

- Before the Show - Set Goals & Objectives

To be successful at RDJ, you should set clear goals and objectives that you want to accomplish. Ask yourself and/or your team to answer the following questions:

- Why are you exhibiting at the show?
- What do you hope to achieve by exhibiting at the show? (Make sales, gain leads, find new reps, increase visibility in the market, introduce new products, etc.)
- What is your toughest challenge?
- Who are your clients/target audience?
- Who are your competitors?

To make sure your staff stays focused on the end result of the show, you can plan staff meetings each day before the show opens to review the results from the previous day and remind each member of their goals for the day. This is also a great time to discuss best practices that worked the day before to gear your staff up for the day!

- Before the Show - Make an Action Plan

Once you have clearly defined your goals and objectives for the show, you need to communicate them to your booth staff and set-up a system to measure your success. For instance, if your goal is to gain 100 qualified leads from the show you can set a personal goal for each staff member to reach each day of the show. At the end of the show you will be able to measure your success at the show based on the number of leads you gained as a whole and as individuals.

Setting goals and objectives is a great way to get the most out of the exhibiting experience as it provides you with a clear purpose. However, keep in mind that these goals and objectives should not be extreme or intense. You want to set attainable, realistic goals so that you maximize your staff's time, energy and motivation.

- Before the Show - Prepare Your Booth

RDJ rules and regulations follow established industry guidelines. Here are some questions to ask yourself when planning your booth:

- What type of booth configuration is my booth?
- Is my booth within the allowed height restrictions?
- Is my booth within the line of sight regulations?
- Is my booth multi-story?
- Can I have a hanging sign above my booth?
- Is my booth covered? If so, do I have sprinklers?
- Is there a column in or near my booth? If so, where?
- Is there a fire hose cabinet in my booth? If so, what does that mean?
- Will there be vehicles in my booth?
- Have I made arrangements for floor covering in my booth?

- Before the Show - Booth Design

Communicate clearly through your booth design. Attendees' time is often short, so be sure anyone approaching your booth can determine in just a few seconds the name of your company, the product(s) you sell and the solution(s) you offer.

Be sure your booth and staff are inviting. Don't impede an attendee from coming into your booth with large obstacles, walls or the backs of your sales people. Make sure your booth layout and staff encourages visitors to come in and get to know your company.

Proper lighting will give your booth added depth and excitement or make it warm and inviting. Lighting can define areas of importance and add dimension to booths of any size.

Choose the right graphics. Graphics must announce who your company is and what your company does (combine branding and messaging in one).

Limit the text and make the copy large and easy to read.

Order early and save! Take advantage of discount pricing by ordering early. Check the vendor forms for discount deadlines. It's an easy way to save money and have the added benefit of meeting or beating deadlines.

- Before the Show - Obtain Booth Approval

If you have any questions regarding booth specifications, Fire Marshal approval or any inquiries about booth approval, contact Show Management by phone at 972-536-6398. You may also submit a booth variance request form and a copy of your booth layout to fax 972-536-6408. Keep in mind the Fire Marshal approval process can take up to 6-8 weeks so submit plans as soon as possible.

Money Saving Tips

- Order all show services by the deadline to take advantage of discounted pricing. Prices after the deadline can be significantly higher.
- Ship booth contents to advance warehouse. You will not save money, but your shipment waiting in your booth when you arrive at the Convention Center.
- Schedule labor accordingly so that they are not at your booth longer than necessary. You want to make sure your freight is delivered before your labor arrives. Ordering labor correctly can save you money!
- Order and ship your hanging sign in advance to avoid the risk of not having your signs hung. All signs and hanging orders must be received at the Freeman Decorating warehouse by the deadline. Signs received after this date may not be hung. Inline booths, perimeter booths and any booth less than 400 square feet will not be approved for hanging signs.

Services for Your Booth

Having an exhibit booth is not all you need when you arrive at the show. You may also need carpet/flooring, utilities, material handling and much more. Your Exhibitor Service Manual (ESM) provides the vendor contact information and order forms you will need to order these services. You should review the entire kit to ensure you have all the forms you need and are aware of any discount deadline dates. The following items are the basic services you will need plus additional services that will enhance the look and feel of your booth:

Basic Booth Services

Some services are a necessity or a requirement by show management. Exhibitors will need these basic services for their booth:

Shipping – In order for your booth to get to the show you will need to arrange for shipping to and from the show via a common carrier, van line or air freight. If you do not have a preferred shipper, Freeman Decorating offers shipping services within the ESM.

