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In this  
issue:

Because you  
asked

Motivate the  
doers

Trade Show  
Magic

Guru Report

Test you trade  
show TQ

Trade Shows  
and Beyond

# Successful Exhibiting

Volume 1 Issue 2

## Because you asked

**Q:** It seems every time I pick up a newspaper or trade journal I read about another show that's in trouble. Are trade shows a dying breed?

**A:** The problem with the media is that success stories don't sell papers. Yes, many of the big name shows are in trouble. Yes, there seems to be some uncertainty about the future of large exhibits (war, SARS, terrorism, the economy etc.) but nothing here is new news. Some challenges are universal but most are industry specific. When industries such as High Tec or Financial undergo major changes their trade shows are affected. When industries such as construction, or pharmaceutical are doing well their trade show to do the same.

The bottom line, in my opinion is that exhibiting is here to stay. After a thousand years being the number one marketing tool there are bound to be a few bumps along the road. Everything is cyclical. If they are down today they will be back tomorrow. The smart exhibitor is the one who understands the long term implication in their marketing plans and doesn't panic.

If you have questions or comments send them to [barry@siskindtraining.com](mailto:barry@siskindtraining.com).

### Test your Trade Show TQ (Trivia quotient)

1. The attraction efficiency of your booth increases when you also get involved with show related sponsorships by how much?
    - a. 53%
    - b. 104%
    - c. Nothing at all
  2. Converting visitors to qualified leads increases when your staff is properly trained by how much?
    - a. 15%
    - b. 68%
    - c. 93%
  3. The percentage of decision makers who found trade shows "Extremely useful" as a source of purchasing information when compared to other marketing tells was...
    - a. 47%
    - b. 63%
    - c. 91%
  4. The number one reason people attend is:
    - a. Networking
    - b. See new technology and products
    - c. Attend seminars
  5. The percentage of a typical trade show audience with buying influence is:
    - a. 12%
    - b. 37%
    - c. 83%
- The percentage of attendees that are visiting a show for the first time is:
  - a. 32%
  - b. 47%
  - c. 54%

*answers to quiz on last page*

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# Motivate the doers

By Barry Siskind



Much has been written about the importance of getting senior management commitment to a trade show strategy. Without their support the best of plans become corporate orphans passed along from manager to manager with no one really taking any serious interest. However, commitment from junior and middle management is just as crucial. These are the folks in the trenches who deal with the day to day challenges of planning, organising and executing a trade show strategy. What motivates them?

While money and job security are genuine motivators, stopping here may be limiting. In an economy fraught with drastic budget cuts, throwing money at a problem is no longer a practical solution. In addition, with the prospect of layoffs looming everywhere, the promise of job security is nice but may not be realistic?

A successful show is more than following the rules and hoping for the best. It requires each team member working at an above average level of involvement. It means pushing the creative boundaries and working out of the box. It means a level of excitement and enthusiasm seldom seen in other parts of the corporate culture. So, how do we motivate the doers to perform at this level?

There is no one answer that works for everyone since what excites some will have no effect on others. Knowing your staff is the first crucial step. This is easily accomplished by doing a bit of research. Talk to the key players and get their opinions. Elaborate incentive programs do have value but they are often geared to sales people and ignore the people behind the scenes. More often than not it is the little things that are most meaningful.

## Consider some of the following:

### · **Make them feel part of the team**

Plan some team activities. A project launch or a post-show celebration will do the trick.

### · **Communicate to the whole team regularly**

Let everyone know everything and encourage ideas.

### · **Encourage feedback**

Get your staff out of the "Not my department" syndrome. Encourage the free flow of information and advise from one person to another.

### · **Listen**

This is not as easy as it sounds so when one of your team is talking- stop and listen.

### · **Let them get involved with all aspects of the show**

The educational programs as well as other industry activities are a terrific way for people to develop their potential.

## After it's over

· Publish pictures of your booth and your team in a company newsletter or special bulletin posted on your intra-net site. Hold a post show bash as a reward for a job well-done or have everyone get together for a debriefing and dinner.

Motivating the doers is not rocket science. We are all the same and need to know the work we do is important and appreciated. So, if you don't have any more money to put into the pot, try a little TLC. You will be amazed at the results.

# TRADE SHOW MAGIC

## Hocus Pocus or Profits???

Abbra Kadabbra. Now you see them, now you don't. Ahh, the magic. Maybe the solution to increasing your booth traffic is magic. But not any magic...trade show magic. But does it work?

Anthony Lindan thinks it does, but then again, if he didn't, he would have to find a real job. You see, Lindan is a trade show magician.

