade show displays create a visual and interactive experience. In 2015, it'll be simpler to acquire back-lit, digital, multimedia displays; touchscreens; large graphics and monitors; and also customizable exhibit areas of different types. While it may be necessary to spend just a little more, the payoff is often worth it! Trade show trends show that colorful, interactive displays attract visitors. Additionally, the trends reflect value, portability, and the ability to communicate your identity to prospects and stand out on the busy trade show floor.

A trade show is an opportunity to stand out among your competitors. To do so today, you must create a visual experience to draw traffic, foster lead capture, and sales conversions. This free guide from NWCI Displays will cover the advantages in upgrading your trade show display with the latest technologies, design trends, and adaptability.

### DIGITAL DISPLAYS/MULTIMEDIA TO INCREASE DOMINANCE IN 2015

Digital technology is here to stay. Technology has made business more competitive and demand has increased with the trend of experiential exhibiting. Digital displays and multimedia are encouraging visitor engagement and greatly enhanced product demonstrations.

Think about when you walk into a large conference hall for a trade show. You are immediately hit with sounds, lights, shapes, signage, and more, vying for your attention. Today's trade shows are a digital multi-sensory experience for vendors on site as well as for show attendees. Digital visual elements also help invite visitors into your trade show exhibit, and then immerse them in the experience. Look at some of the ways that digital signage is exhibited:

- Large video screens
- Interactive touchscreens
- Audio/visual presentations
- Product demonstrations
- Exhibitor video walls

Unlike traditional static signs, digital signage allows you to program virtually any type of visual content onto a screen. You can use your integrated tools to set up simple static images and messages to videos, slide shows, animations, and more. Take your existing materials and incorporate some or all of these into digital formats to be displayed on the LED screens at your booth. This gives customers a very different experience at your trade show display. This changing array of messages will grab the attention of trade show attendees passing by your display.

High-quality pop-up displays, even those supporting 3-D graphics, are becoming increasingly accessible. More affordable options with size selections are giving businesses greater flexibility. Larger steel truss displays enable companies to have an even bigger presence at trade shows. More companies are using multimedia display systems with touchscreen media kiosks, flat-screen monitors, and custom modular displays. Users can also create interactive systems with freestanding iPad stands and portable iPad counters. Animated graphics, attractive lighting, and interactivity also add substantial value. These technologies serve to both inform and motivate attendees about your company, product, and brand.

If you're eager to drive more traffic into your trade show display, start with a large screen...
experience for your visitors, showing a video overview of your business. Smaller interactive flat screens can be placed inside the booth. Consider a mix of video, lighting, and music to draw people in. The perfect mix will:

- Attract more customers and prospects to your exhibit.
- Increase the number of leads generated.
- Maximize visibility across the trade show floor.
- Catch the interest of other show attendees, expanding your potential reach.

TODAY’S HOTTEST DISPLAY TRENDS

Now considered essential for trade show success, back-lit displays and multimedia displays are the hottest trends in the segment. Large commercial signage monitors are not uncommon among exhibitors. They attract visitors interested in the content and who are drawn to the design. These, however, are not the only elements of a successful trade show display.

Back-lit displays are often similar to standard models. Light strips behind the image are the only difference. A glowing backdrop is created, making the exhibit stand out at any trade show event. Such displays are unique and attention-grabbing. They draw little power so are also energy-efficient. Transporting the display is generally easy as is assembling the structure. Trade show supply companies such as NWCI Displays also offer color printing services, so back-lit displays are a cost-effective solution.

Two basic types are available:

- Hop Up systems: Curved, backlit displays with full color graphics. They come complete with an LED lighting kit and display spanning 10 x 8 feet.
- Vector Frame light box: A versatile display with multiple size options. A back-lighting system can be added and the display can be printed on one or both sides.

TRADE SHOW DISPLAY UPGRADES CAN HELP

Outfitting a trade show display requires a lot of thought to achieve its goal to engage, inform, and entertain attendees. Your product and your business may be on the line. A basic interactive kiosk may be enough to engage a few visitors. Just the right level of interactivity and lighting can help turn a random guest into a purchasing customer.

You also don’t have to guess the right upgrade. Experts in the trade show industry know what it takes to succeed at an event. Cost-effective designs and configurations can be found when the client business and a trade show display company work together. You can customize a sharper table top panel display or a floor-standing exhibit. You can showcase rebranded graphics or create a new layout with electronics stands, tables, and counters.

Let’s look at five key elements for a great trade show display. The trends for the coming year
and tips on addressing price vs. value are included so your business can conquer the trade show floor.