Exhibitors have the option to send their materials to an advance receiving warehouse or direct to the show site. By shipping to the advanced warehouse you ensure that your product is delivered prior to the show which will assist in a smooth set up.

Material Handling – This is the delivery of your exhibit materials from the dock to an assigned exhibit space, removing empty crates, returning empty crates and delivering materials back to the dock for carrier loading and outbound shipping. Material Handling forms are located in your ESM.

Labor – Each exhibitor has the option to have their own company personnel provide the labor; they may hire outside labor (an Exhibitor Appointed Contractor) or they may hire labor through Freeman. If you choose to hire an EAC, you will need to send in the appropriate proof of insurance to Show Management for approval 3 weeks before the show.



Services for Your Booth - Continued

Carpet/Flooring – Every exhibitor SHOULD have carpet at RDJ. However, if you wish to still have floor covering, you can rent carpet from Freeman in your ESM.

Utilities – If your exhibit requires electric, telephone lines or internet lines, you must order these services from the show's exclusive provider. The forms for these utilities can also be found in the ESM.

Additional Booth Services

The following services are not required but can enhance your booth appearance and overall experience. All of these services can be ordered through the ESM.

- Furniture (tables, chairs, etc.)
- Cleaning (booth vacuuming, trash removal, etc.)
- Audio/Visual/Computers (televisions, computers, computer screens, speakers, etc.)
- Catering (beverages, food, ice, etc.)
- Floral (floral arrangements, plants, etc.)
- Lead Retrieval (lead readers scan attendee's barcode on their badge and compiles their contact information so you can follow up with them after the show)
- Models/Talent (models/talent, greeters, product demonstrators, etc.)
- Photography – this allows you to have professional pictures taken of your exhibit at the show.
- Security (in-booth security to guard materials in your booth before, during, and after show hours)

Electricity

Equipment that plugs into a standard wall outlet in the U.S. requires 120 volt power. This includes lights and most office equipment. Some of these products will be rated in wattage and others in amperage. Rating can be determined by looking at the back or bottom of the equipment for a plate or stamp.



Some electrical order forms ask for your order in wattage, others in amperage. A quick conversion is 1AMP = 100 watts.

Determine the total wattage or amperage of all of your equipment and order the appropriate 120 volt power. Total the wattage of each bulb to determine the wattage you require in your outlet.

Be sure to complete the diagram provided on the electrical order form to alert the electrician where your electric should be dropped so it will be ready for your move-in.

Supply your own extension cords and power strips to save money.

Tips for a Great Show

Booth Specifics

- Note your booth number and check the floor plan to see if there are columns or obstructions in your booth.
- Be sure that your booth adheres to the rules and regulations of RDJ
- Notify Show Management of any vehicles that will be in your booth. (You will need prior approval.)
- Take the following with you to the show: a copy of your exhibit contract, copies of completed service order forms and any correspondence you had with Show Management regarding any special arrangements or approvals.
- Plan for extra booth personnel if you are having any promotions, giveaways or celebrities in your booth. Make sure everyone working in your booth has an official show badge.
- Remember to make your return shipment arrangements when making your outgoing arrangements. Be sure to bring your bill of lading in case you need to track your freight.
- Order floor covering in advance so it will be in place when you arrive.
- Ship your hanging sign and order in advance or there is no guarantee it will be hung (if applicable.)
- Bring a contact list with important phone numbers of all involved with your exhibit (for example: your shipper, exhibit house and staff hotels).
- Inventory each crate and their contents to verify that all are delivered on-site.



Services

- Order services from show vendors early to receive advanced discount pricing.
- Add any applicable overtime charges to material handling charges.
- Bring a copy of all orders placed with you to the show.
- Order badges in advance to save time on-site.

Marketing

- Complete your FREE Show Program Listing in your Exhibitor Dashboard.
- Send FREE Customer Invitations to your customers so they can get FREE exhibits admission.
- Advertise in the Show Program.
- Place the RDJ logo, with hyperlink to registration, in your ads and direct mail.
- Take advantage of numerous sponsorship opportunities that will make your company **STAND OUT ABOVE THE COMPETITION!**
- Include show information and your booth number on your company fax sheets.

- At the Show - Exhibit Display Tips

The following are tips on best and worst practices that you should keep in mind while deciding how your booth will look for the show:

Less is More – Everyone has heard the saying “less is more” and that is definitely the case in exhibiting. When a booth is cluttered with products, demonstrations and information attendees become overwhelmed and intimidated. Instead, highlight your newest, most important information and products that appeal to the specific audience at the show.

