



## Before:

- **Promote the show.** You want people showing up and going to your booth, add a line to everyone's email signature with the show info and your booth number. If you have a giveaway or something else interesting, say that too. Social media is your friend. Post, post and repost that you're going.
- **Decide on your main message.** Just like your home page, you get 3 seconds to convince someone to stop at your booth. Remember the goal is to get people to *stop*, not to explain everything about who you are and what you do! Boil it down to a single, short sentence.
- **Decide how your booth will be different.** Attendees will see many booths apart from yours, all essentially identical. You have to do **something** different. It doesn't have to be amazing - just different.
- **Booth Survival Kit** –You won't use *all* the stuff *every* time, but you will use some *every* time. The kit should contain:
  - pens (multiple, different colors)
  - Sharpies
  - Scotch tape
  - masking tape
  - extension cord
  - electric plug bar
  - post-it notes
  - rubber bands
  - tiny stapler
  - highlighter
  - paper clips
  - scissors
  - all-in-one tool (screwdriver, can opener)
  - zip-ties
  - Generic business cards (in case anyone runs out)
  - medicine (Tylenol, Advil, Band Aids)
  - Breath Mints
  - Water

## At The Trade Show:

- **Shoes** – Wear shoes you will be most comfortable in. Don't wear new shoes.
- **Clothing** – Select sensible and comfortable clothing. Dress in layers if possible.
- **Stand, don't sit.** Sitting looks like you don't want to be there. It's uninviting. The head-height differential is psychologically off-putting. Yes your feet will hurt (see 1<sup>st</sup> point!)
- **Quality is better than quantity.** Making strong connections with a handful of patrons is far more valuable than having 100 people walk into your booth for a promo item and are never heard from again.
- **Free food.** Works better than almost any other free thing. The more "real" the food is (i.e. not just candy) the better. Cookies are good. Put it at the center of your booth so it's harder for someone to take without talking.
- **Offer Show Specials.** Make sure to highlight your show specials so that buyers know that they need to buy or enter at the show in order to receive the discount or special offer. Make sure your show special is posted and very clear.
- **Take a Break** – Breaks are leaving the booth to visit other vendors.
- **Low Energy** – Arrange for lunch breaks. Try not to bring large food items to your booth. Exhibitors have access to snacks in the Kinsmen office each day.
- **Busy Times** - Be sure to have a disengagement line or two. The best one is "thanks for stopping by", but if you are talking to an important prospect it might be better to say "where do we go from here?" or "how would you like me to follow up?"
- **Boredom/Slowdowns** –When booth traffic slows, networking with other exhibitors should become a priority. Other vendors are looking to do something and are vulnerable to a sales pitch. Be respectful and listen to their pitch as intently as they listen to yours.
- **Ask questions, don't just transmit.** Sure you want to pitch your stuff, but **this is a fantastic opportunity for direct market research on your potential customers!** Come up with 3-5 questions that you're going to ask of people who walk by the booth, then ask away. No need to carefully record the results — the big trends will be obvious and the rest is noise.
- **Have ways to capture contact info.** You're there to connect and generate sales, so be sure you have note pads, forms, draw ballots, something at your booth so you can get in touch with everyone after.
- **Follow up! Follow up! Follow up!** Attendees are saturated with presentations and vendor pitches, so there's a 99% chance they've forgotten about you. It's up to you to follow up and remind them.