**FIVE KEY ELEMENTS FOR A GREAT TRADE SHOW DISPLAY**

**DISPLAY STRUCTURE & LIGHTING**

The size, structure, and lighting of your display are the first elements to plan. Small businesses often start small with a 10 x 10 ft. booth, but quickly realize its limitations. A 10 x 20 ft. display booth is better to speak to prospects and visitors. As a company grows, so too usually does its conference hall presence.

The type of display you choose can make or break the trade show experience.

- **Standard Linear:** Up to eight feet high and 10 ft. deep, this display is normally bordered by one or two other displays. It is also suited for corner locations. Trade show regulations dictate the front be no more than four feet high. If your booth shares a back wall with another, hanging signs are prohibited.

- **Perimeter Wall:** Same depth and up to 12 feet high in back (front height max is also four feet), it accommodates your display on show floor’s perimeter walls. You can hang signs or support them from underneath, so long as the top extends less than 12 feet. If it’s a double-sided sign, it must be at least 10 feet from the next exhibit.

- **Peninsula:** One side on the back wall and bordered on three sides by aisles. The exhibit can be 20 x 20 feet or larger. Large ones can accommodate hanging signs. Lighting and trusses must be within the 20 foot limit while signs 20 feet or less are permitted.

- **Island:** Also larger than 20 x 20 feet, islands can be up to 30 feet high and are surrounded by aisles on all sides. Signs can be up to 30 feet while lighting and effects are allowed as long as directed toward the interior.

Additional display types/specifications are on the NWCI blog.

Common lighting options include spot lights, strobe, accent, and energy efficient LED lights. Whatever you choose, it should set the mood and/or be consistent with your branding. Halogen and specialized trade show lights are also available. If you highlight your exhibit with lasers or lighting effects, check with show regulations and respect other exhibitors.

**DISPLAY GRAPHICS AND IMAGES**

Hanging signs and large graphics are still used for trade show displays. As mentioned above, larger signs are generally permitted for peninsula and island style exhibits. It’s important to be visible. You also want your display to stand out. Selecting a color scheme is critical, while the message should be concise and strong. Working with a graphic designer experienced with trade shows can maximize your success.

Graphics and images should also be coordinated with specific types of surfaces. The cohesiveness of the display depends on a match between graphic design and the panels, tension fabric displays, and other portable or shipped structures they’re printed on. Again, experts can help with color schemes, marketing messages, and how to unpack and pack materials for multiple shows.

Always invest in higher quality images, as attendees will see them up close. With proper
planning, you can check if monitors, speakers, or counters will block a graphic or image. Make sure every detail of your signage is visible. The design can then be adjusted accordingly. Most importantly, the colors, images, and graphics you choose represent your brand. A unique design and color scheme help your exhibit stand out on a busy trade show floor.

DISPLAY LOGO AND BRANDING

Not everything has to be digital, but you can easily incorporate logos and other branding assets into digital signage and screens. At a convention, brand awareness is essential. A trade show is just about the most important advertising opportunity you’ll find. According to the Center for Exhibition Industry Research, visitors may decide in as little as three seconds to stop at a booth.

Here are a few tips to maximize the impact of your logo/branding.

- Place logos and branding at eye level.
- Place the same information in different locations.
- Communicate your business’ message as a tagline or slogan near the logo.
- Your business name and logo should be front and center.
- Print your website link near the most prominent branding.

Another word of wisdom is to match your branding images with your marketing materials. Creativity is extremely useful. Consistent logo/brand colors, images, and statements however go a long way in avoiding mixed messages, which can confuse prospects. Careful attention to detail helps strengthen not only your message, but the company’s and product’s identity.

TECHNOLOGY-MULTIMEDIA

As we noted above, technology and multimedia are now standard in trade show displays. Large digital screens are useful, but digital signage is not limited to these types. You can also leverage visitor’s smartphones, desktop computers, and RSS feeds. Specialized software is available just for this reason.

Companies often create informative, visual presentations and put them on large video walls. Content created just for the show can leave a lasting impression. A video wall is great if it fits in the exhibit. Flat screen televisions also serve well as audio/visual systems. There are also specialized display mounts and mobile TV stands such as the ones available from NWCI Displays.

Video enables companies to show loops of movies, promotional ads, equipment demos, and even software demonstrations. Today’s video technology is also great for demonstrating anything from construction equipment to video games.

Another technology is lead retrieval systems. Automated devices allow your team to scan attendee badges. Rather than distributing business cards, you can gather product/service
interest and more through encoded data. The details can be entered into a database and used for marketing campaigns later on. Such devices can be purchase or rented.

**INTERACTIVE MATERIALS (PROMOTIONAL COLLATERAL)**

Interactivity is quickly becoming a must. Here are a few examples to complement your exhibit.