Open & Neat Booth Space – Make sure you keep an open, neat exhibit space to allow attendees to move freely through your booth without feeling trapped. By utilizing the “less is more” theory you will keep your booth from becoming cluttered. Keep tables and counters to the back of the booth so attendees feel free to step in from the aisle without having to maneuver around furniture or display materials.

Use Movement to Create Interest – Moving action exhibits tend to create a more exciting environment that attracts attendees to see “what the buzz is about.” You can create movement in your booth with rotating signs, lights, audio visual, etc. If you have a laptop, run a continuous Power Point slide show in your booth. Attendees will stop and look, giving you an opportunity to strike up a conversation.



Use Graphics – Get attention with big, bold graphics. Graphics should be clear and concise but not providing too much information as attendees may become overwhelmed. Graphics should answer the following questions: “Who are you? What are you selling? and Why should customers buy it?”

Booth Giveaways – Have brochures, fact sheets, or a promotional item with your company logo and website available to hand out to attendees that visit your booth. Keep it simple and inexpensive as 90% of these items are disregarded after the show. Save the detailed (more costly) information for serious customers and mail the information directly to the prospect after the show.

In-Booth Demonstrations – A demonstration in your booth will create activity and movement in your booth which attracts attention. If you have a product demonstration in your booth, keep the following things in mind:

- Set goals and objectives for what you want the demonstration to accomplish.
- Test your demonstration before you get to the show to make sure it works. You will want to test it again when you arrive and each day prior to the show opening to make sure no problems have arisen.
- Keep the demonstration very visual so attendees can see what you are doing. Try to include some hands-on experience for attendee participation which will provide first-hand knowledge of your product.
- If the product demonstration has a problem and is not working correctly, stop the demonstration or have a backup demonstration.
- Assign a person(s) specifically to the demonstration so they may focus their attention and energy strictly on the demo.

- At the Show - Booth Staff Tips

Now that you have your exhibit ready it is time to prepare your staff for the show. Once an attendee enters your booth, your booth staff is the first contact that person has with your company and first impressions are everything. The following do's and don'ts will assist you in training your staff to be at the top of their game while at the show.

Staff Apparel:

When an attendee enters your booth they need to be able to immediately identify who works for your company. Coordinate your staff apparel so your employees stand out.

Dress Code:

Create a staff dress code before leaving for the show so each employee is prepared with the appropriate clothing (i.e. black pants & staff shirt or khaki pants & staff shirt). This will create consistency with your staff and eliminate any confusion on what must be worn to the show.

Women's & Men's Clothing:

As you will have men and women of all different sizes, make sure you order staff apparel that comes in both men's and women's sizes. You will also want to get each staff member's specific size so no one's shirts are too big or too small.



Booth Etiquette:

Besides good appearance and attitude, it is important that your booth staff exercise proper booth etiquette to ensure no attendee turns away or is offended.

Trade Show Do's:

- Prepare for success and contingencies.
- Anticipate questions and your responses.
- Know your role and responsibility.
- Practice your demonstration prior to the show.
- Get to the booth early to avoid last-minute glitches.
- Qualify prospect's needs before presenting.
- Present enough information to stimulate post-show activity.
- Stand and face outward to engage prospects.
- Maintain good eye contact.
- Be assertive, not aggressive.
- Introduce yourself and shake hands.
- Be professional at all times.
- Wear your badge at all times where it is visible to attendees.
- Have plenty of business cards and brochures to distribute.

Trade Show Don'ts:

- Don't smoke, eat, drink or read in the booth.
- Don't talk to your associates – talk to your prospects and customers.
- Don't let customers with complaints ruin it for others – take them out of the booth & discuss their concerns one-on-one.
- Don't let your booth get messy or cluttered.
- Don't leave your booth or demonstration area unattended.
- Don't complain about the show, or about being at the show.
- Don't bad mouth your competitors.

- Don't stand with your arms crossed, hands on hips or in your pockets as this may come across as negative body language. Instead hold your hands behind your back or relaxed at your sides.
- Don't wear uncomfortable shoes or clothing.
- Don't assume anything – ask questions.
- Don't ignore attendees who wander into your booth.
- Don't sit on chairs when a prospect walks into your booth – stand up and acknowledge them.
- Don't wear heavy cologne or perfume as this may be unappealing to attendees.

