

## The Cost

The trade show maximizes the effectiveness of your sales efforts. The sales person in your exhibition booth can make four to six individualized presentations an hour—not to busy people distracted by telephones or impending meetings, but to attentive buyers who have confirmed their interest in your product by paying the show admission charge. There is no other sales opportunity like it.

The estimated cost of attending a three-day trade show in New York with two-day follow-up is a minimum of US \$6 000. Although at first glance this may seem high, business surveys show that four sales initiated at a trade show can be concluded for the cost of a single sale created by phone calls and visits to a potential customer.

## How to Succeed at a Trade Show

### Preparation

- Submit your application for booth space early to improve your chance of obtaining a prime location. Given the choice, select space along the main traffic flow—near hall entrances, exits, snack bars, rest areas or near major exhibitions.
- Establish a realistic budget for the show that includes space rental, booth design (if applicable), furnishings, services, staff travel and expenses, shipping and promotion (give-aways, literature, advertising).
- Plan your exhibit program with identified goals and promotions.
- If you are providing your own exhibit, use experienced professional designers who know how to create that very important first impression to attract a visitor.
- Train your support booth personnel for show duty. Brief them on the purpose of the show, the composition of the audience, the products to be shown and other essential information.
- Contact the official exhibitors' services centre for any anticipated contract labour you may need at the site because of the size of your equipment or other special requirements.
- Obtain short-term insurance coverage to meet your specific show needs.

### The Exhibit

Your show is your product. That is what the buyer comes to see. Anything else detracts from your purpose to sell—and the buyer's interest in making a deal.

- Show as many variations of your product as possible.
- Build your display around your product. Let visitors experience it to the best advantage and see for themselves why it is a great buy.
- Be creative in your presentation of the product.
- Hand out samples or give-aways that are relevant to the product.
- Ask all visitors to sign a guest book.
- Keep your exhibit area neat, clean and well-lit.