- Touchscreens with custom interfaces are appearing as interactive kiosks. You can also set up touch televisions or integrate phones and tablets with your exhibit. Suitable for product demonstrations, these also let your audience interact with your brand.

- Games engage visitors as well. When tied in with your business, a game can draw attention and give players a chance to win prizes for trivia or scavenger hunts, for example. Even the simplest of digital exercises can garner attention.

- Social media can let visitors “like” your brand, join your page, or share information with others. Games can be integrated with social platforms such as Facebook or Twitter.

Promotional collateral can also include webcasting. This lets you stream video productions across the web or use your own website and YouTube channels. It broadens your reach because customers and prospects can see executive interviews, product demos, and trade show activities remotely. Webcasting provides an interactive platform for those who cannot attend the show.

**TRENDS FOR 2015**

**DISPLAYS AND MONITORS**

*Back-lit displays* enable you to create a glowing backdrop at any event. They have made it easier to stand out, while being versatile enough to display your message if without an electrical connection. Models such as NWCI's Hop Up backlit display come with graphics, a shipping case, liner, and an LED lighting kit. These provide 30 and 40 foot wide solutions. The Vector Frame light box display system is offered in single- or double-sided units in many sizes. Both can also be used without backlighting.

Multimedia displays are another trend for 2015. These can help make your exhibit more impressive and draw more traffic. Touchscreen technology enables visitors to interact with your company and brand. An interactive kiosk with touch panels is another possibility. The Brandstand Wave from NWCI provides a complete monitor and touchscreen solution, while the Brandstand Blade kiosk features a full HD monitor and even easier portability.

Entire media systems are also available, letting you incorporate multiple monitors and electronic systems. A trade show display can therefore be turned into a complete media center. Suited for auto shows and museums, the products can be integrated into any exhibit.

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and promise to shape how companies expand their floor presence in 2015.

Larger monitors are becoming more accessible on the business market. Like multimedia displays, they are ideal for showing product usage and promotions. Endless video creations are possible to demonstrate your company’s capabilities or a new software product. Today’s large HD monitors support vibrant graphics and video. If you set up a multimedia system, endless loops of video and graphics can lure attendees to your exhibit.

For technology companies, the trends in electronics are yielding new opportunities to showcase your business and draw attention. The Standroid from NWCI incorporates a strong mount and header. It’s in fact a complete display system giving any exhibitor an all-inclusive solution. Tables and graphics will clearly not be enough for 2015. To stand out, trade show exhibits will need a more digital, interactive approach.

PRICE – VALUE

There are also a few trends regarding price – value. Budgeting undoubtedly saves costs, but spending as little as possible doesn’t necessarily maximize the value of the experience you provide. Here are tips reflecting some of the latest trends and best practices for trade show goals.

1. Spend More: That’s generally not common financial advice. A little extra spending, however, might get you the attention-grabbing technology to convert more customers. High tech monitors might cost a couple thousand dollars. They often make up for the cost with functionality, easy portability, and minimal setup time. Large displays visible from far away have more audience-drawing potential. Construction options such as truss systems can cost $10,000, $20,000, or more with options such as lighting, graphics, and customization. Sometimes the impression and experience you create matters more in the long run.

2. Portability: More so than ever before, trade show equipment providers have added portability to the equation. Configurable, modular frames can be assembled and disassembled, stored, and used for the next event. The components can be packed into shipping cases. This enables your staff to easily transport items to the exhibit floor and put everything in storage later. At the very least, your business can present itself at multiple trade shows and interact with more customers, partners, and prospects.

3. Reflect Your Company Mission/Products: While there are common elements, the options available allow you to create a unique trade show exhibit. Acquiring a signature look is more possible than ever before. Every aspect of exhibit design, signage, graphics, video, and the color scheme you choose visually represent your company/brand. Images and logos reflect your identity, brand, and mission, maximizing the value of your exhibit. Company and product branding is reflected in the content of hanging signs – aside from color, these can have two- or three-dimensional shapes. There are endless possibilities. In the modern world of digital media, making an instant impression on prospects is a priority.
CONCLUSION

Trade show attendance is anticipated to continue to grow in 2015, according to the Center for Exhibition Research. Technology and related industry sectors are already seeing this increase in exhibiting, show attendance, and exhibit space used. Most show industry observers anticipate that the current pace of multimedia growth can only expand.

For exhibitors, the pressure is higher than ever to give visitors the most sensory experience possible. Trade shows cost money to companies to exhibit, and attendees are busy. Your window of opportunity to reach these business decisions makers is short. Follow the tips within this guide to start creating your company’s trade show display experience. If you need more customized attention, let us help! Contact the pros at NWCI Displays - http://www.nwcidisplays.com/