

Trade Show Marketing Strategies

Chris Hurn:

We appeal to different segments of the marketplace, and it's true: uh, they like the guys that are just, you know, live and breathe sports, and that's great. We basically are more about businesspeople, professionals. We generally, in most of our clubs, have flat-screen TVs. They're muted. One channel's usually on sports, one channel's usually on business, and it works out just fine.

Mark Hammrick:

People pay about fifty-six hundred dollars to exhibit here, and others pay up to twenty-five dollars just to get in. And for that money, they'll also probably get some free food.

Mark Hammrick:

Not everybody had a lot of people coming by, maybe because they weren't giving out food. It doesn't take long to figure out the way to a potential franchisee's wallet is through the stomach. Having a nice-looking young woman at the booth doesn't hurt either.

Exhibitor:

We are giving out, um, we have mini cheese croissants, raspberry croissants.

Mark Hammrick:

Doesn't it bother you all these people just come by for the food?

Exhibitor:

No, well, that's... (laughs). That's all right, we wanna-we wanna share. At least, because otherwise, we're gonna sit here and eat it ourselves, so that's-that's, the more the merrier.

Mark Hammrick:

At the PostNet booth, they were giving out suckers; and founder Steven Greenbaum, who's been doing this for years now, says a booth has to be just right.

Steven Greenbaum:

Well, um, candy, uh, we have, um, some green pens, and uh, and giveaways. A lot of that is about branding. Just having people, uh, take some of these items home and as they're looking through things they saw, things they looked at in the show, hopefully you, uh, you're top of mind.

Mark Hammrick:

As it turns out, even the diet booth was giving out food. But even with a full stomach and more than an earful of sales pitches, don't believe everything you see at a show like this.

Mark Hammrick:

Mark Hammrick, The Associated Press, Washington.

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