Sitting across the table at a downtown Starbucks, Lindan looks more like a corporate accountant than a magician. Void of David Copperfield's riveting eyes, Blackstone's prestidigitator's charisma or Sigfried and Roy's stage props - Lindan knows how to work a trade show audience which is why companies like Dynamic Mutual Funds, Tivoli, Canada Post, Qualcomm, Coca Cola Bottling and Lucent Technologies are booking him months in advance. Although Lindan has been performing trade show magic for years, in the beginning the magic act stereotype was a difficult obstacle to overcome. Many decision-makers viewed it as frivolous. They simply didn't understand the power that magic brought to their exhibits Lyndan said, It was a tough sell. They needed to know there was a positive return on their investments.

At \$6,000 - \$9,000 for a three-day show, which is what Lindan charges these days, there had better be a pretty obvious return. "Whether I'm at a small show like the Canadian Association of Insurance Advisors with 1,000 people or INTEROP in Orlando with 100,000 people, my job is essentially the same - creating some buzz in the booth and thereby increasing booth

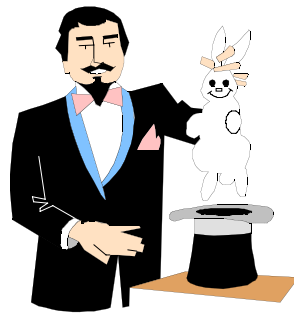
The difference between the good magicians and the bad ones according to Lindan is that good entertainers customize every show. Customizing starts in the initial meeting where Lindan helps the client identify their exhibiting objective, grasp the nuances of the product or service, understand the customer and develop an overview of the event itself. With this information in place a first draft of the performance will be created which includes choosing the tricks that will best meet the clients objectives. During an initial run-through the client will have an opportunity for fine-tuning by confirming the correct product connections, language issues and audience acceptance.

Magic is a tool to get people into a booth, Lindan says" The trick is to tie the presentation into the sales process". A good magician can also help pre-qualify potential customers by asking the right questions. In some cases it is easier for the entertainer to pose questions a sales person might find awkward. This is a real blessing for less experienced booth staff who are intimidated with the process of engaging attendees in conversation.

There are two types of magic presentations an exhibitor should consider. Each hinges on the amount of booth space available and the length of time the client wants the visitor to linger.

### The Aisle Presentation

The aisle presentation, which is the most common, has the illusionist beginning his presentation with a single visitor. Soon the numbers grow and during the next 5-8 minutes the mesmerized audience subtly learns about the exhibitor's products or services. Meanwhile the entertainer pinpoints a few semi-qualified prospects, lures them into the booth and sends the rest on their way.



## Trade Show Magic: Hocus Pocus or Profits?

(continued from previous page)

### Theatre Style Presentations

Theatre style presentations are carried out on a schedule and frequently include more elaborate props such as the Chamber of Death, a straightjacket or the woman who is sawn in two. Here the audience is invited to sit, watch and be amazed. So, what do you look for in a trade show magician? According to Lindan four things:

1. Presentation style - Can they provide the right magic in an entertaining manner?  
Being

technically good is of no value if they are not knowledgeable about your company and fun to watch;

2. Appearance - Do they convey an impression that is consistent with the client's reputation? Be careful about tasteless humour or offensive tactics that might turn your client base in the direction of your competitors booth;

3. Attitude - Can they create a friendly, approachable and fun atmosphere. This is particularly important if they are calling a member of the audience up to participate in the performance;

4. Experience- Has your choice of entertainer worked in the trade show environment? Performing on the floor of a show is different than at a theatre, birthday party or at a reception. Before you hire a magician for your next show ask for a demonstration. Then you be the judge.

*Click here to receive a free copy of Anthony Lindan's booklet 'The Power of Customized Entertainment'.*

## Trade Shows and Beyond

It's your last chance to join Barry Siskind and his faculty of experts in this one-day intensive look at exhibiting. Whether you exhibit at trade shows, corporate events, product launches, professional conferences etc. This program will put you face to face with the experts. June 17, 2003 at the Days Inn, Mississauga, Ontario. For information call 1-800-358-6079 or [www.tradeshowsandbeyond.com](http://www.tradeshowsandbeyond.com)



## GURU Report

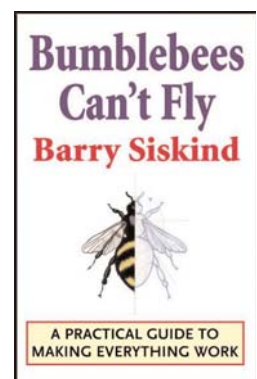
The Center for Exhibition Industry Research will soon be publishing their long awaited series of "GURU Reports". These reports focusing on all aspects of exhibitor education will be available to exhibitors, show organizers and suppliers through the CEIR.

The first GURU report will be published in the spring of 2003 with reports following throughout 2003. The Gurus include Skip Cox, Susan Friedman, Alan Konopacki, Linda McKinney, Steve Miller, Barry Siskind and Margit Weisgal. For more information visit [www.ceir.org](http://www.ceir.org) or call 312-808-2347.

## Special Offer

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Regular Price \$24.95  
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## Answers to Trade Show Quiz (TQ)

1 - b, 2 - b, 3 - c, 4 - b, 5 - c, 6 - c,