

**So...you've signed up to AHG 2020...well done.** Good decision. Despite the influx of social media and other ways to communicate your existence, the face to face medium of trade shows remains at the top of the sales and marketing pile. People still do business with people.

**I say 'good decision' with an asterisk.** Signing up to the show was just the first step in your journey. The focus now turns to achieving value from the show. Your actions in the lead up to the show will dictate how well the show works for you.....so here we go.

### Goal Setting & Planning your Participation

Firstly, cast your mind forward to the Monday after AHG2020. You are reflecting on the show and then it hits you... "I can't believe we didn't..., I wish we had have..." These gut-wrenching moments can be avoided by having some measurable goals for the event and a plan in place to achieve them.

It seems simple, but most exhibitors don't do it...and then the fallout begins, and the finger pointing!!

Everything you do between now and the end of the trade show should come back and reflect the goals you have set for the show. **Goal Setting is your most important step in getting prepared. Don't gloss over it.**

### SMART Goals

**SMART** Goals allow you to properly analyse whether the goal has been achieved.

SMART stands for.....S = Specific. M = Measurable. A = Achievable. R = Realistic. T = Timely.

Example of a SMART Goal = *To achieve 50 leads by the end of the trade show, whereby we have their contact details and they have received information on one or more of our products.*

- Specific            YES – It clearly states what is required, when by and the criteria to achieve it
- Measurable        YES – It becomes a lead when the criteria in the goal are met
- Achievable        YES – This is subjective. It must reflect the amount of potential clients at the show
- Realistic            YES – 50 leads is realistic, as is our ability to provide them with the information
- Timely              YES – There is a clear end to when the goal needs to be achieved (end of the show)

A goal that doesn't meet these criteria could read '*To achieve 50 leads.*' This isn't clear. What is a lead? Is this just whilst at the show? It will also be interpreted very differently from person to person.

By undertaking the setting of SMART Goals you have already raised numerous questions that now need planning in place to achieve. These queries could look like this:

1. How many people can we expect to see past our stand?
2. What percentage of them will be potential clients?
3. How many brochures will we need to cover this....and which brochures will be most appropriate?

## Your turn

Set three SMART Goals for AHG2020\*

Warning: Try not to make everything LEAD driven. Some other goal ideas follow:

- Meeting XX number of industry personnel (from other stands)
- Talk with XX number of distributors
- Having XX number of sit-down meetings at the show
- Launch XX number of new products / services at the show

\*I am happy for you to send these goals to me for review.... [russell.mcintosh@tradeshowtraining.com.au](mailto:russell.mcintosh@tradeshowtraining.com.au)

## Where to now?

It's November. The show is not until mid-March. You have loads of time.....STOP! NO!

December and January are very interrupted months. You may be working through the Christmas period but a lot of your suppliers will not be or they will be reduced in their capacity.

February will be too late to order things that require long lead times.....get things in motion now.

## So, what are my priorities?

We are four months from the show and there are some critical deadlines that you need to meet prior to Christmas. Please achieve these and your 2020 will start off on the right note in relation to AHG.

### **1. Set 3 SMART Goals**

- i. All explained above

*Why? Everything else feeds off what your goals are.*

### **2. Choose one person to coordinate the stand**

*Why? One person has to own the effort and be the point of contact. Many chiefs leave too much to chance. The person needs some expectations set and has to document what they do. Employees leave. Trade stands have been de-railed by staff turnover. Risk manage this potential occurrence.*

### **3. Read your show materials**

*Why? These will let you know exactly what is included in the stand, extra marketing opportunities available, who the suppliers are for ordering furniture, etc.*

### **4. Mock-up your stand**

- Physically (eg – factory/office floor), put some tape down for the boundary and other items you are expecting to have on the stand.
- If you don't have the physical space, use a computer program (eg – Paint).

*Why? It gives you an early view of the stand so there are no nasty surprises when you arrive onsite. It is especially important if you are occupying a different size to what you have had in the past.*

***I will be back in early February to get you on track with 6 weeks to go. Merry Christmas.***