

LegalTech New York in January is the largest legal trade show of its kind, and is only a month away. Most of the companies that will be exhibiting have been making preparations for months. They have been updating the design of their booths, designing new collateral to be printed, scheduling ads for the January issue of Law Technology News and designing the multi-media presentations that will be displayed in their new booths. For all the effort they will put into their presence at a show like LegalTech New York, how much time and effort will they spend getting the right people to their booth? Most companies leave this important step completely to the show management. Although it is the responsibility of the show management to market the show to potential attendees, conducting your own program to draw attendees to your booth will dramatically increase your return. In fact, this is the perfect time to invite hot prospects, as well as important clients, to come visit you at your booth. There are a few different ways you can do this - pre-show mailers, call campaigns and email invitations.



Before the Show

Pre-show mailers to the pre-show attendee list available from show management are an excellent way to announce your presence at an industry trade show. While you are already having postcards printed, why not go the extra mile and do a mailing to your own list of prospects and clients. Shows like LegalTech also offer free show brochures to their exhibitors that you can include in your mailings. If your budget is tight, an alternative to the cost of a pre-show mailer is a call campaign. Have your sales staff divide up the list of targeted prospects and clients and call them and invite them to the show. This definitely adds the personal touch while reducing your pre-show costs.

Another alternative program that can be executed for free is to send email invitations. Shows like LegalTech are beginning to offer free PDF passes to their exhibitors to allow them to invite special clients and hot prospects. A personalized email invitation, with a free pass to the show attached, is an excellent method as it is easy for them and can be forwarded to other people at their firm.

At the Show

Now that your clients are at the show, take advantage. Have something special to give to your clients when they visit your booth. It's OK to ask for something in return. Now is a great time to collect some information and have them fill out a client satisfaction survey in exchange for their gift. Also, while all your company's executives are in town for the show, host a hospitality suite for your clients. Hospitality suites can be an excellent way to show your clients you appreciate them. It's also a great time to mix your favorite clients with hot prospects. Let your clients talk about how great your product or service is and it will go a long way to impress your prospects. One thing to remember, trade shows are busy and there are a lot of extra activities taking place at all times. Make sure before you spend a lot of money on a reception that you give your clients plenty of notice and make sure they are planning on attending.

And After...

Now that you have made it through the show and have compiled a new list of prospects, the follow-up process begins. It's surprising how many companies go through all the effort of exhibiting at a show and then fall short when it comes to the follow-up process. When you employ a program to invite your clients and prospects personally, it is just as important that you follow-up with them. Always remember to send an email or make a phone call to anyone that attended the show at your invitation to thank him or her. Remember, the ultimate success of your exhibit plan depends on the contact you have with the right people. By creating and utilizing a special program for your clients/hot prospects, not only will you drive the exact type of traffic you want to your booth, but also you let them know that they are important to you.

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