Trade Show Checklist

Your step-by-step plan from booking to follow-up, from ShowCase Portable Exhibits

SHOWCASE PORTABLE EXHIBITS

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EVENT DETAILS

Event Name	**Dates**
Venue/City	**Booth # and size**
Exhibitor move-in / setup time	**Move-out / teardown time**
Show services contractor	**Booth team lead & phone**

1 Plan & Book — 3-6 months before

- ☐ Set goals for the show: number of leads, meetings booked, product launches, or sales targets.
- ☐ Set a budget covering booth space, shipping, travel, hotel, show services, and giveaways.
- ☐ Book your booth space and confirm the booth size (10x10, 10x20, island, or tabletop).
- ☐ Download the exhibitor manual and note every deadline, including early-bird discounts.
- ☐ Check that your exhibit fits the space and meets show rules for height, sightlines, and fire codes.

2 Design Your Exhibit & Graphics — 2-3 months before

- ☐ Confirm which displays you'll use: banner stands, pop-up wall, tabletop, counters, or a full kit.
- ☐ Order new or replacement graphics in plenty of time. Allow time for proofs, printing, and shipping.
- ☐ Keep graphics simple: logo and main message high up, readable from 10+ feet away, with a clear call to action.
- ☐ Order extras you need: lighting, monitor mounts, literature racks, flooring, table throws.
- ☐ Plan your booth layout: where people will stand, product demos, storage, and an open, welcoming front edge.
- ☐ Plan pre-show marketing: email invites, social posts, your booth number on your website and signature.

3 Order Show Services — 4-8 weeks before

- ☐ Order electricity, internet/Wi-Fi, carpet or flooring, furniture, and cleaning by the discount deadline.
- ☐ Arrange lead retrieval (badge scanner app) or set up your own lead capture form.
- ☐ Confirm whether you can hand-carry your exhibit in or must use the show's freight and labor services.
- ☐ Order promotional items, giveaways, and printed literature. Plan for about 1 piece per expected lead.
- ☐ Register booth staff badges and book travel for the team.

4 Prepare & Ship — 2-4 weeks before

- ☐ Unpack and set up your full display at the office. Replace damaged or missing parts and graphic wear.
- ☐ Ship to the advance warehouse or show site by the deadline. Use the show's exact shipping labels.
- ☐ Save tracking numbers, the bill of lading, and contact numbers for the carrier.
- ☐ Brief booth staff on goals, key messages, product demos, lead qualifying questions, and the schedule.

5 Pack Your Booth Toolkit — 1 week before

- [ ] Tools: scissors, box cutter, multi-tool or screwdriver, tape measure, zip ties, Velcro, gaffer/packing tape.
- [ ] Power: extension cords, power strips, phone and tablet chargers, spare batteries, monitor cables (HDMI).
- [ ] Cleaning: lint roller, wipes, glass/screen cleaner, small trash bags, paper towels.
- [ ] Office: pens, markers, business cards, stapler, notepads, lead forms, clipboard.
- [ ] Comfort: water, snacks, breath mints, pain reliever, bandages, comfortable shoes.
- [ ] Documents: exhibitor manual, service orders, shipping papers, hotel and travel confirmations.

6 Show Setup — Move-in day

- [ ] Check in at the service desk. Confirm your shipments arrived and know where your booth is.
- [ ] Check that electricity, carpet, and furniture are delivered and placed where you ordered them.
- [ ] Set up the display following the setup instructions. Smooth graphics, straighten panels, and hide cords.
- [ ] Test lights, monitors, demos, Wi-Fi, and the lead scanner before the show opens.
- [ ] Stock the booth with literature and giveaways. Store empty cases out of sight (behind the back wall or in storage).
- [ ] Take photos of the finished booth for social media and future planning. Email photos to your display provider.

7 During the Show — Show days

- [ ] Stand at the front of the booth. Greet people and keep phones and food out of sight.
- [ ] Ask qualifying questions, then scan or record every lead with notes and next steps.
- [ ] Schedule breaks so the booth always has staff.
- [ ] Do a short team check-in each evening: leads collected, what's working, and changes for tomorrow.

8 Teardown & Return Shipping — Move-out day

- [ ] Don't start tearing down before the official show close. Many shows fine early teardown.
- [ ] Take the display down with care. Roll graphics the right way and pack each part in its own case.
- [ ] Check that all parts are there before closing cases. Note any damage for repair.
- [ ] Do a final walk of the booth space for any items left behind.

9 After the Show — Within 1-2 weeks

- [ ] Follow up with hot leads within 48 hours. Send the rest of your leads a personal follow-up email within a week.
- [ ] Enter leads into your CRM with notes, and rank them by how ready they are to buy.
- [ ] Hold a team debrief. Record what to keep, change, or add next time.
- [ ] Inspect your exhibit, and contact your display provider about repairs, graphic updates, or upgrades for your next show.

Need help with your next show? ShowCase Portable Exhibits can help with replacement graphics, repairs, new displays, and accessories. Contact your ShowCase representative to plan ahead and meet every deadline. Contact Sales@ShowCaseExhibits.com to speak to one of our representatives.

Exhibits Solutions are Just a Click Away ShowCaseExhibits.com