- Before, During and After the Show - Marketing Plan

Another great way to maximize your exhibit traffic is to develop a marketing program for before, during and after the show. You can utilize this marketing program to generate leads and immediate sales; introduce new products; promote company/ brand awareness; establish market presence; and maintain image. First identify the audience you want to reach, and then bring them to your exhibit. Develop a focused and creative approach to attracting attendees. Statistics prove attendees come to a tradeshow with a set agenda of exhibitors to visit. Your tradeshow marketing program can get you on that list!

Before the Show:

- Purchase sponsorships for impact at the show
- Send press releases/articles to trade publications.
- Place an ad in the Program & Event Guide.
- Run ads in trade publications. Be sure to include the RDJ logo and your booth number on your ad.
- Submit company description, brands, and product categories for on-line and printed Program & Event Guide Listings on www.remodelingdeck.com
- Send complimentary Electronic Customer Invitations to customers.

During the Show:

- Conduct presentations and/or demonstrations in your booth.
- Have contests/games in your booth.
- Host a press conference while at the show.
- Provide company press kits in show press room.
- Have an interactive video and/or audio visual to create motion in your booth.
- Pass out promotional giveaways or product samples to booth visitors.
- Rent a Lead Retrieval system to capture leads from our Official Show Vendor, CompuSystems

Post-Show:

- Follow up on the leads you gathered at the show.
- Send product information & press releases to post show media lists.
- Advertise in post-show issues of trade publications.
- Utilize internal promotions such as company newsletter or memo.
- Take note of sponsorships that were effective at the show that you would like to sign up for next year.

Exhibiting Quick Facts for Smaller Booths

Bringing Your Own Exhibit:

Some exhibitors choose to bring their own exhibit in a privately owned vehicle (POV) such as a passenger car, van or small company vehicle. When you bring your own exhibit in a POV, you may have to check in with Freeman first. You will then be directed to the POV Line which is a special loading dock reserved for POV's to unload their material.



POV Material Handling:

Exhibitors that use a POV to deliver their property to the show may also hand carry their property to their booth, pending certain restrictions of the building. If you cannot meet this criteria, you must use the material handling services provided by Freeman.

Move-In:

All exhibits must be fully installed by 6:00 PM the evening before the show opens.

Move-Out:

Move-out does not begin until 3:01 PM on the last day of the show. Any exhibitor that dismantles their booth before 3:01 PM may lose priority points.



Sponsorships:

All exhibitors are eligible for RDJ Sponsorship Opportunities. This is a great way to increase your company's exposure and maximize traffic at the show. Review the available opportunities to determine which one works best for your company and your budget.

Security Tips

- Ship materials in locked trucks or crates.
- Do not indicate the contents of the crate on the exterior of the crate.
- Try to be on-site when your freight is delivered.
- Conduct an inventory after the product is delivered.
- While setting up the booth, place your materials within visible vicinity.
- Do not pack merchandise in containers to be stored with empties.
- Either carry VCRs or laptop computers with you or store them in a locked cabinet.
- Run wire or cable through items if possible and secure them at the end of the day.
- Do not leave your booth immediately at show close; spend some time in your booth until the floor clears.
- Assign someone to be in your booth one half-hour prior to and one half-hour after all tradeshow guests have left.
- Obtain proper insurance coverage for your goods, including transit to and from the show site and move-in and move-out.
- Do not leave your bill of lading unattended in your booth.
- Most thefts in convention centers occur during move-out, after you have turned in your bill of lading.
- Do not store purses, briefcases or valuables behind drape or underneath tables.
- Hire a security officer from the security contractor's firm to watch and safeguard the exhibit overnight, if necessary.
- Report any suspicious person(s) in the exhibit area to security or Show Management.
- Report any thefts immediately to the security office or Show Management. You will need to complete an incident report which you can then provide to your insurance carrier.



The exhibit hall will be monitored by uniformed security guards during the entire show. While general perimeter security is provided, the security of your booth or valuable items cannot be guaranteed and is not covered by the general contractor or Show Management. Remember to take with you any valuable items that are easily removed when you leave your booth. Report any missing items to Show Management and to security immediately.

Vital File

Here is a list of items you shouldn't leave home without! Take a file containing this information with you to show site, you'll be glad you did.

- Show rules and regulations and Show Management contacts
- Written confirmation of early move-in or any other special arrangements made with Show Management
- Duplicate set of exhibit setup drawings and/or photos
- Your copy of the exhibition contract
- Phone numbers of the exhibition house, shipping company and I & D company
- All travel paperwork – airlines, hotel confirmations, car rental
- Proof of payment for booth space, utilities, contracted labor, etc. This should include advance service orders with the discounted rate.
- Bill of lading.